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Department of English

Section of English

***The Indian Diaspora between the Self and the
Other in Transnational Cinema***

***Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy for a 'Doctorate'
Degree in Civilization***

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Mera Joota Hai Japani Yeh Patloon Englishtani

(My shoes are Japanese These pants are British

Sar Pe Laal Topi Roosi Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani

(I have a red Russian hat on my head But still my heart is Indian)

(Raj Kapoor, Shree 420, 1955)

Statement of Originality

I affirm that this dissertation is solely the result of my own work. It does not incorporate any previously available information or writings by other authors, nor does it contain material that has been used to obtain any previous academic qualifications. Furthermore, I attest that this thesis is original and not plagiarized, reflecting my own research efforts, except where explicitly acknowledged.

Ms. Sihem GHEZZAL

Dedications

I would like to dedicate this humble work to the queen of my heart; my loving mother for everything wonderful you made for me.

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At the very onset, I surrender myself before the Almighty Allah for blessing me with the best of what I could have had for granting me the patience, focus, and motivation to carry out this endeavor successfully.

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Abstract

Movies serve as a potent medium for exploring history, authentic identities, ancestral roots, and cultural connections. The broad concept of cinema significantly influences various aspects of our global society. The Indian diaspora, notably showcased in Bollywood, introduces new values that sometimes generate divisions from Western perspectives due to the diaspora's transnational dimensions. The study focuses on how Indian Americans are depicted in popular Bollywood films within a global context. Therefore, their on-screen representation plays a significant role in perpetuating or challenging existing stereotypes in both their home country and the countries they migrate to. The films discussed through a qualitative descriptive approach can be seen as examples of transnational cinema, such as *The Namesake* (2006), which straddles both diasporic and transnational perspectives. Meanwhile, films like *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) exploring the role played by Bollywood films in representing Indian culture can be viewed as transnational productions with local themes, yet they are often received through a Western lens in diasporic communities. Typically, this research will delve into how globalization and transnationalism influence the conceptualization of cultural identity and stereotypes, particularly as influenced by international collaborations between the two biggest film industries namely Hollywood and Bollywood.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABCD: American Born Confused Desi

BAFTA: British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CNN: Cable News Network

COO: Country of Origin

COR: Country of Residence

D.C: District of Columbia

DDLG: Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

GOPIO : Global Organization of People of Indian Origin

IMDb : Internet Movie Database

IPTA: The Indian People's Theatre Association

IT: Information technology

K3G: Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham

MPAA: Motion Picture Association of America

MPPC: The Motion Picture Patents Company

NFIA: The National Federation of Indians in America

NRI : Non Resident Indian

NYFCCO: New York Film Critics Circle Awards

OCI: The Overseas Citizenship of India

OTT: Over-the-top service

P.I.O : Person of Indian Origin

SAG : Screen Actors Guild Awards

SDM: Slumdog Millionaire

SET: Sony Entertainment Television

UAE: The United Arab Emirates

UK: The United Kingdom

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USA /US: The United States of America

USSR: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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General Introduction

Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world as it is a matter of what's in the frame and what's out. Film stands out as a potent tool for understanding history, authentic identities, ancestral roots, and cultural ties. Moreover, the expansive influence of cinema transcends boundaries, significantly impacting various aspects of global dynamics. Also, movies serve as a medium for envisioning locations, yet it's important to recognize that locations also shape our perceptions of cinema. As the concept of "Cinema" has perpetually fascinated us, embodying intricate reflections of human society and culture. Extensive literature, encompassing books, articles, journals, research papers, and study materials, delves into various facets of films, including those scrutinized in this thesis and critical reviews, and through its evolution, it has demonstrated its efficacy in fostering social awareness and inspiring action against prevalent issues, aiming to engage and empower its audience.

Interestingly, cinema is an art form that is designed to go across borders. In the meanwhile, the widespread presence of Hollywood movies has sometimes been seen as harmful to the existence and identity of national cinemas. Despite critiques, it's undeniable that Hollywood, alongside other influential forms of global cinema, has evolved into not just a matter of international politics but also a tool for international diplomacy and national image-building. What is evident is that Hollywood movies have spread extensively worldwide, transcending their role as mere representatives of American culture. This expansion owes much to strategic approaches such as subtitling and crafting scenes tailored to diverse global viewerships. Certainly, the influence of global or transnational cinema in shaping international perspectives and cultural norms has significantly expanded over time. Furthermore, Hollywood has long served as a platform for conveying various ideologies throughout history, cleverly intertwining entertainment with subtle yet impactful political messages and agendas. Instead, this study contends that the concept of the transnational is being utilized across a broader spectrum of academic subjects within the fields of film and media, as will be explored further.

It's particularly noticeable that this account underscores the diverse interpretations of 'transnational cinema'. Its origins can be traced back to the early days of cinema or linked to the influence of globalization on the film industry. It encompasses big-budget productions tied to global corporate interests, as well as films that challenge national identities or are consumed as part of a discourse on national identity. According to Hjort (2010), certain types of cinematic transnationalism hold greater value than others as they contribute to specific social, political, artistic, or aesthetic developments. For instance, global Hollywood productions exemplify transnationalism through their diverse production, distribution, and exhibition methods, involving multinational collaborations, foreign studio ownership, and filmmakers from various nations (McDonald & Wasko, 2007, p.6). It's noteworthy that the variety of workshops and panels indicate how transnational cinema has influenced numerous facets of film studies. Its impact extends beyond the anticipated focus on migration, diasporic, and postcolonial cinemas, although these topics remain significant in scholarly discourse.

Only a limited number of studies have successfully illustrated how films affect the development of social roles and interactions within Third World societies. Furthermore, scant focus has been given to exploring how films can either reinforce or challenge prevailing power dynamics within and between nations, ethnic groups, or political factions. Additionally, a significant proportion of Third World films tend to imitate Western styles, as even well-meaning filmmakers often adopt Western aesthetics through overseas education or extensive exposure to Western cinema within their own countries.

While film production, promotion, and reception have long involved crossing national borders, the term "transnational cinema" has only gained prominence in recent times. The discussion around transnational and diasporic cinema has sparked lively debates in film studies, with some advocating for terms like "world" or "global" cinema, while others analyze the emerging phenomenon of "transnational" media through critical cultural and historical lenses.

However, since the introduction of transnational theory into film studies, it has remained a central conceptual framework for the discipline. Beyond exploring the impact of diaspora, migration, and their reflection in cinema, numerous scholars have extended this framework to analyze regional or national cinemas worldwide. Additionally, there's a growing interest in applying transnational perspectives to the study of film festivals, where global artistic expression converges with business interests. This intersection holds particular importance in understanding transnational aspects of production, exhibition, and distribution within the film industry.

In the inaugural edition of *Transnational Cinemas*, Will Higbee and Song Hwee Lim (2010) advocated for a concept they termed 'critical transnationalism,' contrasting it with the prevalent but often vague and undefined use of the term. They argued that in the realm of cinema, only such an approach could adequately encompass the diverse formations of transnational cinema and provide a framework for analyzing their structural dynamics (Higbee & Lim, 2010). It is crucial to understand that asserting the ascendancy of transnational cinema over the traditional national cinema model does not imply, nor rely upon, the disappearance of nation-states or national cultures. On the contrary, both have endured, thrived, and even expanded within the framework of the new transnational order.

Moreover, the terms diaspora and transnationalism, initially denoting distinct phenomena, now exhibit significant convergence. This convergence is substantiated by theories drawn from various sources, including case studies, to analyze the socio-cultural context influencing the themes of Bollywood movies. The focus lies on examining identity and representation within these films, particularly in relation to diasporic concerns and transnational elements. By scrutinizing the global dissemination of popular Indian cinema, this thesis aims to critique prevailing explanations rooted in ethnic and cultural factors concerning the spread of popular culture across borders, and to contribute to academia by examining transnational cinema through the lens of Indian popular movies. It seeks to explore how Indian

immigrants in the USA navigate a shifting sense of identity between themselves and others.

Also, the Indian diaspora as a community chosen for this study possesses a global outlook distinct from traditional international migration. Utilizing media, especially cinema, this diaspora has cultivated a stronger connection to their homeland and its culture through transnational Hindi films. However, enduring discrimination and entrenched stereotypes, rooted in the East versus West paradigm, persist among immigrants. Efforts are consistently undertaken to address these challenges and aspirations abroad. Hence, the influence of the transnational aspect in daily life significantly affects the shaping of identity and the integration of individuals with immigrant backgrounds. This thesis initially explores the origins and evolution of this concept. Additionally, it seeks to delve into the concept of 'diaspora' and its connection to transnationalism.

Notably, the notions of transnationalism and diaspora appear to fit this description. Since the 1990s, both have gained enormous popularity and are now used to describe far larger types of occurrences. As the empirical field has expanded, there has also been an increase in conceptual overlapping, making it more challenging to discern between diaspora and transnationalism (Bauböck, 2010,p.360). The majority of writers and filmmakers that deal with these concepts have firsthand knowledge of the struggles brought on by exile, migration, and living in numerous places under varying circumstances. The transnational Indian community concept serves as an example of interaction.

In this light, Diasporas are communities of people who have dispersed around the world from a common ancestry or homeland. Communities that traverse national lines to retain family, social, cultural, or economic ties are known as transnational communities. These groups are diverse in their identities, connections, and cultural abilities. Transnationalism, diaspora politics, methodological nationalism, hybrid identities, and the connection between globalization and migration are all topics covered in literature on this subject (Segal,2019,pp. 135-142). Diverse diaspora groups are being created in more places, and they are

involved in intricate interpersonal and intercultural interactions with both their host societies and their societies of origin. They actually experienced living in two places and manifesting dual consciousness, as opposed to being deterritorialized. They experience three flows that are collectively referred to as "transnational movements": the flow of individuals through transnational migrations; the flow of capital in our time of multinational capitalism; and the flow of information across great distances in the context of contemporary advancements in communication. This ongoing connection to the country shapes the collective identities of these expatriate populations. Similar-origin migrants and immigrants are dispersed and located in several diasporic locales, which allows them to communicate with one another, particularly through contemporary media, and move in a transnational and transactional arena that is centered on their own preoccupations and interests. Additionally, the two words are frequently used in the same sentence. In characterizing the circumstances that give rise to new types of migration, mobility, and mediatization, these two ideas frequently overlap with conceptions of globalization. In her paper, Lily Cho makes the following suggestion: "Diaspora must be distinguished from transnationalism, not only because the crossing of national lines does not always characterize diasporic subjectivity, but also because to be marked by loss" (Cho, 2007, p.9).

If it is correct in suggesting that 'transnational' lacks a clear meaning and is merely a trendy term, then there's no point in retaining it. We could instead use 'global' as a substitute, as they emerged concurrently during the rise of globalization discourse in the late 20th century. Since most genuinely transnational films free from Eurocentric influence are typically showcased in film festivals rather than mainstream screenings, they often struggle to reach Western audiences easily. The risk here lies in overlooking or dismissing the national aspect, as if it fades away, when in reality, national identity remains influential in transnational filmmaking.

Movie producers, directors, and academics quickly capitalized on the growing criticisms of the nation-state concept by promoting the notions of both national and transnational cinema. In essence, grasping the true essence of

General Introduction

transnational cinema necessitates an approach that acknowledges the conflicting values and mechanisms of global capitalism challenged by other influences within the very system it has significantly shaped.

Put simply, globalization entails the unrestricted exchange of information, technology, and goods between nations and individuals. This exchange encompasses a wide array of interactions, spanning business, geopolitics, technology, travel, culture, and media. Given the current level of global interconnectedness, many people may not perceive the constant presence of globalization in their daily lives. Despite its benefits in enhancing our lives, globalization also presents challenges, particularly as companies seek to extend their reach and operations across international borders. Over time, numerous groups of filmmakers have become closely associated with Indian cinema, whether produced domestically or in collaboration with the two largest film industries, both within and beyond India's borders.

Merely, the significance of cinema cannot be overstated, as it holds a crucial place in various realms including education, society, politics, and morality. Extensive analysis of film content reveals the concerted efforts of directors to prompt discussion on sensitive social issues and convey meaningful messages, particularly tailored for Indian audiences. Hence, Indian cinema stands out for its remarkable ability to spark societal change through impactful movies. Some films expedite the delivery of justice; others inspire individuals to combat social injustices, while some offer fresh perspectives that reshape viewers' lives. Representing the diverse linguistic fabric of the nation, Indian cinema transcends beyond Bollywood, yet it's undeniable that Bollywood holds significant national and global influence.

Effectively, the global dissemination of Bollywood culture and its enthusiastic reception by Western media and the extensive South Asian diaspora worldwide have bolstered investor confidence in the Bollywood film industry. Recent films that explore the South Asian diaspora highlight the importance of reconnecting with the Indian subcontinent, even if only through the lens of cinema,

to better express diasporic identity. What's noteworthy is the appeal not only of India's vast market for Bollywood films but also the unique masala genre itself.

Furthermore, Indian movie stars are being enlisted to promote international brands both domestically and internationally. While doing culture deliberately, we make an effort to consider the settings and circumstances that control our cultural actions and to consider the impacts they have. So, actively producing culture requires that we consider our attitude and place of departure. It includes a claim to influence the creation of social norms and values, to participate in determining what or who qualifies as significant or unimportant, as good or evil, and to alter the standards that support social and cultural relationships. At the level of cultural representation and its authoritative address, the articulation of cultural difference problematizes the divide between the past and present, tradition and modernity. Cultures are never monolithic in nature or just dualistic in regard to the self and the other.

Henceforth, this dissertation explores the foundational and theoretical underpinnings of globalization, culture, cinema, and diaspora through a qualitative examination. Drawing on the insights of prominent theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, and Arjun Appadurai, the study focuses on two internationally acclaimed Indian films that adapt diasporic literature. The first case study, *The Namesake* (2006), delves into the themes of diasporic and hybrid identities within a Bengali immigrant family in America, illuminating the generational conflicts over cultural identity. Symbolism, such as the transformative mirror, underscores the protagonist's evolution. Concurrently, the rise of the Indian diaspora in Western countries is paralleled with changes in Bollywood storytelling, a phenomenon explored further in the third chapter. The second case study centers on *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), igniting debates on Western representations of Indian culture through the journey of Jamal, a poverty-stricken teenager who ascends to wealth after winning in a TV show. Typically, it unfolds as a familiar, sentimental tale where a boy and a girl meet, face various challenges, but ultimately triumph to be united. This film's portrayal of Bollywood resonates deeply within Indian society

and its diaspora, reflecting broader discussions on cultural stereotypes and representation.

Significantly, the influence of global cultural currents has compelled Indian cinema to reassess its approach to cinematography, aiming to convey darker emotions. Additionally, the enduring allure of demassification persists despite increased exposure to international film cultures. Exploring these dynamics could have led to new perspectives, enriching the discourse further. This observation seemingly strengthens the authority of colonial canonical texts by affirming their ongoing relevance across transnational and transhistorical contexts. The remarkable expansion of India's local market is drawing a significant portion of the worldwide film industry to this media powerhouse. As a result, the United States, still the dominant player in the field, adjusts its production strategies to optimize earnings in this lucrative market. This adjustment primarily involves the collaboration of cinema professionals from both Hollywood and Bollywood, seeking to work together to capitalize on opportunities in both industries.

This viewpoint provides a significant chance to delve into these pieces concerning transnationalism, modernity, culture, and globalization. Filmmakers who have firsthand experience within diasporic communities like Nair offer the most authentic expression of Indian diasporic encounters, conveying a poignant narrative about the identity struggles faced by diasporic Indian citizens, torn between two conflicting worlds. Moreover, the careful selection of settings, attire, music, and character portrayals by Boyle has greatly transformed the allure of Bollywood, enabling it to penetrate Western markets and incorporate Western influences into its essence.

The interest of this research work that Nair and Boyle attempted to showcase on the cultural identity put on the Indian diaspora in one hand and the cultural stereotypes on the Indians as a whole in another hand through the analysis of the selected movies is centered on the following questions:

- ✓ How do Indians of South Asian descent migrate to and settle in the United States of America? How do the portrayals of the cultural identities and the cinematic representations of the Indian diaspora in Bollywood, a transnational film industry, both reflect and influence transnational communities in the USA?
- ✓ What is transnational cinema, and how does Bollywood contribute to bolstering the cultural identity and hybrid global presence of the Indian diaspora?
- ✓ What popular Hindi films are reflecting the current trends in international distribution, exhibition, and reception? And what cultural preconceptions were applied to the Indians who were shown on screen through a Western perspective?
- ✓ Has Bollywood been successfully portrayed as a transnational film by diasporic and transnational filmmakers?

Similarly, this thesis focuses not only on defining diasporic or transnational elements, but also on how filmmakers explore these aspects in their examination of "*The Namesake*" and "*Slumdog Millionaire*," showcasing the collaboration between Bollywood and Hollywood, or more precisely, the intersection of Eastern and Western cultures. This study aims to contribute to academia by examining transnational cinema through the lens of Indian popular movies. It seeks to explore how Indian immigrants in the USA navigate a shifting sense of identity between themselves and others. It examines the chosen films of the filmmakers under investigation, evaluating their socio-cultural and economic impacts on both the diasporic population abroad and the local communities.

Chapter one will center on key concepts from postcolonial theories to worldwide explorations of culture. It will delve into the understanding of identity within a diasporic setting, thematic considerations regarding Indian migrants and their cultural experiences abroad, as well as reflections on transnationalism, globalization, and the stereotypical depictions of these communities. These discussions aim to lay the groundwork for a cultural inquiry that will extend into

subsequent chapters, particularly focusing on the selected case studies for this research.

Chapter two will explore various platforms where the visual culture of Bollywood operates and how it extends beyond the cinema screen to integrate into daily life in both India and its diaspora in the US. Additionally, it will analyze the reciprocal influence between Hollywood and Bollywood, examining how cultural exchanges are reshaping global film production and consumption. This chapter aims to shift the Western perception of Indian cinema from mere spectacle to a complex and impactful cultural phenomenon, challenging stereotypes of Bollywood as simply colorful, loud, and shallow entertainment. Hence, this chapter underscores numerous research endeavors exploring the idea of transnational cinema, suggesting that it's overly broad and insufficient for understanding the nuanced portrayals of migration, diaspora, and globalization in film.

Chapter three will focus on examining the film *The Namesake* (2006) by Mira Nair, exploring the challenges of transnational identities faced by Indian Americans. It will delve into the tension between one's sense of self and the influence of external forces, such as societal expectations and cultural norms. Through the characters' experiences, the chapter will explore the struggle to maintain their cultural identity while navigating the complexities of assimilation. This will involve an analysis of how names, practices, traditions, beliefs, and the dynamics of assimilation play a role in shaping their experiences as a cohesive yet diverse group.

Chapter four dominates the conversation by tackling entrenched hegemonic, racist, and orientalist tropes found in mainstream media narratives about the dichotomy between self and other, and between East and West. This examination is exemplified through the cinematic collaboration of two major film industries in Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), which operates under the banner of transnationality. The film endeavors to unravel the Western viewpoint of India as a third-world nation within a global context, exploring the cultural stereotypes

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imposed on its people. Additionally, it investigates the response of the Indian diaspora to this portrayal abroad.

At the conclusion, all facets of the study will undergo comprehensive scrutiny to ascertain whether Bollywood has effectively integrated into the global landscape of filmmaking as a transnational film industry.

CHAPTER ONE

Contextualizing the Indian Diaspora's

Cultural Identity in USA and the Challenge of Facing Stereotypes

Chapter One: Contextualizing the Indian Diaspora's Cultural Identity in USA and the Challenge of Facing Stereotypes

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Chapter One: Contextualizing the Indian Diaspora's Cultural Identity in USA and the Challenge of Facing Stereotypes

1.1. Introduction

Diaspora, identity, culture, transnationalism, globalization, and many other significant concepts will be defined and analyzed in the context of renowned theorists and researchers, such as those included in chapter one of this study namely Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, William Safran, Vijay Mishra and Arjun Appadurai..etc, who eagerly adopted its concepts and recognized the related theories by adding their basic contributions. In this regard, the current chapter will look at how the corpus of notions depicts diasporic identities, with an emphasis on the formation and affiliation of Indian diasporic identity in the USA.

Currently, concepts of intercultural heterogeneity, transnationalism, multiplicity and pluralities, and ethnic diversities are the driving forces behind critical discourses about the diaspora, and once more it recognizes Asian Indians as an example of diasporic communities that are not only set in cross-cultural, but also transnational, transborder, and trans-ethnic networks, in which forms and politics of membership and belonging are re-conceived and attachments to home are multiply recast. By Contextualizing diaspora within this multi-paradigmatic frame, a productive methodology for repositioning Indian diasporic communities in the United States within postcolonial, global, and transnational terrains, in addition to various interconnecting nodes of identity formation that should be taken into consideration, that gives an interesting and debatable work which focuses on discussing the immigrants' status of cultural hybridity in the diaspora and probe the subalternity and politics of otherness regarding representation and identity reformation. This is done to demonstrate how interdisciplinary concepts in sociology, and anthropology and cultural studies are used.

1.2. Theorizing Diaspora

Due to the changes that have taken place over time, the term "diaspora" has no clear definition. The Greek term "diaspeiro," which meaning "to scatter around," is the source of the English word "diaspora." It is a condition in which a diasporic is living outside of their country of origin in a foreign country. Since the beginning of

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the 1950s and 1960s, it has grown in prominence and is frequently used in conjunction with words like migration, exile, transnational, etc., and throughout the next decades, the term's usage expanded even more. According to Phil Cohen (1998), who believes that diaspora is one of the buzzwords of the postmodern era, scholars have made an effort to distinguish between all such phrases. It has the advantage of sounding foreign while speaking English sibilantly. It whispers the promise of secret depths of meaning while assimilating them to the shape of a wave breaking gently on native shores (p.3). The concept "diaspora," which simply refers to forced or voluntary migration from one country to another, encompasses all three of the categories described above, and all people of the diaspora, whether they are expatriates or immigrants, have the experience of having numerous identities and cultures. Because each diaspora has its own unique history and context, it differs from the others in terms of how it came and settled and how it integrated into the cultural norms of class, gender, race, and sexuality, among others, in the place and time it was located.

Historically speaking , the term's origins may be found in the forced exile of Jews in Babylonia among the Gentile countries and their dispersion and expulsion outside of Israel, as well as the razing of Jerusalem and its Temple ,therefore, the phrase connoted a sense of loss. The Greek colonization of the Mediterranean region, which stretched from the coasts of modern-day Turkey and the Crimea to the Strait of Gibraltar has also shared this view. These diasporic movements brought about by colonialism eventually contributed to the development of numerous locations, including South Africa, Asia, and America, in one way or another via the process of assimilation or integration. This development was evident in such areas as business, industry, agriculture, and culture. The Assyrian Diaspora, which began during and after the Arab conquest of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran, and continued after the Assyrian Genocide, the Italian and Mexican Diasporas, the southern Chinese and Indians, are a few significant Diasporas. All of these examples are a substantial number who went through difficult times and felt the turbulence of this experience.

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Diaspora movements really gave rise to a lot of concerns regarding national identities, customs, cultures, colonialism, etc., and the film industry was no exception, even diaspora studies, an academic discipline, has emerged in relation to this use of the word. Particularly, the term "diaspora" now refers to the forcible massive dispersion of a population from its native land, and according to Walker Connor (1986) this term is a segment of people living outside the homeland and share various attributes and adds:

- (i) they or their forefathers have been scattered from their origin place to two or more foreign region, (ii) they maintain shared reminiscence and myth about native land, (iii) they feel and think that the host society will never accept them completely and feel alienated, (iv) they consider their ancestral land to be their real home and keep a desire that they would ultimately return to it and (v) they feel that they should be loyal in maintaining their original homeland and to its security and prosperity (pp.83-84).

Currently, the term is used to describe any group of people who have been scattered or dispersed outside of their place of origin and who have a distinct collective memory and a myth of return. This function, which is frequently religious in nature, preserves the historical events that led to the spread or dispersal as well as the homeland's cultural legacy. In essence, as per Hall (2015), "diaspora identities are those which are continually constructing and repeating themselves a new via metamorphosis and difference " (p. 235). Both of these experiences, which have their roots in Western culture, have served as the basis for stereotypes about diasporas. Moreover, Clifford (1998) asserts that "diasporas define themselves against the norms of the nation-state and indigenous, notably autochthonous claims by tribal peoples... that is to say, diasporic affiliations transverse the nation-state " (p. 249). Despite the initial definitions , the majority of scholars who have studied it appear to concur the fact of the phrase that has come to refer to a wide range of people who have been forced to establish new territories after being uprooted from their original territories yet still have a real or perceived tie to them. Diasporas, according to him, "are able, in part, to transverse nation-states because they are

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deployed in 'alternative public spheres,' forms of community, awareness, and solidarity that preserve identifications outside the national time-space in order to live inside, with a difference" (Clifford, 1998, p. 251).

In the world of academia, typically, these diasporic trends have given rise to a variety of hypotheses about identity, customs, cultural foundations, etc., leading numerous researchers to construct a number of typologies. Many writers also have recently embraced the idea of a "diasporic identity" as a positive affirmation of their hybridity (Ashcroft et al, 2013, p.62). Homeliness, exile, inferiority, dislocation, and other words all come from written works such as articles or novels that are either written in a second language other than the author's mother tongue or that are written by authors who have migrated across international borders and have been influenced by different cultures. According to some calculations, diasporas can be categorized as victim, imperial/colonial, commerce, or labor diasporas depending on the primary driving forces behind the first movement, which are, respectively, expulsion, expansion, commercial endeavors, or the search of work. Durable expatriate communities have emerged all over the world, as seen by a global map illustrating the effects of migration, where they are united by a shared history and a sense of collective identity that is more rooted in shared sociocultural experiences than in a particular geographic origin. Around 10% of the population was thought to be in a diasporic condition at the beginning of the twenty-first century, which led to the growth of migrant and expatriate groups in many of the host nations. In general, host nations have aided diasporas and their organizations.

Additionally, collaboration amongst diasporic communities opens doors for the receiving nations overseas. Many people nowadays assert that they are diasporic, belong to a minority, or are descended from a different ethnic group than the majority. They place a positive value on this, seeing it as enhancing their identity rather than degrading it. They also see it as a way to keep in touch with the cultural, cognitive, and symbolic aspects of far-off locations. On the other hand, xenophobia and a refusal to welcome foreigners have not vanished and might resurface at times of crisis. Furthermore, as migrants transition from the position of

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being a "majority" at home to that of being a "minority" or "diaspora" in another country, they encounter dramatic changes in their conceptual social orientation, leading to emotions of displacement, alienation, and in-betweens that they must deal with. The concept of a diaspora is therefore not new, and diaspora populations have existed ever since there have been instances of international movement.

In order to provide a conceptual framework to understand intercultural and transcultural processes and forms, contemporary cultural theorists and critics like Edward Said, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, and Vijay Mishra readily recognized the word as a model. By advancing the concept of "travel" as a paradigm that widens the image of cultures as displaced or migratory while simultaneously hinting that cultures maintain linkages to a place of origin, Clifford (1994) also went further and challenges ideas of diaspora that tend to "localize" cultures. Travel is, then, more than just a metaphor; it is also a diasporic stance and practice that suggests the changing nature of communities (pp .302-338). Since the study of diaspora and the definition of the term itself were relatively simple not too long ago, the location of diaspora in this wider "cover" subject is for many historians of diaspora a recent theoretical challenge. It turns out that the term "diaspora" is quite culture-specific.

Other characteristics that may be common of many diasporas include aspirations of returning home, maintaining links with other diasporic communities, and a lack of complete assimilation into the host nations especially from the ones who experienced irredentist or separatist movements. To counter this trend, William Safran (1991) outlined six principles to identify diasporas from migrant groups, which are worth mentioning. These requirements included upholding a myth or collective memory of their homeland, believing it to be their true home, to which they will one day return, being dedicated to the preservation or restoration of that homeland, and having a "personal or vicariously" close connection to the homeland to the extent that it influences their identity (pp. 83-99). As long as they keep some connection to their parents' native country, notions of "diasporas" also include first-generation immigrants' foreign-born offspring. These connections, whether linguistic, historical, religious, or emotional, set expatriate populations apart from

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other communities. So, the idea of diaspora is nothing more than the idea of dislocation and the maintenance of contacts with a real or imagined homeland. No country, developed or developing, can deny the impact of diaspora on the world.

Ordinarily, diasporic communities share the following traits: they hold on to a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland, including its location, history, and accomplishments; their ancestral home is idealized and it is believed that, when circumstances are favorable, either they or their descendants should return; they have expanded from their home country in search of work, in pursuit of a trade, or to further colonial ambitions; and they also have troubled relationships. The diaspora establishes their identity, impact, and hybrid culture in the host countries. It has been praised for the way the concept expresses ideas like hybridity, heterogeneity, identity, fragmentation and (re)construction, double consciousness, memory shatters, ambivalence, roots and pathways, divergent cosmopolitanism, multi-locationality, and more (Bauman,1994, p.324). It has become an increasingly trendy concept given the constant migration of people across nations, regions, and continents for a number of reasons, including economic, political, social, and cultural factors a considerable recognition from many researchers who have shown a keen interest in the diaspora's research scope, including the distinctions between the old and new diasporas and the contents of each.

1.2.1. Diasporic Identities

Holding the aforementioned concerns, the challenging theories of diaspora fused the ideal-type of the "nation," or more specifically, the congruence of nation and state, that has been brought into question as a result of this phenomenon, and most societies are becoming multiethnic, multicultural, multiracial, and pluralistic. Previously, minority communities were categorized as either refugees, immigrants, expatriates, asylum seekers, or guest laborers. It is well known that when highly educated or competent people leave in large numbers, it can cause issues for the country of origin. However, in most cases, the sustained participation of diaspora

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groups in their native nations can offer a solution to the brain drain that has been occurring since the late 1990s as a result of the beneficial benefits of emigration.

Diaspora individuals may contribute directly or indirectly to development in their own nations. The term "diaspora" should not be restricted to ethnic groups whose members have left their home countries on their own freewill or who have been forcibly expelled from them, and whose expatriation is marked by collective traumas such as famine, political persecution, or ethnic cleansing; it may also be applied to groups who have left on their own will for the purpose of economic advancement, political ambition, or adventure. There may be a reverse cultural relationship since the diaspora's concern for the fate of the homeland has been one of the primary expressions of such co-responsibility. For example, the exiled Iranians in the United States have been denouncing Islamic fundamentalism and promoting women's rights in their homeland, and the "Association of Tamils of Sri Lanka in the United States" has been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland; and the Tamil diaspora in Canada. Additionally, by maintaining their dual citizenship, Afghan expatriates in the United States have showed their pleasure in contributing to the development of a modern, democratic Afghanistan and their affiliation with their native country (Safran,2007).

What is more, their immigrant populations in contemporary Western democracies are likely to resent and resist efforts by those countries to export unwelcome ideas, such as democracy, gender equality, non-ascriptive elite recruitment, and the supremacy of civil over religious law, these are some problems that they must also deal with. All diasporics share the experience of having various identities and cultures. Where these communities frequently keep "national" values better than the homeland because they are not influenced by the ideologies of an authoritarian homeland administration. As a result, diaspora communities may act as cultural "reserve" areas. There is general consensus that having a diaspora status entails interacting with one's native country.

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Additionally, it is not always obvious which country is the hostland and which is the homeland, along with the actual location of the homeland. In his "solar system" metaphor, Michael Bruneau compared the nation to the sun and the many diasporas to the stars that have created an expanding constellation around it (Safran,2007). In this time of globalization and expanding supra-nationalism, many successful business and professional elites willingly departed their home countries with their families for economic reasons, contributing to the formation of "bourgeois" expatriate communities, according to some thinkers. For example, thousands of Americans, notably executives from multinational firms, have relocated to France and other European nations for work-related reasons. They frequently enroll their children in American schools, keep up their English, and have every intention of returning to the United States when their tour of service is over. They could have dual citizenship as well as perfect fluency. They may feel equally at home in both the United States and a country in Western Europe, but they frequently have transnational identities. In any regard, for a number of reasons, diaspora identities based mostly on other factors: racial difference, religious prohibitions, identity confusion, and the memory of previous persecutions, have frequently been unable to be overcome by economic concerns.

Besides , the relationship of an identity to a culture or cultures with various ethnic origins is known as identity formation. It is crucial to look at Stuart Hall's understanding of cultural identity in diasporic settings. The presence of immigrants from Third World nations cannot be excluded from the modern picture of American society and culture, according to Hall's "Ethnicity, Identity and Difference". In this regard, the critic declares a position of limbo that references Bhabha's 'Third Space' once more. These immigrants, according to him, "inhabit a liminal or marginal terrain in contesting both the cultural common heritage of the original nation as opposed to established limits of marginalizing Third World cultures" (Hall,1996,p.18). What we learn from Stuart Hall's account of the in-betweenness of immigrant cultures in the diaspora aids in the development of a fresh perspective on

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borders and identity and encourages us to break away from assimilation or Western expectations.

Again, the term "diaspora studies" refers to the feelings of nostalgia, cultural void, psychological suffering, loss, and the agony of responsibility to uphold national traditions as a social duty in order to settle and adapt to the new life and build a new identity experienced by immigrants. It is necessary to reconfigure the identity that was formerly a part of the original origin in relation to the new space. A new identity made up of two or more parts emerges as a result of the process of adjusting oneself to the host country. According to Hall (1996), the past and present are significant in the process of subject creation in the host nation because they are inextricably linked to the current situation and alter the idea of the subject's "old" identity. Issues of new subjectivities are brought to the discussion of globalization, multiculturalism, transculturality, and identity creation in the context of national and cultural barriers in the ever-evolving transnational present world. The argument for the universality of identities within the framework of globalization is based on "the transitory paradigm of the ethnic towards a hybrid transnational identity in multicultural Western cultures"(Hall ,1996,p.85).

James Clifford (1998) claims that after this procedure, "although there is a spectrum of acceptance and estrangement associated with ethnic and social variances, the bulk of these new entrants are held in subservient places by existing institutions of racial exclusion". The critic contends that the diasporic subject constantly engages with the notion of empowerment or turning toward it. In this instance, Clifford highlights how diasporic subjects are "leaning back upon those markers of self -homeland, memory, loss even as they turn on or away from them" (pp.43-45). Because the subject participates in a transnational network, Clifford continues to see diaspora as a movement that promotes the homeland and host country as complimentary. Because the subject participates in a transnational network in which the homeland is not a left behind entity but an essential element of the process of identity re-fashioning, Clifford still sees diaspora as a constructive movement that presents the homeland and host land as complimentary.

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Another point that needs focus is perceptual differences that determine diasporic identity may be a generational matter. Except for those who have personally experienced discrimination or who feel like they have no roots, the majority of immigrants' descendants have not been taught much, if anything, about their native culture, the issues in the Old Country, or the complexes of their ancestors who have left it. They are also not burdened with the diasporic baggage. On the other hand, if they come into touch with well-assimilated co-ethnics who had immigrated several generations before, the diaspora identity of new immigrants may not develop.

The tangible departure and migration from one country to another, as well as the struggle to settle down in a new location, are some of the major experiences of first generation migrants, whereas subsequent generations; second generations in particular do not have these experiences and do not, therefore, consider themselves to be immigrants or members of the diaspora. Thus, the diasporic community sees both the positive and negative aspects of the host country. The outside world perceives them as migrants or foreigners despite the fact that they were born and grown up in the host country, and have never experienced migration, and many of them seldom travel to the country where their parents were born, this is because of their ethnic origins. Although immigrants experience challenges with their identity and cultural conflict, racial prejudice has a greater impact on them.

More specifically, the second generation that is born and raised in the new country finds an atmosphere that is conducive to absorbing the way of life and culture of the host nation. As the diasporic population is multicultural and multilingual, making it difficult for them to fully identify with any one culture, but at the same time, they feel as though they belong to neither due to their experience of being torn between two worlds. The sensation of alienation and identity uncertainty develops mostly owing to a diasporic's position as being displaced. Dislocation and loss are the two emotions that trouble diasporic people the most as well. Besides nostalgia, which conjures up a false image of the original place. The diasporic unknowingly lives with pompous conceptions of comforts and safety that

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perpetually keep him or her away from reality by seeking refuge in the illusionary world. The host culture's efforts to maintain its autonomy serve as the foundation for cultural prejudice in the host country. Bhikhu Parekh(2007) also presents a similar view that any community or culture will never show complete equality to other minority cultures (p.411). This made the host country convinces the host society to build a wall to separate its culture from other alien cultures because it sees the alien practices of various migrants as a threat to its own culture. The diasporic people frequently believe that being in an established area provides them opportunity, liberty, and dignity. Despite the geographical and social boundaries that separate different subpopulations, in some cases groups still have a strong sense of collective identity, while in other cases the identification threads have severely weakened.

On the other hand , Robin Cohen (1997), posits that “diasporas are positioned somewhere between nation-states and travelling cultures,” meaning that although they are physically situated within the borders of a nation-state, they are simultaneously located outside its boundaries through their symbolic relationship with the homeland or their past (p.135) .Cohen’s reference further implies the voluntary movement of cultures, which is a feature not traditionally ascribed to diasporic cultures besides other intertwined mechanisms. For Lavie and Swedenburg (1996), they went a step further and suggested the idea of a third time space, where minorities disrupt categories of race, gender, sexuality, class, nation, and empire both in the mainstream and on the periphery. The third time-space transcends the previous cultural model without creating a new fixity. However, even if the third time-space refers to phenomena that are too varied, mobile, and discontinuous for fixity, it is still rooted in the politics of history and place (p. 14). With this, diasporic identity is meant to shift from ideas of identity as essence to views of identity as conjuncture.

Furthermore, due to its close connection to a single fixed area, diaspora identity has been viewed as being continuous and unchangeable. In other words, they have a hybrid stance where classifications are blurred and where there is a gap

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between positions of identified subjects. Nevertheless, more than in the past, political and socioeconomic integration may be dissociated from cultural and relational assimilation. In the present significance, when the individuals of diaspora face willful removing from their own territory, they may reserve the option to return to their country in the event that they need. Their presence frequently undermines conventional ideas of national identity and national sovereignty since their failure to fully integrate into the society of their host country is so blatant. Thus, the dilemma around identity is one of the major issues that a diasporic population faces. As a result, one of the most prevalent topics in this set is identification, and the pursuit of one's own identity is frequently presented as frustrating and occasionally fruitful. The diasporic community's second and subsequent generations typically exhibit a dual identity. Even if the diasporic community's second and later generations regard their birth nation to be their home country, society still views them as foreigners, which forces them to maintain a hyphenated identity.

The basic premise of a diasporic attachment to an imagined homeland is complicated by an extension of the criteria that create and usher in diasporic collectivities. However, in the contemporary postmodern and transcultural global arena, diasporas are produced as a result of both choice and force. In order to remap and rearticulate identities that shift between and across two or more locales, diaspora nowadays offers a bigger field for inquiry and a wider critical perspective. Modern diasporas, in contrast, are more readily sustained numerous ties to the homeland and spread over different geographic regions, reflect multilingualism, and show divided allegiances. The focus of the diasporic subject is what Mariam Pirbhai (2009) refers to as a "multiply positioned identity," which is no longer grounded in a single national realm but rather in several diasporic enclaves that make up a wider transnational arena (p.16). The term "diaspora" has come to refer to "basically any and every namable population category that is to some extent dispersed in space," according to Rogers Brubaker (2005), who also worries about the "dispersion of the meanings of the term" . If everyone is diasporic, then no one is particularly so (pp.1-

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3). In addition to serving as transnationalism's emblems, diasporic collectivities also represent the actual issue of boundaries.

Diaspora identity is presently being re-conceived as a continually developing, dynamic process due to the ongoing re-organization and repositioning of so many distinct migrant groups on a worldwide scale. Using Khachig Tölölyan's perspective, which continues to stress the significance of place in connection to diasporic identity (1996):

Diasporists who have been influenced by globalizing rhetoric see actual weakening of the connection between a people and a defined area, diagnose it as inevitable, and rapidly praise its contribution to a diverse, multicultural, hybrid society that they find acceptable. In order to avoid the accusation that we are either copying debunked national rhetoric about the connection between land, people, and culture or that we are still naive about the global spaces that have opened up in the past, diasporists like myself who want to argue that attachment to place was essential to diasporic life and thought until very recently and that despite its erosion, it remains important today must tread carefully (pp.138-9).

When the established community recognizes a certain migrant group's identity, they bully the national identity of the migrants.

It is only because of their ethnic identification and cultural background that immigrants can endure mistreatment or bad luck without losing their spirits. Intergenerational conflict in the diaspora is brought on by generational differences and made worse by cultural inconsistencies as well. There is undoubtedly a generation difference between the first and second generation members because they were both born and reared in utterly different nations with very different cultural contexts. They can negotiate the cultural and identity problems they experience, and this negotiation might result in the development of new family values (Pieterse, 2019). The issues can be resolved if the immigrant population demonstrates a willingness to compromise and is able to assimilate in an established area.

1.2.2. Transnational Immigrants

Some scholars define ethno-national diasporas to specifically set them apart from transnational networks that have generally grown as a result of globalization. The term "diaspora" has significant sociopolitical, national, economic, technical, and cultural currency in today's globalized world, the thing that Khachig Tölölyan, the editor-in-chief of *Diaspora* journal, claimed in 1991 that diasporas are "the exemplary communities of the global time." (p.4). This moment had the prospect of upending the nation-homogenizing, state's absorbing authority. So, diasporas can never be exclusively nationalist, their existence is inherently transnational. In fact, it is important to take stock of the ways in which diasporas are deployed in transnational networks and cultural forms and connect dispersed groups in remote locales, but desire to return with a difference, and the ability to recreate cultural practices in diverse locations, are not mutually exclusive. The processes of identity reconstruction, transnational cultural ties, and the modernization of migrants' worldviews are some of the topics that are presently the subject of extensive academic discussions on global population movements and transnational migration.

To promote a reconsideration of the interaction between people and their imagined communities of both their home country and new recipient nation, theorizing identity should now take place in and through diasporic communities. As a result of globalization's propensity to exacerbate the economic exploitation of the unskilled, the poor, and the oppressed, many immigrant populations fall under these categories, which might speed up diasporization. An important characteristic that diasporas throughout the world all have is the yearning to go back to one's roots. This shows a bond they have with their own nation, its people, and their culture. There are several ways that this desire could manifest. In other words, cultural distinctions between home and host nations become less obvious as a result of globalization, which homogenizes all cultures.

Furthermore, the way people view immigration is significantly impacted by transnationalism. Immigration has always been viewed as an independent process, driven by factors such as poverty and population growth in the country of origin and

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unconnected to circumstances in the country of destination (Lima,2010,p.17). Thus, immigration is only a vital component of the process of market penetration, capitalist expansion, and globalization. In transnational migration, persons literally live their lives across international borders (Schiller, 1999, p.96). Diasporas, also known as expatriates or transnational groups, are crucial for maximizing the positive effects of migration on development. Many diaspora communities who are unevenly progressing toward integration and not in a condition of exclusion, temporary residency, or deterritorialization may be able to manage "dual territorialization" or "dual location," which includes both their host cultures and societies of origin. There are two types of lateral networks: one focuses on preserving, enhancing, and growing ties with immigrant communities of origin (also known as "home communities"); the other depicts networking that cuts across national and state boundaries for both immigration and resettlement. One refers to this type of networking as the transnational global network. Similar-origin migrants and immigrants are dispersed and located in several diasporic locales, which allows them to communicate with one another, particularly through contemporary media, and move in a transnational /transactional arena that is centered on their own preoccupations and interests. They typically have distant nationalistic or patriotic longings and sentiments and may financially support home issues.

Significantly, the development of the diasporic identity through the federation of organized groups exploded in the early 1980s. Those who had already immigrated to other countries and other Indian groups were contacted. The National Federation of Indians in America (NFIA) was already operating as a national organization, namely in the United States of America. Another organization was established in the US called GOPIO (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin). In 1989, when it held its first international convention in New York, it turned into a forum for Indians who were residing abroad, and many Indian organizations, whether local or national, have brought together the Indian communities. The associations' events, which include cultural performances, feast celebrations, and educational talks about India, have assisted the Indian community

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in preserving both their internal and external sense of Indian diasporic identity. For the second and third generations of Indians, the idea of "home" has grown confusing. The Indian populations in both nations have used their ethnicity to both build their sense of national identification and to petition their governments on a regular basis for assistance in preserving their identity and cultural heritage.

Certain facts are made evident by taking into account the American Indian Diaspora. The emergence of diasporic identities and settlement patterns have remarkable similarities. Gujaratis, for example, are successful not just in commerce, which is their first love, but also in professional disciplines like technology, science, medicine, and business management today as one of the main Indian diasporic communities in the globe. Most of them are foreign immigrants who may become citizens of the nations where they are going and who frequently converge in diasporic groups. In the past, immigrants from the Indian subcontinent established colonies as far afield as those of the British, French, and Dutch. Wherever they arrived, they established "little India." These days, they have developed wide-ranging networks with members of their community across the world, especially in India, the motherland—familial, economic, and political networks. Nearly 20 million individuals of Indian descent have diasporas in 70 different countries. In Malaysia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda, the UK, the USA, and Canada, they make up smaller minority (Bhat, 2003, pp.141-167). Overseas Indian communities in the United States and likely in Britain are less concerned with their roots in a particular territory in India and with an eventual return to their homeland than they are with recreating the religious and cultural foundations of their lives in their new locations through negotiations with the locals. Diaspora communities of different origins, backgrounds, and orientations will inevitably vary in their accommodative and innovative responses.

From a transnational perspective, diaspora raise the issues of immigrant marginalization, acculturation, and assimilation. It also highlights the difficulties faced by immigrants as they struggle to forge a new migrant identity in light of racism, ethnic politics, and social and cultural differences that are marked by

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dislocation which is most notable when it comes to a new hyphenated identity like the "Indian-American."

Instead, more and more people in the 21st century will simultaneously be members of two or more communities. Many academics refer to this as transnational migration. Rather than live in a single nation-state, transnational migrants work, pray, and express their political views in a variety of settings. Consider Shrewsbury, a posh neighborhood of Boston with well-kept lawns and pricey homes. It appears to be just another prosperous American neighborhood. A twist is revealed by the mailboxes at the end of those lengthy driveways, which are virtually all marked "Patel" or "Bhagat." Without neglecting the other Indian populations, immigrants from Gujarat State in India have relocated from villages and small towns in western India during the past 20 years, first to rental apartment buildings in northeastern Massachusetts, then to their own houses in subdivisions outside of Boston and to improve religious life in their country of origin as well as to create a worldwide Hindu community that crosses geographical boundaries (Levitt, 2004, para.2). Some spectators could draw the conclusion that another immigration wave has successfully enrolled in the American dream.

Additionally, neither all migrants engage in transnational behaviors consistently, nor are all migrants transnational migrants. Only five to ten percent of the Dominican, Salvadoran, and Colombian migrants studied in the U.S. routinely participated in transnational economic and political activities; even sporadic engagement is not common, according to studies by sociologist Alejandro Portes and his colleagues (Levitt, 2004,para.6). The experiences of Gujaratis and people who are similar to them in the U.S., however, indicate that international migration is not a long-term danger to assimilation and does not diminish migrants' capacity to contribute to and be loyal to their host country. Even those who have rarely ventured out of their hometowns embrace ideals and views from abroad and join international organizations. A social field viewpoint also highlights the distinction between belonging to a social field and participating in it. For instance, a person may vote, invest, or join to a religious group that is connected to their place of

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origin, but they may not even recognize themselves as members of a transnational group.

Thirdly, a social field view highlights not only the numerous sites of transnational social fields but also their several levels. A study of the religious experiences of Brazilian immigrants in Boston, for instance, would map the relationships between local congregations in Boston and Brazil and their linkages to the national denominations active in both contexts. Incorporation into a new state and strong transnational ties are not binary opposites, it becomes obvious when migrants are positioned within transnational social domains. The migratory experience is better understood as a type of gauge that, although rooted, pivots between a new country and a global perspective. As a result, the one anticipates a mix of the two rather than complete absorption or full international connection as the end result, as the topic of a transnational approach to migration is still debatable. Children of Mexican immigrants, for example, who visit their homeland and then return with a deeper understanding of what it means to be Mexican in New York, are engaging in transnational social field participation. Here, some opponents would argue that if immigrants live in the United States, their earnings, talents, and charitable contributions ought to stay there as well. In fact, balancing the rights and obligations of international migrants is not a simple task. Finding the best ways to safeguard and represent people who straddle two cultures is a difficulty. It is also difficult to simply comprehend how people and organizations really interact across cultural boundaries, much alone the advantages and disadvantages of doing so.

1.3. A Glance on Migration

First and foremost, Migration is a phenomenon that has existed for thousands of years and is still happening now all over the world. It is a crucial component of worldwide social change. People used to move about in ancient times in search of food, home, and protection from persecutors. People now often relocate in quest of better job prospects and a higher standard of living. Regardless of nationality or ethnicity, whether it is Jewish, Irish, Italian, Polish, British, German, Chinese, or

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Indian, this cultural movement has been a constant thread throughout history. Policy goals influence migration potential, migration patterns, and the effects of migration on both the nations of origin and destination. Many of the earliest attempts to answer the most fundamental question of why people migrate involved scholars identifying push and pull factors like a lack of economic opportunities, political or religious persecution, natural disasters, the reunification of families, better living and working conditions, and so on. However, a collection of such push-pull forces is insufficient to offer a thorough theory of migration that is useful in understanding its varied manifestations across time (Portes,1978,pp.1-48). Depending on these variables, the process of reconstructing one's identity may result in some beneficial techniques as well as those that have disastrous consequences.

Migration, emigration, and immigration are often regarded as synonyms for the action of "moving from one nation to another." These phrases, however, are distinct and have different meanings. Migration is defined in The Concise Oxford Dictionary(1977) as "movements from one location to another," or from one nation to another (cited in Gautam,2013,p.690), whereas immigration is defined as "coming as a permanent resident into a foreign country". Emigration is "leaving one nation to dwell in another," according to the dictionary (cited in Gautam, 2013,p.338). In the social sciences, "migration has always been one viable technique for coping with internal and external challenges in communities which are encased in bigger and social units (Kasdan,1970,p.1). There is always a lure to travel to the immigrant nations since they are renowned for their welfare and social systems. There are several possible causes for the migration impulse. As the bearer of cultural baggage, the individual carries it into new cultural contexts where he sorts through his experiences and adjusts to himself in a foreign land. Politically speaking, the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of the Rights*, article 27, states that individuals should be treated equally, regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, or way of life, natural or social origin; ownership, birth, and position. This was done in 1948 to safeguard migrants. This Declaration was ratified by every nation. Each of the founding members did so and permitted

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immigration. In the 1960s, visas were not necessary for immigration to the European nations. However, when the migrant population grew, European governments, for example, discussed the problem and limited immigration. Because of public opinion and the media, which also contributed to the negative portrayal of immigrants based on racism and prejudice. However, immigrants experienced prejudice, which in certain nations aided in the exclusion of racial and ethnic minorities.

Factually, groups of migrants are referred to as "minorities," "cultural minorities," and "ethnic minorities" in their host nations and are seen as a component of "pluralism," "culture-pluralism," and "multiculturalism". The idea of "Pluralism" is the basis for the idea of a multi-cultural society. In terms of culture, it consists of groups that are institutionally different and do not share the same fundamental principles and way of life; in terms of economic interaction, these distinct social entities primarily engage in buying and selling types of relationships in the marketplace; and in terms of politics, these different but economically interdependent segments are held together by a superior authority, namely the colonial rulers (Furnivall cited in Gautam, 2013). The meeting sites, or contact centers, may be found at markets, trade centers, plantation estates, towns, play areas, religious and festive locations, police bureaus, and government taxation agencies (Gluckman cited in Gautam ,2013). An ethnic group may readily be connected to comparable groups in other nations as ethnicity is not restricted to national borders. This fosters a sense of community, reflecting the "Indianness" for instance that all Indian groups share and forming a transnationally affine Indian Diaspora. A psychological sense that may be expressed in phrases like "They are like us and belong to the same nation from which I came" arises (Tiwari, 2020, pp. 98-102). So, the multicultural has transformed into a "floating signifier" whose mystery resides less in its own usage as a marker for social processes where difference and condensation appear to occur practically simultaneously in discourse.

Furthermore, there is a significant distinction between migration and diaspora; migration refers to the movement of people from one location to another

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in pursuit of settling, whereas diaspora refers to a group of people who have a similar heritage and are dispersed around the world. In addition, persons in diaspora keep a deep connection to their roots, culture, and country, but this connection is absent in migration. In contrast to migrants, diasporic individuals are aware of their origins, cultures, and traditions. It goes without saying that migration creates diaspora, and in the modern world, migration has given the term diaspora a variety of meanings. However, it becomes challenging to distinguish between a migration and a diaspora, or between a minority and a diaspora, once the term is used to describe other religious or ethnic groups. For instance, when addressing the presence of even recent descendants of British people in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, or the United States, they do not use the phrase "British Diaspora." Despite the fact that they have most of the traits of persons from a diaspora, they nevertheless refer to them as Australians, Kiwis, South Africans, Canadians, or Americans.

Simply said, a collective consciousness must reflect the reality of migration; this consciousness is unmistakably present among individuals who stand out due to their religion, language, or other distinctive characteristics. Not every transplanted minority has worked as hard to preserve these markers. Older immigrants to the United States, for instance, were motivated to assimilate because they had rejected the extreme traditionalism and destitution of the Old Country and were drawn to the opportunities and "wide open spaces" of the New World. The host country's limits, socioeconomic issues, and superficialities have become more apparent to more recent immigrants, who are more concerned with retaining their cultural, emotional, and community identities.

In the same vein, The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, a federal immigration legislation, should also be mentioned in relation to US policy. The National Origins Quota System, also known as the Hart-Celler Act, limited the amount of people from each country who may immigration to the United States. The bill ended the system. On October 3, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson (D) signed the bill into law. It became operative on June 30, 1968. According to the

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legislation, "no individual shall be given any preference, priority, or be subjected to discrimination in the issuing of an immigrant visa on the basis of his race, sex, nationality, place of birth, or place of residence. In a similar vein, later law introduced preference categories for those applying for visas to visit family members in the US or for professional preference categories.

Accordingly, Immigration refers to the worldwide movement of individuals into a destination country where they are not citizens or natives in order to live or dwell there, often as permanent residents or naturalized citizens, or to work as migrant workers or temporarily as foreign workers (Lee,2019,p.104). Hence, in recent years, the issues of migration and social integration have become more prominent in the political landscape. It is used for Indians who move from their native countries to other locations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and many others in order to promote their culture and mix it with others. So ,the history of immigration is lengthy and diverse, and it has frequently led to the emergence of multicultural communities.

1.3.1. The Desi Diaspora in USA

The essential nature of human existence is migration. Every country's human history contains countless accounts of individuals migrating from one area to another. When people first began migrating, it was just to meet their most basic requirements. As time went on, man's demands grew, and in order to meet those wants, either people or things needed to travel from one location to another. Food, spices, clothing, medicines, jewelry, and other items started to be carried from one location to another and throughout the globe as a consequence. In the past, merchants and monks from India, for example , traveled to other regions of Asia to sell commodities and spread their own religions. People created mass movements all throughout the world starting in the 19th century for a number of causes. People embraced migration primarily for three reasons: employment, education, and escape. Salman Rushdie (2003) said in BBC conversation series, "To migrate is to

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experience deep changes and wrenches in the soul, but the migrant is not simply transformed by his act, he also transforms the world” (BBC,2003).

Around the turn of the twentieth century, the first significant Indian migration to the USA began. Most Asians were prohibited from entering the US under immigration regulations enacted in 1917 at the request of California and other western states that had experienced a significant inflow of Asian immigrants during and after the gold rush. Early immigrants were frequently denied citizenship, family reunification, and voting rights (Leonard, 1999). Indians advocated for an end to their legal discrimination as popular support from the western allies for India increased throughout the Second World War and as India's independence became a reality (Lal, 2006). Another wave of Indian immigrants came to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s following the enactment of the 1965 Immigration Act, which eliminated national origin limitations and allowed for widespread immigration from non-European nations. Indian immigrants arrived in increasing numbers as professionals between 1965 and 1980, however many later fell under the family reunification category. After the United States' immigration restrictions were liberalized in 1965, professionals, academics, and physicians decided to emigrate as well as students looking to complete their education there. Over time, these immigrants frequently transitioned into highly compensated professions, where they are overrepresented in relation to their overall numbers (Kapoor cited in Chand, 2012). The concept "brain drain" often refers to the migration of educated individuals from poor nations to industrialized nations, particularly from Asia and Africa to North America and Europe (Creehan cited in Chand,2012). One of the wealthiest and most well-educated populations in the USA today is that of Indian Americans. It was a classic example of brain drain when Indians left India for other industrialized nations during the post-World War II era, particularly the USA and Canada. In addition to avoiding poverty, caste and religion-based discrimination, and political upheaval, the reasons for this included greater incomes and better living standards than in India, more professional prospects, and a generally more prosperous existence. Up until around the year 2000, the trend of brain drain was

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generally followed by Indian immigrants to both the USA and Canada. According to A. K. Sahoo and Brij Maharaj, migration becomes diaspora when it fulfils four conditions:

- (i) a collective ethnic consciousness, (ii) an active associative life, (iii) contacts with the land of origin through various types of mediums and (iv) there should be relations with other groups of the same ethnic origin spread over the world (v)(Maharaj,2007, pp.156-193.).

Due to migration, the cultures of two separate areas may intersect and give rise to a multicultural environment.

While some took a more open-minded "melting pot" approach, emphasizing the fusion of many cultures into a single, cohesive sense of citizenship, similar to that of the United States, the assimilation of other cultures and the repression of diversity in the name of the state spread. Although the process for choosing legal immigrants in the United States is convoluted, all legal immigration flows include at least three categories: family, unskilled workers and investors, and asylum seekers. The immigration pattern was drastically altered by the new policy. For the first time, non-Europeans, including newcomers from Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East, made up the majority of immigrants. Immigration was further liberalized in the 1980s and 1990s by offering amnesty to illegitimate immigrants, increasing admissions caps, and establishing a process for vetting refugees. Limiting future immigration was one way some governments tried to address the social exclusion of immigrants, while other states took a more inclusive "melting pot" approach, emphasizing the fusion of many cultures into a single cohesive notion of citizenship. When immigrants apply for citizenship in the United States, they pledge loyalty to their new country of residency. This method has been fundamental to the concept of citizenship in the United States. Critics of this strategy point out how different cultures are assimilated and differences are suppressed for the sake of the state.

Furthermore, diaspora is migration during the time of nationalism, and it is not just a dispersion of peoples but also a political and emotional gathering in

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distant lands under the banner of the nation. This was the case with the Indian subcontinent desis who moved to Southeast Asia or to Africa as part of the Indian Ocean region, taking with them social customs, habits, and materials from their home. A sequence of events involving their Indian culture occurred in the overseas as a result of their everyday attempts to make meaning of their life in racially sensitive settings, which gave rise to an ideology. The desi diaspora culture in the United States today provides fresh avenues for philosophy, research, and innovation to the point that the dot has gone from being offensive to stylish. Desi is a term “coined by Indian nationals to describe culturally challenged second-generation Indians raised in the U.S.,” and by extension, Canada and Britain (Cited in Ausman, 2011, p.22) . Moreover, the Hindi word *pardesi*, which signifies alien, is short for this term. Tenuja Desai Hidier (2002) refers to this type of person as an ABCD, or American Born Confused Desi, as one who appears to be in a state of limbo between India and North America(Cited in Ausman, 2011,p.22). By creating space in American society for a discussion about creating a hybrid identity amidst all of the cultural confusion, politics of multiculturalism, challenges and rewards of immigration, and colonial histories back in India that have never left their parents' and relatives' minds, Desis explore what it might mean to be "born confused".

Many desis appear to carry their mixed Indianness into a Third Space (Bhabha, 1994), where personal journeys, cultural translations, and cultural manifestations in media like music and cinema emerge, rather than trying to avoid this apparent paradox. This diaspora has contributed to India's progress in the globe through its highly effective lobbying of the Indian Government, which finally led to liberal reforms and put India on the path to becoming an economic powerhouse. More specifically, Indians have made significant contributions to entrepreneurship, commerce, academics, research, the arts, and culture in every nation to which they have emigrated. Even though there is prejudice, xenophobia, and exclusion in many nations, this diaspora increased by over 10 million individuals just in the previous ten years. Following World War II, US immigration law was altered to let non-white immigrants to reunite with their families. Asians may also register to vote and

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become citizens. To clear up confusion with the indigenous peoples of the Americas, often known as American Indians, the US Census Bureau refers to them as Asian Indians. Indians were denied fundamental civil rights and were ineligible for naturalization during the decades of minimal or no migration, despite the fact that they had not engaged in the labor movement to North America that led to the nativist anti-Asian laws. India was not a substantial source of immigrants for the United States historically, but it was not a significant country of settlement for Indian emigrants. Approximately 20,000,000 South Asians already reside outside of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, the bulk of whom are found in Africa, the Caribbean, and Oceania.

To put it another way, many South Asians who live abroad tend to imitate Indian culture, values, language, and religion to the greatest extent feasible. Additionally, a large number of South Asian migrants are presently attempting to re-establish ties with their native countries through contemporary media, the Internet, or personal visits. These re-connections with the past and their "original roots" are sometimes viewed as love encounters. The United States has historically been a fairly open society, a place where waves of immigrants from many parent nations have settled, and a nation-state that has preached and aspired to a particular kind of inclusion known as "the melting pot" and "assimilation, American style." Following that, the United States' national policy changed from the 1960s, allowing immigration from other nations, particularly those in the Third World.

1.3.2. The Indian Diaspora

As regards to the previous explanations, the case of Indian diaspora is really a special one and has a major place in the history and culture of the world with a complicated social structure that really has an incredibly rich archive and is conducive to theory and careful study to examine the approximately 30 million-strong historical movement of the Indian diaspora. Around the period of Emperor Kanishka's reign, the first exodus out of present-day India occurred. The Romani people now often referred to as "gypsies" around the world left what is now the

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Indian state of Rajasthan in the northwest and finally made their way to Eastern Europe about the first century AD. Around 500 AD, a group known as The Cholas left the Indian subcontinent for Southeast Asia, where they conquered and Indianized the kingdoms of Indonesia and Malaysia. This was the beginning of another significant exodus from the Indian subcontinent. Geographical distance is less significant to the Indian diaspora in the West than psychological and spiritual situations since disturbing pictures from the country still persist, and Indians have participated in migration across borders and across time.

In comparison to the Jewish, Chinese, or African diasporas, the Indian diaspora is roughly smaller in terms of the worldwide movement. But during the last two centuries, India has produced the Modern Indian Diaspora, which has one of the most complicated and diverse migration histories in the world. Every country that migrates has seen a shift in the migration process since World War II, and India was not far behind in this shift. The Indian Diaspora currently numbers around 30 million individuals, dispersed over all six continents and 125 nations, and because of the wide range, one categorizes this diaspora into three groups: the Old Diaspora that started in the early 19th century and went on till the British Raj came to an end, the New Diaspora which is made up of immigrants who immigrated to industrialized nations including the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe after leaving India in huge numbers starting in the mid-1960s, and the Gulf Diaspora as the Middle East's oil boom in the 1970s ultimately led to a huge influx of people from India into the Persian Gulf. More and more semi-skilled and unskilled laborers, mostly from South India, have been employed on temporary contracts in the oil sector, services, and construction in the gulf nations, and they are given a sort of "second class" status in these nations Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar, as well as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and other Gulf nations.

To mention this case with USA; The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 served to limit annual immigration to the US from any nation at 2%, making it arguably the most obviously discriminatory immigration policy in history at the time. Despite being directed against Eastern Europeans, this rule also prevented Middle

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Easterners, East Asians, and Indians from entering the US. The act's goal, according to the American Department of State at the time, was "to protect the concept of American homogeneity." The historic Hart-Celler Act was approved in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson and the US Congress. Thus, 1965 marks the turning point for Indian immigration to the United States and the massive diaspora that followed, had updated immigration regulations that allowed highly skilled foreigners access. After that, the Indians came to the US in massive numbers during the 1990s software boom and growing economy. The US Immigration Act of 1990, which went into force in 1995, made the hiring of foreigners with at least a bachelor's degree in "specialty occupations" like doctors, scientists, engineers, and IT professionals easier by creating the H-1B temporary worker program. After Mexicans, Filipinos, and Chinese, they are now the fourth-largest immigrant group in the US. Australia and New Zealand have also risen in prominence as Indian migrants' destinations during the 1990s.

Aparna Rayaprol(1997) believes that India is different from other diasporas because of its internal variety and its regional, language, caste, and religious viewpoints (Vertovec, 2002,p.5).It is true that the Indian diaspora as we know it is a relatively new phenomenon, but it can be argued that the modern Indian diaspora actually has a longer history and is connected to an older tradition of 'Ghummakar travel', which sent gypsies to the Middle East and to Europe, fellow Indians to Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka as missionaries and conquerors, and traders to the littoral trading community around the Arabian Sea. As in Fiji, South Africa, Malaysia, Mauritius, Trinidad, Guyana, and Surinam, the subjects of the old occupy spaces where they interact primarily with other colonized peoples with whom they have a complex relationship of power and privilege; the subjects of the new are people who have entered metropolitan centers of Empire or other white settler countries like Australia, Canada ,USA, and New Zealand. They were formed by a labor migration that began two centuries ago with unskilled work and continued until the middle of the 1960s with highly skilled labor. Since India acquired

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independence in 1947, its variety as a country has affected the systems of Indian settlement across the world, whether they are regional, religious, or linguistic.

This has improved not just the sense of belonging for Indians residing in India but also for immigrants outside, and demonstrates that despite the variation, there are still constant ties between the diaspora and the motherland. Many Indian intellectuals who spend years studying or working abroad and then return to their own country feel out of place. As a result of their act of displacement, diasporic subjects are now on the move, their homeland being the virtual realm of visual media where the "net" serves as a substitute for the "person" (Castells cited in Gautam,2013). However, the fetishization of the new diaspora and an amnesiac disavowal of the old have resulted from the standardization of all Indian diasporas in terms of the politics of disarticulation/rearticulation and networking with reference to Britain, America, or Canada. The "India Shining" or "Incredible India," where people once perceived India as a poor nation of snake charmers and elephants, has been replaced by the new "India brand."

Moreover, in "*The Diaspora in Indian Culture*", Amitav Gosh (1989) contends that the relationship holding between Indians and India is special in the sense that Indian diaspora can never declare an open detachment or separation (p.246). These opinions demonstrate how strongly Indian diasporans are connected to their original country. Indians used to leave their nation mostly for economic reasons in the past. The prevalent belief that migration is a betrayal and returning to one's hometown will cause it to lose its purity after being immersed in the host country eventually leads diasporic people to see themselves as displaced. Even in current times, Indian immigrants are likely still impacted by this conventional perspective because they don't seem all that eager to return home. Actually, a large number of Indians migrate to the United States to advance their careers, get a higher education, or just to escape political unrest, famine, or rigidly constricting traditions. Brah (1996) suggests that economic inequalities within and between regions expands the mobility of the capital, in which case, people would seek to follow better opportunities that might improve their life chances, political strife (p.

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178). For diasporans, the connection to home is quite complicated; in reality, first-generation immigrants still hang onto the idea of home since they still uphold many traditional values. Here, Hall (1996) argues in favor of the idea that the distinctive features of diaspora are, first and foremost, a cultural and communal identity that preserves aspects of the linguistic, religion, social, and cultural activities of the homeland. However, with the generations who will come after, this is not always the case (cited in Brubaker,2005,p.6).

Since the 1990s, several writings on the Indian Diaspora, Indian identity, and Indian groups have emerged in academic journals and books. These works have benefited Indian communities because of the Indian Diaspora's transnational connections. Beyond caste, religion, and language, the labels "Jahaji Bhai" (ship fraternity) and "dipua Bhai" (depot brotherhood) were the unifying elements that produced a "globalized sensation" of being an Indian Diaspora (Gautam cited in Gautam,2013). Together, these associations sparked sentiments of connection to India's cultural history and a desire to maintain ties with the country. Some academics have categorized the Indian Diaspora based on their religious beliefs. As a result, Indians were analyzed as a sociologically differentiated ethnic group with their own unique cultural forms, rituals, and structural institutions for marriage (Bereton & Dookaran cited in Gautam,2013). Globalization has created a globe where memories of India are shared across the majority of the nations. With the election of New York Attorney General Preet Bharara and Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, Indians have recently shown their growing political power.

Notably, the accomplishments of Indian CEOs, scientists, scholars, media figures, filmmakers, and IT specialists in the US have increased confidence in India's intellectual prowess overseas. This achievement has played a significant role in establishing India's reputation as a supplier of educated and committed professionals. Significantly, there are now words for "Hindu Diaspora," "Sikh Diaspora," "Muslim Diaspora," and other diasporas. There has also been a tendency of the regional identities of India, such as Telugu, Tamil, Malayali, Gujarati, and Bhojpuri communities, to help people understand it better. The wealth created by

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Indian Silicon Valley entrepreneurs was estimated by Fortune magazine to be approximately \$250 billion in 2000. Many CEOs of IT firms, including Google, Microsoft, Twitter, Adobe, and IBM, are of Indian descent. One might claim that there is an Indian community in practically every American city. The creation of classified Indian villages and Indian cities in the United States has often been thwarted by the multiplicity of Asian Indian culture and customs. The vastness and verbose history of the Indian diaspora might be blamed for the huge corpus. There are common emotions that are triggered by living in the diaspora, even if each member of the Indian diaspora has a unique experience: all diasporas are dejected, albeit each diaspora is disturbed in its own particular way. An academic community that highlights the significance of this miracle has been created by the sublimity of the Indian diaspora. And to them, the idea of being Indian is a crafted concept based on the origins of their ancestors. It is not predicated on where they were born because they were socialized, raised, and educated in America, but for other people, having an underlying psychological sense of being Indian and having Indian social values is the primary prerequisite. For instance, when an Indian immigrates to the United States, he retains both his Indian and American Indian identities. Building a bridge between these utterly incompatible identities becomes challenging, so occasionally people seek refuge in identities from the developing world. The second generation of this existing hybrid group moves to the United States, the United Kingdom, or other countries with at least three identities and cultural origins, and there is a strong tug between these three identities. For the children of the first generation of immigrants, India is a country because they are tied to it, but for those of the second generation, India is still a nation and the place where they were established becomes their country. It makes up a broad, diversified, and eclectic global community that represents several nations, ethnic groups, linguistic groups, and religious traditions. Indians of ethnicity have gained fame for their achievements in the fields of business, profession, academia, science, and the arts as well as for their typically harmonious assimilation, especially in nations of the New Diaspora. Radhika Seshan and Sushma Varma (2003) in *Fractured Identity As*

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stated by the Indian Diaspora in Canada, diaspora not only highlights identity-related issues but also concerns about power, culture, multiculturalism, and transnationalism (p.29). Despite their struggles, the immigrants from India maintain their ethnicity while living in America.

The Hindi word meaning homeland is *desh*, in comparison to which all other territories are alien or *videsh*. When it's not presented in this "real" sense, homeland exists as an absence that is given additional meaning by the fact of diaspora, such as when Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto and Sikhs in Vancouver call out for a homeland or when Muslims in some communities seek a pan-Islamic utopia in the European heartland. Ethnic Indians continue to have a chance of being the targets of xenophobia and violence motivated by hate despite the overall acceptance of these people and the rising "coolness" of being Indian. Instances of racial tension abound across the diaspora; for example, Indians endure prejudice that is made worse by religious conflicts amongst the majority-Muslim population. They are also not exempt from hate crimes. For instance, William Safran (1991) only offers twelve words to the Indian diaspora and, due to his shortness, oversimplifies this diaspora's features (pp.83–99). Nevertheless, over the years, there have been a number of significant changes, and these Indians worked hard to provide better economic prospects for their offspring by frugality, strong tenacity, hard effort, and most importantly a withdrawal into their own cultures. According to Raghuram (2008), "The media actively generates diasporic subjectivity among both the authors and listeners" rather than just representing it (cited in Mishra, p.323,2007). The ambivalence of members of the Indian diaspora over their racial identification gives them the status of being "different but equal" to Americans. Thus, writers and filmmakers from this diaspora, including Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, M. G. Vassanji, Hanif Kureishi, Mira Nair, Deepa Mehta, Gurinder Chadha, Meera Syal, and Srinivas Krishna, among many others raise theoretical issues surrounding ethnicity and frequently speak of a diaspora whose defining characteristic is mobility as well as the imported cultural artifacts that preserved the innate sanctity.

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They represent the second-largest contingent of foreign students in American schools and universities.

Moreover, the cultural diaspora includes the Indian diaspora, and this category alludes to the reality that Indians' migration to America involves not only the transfer of their bodies but also the migration of their ideas, traditions, languages, and music. The number of Indians residing abroad in the US has increased significantly. 2.4 million members of the Indian diaspora in the US have already been reached by 2015. Metropolitan locations like New York, Washington, D.C., Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco are where they are most concentrated. Living in a major city makes it tough to avoid interacting with individuals from other cultures. The way they develop relationships and preserve their cultural identity is particularly via gathering and associating with others whose traditions and roots are known to them. Since the Indian diaspora is a genuine one with a long history on all three continents, it contributes to host countries and has a tendency to be both integrationist and particularist (Mishra cited in Gautam, 2013, pp.40-41). The Indian diaspora possesses the skills and resources necessary to contribute to the wealth, progress, and development of the nation.

According to the UN, there will be 18 million Indians living abroad in 2020, making it the largest diaspora in the world and one of the most prominent and energetic. Notably, the number of migrants overseas increased between 2000 and 2020, with India recording the highest increase at about 10 million. Immigrants' social networks in both their country of residence (COR) and country of origin (COO) serve as bridges for investment and commerce between the two. By operating cross-border enterprises, bringing Indian goods and brands to the COR, spreading Indian culture, and assisting non-Indians with investments in India, the Indian diaspora further fosters economic connection between the COO and COR. By highlighting the significance of the diaspora's transnational social networks, it adds to the body of learning on social networks. Because of their better familiarity with the language, culture, preferences, regulatory environment, and social

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networks of their native nations, the diaspora can promote commerce between their COR and their COO (Hatzigeorgiou cited in Chand,2012). Diaspora networks aid in building links between the nations where diaspora members reside and the nations they are from. Hindu temples, Sikh Gurudwaras, mosques, meeting places, sports clubs, weekly markets, religious institutions, and gathering places make up the robust infrastructure that Indians have built. The majority of diasporic cultures constantly generate several types of cultural spaces; for instance, when Indians immigrate to the United States, they simultaneously value their own culture while also being forced, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, to adopt American culture. So , the members of this group must meet certain criteria, based on the fact that they uphold their ancestral customs while simultaneously progressively as they frequently send remittances back home assimilating into the social, cultural, and political life of the host country and they continue to practice important facets of their Indian culture, including language, customs, and religion. Therefore, the Indian Diaspora's influence on future policymaking might be crucial and new project ideas would result from this.

An essential component of a person's identity is a sense of belonging to a community, country, and culture. It has a significant impact on how someone views themselves and how they relate to their nationality, race, religion, socioeconomic class, generation, area, or any other type of social group. Culture shapes identity regardless of the reasons for migration. For example, culture continues to be a defining force for those who migrate against their will in search of better living conditions and employment opportunities abroad. This includes those who are affected by push factors like climate disasters, the refugee crisis, poverty, wars, etc. In both situations, immigrants go through acculturation and absorb elements of the host country's culture. But it's interesting to see how the diaspora deals with maintaining its ethnicities, identities, and traditions while still going through the acculturation process. To investigate the mechanisms that keep the culture alive in spite of the cultural divide and to comprehend the transition or even change through oral history, which may also be stored to support the processes of conserving,

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maintaining, and sustaining more and more diasporic populations are returning to their native countries in recent years, presumably to reclaim their identities. One may clearly detect feelings of exile, loss of communication, a sense of belonging nowhere, the inability to feel accepted, problematic social standing, interpersonal issues, and many experiences that first and second generations of Indian immigrants in the United States have. Additionally, one of the inevitable results of this deliberate task is the exchange of cultures and adaptation to the new cultural demands, where sensations of in-betweenness, displacement, diaspora, and so forth arise.

Based on their citizenship, Indians who immigrate to foreign countries are divided into three categories. NRIs, PIOs, and OCIs are these. NRI stands for Non Resident Indian, an Indian citizen who has moved to another country. They are also sometimes referred to as "desis". Any Indian citizen who travels or resides overseas for (a) work, (b) business, (c) vacation, (d) government deputation, etc., but stays there for fewer than 182 days is regarded as a non-resident Indian (NRI). P.I.O., on the other hand, refers to a person whose roots are in India but who does not now have Indian citizenship. The Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) program was established by the Indian government for all people of Indian heritage who qualified as citizens of India on January 26, 1950, the Indian government has launched a program called "Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)" (Mallapragada, 2014, pp. 1-20). These terms have been created to help understand the status of the Indian diaspora abroad. Many now wealthy Indian immigrants to the United States arrived with limited means but went on to attain a surprising degree of success via a mix of diligence, education, talents, and vision. India has a wide array of languages and religions, yet some Indian Americans have developed a sort of pan-Indian, and in some cases, pan-South Asian, diaspora society. Both the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) and Person of Indian Origin (PIO) programs grant non-resident Indians many of the privileges of Indian citizenship, including the freedom to stay and conduct business there. However, neither of these two plans allows for voting, campaigning for office, or working for the government. Overseas Indians make up

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the biggest overseas diaspora in the world, with 32 million NRIs and OCIs living outside of India, according to a Ministry of External Affairs study (Naujoks,2013). PIO cards will be combined, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared in 2014, however the Indian government later withdrew that announcement.

Due to this, Indian immigrants abroad started a campaign to ask him to provide dual citizenship to Indians living abroad. And the issuance of Indian passports with full political and economic rights to foreigners of Indian ancestry, together with the convenient giving of voting rights to such dual passport holders. NRIs and PIOs are the two different types of Indians. The NRIs are inextricably linked to India since they have family there. Their "home" has always been India. They feel as though they are also Indians. They aid in financing corporate operations and send money to India. India is an envisioned nation for the younger generation. India is not considered to be the PIOs' "home." It represented the home of their emigrant ancestors to them. They have no desire to use their right to vote in India. Both groups of Indians desire close ties to India and view themselves as members of the Indian Diaspora. Individuals of Indian origin (PIOs) and NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) also have to deal with the various possibilities at play under the rubric of "South Asian diasporic identities," since host nations may regard people of South Asian heritage as both "same" and "other." The concept of the "model minority," which emphasizes work ethic, family values, and educational accomplishments as reasons for their quick ascent to the top of their sectors, has come to dominate the American perception of Indians. However, Prashad (2000) stated that "intentional state selection" rather than "cultural or natural selection" is more to blame for the development of this image (cited in Gautam,2013,p.4) So, Indian identities and traditions are being preserved and promoted through international organizations that unite India and the Indian diaspora worldwide.

1.4. Understanding Transnationalism

It is a scholarly research field and social phenomena that has emerged as a result of the increased interconnection of individuals and the diminishing economic

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and social importance of national boundaries, and Randolph Bourne (1916), a writer, popularized the word "trans-national" in the early 20th century to refer to a new way of thinking about interactions between cultures(cited in Schiller,2013,pp. 86–97). In addition to the development of the internet and wireless communication, as well as the decline in the cost of international transportation brought on by containerization, economic transnationalism, also known as globalization, was sparked in the second part of the 20th century for instance Multinational corporations.

Additionally, transnationalism has influenced a significant body of works in the social sciences as a concept, theory, and experience. In fact, transnationalism refers to the growing functional integration of cross-border processes or, in the words of others, trans-bordered relationships of people, groups, and businesses, as well as mobilizations outside of national borders. The process of capitalist globalization involves interactions between people, organizations, institutions, and nations in a new global environment where national societies' cultural and political traits coexist with newly emergent multilayer and multinational activity. The primary emphasis of this study is transnational cinema, although other researchers have concentrated on popular protest as a type of transnational activism. Some research has also highlighted illegal and criminal networks, as well as foreign fighters, as instances of a larger form of transnationalism.

Since most diasporas, unlike those of some individuals leading transnationalist lives, have not been voluntary, the field of diaspora politics does take into account modern diasporas as having the potential to be transnational political actors and be influenced by transnational political forces. The concept of diaspora brings to the fore the racial dynamics underlying the international division of labor and the economic turmoil of global capital. Asale Angel-Ajani asserted in a 2006 paper that "diaspora studies has the potential to move away from the politically sanitized rhetoric that surrounds transnational studies"(cited in Vertovec, 2010,p.296). As the study of transnational dynamics and globalization may benefit

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from a diverse political, if not radical political perspective, diaspora theory offers this potential.

Additionally, some doubters contend that it is principally motivated by the advancement of technology that have made travel and communication more convenient and inexpensive, radically altering the interaction between people and places. Immigrants may now communicate more often and intimately with their native communities than ever before. Transnationalism is fueled in large part by the way that international migration is incorporated into the demographic future of many affluent nations. Others claim that the emergence of transnational class relations coincides with new organizational and technical developments as well as the expansion of transnational chains of production and finance. It's also important to note that immigrants who participate in transnational activities build "social fields" that connect their home country with their new country of residency (Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton cited in Bauböck & Faist, 2010). These social sectors are the result of several related and converging socio-political, economic, and cultural activities.

Having mentioned that, transnationalism is a method of analysis that is employed to comprehend minority and immigrant groups as a synthesis of several contemporaneous histories. The term "socio-cultural transnational activities" refers to a broad range of social and cultural exchanges that take place internationally. A collection of scholarly articles, edited by Terese Guinsatao Monberg and Morris Young (1994), seeks to understand how transnationalism reveals ways Asian/Americans "negotiate, resist, and work against emerging, shifting, and often intensified 'highly asymmetrical relations of power'" (cited in Vertovec, 2010, p. 25-26). These results lead one to the conclusion that movements build strength and prominence when they unite with actors and social change strategies.

So, the way one views immigration is significantly impacted by transnationalism. The massive transnational movements of people are receiving more attention in this age of globalization for a variety of reasons, including forced

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migrations caused by civil wars, ethnic cleansing pogroms, and genocide, as well as the search for employment in the more prosperous industrialized or industrializing countries as guest workers or immigrants (Tambiah, 2017, pp. 163-194). The term "transnational movements" here should ideally cover three flows: the movement of people through transnational migrations; the movement of capital in our time of multinational capitalism; and the movement of information across great distances in the context of contemporary advancements in communication. Together, they put to the test and cross the borders of the current nation-states, which were previously thought to be the main determinants of collective social identity and existence. They also exacerbate and deepen sociocultural variety in so-called plural societies, which are spreading around the globe and provide difficulties for cohabitation, tolerance, and accommodation among different cultures. Of course, there are also notable incidents of international migration that are not just limited to the industrialized nations. After the Russian invasion in 1979, for instance, 4.4 million people from Afghanistan moved to the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan in South Asia, while migrant laborers from North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia moved in large numbers to the oil-producing nations in Western Asia. Three general categories of migrant integration that may also be used as benchmarks or measurements can be distinguished. Assimilation, exclusion, and integration are the three. Multiculturalism is a fourth category that connects with integration but emphasizes problems with accepting diversity within multiple societies while maintaining their viability as polities (Tambiah, 2017, pp. 163-194). This modern, or, if you prefer, postmodern, condition that all societies are growing more multicultural while also getting more porous inspires philosopher Charles Taylor's argument for the value of diversity in our time. Because of their porousness, they are more susceptible to international movement; more of them lead lives of diaspora, "whose core is elsewhere." (Tambiah, 2017, pp. 163-194).

While transnational perspectives are crucial for analyzing how national identity, sociopolitical contexts, and cultural practices may influence fannish practices and popular culture consumption across borders, these perspectives have

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left gaps in the analysis of other contexts, such as age, gender, sexuality, popular culture, and fannish culture, as well as the investigation of the flows of meaning and affect that arise from such contexts (Chin & Morimoto ,2013).

Interestingly, one of the distinguishing features of the 21st century is transnational migration, which has a profound impact on both the lives of people who move as well as the lives and communities in which they settle and find employment. In connection to transnationalism, migration, and the newly erected social structures. In order to create new theoretical and methodological resources and understandings, it promotes critical discourse in this developing subject. One has the chance to improve our strategy and get a bit closer to significant advances in the area, whatever it may be, through the disputes and vigorous arguments that naturally occur when experts differ about the specifics of theory creation and implementation. According to Appadurai (1996), globalization and the transnational impacts it entails are very recent developments. This book has an implicit theory of rupture that examines the simultaneous impact of migration and the media on the activity of the imagination as a defining characteristic of contemporary subjectivity (p.3). New identities are created and disseminated when diasporic groups improve their ability to communicate and construct communities quickly and easily. In the researcher's own reasoning, he makes the claim that transnationalism is not a modern phenomenon and that globalization is not its primary or simple source. Combining materialistic and cultural perspectives will lead to a more complete understanding.

1.5. Cultural Identity

Particularly for immigrants, cultural influences are crucial in the search for identity and the self. The issue of cultural identity raises issues related to the self and culture. In other words, this entails considering the fundamental components of culture and the implication that there is a valid basis for self-examination. Both having a defined identity and not having one are limiting. Cultures are where and how identities are created. These two connected phenomena are neither fixed nor

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changing. Stuart Hall (1990) claims that diasporic peoples have created their diverse identities as a result of migration and dislocation, which has forced them to continuously produce and reproduce themselves via constant change. Thus, if "diaspora identities" are defined by the word "hybridity," diasporic discourses may undermine "narratives of purity, rootedness, and timelessness"(cited in Hall,2015,pp.392-403).A second method of thinking about cultural identity is to recognize the "uniqueness" among cultures while acknowledging some shared histories and attributing personal distinctions to the influence of history, culture, and power on the expression of cultural identity. According to a number of critics, what sets one individual or nation apart from another is their identity. Stuart Hall (1980) thinks that because there are so many diverse cultural identification views, we all have a variety of them. He also contends that identity is a product of one's race, nationality, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, gender, and sexual orientation"(cited in Hall,2015). Hall presented two opposing theories of how cultural identity is constructed in his examination of cultural identity.

Significantly, Indians and people from other third-world nations were exposed to new languages, cultures, and traditions as a result of colonialism. Their identities have been impacted in this situation. A new identity develops as a result of the internal effort to attain a stable identity that results from cultural disputes. Any culture, it is argued, is actually multicultural and develops its characteristics via interactions with other cultures and the wider globe. Because of the contact between nations, there is a multiplicity of identities that overlap and give rise to a new society with many potentials. But in addition to having unique identities of their own, all people also have identities that are tied to their cultures and nations. It concludes that everyone has their own traditions and values and struggles to define their individual and national identities. Another thing to note is that ethnic identification, or diasporic identity, became a shield to defend, preserve, and perpetuate the ethnic culture since it depends on ancestry, familial bonds, a shared language of communication, historical and imaginative memories, and religious beliefs.

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Highly permeable representations exist, and they depend on the singularity of the individual. Cultural identification is the sense of belonging to a certain group. It relates to nationality, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic class, generation, locale, or any other type of social group that has its own distinctive culture as part of a person's self-concept and self-perception. This view of identity, according to Jola Skulj (2000), was a product of the romantic interpretation of the self as an absolute and independent being that denied any significant or compulsory references outside of oneself. It rejected the idea of transcendence outside of oneself and only acknowledged its own immanent reality or immanent validity. Being was acknowledged as genuine while only being understandable as internal awareness (p.4). This implies that culture should also be viewed as a tangible whole; as something that is open, non-finite, and inherently ambiguous. According to Bakhtin(1986), cultural identity is defined as: "In the arena of culture, outsideness is a very strong component in understanding... one must delve into it, forgetting one's own, and experience the world through the eyes of this alien culture. "While they both maintain their individuality and open wholeness, they are mutually enriched (cited in Skulj,2000,pp.6-7). Because diaspora identities are always exposed to influences from their home and host cultures, we might deduce that these identities have always been brittle. The Internet and satellite television, for example, enable expatriate populations to connect with their ethnic roots as frequently as possible and revive the ancient customs and value system (Appadurai, 1996). Given the diversity of races and cultures in the United States today, it is not at all unexpected, but it does make it more challenging to come up with a single, universal definition. It's crucial to remember that ethnic groups blend these with aspects of the host culture to create a third identity, such as Indian American (Tirumala,2009). Thus, social interactions both within and outside of ethnic communities establish, develop, and perpetuate cultural identity.

Another way that place-specific identities are created and maintained is through culture. According to Stuart Hall (1995), we tend to imagine cultures as “placed” in two ways. First, we associate place with a specific location where social

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relationships have developed over time. Second, place offers cultures “symbolic boundaries,” which separate those who belong from those who don’t. At the same time, “there is a strong tendency to ‘landscape’ cultural identities, to give them an imagined place or ‘home,’ whose characteristics echo or mirror the characteristics of the identity in question” (p.182). Hall continues, “the ways in which culture, place and identity are imagined and conceptualized are increasingly untenable in light of the historical and contemporary evidence” (p.186). It follows that no one location is restricted to a single culture or identity if culture and identity are not site-specific. Localized conflicts over immigration, language, urban growth, architecture, and foreign investment have resulted from this. Place identities are constantly up for debate. They are frequently attained by building "Others," which fosters a sense of community insiders and outsiders (Rose cited in Kraidy, 2006, pp.104-5). The nation state has been the traditional container of identity and culture that has been most seriously challenged by the reinvention of community.

Obviously, when identity and culture come into contact, immigrants tend to embrace a specific cultural identity model and gravitate toward other expectations that reflect the characteristics of border discourses and the transnationality of cultural identity. In his article "*Cultural Identity and Diaspora*," Hall (1996) sheds light on various ethnic experiences in literature that represent immigrants' daily experiences and actions to place themselves between two cultures while examining the common challenges of cultural identity. "The ongoing process of identification as dynamic and ever-changing and precludes fixity and stability," the critic argues (p.69). Due to the fact that immigrant identities in the diaspora are destined to change, they are fluid and do not adhere to the tumultuous conceptions of connectedness and rupture that make up the modern definition and picture of the multi-layered cultural identities that exist today. The usage of cultural diaspora is distinguished not just by the characters' initial identities but also by whom they have evolved into. This implies that each person's manner of identifying with and relating

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to the shared experiences of the past influences how their cultural identity is constructed.

1.5.1. The Indian Diaspora's Cultural Identity

When referring to second generation people whose parents are wholly Indian, their inborn desire for freedom and emancipation from the identity-related captivity is related to the fact that they suffer from the cultural captivity brought on by their parents' roots and do not find solace in their American side. Regarding the question of whether there is a unique "Indian" identity, there are two key elements that stand out. Diversity is emphasized in the first aspect. Hence, the second subject explores how the Indian presence in America may be understood in terms of a single patriotic identity through a historical account of the attempts of an early generation of Indian immigrants to "recreate Indian identity" in America. The topic of how India is represented in the diasporic community's imagination is constantly connected to the idea of Indian identity. The migrant community imagines and combines many ideas of "Indianness," which are influenced by the members' social classes at home, their love for the original desi nation and culture of their birthplace, and nostalgia (Bhatia, 2007,p.15). They may, however, see themselves as global citizens who prioritize their professional identities over their national or cultural allegiances.

As stated earlier, an essential component of a person's identity is a sense of belonging to a community, country, and culture. It has a significant impact on a person's vision of themselves, their definition of themselves, and their justified relationships with their nationality, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic class, generation, area, or any other type of social group. And when it comes to culture, it shapes the identity regardless of the reasons for migration; for example, it defines those who are pushed to migrate, such as those affected by climate disasters, refugee crises, poverty, wars, etc., as well as those who voluntarily leave their home countries in search of better living conditions and employment opportunities abroad. In the age of mass migration and globalization, this notion of preserving

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cultural identity is gaining popularity. In both situations, immigrants go through acculturation and as a result, they adopt the cultural characteristics of the host nation. But it's interesting to see how the diaspora deals with maintaining its ethnicities, identities, and traditions while still going through the acculturation process. India is therefore exceptional for the scope of her diversity, which is mirrored in her diasporic populations, in terms of languages and regions, religions and sects, castes and subcastes, rural and urban, food, and fashion. There are diasporic groups based on language or regional identities, such as Telugus, Tamils, Malayalees, Sindhis, and Punjabis (Sahoo, 2006, pp. 81-98). The foundation of this idea is based on the fact that the Indian diaspora, which is itself a culture, continued to maintain the hybridization of their cultural identity after migration.

Although it is impossible for the individual to be socio-politically and economically linked, as the statement is predicated on the idea that the person is connected to his or her country, socio-cultural nationality is a component of the person's cultural identity. The relevance of concerns like "where is my home" and "what is my identity" in one's life is growing as a result of today's global society and freedom of travel. More and more diasporic populations are returning to their native countries in recent years, presumably to reclaim their identities. For instance, middle-aged Indian parents who relocated to another country in search of better employment possibilities and who put in long hours at work want their young children to be aware of their culture. Sharing information is one way to preserve intangible cultural heritage. That is why the foundation of every culture is considered to be its most important and prominent components, such as its food, language, religion, dance, dress, cinema, and festivals (Kanchan & Chansauria, 2020). It might be argued that social practices are linked to the reality of identity and that they help people form a sense of identity. Aditya Raj (2004) provides a great illustration of how Indian identity may be assessed in the context of the diaspora. He uses the examples of three people, three distinct geographic places, and three different countries:

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. . . a cab driver in London, the President of a Caribbean Republic, and a computer engineer in the Silicon Valley: three persons, three different spatial locations, in three different nation states. Yet a curious emotional cord to a shared geographical space binds them. All three are persons of Indian origin, members of the Indian diaspora, spread worldwide (cited in Ben-Rafael& Sternberg, 2009,p.529).

In addition to Salman Rushdie, who once said that one of his well-known books, *The Satanic Verses*, "celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, and the transformation that comes from new and unexpected combinations of people, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, and songs," is to be credited with coining the term "hybridization." It celebrates mingling and despises the absolutism of the pure. Thus, the way newness enters the world is through *mélange*, hotchpotch, and bits of this and bits of that "(Tambiah,2017,p.28).

1.6. Cultural Hybridity

Hybridity is used in discourses about race, postcolonialism, identity, anti-racism and multiculturalism, and globalization, developed from its roots as a biological term. It is transgressive, it refers to any blending of eastern and western cultures, and to the integration or mingling of cultural symbols and customs from the colonial and the colonized cultures. It removes the colonized from his native culture and identity; as a result of cultural contacts, it results in an in-between state. The postcolonial subject, particularly the first generation immigrant, who represents a temporary minority, exhibits a yearning to assimilate or emulate the Self as they go from otherness to hybridity. The one shall contend that hybridity's capacity to challenge what seems complete and natural and to problematize naturalized boundaries gives it a vital edge. Here, the researcher aims to demonstrate the applicability of the concept of hybridity in approaching a range of phenomena, from ethnic writing and to modern cinema, in a setting marked by international migration and the globalization of culture, which is connected to the following section of this work as a means of closely approximating the many components of the hybridity debate. This circumstance reflects Homi Bhabha's concept of "mimicry" as it relates

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to the demands of being in a multicultural environment. The dynamics of cultural connection with society grow more complex and difficult when these art forms are proposed as a location for coping mechanisms.

Thus, Homi Bhabha as one of the most prominent scholars in modern post-colonial studies removes the dispute surrounding cross-cultural interactions to explain how hybridity has evolved through time in Europe and the United States, where imitation of Western cultures is encouraged in the quest of homogeneity, which is the target of globalization. He has never written from a simple sense of one group's claims in contrast to another group's, but from a belief in the theoretical possibility of negotiation of borders and limits as a method to go past seemingly intractable disparities between cultures (Niesen de Abruna cited in Kraidy, 2006, p.91). One can see that Bhabha supports the variety of cultural interaction and the diversity of postcolonial histories that produce hybridity by carefully reading his articles, which address the place of postcolonial cultures in the modern, globalized world.

Bhabha (1994) actually makes a distinction between the two, claiming that the term of otherness really refers to a "hybrid subjectivity" (p.85). As His notion of locating culture is an exegesis of a life and ongoingly negotiated personal and social histories, it is not only an academic exercise. In some ways, hybridity symbolizes the Other's geographical and cultural displacement as they are divided between two cultures. This ambivalence doesn't reveal a brand-new, distinctive interpretation of identity; instead, it reveals a culture that has been dislocated, a mingling of places and ideas. Moreover, Bhabha appears to be attempting to provide a fresh perspective on the interactions between the West and the East. The fixedness and hostility between the Self and the Other are dismantled by Bhabha's idea of hybridity. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha (1994) asserts that colonial topics, particularly those pertaining to immigrants' experiences in the diaspora, are destined to be subject to negotiation (p.185). Said's concept of uniqueness, singularity, and particularity of the colonial experiences of class hierarchies, gender disparities, and racial discrimination is divergent from Bhabha's definition of tolerance. One may

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perceive that immigrants represent a fragmented, constrained representation of each distinct culture when it comes to their in-between condition. Always in the same essay, "*Cultures in-Between*," Bhabha (2013) claims that immigrants are unable to represent the entire native culture as influenced by that of the host land and claims that immigrants only bring with them a portion of the total culture, which is the very culture exposed to negotiation witnessing its development on an unfamiliar new soil". This portion of the total culture is the culture whose image is completed when both cultures are fused together through cultural exchanges. Here, he claims that "the relevance of hybridity to him is via the Third Space, which allows for the emergence of various views" (pp.30-211). Therefore, cultural identities are not attributed to an ahistorical, reductive script of gender, ethnic, and racial norms in which the dialectic is a simple black-and-white polarity with no gray zones, or, to put it another way, "in-between." "Cultural difference, not cultural variety, is the foundation upon which the reconstruction of the history of critical theory depends, as it was already stated." (Bhabha, 1994, p.49).

To clearly set this term, the "Third Space," as Bhabha refers to the area between two ambivalent cultures, is where Bhabha advocates uniting the two cultures. The work of Bhabha has theoretically made two significant contributions to discussions in film studies. Beginning in the 1980s, scholarly debates on sexual representations in screen theory led Bhabha to pose *The Other Question* (1983), which focused on ambiguous racial stereotypes. A few years later, Bhabha developed the idea of third space and highlighted a commitment to theory in the context of the resurgence of Third Cinema concerns (1989). It was also shown in several Hollywood terrorist action movies that helped frame the incident and by asking for alternative political narratives that may teach us empathetic principles. He provides a compelling argument for contrasting modern globalization with older types of globalization such as colonization, slavery, and diaspora.

Here, Homi Bhabha's concept of "Hybridity," which is heavily influenced by Edward Said's *Orientalism*, assumes importance. Culture is fluid, which allows it to be always in motion. It is a mash-up of several unique features that are continuously

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introduced and which are often changing cultural identities. Every culture is unique due to mixedness, which Bhabha refers to as "cultural hybridity" (Pak cited in Kraidy ,2006,p.50). Friedman (1994) draws a conclusion by illuminating how identity is diagnosed in the cosmopolitan elite using the same reference. He continues, "One of the things that are not occurring in a society full of expanding diasporas is that boundaries are dissolving." Instead, it appears like they are being built on every new street corner in every failing neighborhood throughout the world. While it is true that small amounts of this and that are crossing many different barriers, this is not being done to promote hybridity. Instead, they are integrated and naturalized through group formation that works to preserve social order within its own limits and homogenize people (Friedman cited in Kraidy ,2006). The core message is that the sensation of hybridity only manifests when cultures are not mixed together and borders are drawn unexpectedly.

More specifically, terms like hybridity, imitation, and ambivalence have recently been used to spark heated discussions about colonial rhetoric and postcolonial identity. In multicultural nations, hybridity is the merging or mixing of several, distinct, and independent ways of existence. Recent discussions on hybridity have revealed the various ways people have thought about this issue during the past ten years. Robert Young (2000), a well-known postcolonial critic, distinguishes between unconscious and conscious hybridity. In his opinion, the propensity of discourse analysis to de-historicize and remove cultures from their historical, spatial, geographical, and linguistic contexts includes hybridity (cited in Ashcroft et al,1998, p.120). This is to contend that a culture cannot be pure in a hierarchical manner. It is essential that the production powers of this third space have a colonial or postcolonial heritage, Bhabha (1994) says in this thread. Because being willing to enter that foreign zone may pave the way for constructing an international culture that is founded on the expression and articulation of cultural hybridity rather than the exotism of multiculturalism or the variety of civilizations (p.33).

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One discovers a concentration on the idea of hybrids in postcolonial thought. According to Robert Young, hybridization is viewed in a dichotomous sense, with the mingling of races and the alienation of some races serving as a reference to the Victorian extreme right's view of separate races as distinct species (Loomba, 1998,p.173). Additionally, this lends support to the argument that the concept of "hybridity" is overstated. Peter Barry accurately defines hybridity as the circumstance in which individuals and communities concurrently belong to more than one culture, such as that of the colonizer through a colonial educational system and that of the colonized through local and oral traditions (Barry, 2002,p.199). Since there can be no authority without the Other, hybridization creates an Other that the Eurocentric world can reign over. To put it simply, the Other is de-centered and dislocated because the dominant culture translates the depiction of indigenous cultures. As a result, there are cultural variations.

Although several academic disciplines and schools of thought have used the word "hybridity" No culture is immune to the effects of another, thus when cultures interact, they influence one another to produce a hybrid culture(Kraidy,2006,p.1), Young compares it to botanical hybridity, in which animals are crossed to produce a new race, but he points out that the outcome of such a collision is a "infertile" creature, which makes him wonder about the effects of a cultural hybridization between various human races. Because the products of this mechanism have demonstrated that they have a unique position in the world, hybridity cannot be viewed as a sterilizing process. In addition, Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin, Homi Bhabha, Néstor Garca Canclini, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak, and Paul Gilroy are the main proponents of hybridity theory, and their writings reflect the multi-cultural consciousness that first surfaced in the early 1990s by arguing that the topic of hybridity became the focus of discussion in the postcolonial scholarship. However, according to Anjali Prabhu, the best way to resolve the issue is to distinguish between "a theoretical idea" and a "political attitude," as well as between "hybridity as a social reality with historical character" (cited in Kraidy,2006,p.2). Therefore, in order to fully express hybridity, it is necessary to understand where it comes from

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and what purpose it serves in terms of culture. Instead of two binary oppositions in which one can only be one thing, hybridity modified the idea of identity to fit on a spectrum. This idea so captures the diverse identities of the colonized. It combines the pre-colonization identity with the forced or accepted identity of the colonized. According to both Said and Bhabha, there will always be a larger story that crosses over between identities and combines histories and cultures, and that story will always be formed in such a way that "it's very forms are subject to the mixing and hybridizing that is the global destiny of the post-colonial world" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan cited in Kraidy, 2006, p. 599). Given that envisioning an international culture based on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity rather than the exoticism of multiculturalism or the variety of cultures may be facilitated by a desire to descend into that foreign terrain (Bhabha, 1994, p. 38). It is only a "exchange" between cultures.

Other attempts to emphasize the mutuality of cultures in the colonial and post-colonial processes through forms of syncreticity, cultural synergy, and transculturation are similarly motivated by the notion of hybridity. It has been noted that discourse analysis tends to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical, and linguistic contexts and to produce an abstract, globalized concept of the textual that obscures the particulars of various cultural situations. The phrase was then used to describe hybridity as a cultural consequence of globalization. Kraidy, for instance, describes hybridity as the "cultural logic" of globalization because it "requires that traces of other cultures exist in every culture, thereby allowing foreign media and marketers transcultural wedges for building emotive linkages between their goods and local communities (Kraidy, 2006). To emphasize the value of cross-cultural contact, or as a feature of cultural globalization which occurs when new brands interact with local cultures and are altered by those cultures, giving rise to new goods like Chicken Tikka Massala and Bollywood for instance.

Again, Young draws our attention further to the dangers of using a term so rooted in a previous set of racist assumptions. He claims that while discussing

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hybridity, modern cultural discourse cannot avoid drawing comparisons to earlier racial classifications when hybridity had a very distinct racial significance. So instead of separating ourselves from it or offering a criticism of it, "deconstructing such essentialist concepts of race now we may rather be repeating the [fixation on race in the] past" (young cited in Voicu, 2011, p.27). In this way, the notion of hybridity stresses a 20th-century preoccupation with interactions within a field as opposed to an examination of discrete objects, viewing meaning as the result of such relations rather than as inherent to particular events or things.

The Third Space, often known as "the grey zone," is a meeting place where identities are negotiated and cultures are blended in an effort to create new identities that are more in line with the demands of the contemporary globalized society. Third space, which is neither assimilation nor otherness but instead embodies the history of coalition building and the transnational and cultural diasporic link, is the common ground of negotiation and transformation between many identities. Bhabha highlights the need to go beyond national concerns and toward more open transnational narratives of displaced people, immigrants, and refugees in the diaspora by commenting on and illustrating hybridized identities in postcolonial theory. The importance of using Bhabha's theories of the Third Space, hybrid identities, and cultures in this thesis is to analyze and comprehend how immigrants, particularly the second generation, construct their identities. The quest to develop new subjectivities outside the confines of the center and periphery, it is also a method to trace the heritage of otherness. Returning to identity negotiation and Third Space, the concept of hybridity is important for the chance to confront ambiguous distinctions, particularly those involving colonial and anti-colonial themes in relation to Western and Eastern cultures (Roy, 2017).

Broadly said, the first space is one's own home or a gathering place for friends and family, the second space are formal institutions like the job, school, or church, and the third space are hybrid spaces that appear to be in opposition to one another. People move to another nation in search of a better way of life and a higher level of living. They struggle to adapt to the new environment, culture, and society

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of the new nation, which may often be a terrible experience for them. As a result, immigrants and subsequent generations struggle with how best to maintain and practice both the culture of their home nation and that of their ancestors. These opposing cultural influences cause people to experience conflicting emotions. People still work hard to integrate and take advantage of the opportunities to settle down in that whole new environment despite the pain that comes with being cut off from one's own country and culture. This is an experience that can result from assimilation and dislocation, which forces immigrants to carve out a third place for themselves that is focused on the hybrid environment they build and the larger picture that is brought about by identity uncertainty. Ulrich Beck (2009) discussed the third space; for him, it is the concept of being in two locations together, away from home and at home, albeit not equally, and this is about a genuine, physical sense of existence. In third spaces, the spaces "between" are points of transmission and porousness between identities in various milieus. The concept of particles in space may be used to interpret the idea of linguistic translations across cultures as well as the movement of peoples in terms of cultural translation. Even in the best of circumstances, the immigration procedure to a foreign nation may be challenging (Noh & Avison cited in Ausman, 2012).

Immigrants must have the ability to adapt to unfamiliar physical, emotional, and cultural situations. They belong to a new environment that is trying to redefine themselves, as well as their position and identity, and to develop a new feeling of belonging because they are no longer a member of a homogenous group with shared values and traditions. Attempting to investigate the third space as a point of interaction whereby cultural and national identities are linked to one another, so fostering a transcultural discourse. As a result, immigrants and subsequent generations struggle with how best to maintain and practice both the culture of their home nation and that of their ancestors. These conflicting cultural influences cause people to experience conflicting emotions. Therefore, the Third Space is a method of conceptualizing the liminal that enables hybrid people to designate a space where they may express their cultural difference. Through "refiguring it as a contingent in-

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between place that innovates and disrupts the performance of the present," they are able to create their own history and revitalize the past in this setting (Roy,2017,p.7).

The term "**ambivalence**" is another crucial concept that Bhabha has highlighted via his theory. It is regarded as a significant concept utilized in the postcolonial theory to address the condition of depression of mind while being drawn to another thing or person in a distant area, according to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin. It might be seen as a straightforward explanation for the collision between cultures that happens when diverse ideologies, practices, languages, and beliefs coexist. Because you might be "you" in one context while yet identifying yourself in another, a hybrid identity includes ambivalences. They entail actions of identification with and via non-self-things that transform you through translation processes. Thus, the act of ambivalence occurs within this conflict between the civilized colonizers and the uncivilized colonized (Ashcroft et al., cited in Kraidy,2006, P. 10).

Moreover, as was previously indicated, mimicry is the act of copying another person's behavior, and the outcome is absurd, as was the case with the native people who attempted to behave like the white man, which Bhabha characterized as "a topic of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite," is the act of adopting the colonizer's behavior (Bhabha, 1994,p.122).

Mimicry is viewed as an opportunistic pattern of behavior in the context of immigration: one mimics the powerful person in an effort to get access to that authority. By imitating him, this individual crosses over his own identity and culture and adopts that of the other, whether consciously or unconsciously. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha(1994) argues that "mimicry" develops new native projects whose difference distorts and subverts the identity of the colonized by rearticulating colonial presence in its construction of Otherness that it disavows," and this discourse also demonstrates ambivalence (p.91). Without summoning the historical ghosts and broken mimetic masks that cover the gaps in our individual and social memory, there can be no discussion of the present. This is only feasible through

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assimilating the cultural customs, presumptions, institutions, and values of the colonizer, and this notion is therefore equivocal since it calls for both likeness and dissimilarity. The "Epic intention of the civilizing mission, 'human and not wholly human'"(Bhabha, 1994,p.122). Bhabha (2021) claims that imitation exposes something in as much as it differs from what may be said to as an itself behind. The result of mimicry is camouflage. It is not a matter of blending in with the backdrop, but rather of being mottled against a background, just as the method of camouflage used in human combat (p.99). In this metonymy, different characteristics have opposing, fantastic, and prejudiced impacts on identity. It is important to remember that a gap exists and that it can be seen from all angles. It reveals two things: first, that there is concern about the idea of nationhood, and second, that the plurality of wide-eyed idealists is rejected. The philosophical underpinnings of what multiculturalism proponents believed to be the epitome of idealized variety are completely upended. Indeed, multiculturalism is what is meant by it in today's society. In reality, it is a sort of covert imitation and a hybridity in the interstitial, or what Bhabha refers to as the "third space."

1.7. The Quest for Identity

Due to the various studies and research that have looked at the term identity from various angles and situations, definitions have changed: As a starting point, identity is defined as the collective feature of the collection of qualities that make anything unquestionably recognizable or recognized; as a result, identity is a topic that some of its typical users may find to be a little challenging. Self-conception influences both a person's identity and social presentation, or how they behave in society. Identity is described by Dorothy Holland(2001) as follows in "Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds": a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world which the collective space of cultural forms and social relations...identities are lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice... identities are a key means through which people care about and care for what is going on around them. They are important bases,

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from which people create new activities, new worlds..." (Holand, 2001, p.5). Hence, Identity encourages one to see people as they take shape in the flow of historically, culturally, socially, and materially formed illusions in this way. There are many different types of social identities, such as national, ethnic, and religious identities, and identity is constantly an ongoing process.

It's a term that implies rootedness ; to take part in a variety of a person forms their self-identity based on their evaluation of their personality, traits, interests, skills, values, and knowledge. Identity development is significantly influenced by a person's conduct, attitude, and self-perception. When it comes to the overall understanding of this research, the topic of identity is without a doubt a question of the "self" because it is the most concrete theme in transnational cinema. The "self" is the gift of the other, or as Michael Bakhtin(1986) put it. So, the presence of the "self" automatically implies the existence of an opposing force known as the "other," which also makes the self-more understandable (cited in Skulj,2000,p.2). The crucial question at hand is whether the idea of "identity" is still relevant, and how a borderless diasporic identity challenges the strong relationship between culture and nationhood. Knowing that identity is multiple, "fractured and reconfigured by gender, ethnic, and class relations," one may face intolerance or a lack of understanding if they choose to avoid social manipulation in matters of cultural identities. This is because "our freedom to assert our personal identities can sometimes be extraordinarily limited in the eyes of others, no matter how we see ourselves" (Vertovec,2002).The social, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic implications of one's identity are not absent. Specialists from the fields of psychology, sociology, and philosophy have done a lot of work to understand what identity is and how it develops. According to Erik Erickson, developing one's identity is a process that happens over the course of a lifetime. The stage that comes after each one is impacted. If something goes wrong at any point, it can eventually have an impact on identity formation (Erikson,1994). This means that people categorize themselves into groups and consider each person similar to themselves as

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a member of the group. This similarity can be physical appearance or religious or ideological.

The group to which the individual belongs gives meaning to his/her beliefs, ideas and values. The greatest threat posed by the technological advancement the world is now experiencing is identity theft. One of the most hotly contested topics in American history is identity. Some people left their country for religious or economic reasons; others were simply brought to America. Others were captivated by the chances America presented. Since the time of its discovery, these peoples have lived in America and have found it challenging to view themselves as a single nation. This came about as a result of the many origins of these individuals and the various motivations behind their immigration to America, on the one hand. One aspect of this conception of identity is that the process of identification occurs across cultures, locations, and colonial histories of oppressors and oppressed. It is a changing hybrid endeavor that is an intractable amalgam of several influences. Clear wishes to exist in one "world" or another are not relevant to the identifying process (Ausman, 2012). The distinctions between oneself and the Other, between whites and non-whites, are obvious, but positionality i.e., the expression of an unfixed position complicates the modalities of representation that Trinh Minh-Ha (1989) outlines. The so-called "Other" takes part in the creation of her own external identity, which is crucial for consumption by the dominant culture, "the West." The self is a component of the human unconscious and neither static nor unaware of its own changing. The ambiguity and hybridity of the Third Space include divergent self-understandings. The diasporic community's second and following generations are when the identification dilemma first emerges. The second and later generations, who were born and raised in the established country, view the settlement as their hometown even if the community views them as outsiders, leading them to start wondering who they are (cited in Safran, 2007). To put it more simply, identity is the presence of a seldom changing personality as well as a sense of self or belonging to a certain culture or group of people. Identity is therefore understood to be the state of being oneself and not someone else. As a result, identity only exists

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as a result of its own deconstruction and ongoing multiplication of various cultural links (Skulj, 2000).

The postcolonial discourse on identity challenges the disintegrations that influence the idea of identity. In addition, emigrants would experience a greater sense of alienation than subsequent generations who have less of a connection to their motherlands because of movement and direct interaction with displacement. The original societies, in contrast to those places where multiculturalism has taken place, had a stable and pure identity. Additionally, while considering postmodern ideas, a reader may observe that their understanding of the concept of identity has far more to do with the individual than the community at large. Multiple pathways are gradually formed transnationally and laterally, moving away from unidirectional vertical North-South/South-North viewpoints, while simultaneously addressing the local and the global, the regional and the national, and the north and south.

Identity is established by a single event and built in the context of what others do to the person. It is impacted by social and cultural circumstances from the beginning. While certain characteristics of one's identity, such as gender and physical appearance, are fixed from birth, others, such as faith and confidence, can be learned from or adopted by one's family and society. Second, identities may be employed to influence other people's behavior. In other words, identities are social and cultural creations shaped by social institutions like the family, the educational system, and the media as well as the process of socialization. According to Gillian Rose (1995), Increasing movements of information, people, goods, and ideas are continuously undermining conceptions of location and identity that view themselves as secure and fixed. Given the growing interconnectedness of locations, at least many scholars believe that locations must be viewed as having porous borders where objects are always moving. Identity experiences increasingly include migration, cultural blending, and change (p.116).

In effect, identity is a contentious topic that affects our social life on almost every level. Identity is being claimed, named, challenged, and self-fashioned

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wherever we turn, including in academia, the national political sphere, the international political sphere, and artistic forms like novels, music, and movies. While identities may be created and destroyed, the stakes are always high and politically charged. Due to the agony of being "othered" and erased by hegemonic modalities of western knowledge production, rooted conceptions of identity have appeal in postcolonial national imaginations (Clifford, 1998).

1.7.1. Crisis of Identity, case of Hyphenated Identities

When a person is exposed to elements of a foreign culture and has an identity crisis, the idea of identity emerges as a complicated concept in the field of cultural studies. Identity only becomes a problem when it is in crisis, when something that was formerly thought to be definite, cohesive, and stable is replaced by the sense of doubt and uncertainty, according to cultural critic Mercer (2020,p.43).When one goes through an identity crisis, they are no longer identified by the same things, which undermines their sense of themselves as integrated subjects. This decline in a constant "feeling of Self" is frequently referred to as the dislocation or de-centering of the subject; by de-centering people from both their place in the social and cultural environment and from themselves, this creates a "crisis of identity" for individuals. The term "identity deficiency" relates to personal experiences that are connected to a lack of guiding convictions yet flourish to build individual aims and values. The latter, however, pertains to the issue of the many definitions of one's self. In essence, a traveler may experience an unavoidable crisis of identity, which has two possible outcomes: alienation from the native culture or the development of new adaptability and acculturation skills.

Although the mind is notably fallible and precious, it may be claimed that migrants hold a displaced position since their imagination serves as their primary place of residence to a greater extent. Another viewpoint holds that themes and displacement eventually lead to identity crises, and that the concepts of "self" and "home" are commonly examined in postcolonialism. According to Homi Bhabha (1994):

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the “beyond” is neither a new horizon, nor a living behind of the past...Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years, but in the fin de siècle, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present... From there is a sense of disorientation... in the beyond, an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words an – au delà- here and there on all sides...back and forth (p.3).

It's interesting to note that the feeling of being "at home" is rooted by five factors, the first of which insists on a person's attachment to a particular place, the second of which refers to the ties between personal and social actions that contribute to enhancing a person's life in a particular place, such as friends. In addition, as language helps to develop and express meaning in an effort to analyze and characterize circumstances, language is seen as one component of connectivity. Similar feelings of belonging can give rise to various cultural expressions, customs, and behaviors; as a result, this can have an impact on marital ties, routines, religion, and cuisine.

The host community has certain characteristics that affect how migrants see their experiences, which has an impact on how they feel about themselves and where they belong. Bhabha writes in "*Beginning Colonialism*" that: "Living along the border, at the edge, necessitates a new "art of the present." This is dependent upon accepting the opposing logic of the border and utilizing it to reconsider the prevalent ways that express things like history, identity, and community. Humans are in a transit zone where space and time collide to create intricate forms. The "beyond" is neither a new horizon nor a leaving behind of the past (Bhabha,1994, pp. 227–231). Through self-representation, some people portray a dominant narrative of belonging, while others may make reference to cultural tradition. In diasporic situations, the issue of identity crisis and re-formation is connected to cultural, political, social, and gender concerns. Identity is a process of "ongoing alterations of social, cultural, and political elements" according to postcolonial studies and the present spirit of dynamicity and progress (Pakesh, 1996 ,p. 182).

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Following the accelerating path of globalization requires identity negotiation and self-redefinition.

The process of claiming one's identity as an individual, a community, or an entire nation requires the development of ideals that lead to acceptance and acknowledgment. James Connolly (2004) examines the problematic topic of identity crisis as it is presented in postcolonial texts in *Wrath of Angels* and discovers that identity is constructed in connection to a number of distinctions and transitions (p.60). In order to affirm its presence as a part of the Self and to ensure its own self-certainty, the immigrant's identity transforms distinctions to the Other, the critic discovers (Connolly,2004,p.64). Connolly's theories follow suit with the previously stated presumptions of the dynamic nature of identity and constant change through negotiation to get adjusted within bounds of acceptability and recognition.

Accordingly, it would follow that identity exhibits some form of relativity since it oscillates between inclusion and exclusion within the binary opposition of the Self/Other, which gives it a malleable fluidity and mobility. After globalization and the separation of the globe into the first, second, and third worlds, a large process of hierarchies is established by internalizing power relations between the West and the East.

1.7.2. The Self and the Other

Any important concepts that were mentioned tended to fall somewhere along the self-and-other spectrum or utterly reject it in favor of something else. Despite not being the founder of this idea, Edward Said (1994) provides the groundwork for it by claiming that: Identity who we are, where we come from, and what we are is difficult to sustain in exile... ... we are the other, an opposite, a flaw in the geometry or resettlement, an exodus. Silence and discretion veil the hurt slow the body searches, sooth the sting of loss (pp. 16- 17). The concepts of the self and the other may be drawn from what Said mentions. The colonizer is represented as the self,

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and the colonized is the other, as would be implied by the western narrative, which is a rigorous definition of identity because one can only be one thing at a time.

As previously stated, Bhabha has succeeded in eroding the boundaries between what defines the self and the other, opening the door to what can be conceptualized as a third identity or a neutral space between the two identities that already exist. By formally and academically criticizing Edward Said's earlier writings, in which he adamantly asserts that knowing identity or one's own identity should be risked for knowledge, Ashcroft & Ahluwalia have attempted to highlight the contradictory aspect of identity. In order to perhaps infuse another identity, or at least elements of another one, one should be able to assess their concentration on their own identity when working in the field of postcolonial studies (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia; Said cited in Kraidy, 2006, p. 16). Because of this, it is a technique that is commonly employed in postcolonial discourse to demonstrate how identity is more flexible than is generally believed and how it both influences and is influenced by other identities.

The relationship that is created between the self and the Other is what helps to define who the Self is. In effect, the self's identity process is based on the contrasts that exist between the two. The process of discussing identity is not limited to the individual level; communal identity also plays a role. The same characteristics that belong to an individual self can also apply to groups, or us. Pieterse (2019) claims that the problem of identity is a result of colonization. He contends that the problem first became apparent during the decolonization process, when imperial identities were decentered. The question of identity becomes more contentious and contested when seen from the standpoint of the binary opposition between the West and East, or Self and the Other (p.45).

Clearly, a person who is labeled or referred to as the Other is someone who is different from the perspective and speech of the one who perceives them to be such. Because of this, the post-colonial theory is driven by the need to understand the nature of Otherness and how to identify it. An "in-group" and a "out-group" are two

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hierarchical groupings that are created as a result of the conflict between "Us" and "Them," or more specifically between the "Self" and the "Other," according to the International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography (2008). The first one stands for the dominant group that sets the rules and values individuality. Westerners at the period of colonization, for example. The second group is a complete diametrical opposite of the first. It has lost worth. The obligation of its members is to follow the standards of the dominant group and to put up with their prejudice since they believe they are always inferior to them. They are labeled as Others as a result (Meer, 2015). The Occident/Orient, Us/Them, and The West/the East may all be used to interpret the Self and the Other. In each of these situations, the inferior reflection of Europe that the Western literary and cultural canon uses to describe "its other" is alien to and inferior to the speaker. The Other is colonized, and the self is the colonialist.

Everything outside of oneself is considered the Other. The Other is unfamiliar (the Orient, the east, "them") while the Self is the familiar (Europe, the West, "us") (Said ,1994,p.43). According to Harle there is a connection between the two. The existence of the Other serves to define the self. In contrast, the self is what makes up the Other, and adds that the Other is perceived in two ways: positively and negatively. When there is no antagonism or violence in the relationship, the Other is seen favorably as illustrating what is special in each individual (Harle,2000).When the issue of self-identification intersects with cultural ambiguity, Hall explains the issues that may arise in Questions of Cultural Identity. This brings up the idea of otherness as a cultural reality once again. In this case, the Self's existence unavoidably requires the Other's, which furthers our awareness of the Self's characteristics (Hall,1996).

1.7.3. Otherness as a Notion

Investigating otherness requires probing identity since these two issues are crucial ones in the context of post-colonial studies. In order to comprehend the connection between the oppressed and the oppressor and how the subaltern

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negotiates space as reflected in the movies under consideration, it is crucial to define such notions. To comprehend how the paradoxical poles required to this process work, it is imperative to define the frame in which identity is established. As a result, the process of self-identification requires the presence of otherness. Furthermore, Otherness can be interpreted as the outcome of how people develop their identities via their relationships with one another. The issue of colonialist mindset and its interaction with the racial "Other" is a central theme in postcolonial writings and theories. Age, ethnicity, sex, physical ability, race, sexual orientation, social economic status, and other demographic criteria are the major ways that this experience can be communicated, allowing a person or a society to be classified or labeled as belonging to a certain type (Gallos & Ramsey, 1997, p.45). Since "us" and "them" are typically an issue, the core notion of otherness is situated right on the line between normal and aberrant, insiders, and this split frequently results in stereotyping, which is necessary for the upkeep of social and symbolic order. Said's claim that "the Orient has served to define Europe (Or the West) as it is developing image, concept, personality, and experience" might provide additional light on this (Said, 1994, p.12).

In addition, there are a lot of agents involved in the process of creating otherness. Social contact, media, literature, the arts, music, folklore, drama, theater, and movies are a few examples of these agents. Additionally, culture is a distinguishing factor since it is necessary to make a definite differentiation between objects in order to categorize them. Boundaries are therefore essential to all societies. Control over the conquered countries is crucial for the conquerors, but it also somewhat defines Europe or USA as a whole. Because the western colonists need an Other, a people, a nation, and spaces to establish their own sense of identity. In this sense, one might presume that Spivak's thesis is closely related to the idea of a world in which anthropological realities are recorded in colonized space.

Additionally, this phrase is governed by the Lacanian concept of the vast "Other" and the minor "other" in psychoanalysis. The former refers to the colonists

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and their systems in the colonial sense. Thus, the process of "othering" included giving the colonized indigenous traits that were considered bad or limited collectively so that they might be perceived and managed in a particular way. In this regard, Hall (1996) stated that "the identification process is the most essential psychological feature of culture the link between culture and personality. This procedure most definitely poses a significant barrier to understanding between cultures (p. 240). One of the key postcolonial difficulties is the notion of Otherness. The word is used to describe duality, identity, and difference. Bhabha expands on the theories of Jacques Lacan and Frantz Fanon, who see "otherness" as a binary opposition between white and black, and is frequently used to describe colonized people. In order to determine what is "normal" and where one fits into the world, one must have other people (Bhabha,1994). The concept that the empirical center produces its others is known as "othering," a word that was first used by Gayatri Spivak in 1988.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Otherness" is the characteristic or state of being distinct or other; however, a more comprehensive definition of Otherness, which describes the Other, is the state of being unrelated to one's own identity. It is important to note that philosophy, not science, is used to examine the idea of otherness. In a way that Richard Kearney (1995) refers to as the "labyrinth of looking glasses," the Self and the Other are connected reflections of one another while still being different (p.17). One could argue that any stranger eventually becomes "the Other," particularly when it comes to culture and sense of identity (gender, race, and social classes). For instance, the biological and psychological differences between a male and a female inevitably resulted in the formation of many prejudices as a result of both parties perceiving the other as "the Other" in this dichotomy. This perception of the "other" is unique to Western civilizations where the "other" is perceived negatively. At the same time, the other is frequently described in terms of culture rather than geography. From this perspective, the "other" is just someone who is not the self or who is different from the self; it need not be an antagonistic or strange figure. The trait of being different

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and unique, particularly in terms of religion, culture, and social grouping (gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic classes), is known as "otherness". "By art alone we are able to reach outside ourselves, to see what another sees of this cosmos which for him is not ours, the landscapes of which would remain as mysterious to us as those of the moon," writes Marcel Proust in *Time Regained* (cited in Zelechow, 2004, p.525). That is to say, art and potent film are the most helpful means of understanding the other and concurrently perceiving oneself.

Genuine and thorough understanding of otherness, according to post-colonial scholar Abdul Mohamed, is only conceivable if the self is able to deny or at least severely bracket the values, assumptions, and ideologies of his culture (cited in Rhit, 2020 ,p.84). In other words, it is difficult to separate and negate the structure of one culture, and in order to comprehend the other, one must make their own perspective objective in order to identify the other. In a nutshell, everything or everybody who is unique or different from the Western world and environment is considered to be a "Other." The Spectacle of the Other, power must be understood in this context not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a particular way. Othering is an expression of dominance by the dominant culture over a minority or marginal culture (Hall, 1995, p. 249).

1.8. Considering Culture

Since numerous academics define culture differently and approach it from various perspectives, there are multiple definitions of culture rather than just one. A general concept that includes artistic works including writing, music, theater, dance, acting, and painting. Debatable topics have come up about the nature of such a broad idea because culture has always been a privileged area of investigation and study. It may be characterized as the beliefs, practices, skills, and tools that distinguish a certain group of people during a specific time. It is a collection of concepts about how to live, think, and conduct that are socially transmitted and developed within one generation. Thus, cultural models are passed down through

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socialization from one generation to the next and are acquired through imitation, instruction, and media (Zafiri & Kourdis, 2017, pp. 35-68).

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), "culture is the advanced development of the human powers; growth of the mind and spirit through training and experience" (cited in Kumar, 2019). Furthermore, culture may be simply described as the way of life of a certain race, nation, or group of people. This idea has drawn criticism for being an all-encompassing one that might simplify complicated socio-historical issues and obscure the ethical and social inconsistencies that exist both within and across communities. Since 2010, Culture is considered the Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development by UNESCO. The anthropologist Edward B. Taylor (1871) coined the word "culture" and defined it as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society" (cited in Kumar, 2019, p. 26). Taylor underlines in his definition that culture is a social practice that men learn and acquire in their own community. He also emphasizes culture as a characteristic that all human groups share.

Moreover, Culture is defined by sociologists Horton & Hunt (1984) as "everything that is socially learned and shared by the members of a society; social heritage which the individual receives from the group; a system of behavior shared by members of a society" (cited in Kumar, 2019, p. 545). Meanwhile, culture allows the various facets of humankind to coexist; in fact, this variety becomes the basis of a stand-alone, and a strong one, and this suggests that culture provides a framework for one's existence. It also affects his actions, attitudes, and beliefs. Therefore, culture plays a critical role in defining an individual's identity. The minds of people are the proper location for it. Thus, in order to establish traditions and norms a particular way of living people attempt to put those concealed concepts into practice. Since all the goods, marvels, and artifacts created by men in a particular community are really cultural artifacts.

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It is also mentioned that a person's "cultural arena," or the area in which they reside, affects the culture they adhere to. One's feelings toward the culture they seek to embrace are influenced by the location, the environment, and the locals there. Many immigrants feel the need to adapt their culture in order to blend in with that of the majority of the country's residents. When an immigrant feels forced to choose between the two presented cultures, it might clash with how they now see their own culture and cause problems.

1.8.2. Cultural Assimilation and Integration

The first concept is the process through which minority cultural groups in the diaspora take on the ideas, attitudes, and practices of the dominant culture. In reality, **cultural assimilation** changes components of minority culture, and there is also a danger that some aspects of minority culture might disappear. It resembles acculturation in a certain sense. On the other hand, the term "**integration**" signified both assimilation and the preservation of some linguistic and cultural traits. When the conditions are right, it can happen. "Integration" aims to rebuild and reconcile communities while allowing the minority diverse group to maintain its culture, language, and religious beliefs. Cultural integration is the process through which adjustments to some cultural elements result in change to others.

Additionally, the process of integration wherein immigrants win the approval of the majority community requires cultural assimilation. Thus, mutual acceptance of cultural diversity may be used to define cultural assimilation. When an Indian decides to settle down in a foreign nation, as is the case with Asian Indians, he learns about the local host culture. He adopts the customs of the host culture when interacting with individuals. He achieves social adjustment through this process by meeting his demands and expectations of his Indian buddies. He has an option between assimilation and integration into the host culture. He just accepts the traditions of the host community when his group is relatively tiny. Although he does not fully assimilate, he is included into the national culture (Gautam, 2013).

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In the context of reception, immigration is accompanied by varying degrees of tolerance, acceptance, or xenophobia toward the foreign newcomers on the part of the natives, which can shape the immigrants' sense of belonging and facilitate the process of response. Their integration into the host society may take a variety of forms, some of which lead to greater ethnic homogenization and solidarity, others to greater ethnic differentiation and heterogeneity. People who appreciate cultural diversity see their own culture as one of the many different civilizations and ways of life in this globe. The two subcategories of acceptance of difference are adaptation of cultural difference and integration of cultural difference, which refers to incorporating cultural differences into one's own life.

Notably, diasporic societies will also encounter **adjustment** and **adaptation**, which are crucial options for dealing with attitude and conduct. Internally, Indians continue to practice their rituals, celebrate religious holidays, and maintain their traditions and overt symbols of costume, temple construction, eating habits, and usage of vernacular language. Externally, they intentionally adhere to the general tenets of the laws, moral code, language, and behaviour of the host nations. On the other hand, when people gather together to create an association in order to preserve their cultural security, it turns into an institution. The dispersed members of the ethnic group get together, hold informal meetings, and decide to join groups when they encounter offensive remarks and unanticipated prejudice. The discrepancy increases when "we" and "them" are used by the host society that views the group as distinct from "we" in terms of attitude, conduct, and cultural baggage.

In addition to the aforementioned concepts, **alienation** is another sociological term that denotes a person's inability to blend in with the crowd. It makes people feel powerless or out of place in a certain circumstance. It is a turning away, separation, the sensation of not belonging or of being an outsider. In addition, the term "alienation" is used to describe minorities, the impoverished, the jobless, and other groups having little influence over societal development. When one thinks of home, they tend to think of comfort and security. The problem of belonging and identification has frequently troubled the world in more recent times. As a result, it

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appears that alienation is an outcome of displacement, "resulting from migration, the experience of captivity, transportation, or voluntary removal for indentured labor" (Ashcroft et al,1998, p.9). So, a prevalent theme in contemporary literature, philosophy, and sociology is alienation.

Also, the term **dislocation** which is a type of forced migration in which people are moved against their will within their own nation of origin can be added to describe the state of the people of the diaspora who are laterally displaced by the concept of diasporic home, they have experienced fluidity of identities, and they live with the agonies resulting from uncontrollable nostalgia for things lost, places abandoned, and languages abandoned. So, it refers to somebody who resides in a condition of ambivalence. Although displacement has aided in advancements for both diasporic people and those in their homeland, it also causes countless problems physically and psychologically, such as assaults from the host community.

1.9. Globalization

Since its inception, the term "globalization" has given rise to a variety of definitions and interpretations. Its historical roots can be found in the great trade and imperial movements that spanned Asia and the Indian Ocean beginning in the 15th century, as well as the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the connectivity of the world's economies and cultures grew rapidly. Major causes have contributed to globalization, which has increased the interconnection of economic and cultural activity (Kolb ,2018). It is the rise in interpersonal communication brought about by the expansion of global trade in goods, services, and ideas. Although in its most basic meaning, globalization refers to the spreading, deepening, and accelerating of global interconnectedness, such a definition calls for additional development, according to David Held and his co-authors(1999) in *Global Transformations* .On a continuum with the local, national, and regional is where globalization may be found. Social and economic networks that are structured locally and/or nationally are found at one end of the continuum, while networks that crystallize on a larger

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scale of regional and global connections are found at the other end (Held, 1999, pp. 14-28).

The term "globalization" may be used to describe the spatial-temporal processes of change that support a shift in the way human affairs are organized by connecting and extending human activity across regions and continents. It is impossible to formulate this concept in a clear or consistent way without making reference to such extensive geographical linkages. Each of the following characteristics of globalization must be included in a definition for it to be accurate: extent, stretching, intensity, velocity, and effect. Thus, as a result of following liberalization, the globe became significantly more integrated in numerous areas. Another important aspect of the globalization process that might be highlighted is human migration and movement. The intensity of globalization the widened scope and instantaneity of modern social relations is what is novel about it. Regional, international, or international migration whether forced or voluntary has become a more prevalent occurrence.

More into history, following the First World War, the American idea of globalization began to take shape gradually, but after the fall of the Soviet Union, it intensified. Following this collapse, the US has been publicly promoting its unipolar New World Order agenda, which depends on the globalization of every aspect of life, from the economy to culture. However, widespread globalism has brought with it significant threats to identity, including ethnic, national, and religious identities. One of the sincere demands of globalization has been to subject everyone to the same set of social, cultural, and economic norms. Numerous ideologies and opposing worldviews have developed over time in an effort to realize this goal. However, it's possible that the variety of opposing ideologies has given rise to a number of perplexing isms, each of which offers a distinct worldview and may work to undermine the aforementioned ideal. Many people Anthony Appiah being one of them believe that cosmopolitanism may make up for the inadequacies of globalization in the midst of this terminology conflation. Identity concerns have frequently been raised in discussions on globalization (Appiah,2006).

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As previously established, globalization is the term used to describe the escalating rate and breadth of interconnections throughout the world. Arjun Appadurai (1996) an anthropologist, has described this in terms of five distinct "scapes" or flows: mediascapes, financescapes, ideoscapes, and ethnoscapes. Within this framework, it is possible to examine issues related to where individuals migrate, why they move, how quickly they migrate, how their lives change as a result of their migration, and how their original communities change (pp.94-102). Within this part of research, the term "mediascape" describes the transnational movement of media, and which concerns the thesis. In past historical eras, moving entertainment and educational materials from one place to another may take weeks or even months.

Through the telegraph, telephone, and now the Internet along with a plethora of other digital communication technologies, media may be exchanged much more quickly and readily across international boundaries. Bollywood movies are screened in Canadian theaters, for instance, and people from all over the world frequently watch mega-events like the World Cup and the Olympics from wherever they may reside. Brazilian telenovelas may even provide as amusement on lengthy African bus journeys. Although Appadurai's five scapes offer helpful frameworks for considering these different types of circulation, untangling them in this way can also be deceptive. In the end, more than one of these scapes will be present in the phenomena that the majority of anthropologists study.

According to this theoretical perspective, globalization should be seen as a complicated web of interdependent interactions that primarily allow for the indirect exercise of power. The Bollywood film business in India or the different McDonald's burger "glocal" variations are two notable examples of this global hybrid trends in fashion, food, music, consumerism, and lifestyle as a result of many cultural styles from across the world. It is suggested that such cultural variety and pluralism will become the norm in the global, postmodern society.

1.9.1. Globalization and Acculturation

Intercultural interaction also starts a second process of globalization that influences both culture and the individual. A process of acculturation starts when individuals from various cultural groups and their members interact with one another, resulting in cultural and psychological changes in both parties. This framework suggests that other outcomes, in addition to the assimilation of non-dominant peoples into dominant societies, may occur: integration results in the maintenance of current cultures and behaviors while people interact regularly within an evolving civic framework; separation results in the maintenance of cultures and psychological processes when groups and individuals interact as little as possible; This exclusion from full and fair involvement in the broader society resulting in cultural and psychological loss, especially among non-dominant communities. Aspects of this variety are shown using empirical research on immigrants, nation states, and indigenous and diasporic populations.

In the same vein, instead of speaking of assimilation and homogenization as a result of intercultural contact, some forms of integration (exhibiting a high degree of cultural and psychological continuity and creating new social structures that include interacting peoples) or separation seem to be more likely outcomes (in the form of resistance and revitalization of heritage cultures). The connection and integration of people, businesses, and governments on a global scale is known as globalization. The expansion of globalization is a result of communication technology. The expansion of international trade, ideas, and culture coincides with a rise in worldwide relationships. Cultural changes may affect a group's traditions as well as its economic and political system. A person's opinions regarding the acculturation process and their cultural identities might shift emotionally. So, Assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization are the four acculturation techniques that are characterized when these two dimensions are crossed. When two cultures meet, several phenomena can occur, and often the minority will adopt the majority's practices. Acculturation and assimilation are the results of this phenomena.

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When individuals of a smaller group adopt the traditions of the stronger community while retaining parts of their own traditions, this process is known as acculturation. And it is distinguished by the fact that, depending on how two societies interact, it may result in both coercion and disruption of people's cultures. Whereas the notion of assimilation, which is wider, relates to how members of a smaller society interpret new knowledge about a bigger culture, because it happens gradually, the culture is assimilated subconsciously. Since cultural change is inevitable, both acculturation and assimilation are considered phenomena that describe the flow of culture. The involvement of the dominant group in transforming culture and modifying the ideas and lifestyles of individuals or groups coming into direct touch with it is one of the key characteristics of acculturation that sets it apart from assimilation (Cohen, 2011,p.1-22).

1.9.2. Cultural Globalization

The widespread consumption of cultures that have been spread via the Internet, popular culture media, and worldwide travel characterizes this movement. This has strengthened colonization and commodity exchange activities, which have a longer history of transferring cultural significance across borders. People can participate in extensive social relationships that span international and regional boundaries thanks to the flow of cultures (Banerjee,2001 ,pp. 683-722). Thus, cultural globalization is the process through which, as a result of the spread of ideas and goods, the experience of daily life reflects a globalization of cultural manifestations. Globalization has been viewed as a tendency toward uniformity that would eventually make human experience throughout the globe virtually the same. This trend has been fueled by the effectiveness or popularity of wireless communications, electronic commerce, popular culture, and international travel. A hesitation to define precisely what the term "culture" means underpins these varied perspectives of globalization (Pieterse, 2019).

Anthropologists defined culture during the most of the 20th century as a set of common values, traditions, and concepts that bound individuals into distinct,

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self-identified groups. This idea of cultural coherence was contested by academics from a wide range of fields, especially when it became clear that members of close-knit organizations had dramatically divergent perspectives on their social environments. It is challenging to prove that there is a dominant global culture given the predominance of local cultures. Globalization is not an almighty, unidirectional force that flattens everything in its path, according to research. Television is now a legitimate target for allegations of cultural imperialism due to the influence of media conglomerates and the prevalence of entertainment programs. The globalization of culture has been disseminated by the effect of technology. It combines the effects of migration, urbanization, and globalization on current developments. In his argument that cultural blending across continents and regions may be seen dating back many centuries, Jan Pieterse proposed that cultural globalization entails human integration and hybridization. The experience of India shows the diversity of the effects of cultural globalization as well as its lengthy history (Sahay, 2013). This may result in the creation of a human monoculture, often known as cultural imperialism or Americanization, which some globalization skeptics see as a danger to these countries' cultural identities.

The most obvious and perhaps most misleading aspect of globalization is the illusion of homogeneity and diversity which seems so attractive. Indeed, Samuel Huntington underlines how, despite the fact that the globe is getting smaller and more linked, contacts between individuals from many cultures strengthen the sense of civilization, which in turn enlivens distinctions (Paul & Steger cited in Kraidy, 2006). Hence, "Cultural globalization" refers to the quick transfer of concepts, viewpoints, meanings, values, and culturally significant items across international boundaries. It specifically refers to the notion that there is now a global and common mono-culture that transcends local cultural traditions and lifestyles and that shapes perceptions, aspirations, tastes, and daily activities of people wherever they may live in the world. This mono-culture is transmitted and reinforced by the internet, popular entertainment, transnational marketing of particular brands, and international tourism. The majority of researchers who study

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current global pressures and interactions concur that it is no longer possible to ignore or disregard the most important globalization processes operating in the world linked to the vast extensions of market relations, economic, political, and cultural interactions, and reproduction cycles developed under the entirely new conditions of capitalism and the new global order (Watson , 2022). As one can see, the topic of cultural globalization is crucial to international relations. It is crucial to continue considering the problems brought on by cultural and global change, especially as we develop new means of communication.

The economic globalization brought in the emergence of transnational firms and a wide range of goods, particularly food and drink products like pizza and soda as well as clothing items like Levi jeans, Reebok and Nike shoes, etc. Everyone is participating in the same international kind of consumption in this way. As a result, cross-border cultural effects resulted from stronger economic ties. Transnational companies, cultural, and media organizations that operate outside of national borders are the main drivers of cultural globalization like radio, TV, and movies. Without leaving out the global cultural flow, which is the product of globalization and involves the movement of people, objects, and ideas across national lines (Appadurai, 1996,p. 296). Five interconnected "Landscapes," or dimensions, that highlight the basic gaps between economy, culture, and politics in the global cultural economy may be used to study global cultural flows. They are the following: mediascapes, financescapes, ideascapes, and technoscapes. The "ways by which individuals build personal and societal identities" are reorganized by these aspects. In his work *"Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,"*(1990) anthropologist and globalization theorist Arjun Appadurai developed these five dimensions which enable cultural exchanges to take place because in the past they have often been constrained by geographical and financial barriers.

It's crucial to remember that cultural globalization is not totally a one-way path, even if the United States may dominate this phenomenon. In addition to America, several other nations also make contributions to world culture.

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Significantly, other national cultures have an increasing effect in the United States and across the world, just as American popular culture has an impact on other nations. A successful industry that incorporates characteristics from other cultures is Hollywood (Lieber & Weisberg, 2002, pp. 273-296). It may be claimed that Hollywood is a multicultural institution from this angle. The U.S. worldwide pop culture is not entirely comprised of American films, music, and television shows, according to Crothers (2012). Numerous more artifacts include the values, beliefs, mores, attitudes, behaviors, customs, and rituals that represent American society (cited in Gripsrud, 2017, p. 195).

In fact, the world is greatly influenced by American art, literature, music, and culture in general. For instance, remakes of foreign films are common in American cinema like, "*The Departed*," the 2007 Best Picture Oscar winner, is a remake of the Chinese film "*Infernal Affairs*". Hollywood is home to numerous non-American performers, producers, and production businesses. Two international media conglomerates, Sony of Japan and News Corporation of Australia, respectively, hold Columbia Tristar and Twentieth Century Fox. Canadian James Cameron is the director and producer of the film *Titanic*. In addition, many of Hollywood's most well-known actors are foreigners. Nicole Kidman was raised in Australia, whereas Arnold Schwarzenegger was born in Austria.

Consequently, there is a significant discussion around the topic of culture and globalization, which centers on the issues of globalization and cultural diversity. Cross-cultural communication is a topic of research that focuses on how individuals from various cultural backgrounds interact with one another, both within their own groups and while attempting to communicate with those from different cultural backgrounds. Moreover, there is the spread of cultural elements, such as concepts, aesthetics, religions, technology, and languages, is known as cultural diffusion. Cross-cultural interactions have expanded as a result of cultural globalization, yet this trend may also lead to a loss of the distinctiveness of once isolated groups (Watson, 2022). Globalization can endanger the variety of local culture by introducing the culture of a dominant nation into a recipient nation. Globalization,

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in the words of Giddens (1990), is "the deepening of international social interactions that link distant locations in such a manner that local happenings are impacted by events occurring many kilometers away and vice versa" (p.4). Therefore, the cultural aspect might be seen as being more important to globalization than material criteria.

1.10. Globalization and Transnationalism Variation

When ideas and terminologies overlap, there is some degree of confusion that comes with the introduction to the key themes to be explored; this is true of the terms "globalization" and "transnationalism," for example. We have the chance to hone the methodology and get a bit closer to significant advances in the subject since, as is only natural, experts frequently dispute over the specifics of theory development and application. *Modernity at Large* by Arjun Appadurai, *Global Matters* by Paul Jay, and *Cosmopolitanism* by Kwame Anthony Appiah the disagreement between Appadurai and Jay's perspectives on the causes of transnationalism and how it relates to globalization was very fascinating. According to Appadurai(1996), the globalization phenomenon and the transnational impacts it delivers are relatively new .Notably, new identities are envisioned and spread when diasporic communities attain increased ease and speed in communication and community development (cited in Bauböck & Faist,2010).

Condensing time and space is, in fact, a crucial component of Appadurai's theory of rupture, which he refers to as "necessarily a theory of the recent past" (p.9). The criticism from Jay, on the other side, is that "Appadurai's approach to globalization stresses rupture, speed, convergence, and disjunction at the expense of historicizing the processes that have led to this rupture in the first place" (Heyman & Campbell,p.36,2009). In his own reasoning, he makes the claim that transnationalism is not a modern phenomenon and that globalization is not its primary or simple source. Combining materialistic and cultural perspectives will lead to a more complete understanding. On the other hand, Kwame Anthony Appiah's (2006) proposal for a new cosmopolitanism reflects an ethical standpoint,

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essentially saying that even if people and cultures differ, one can and must benefit from those differences. He warns, like Jay, that globalization poses a threat to homogeneity as well as homogenization, according to his cosmopolitanism. "Universality plus uniqueness," he suggested as a motto (p.151).

Seemingly, complex systems of interrelations have recently formed and expanded on a variety of scales, including the global, regional, national, and local, augmenting the growth, intensity, and acceleration of interactions, flows, and actors in a world where people are moving about more and more. They are multifaceted in that they combine elements of the economic, political, and cultural spheres as well as the relationships and influences that exist between these spheres. They are also multidimensional in that they manifest as processes of organizational, institutional, strategic, and cultural convergence, alignment, and standardization as well as networks of interaction between transnational institutions and agents (Liwerant, 2015, pp. 309-336). Without geographical, spatial, and temporal referents, without which it would be hard to imagine the structures and institutions, economies, social interactions, and cultural spaces of today, globalization has brought about economic, social, political, and cultural transformations.

The term "transnationalism" refers to networks, people, organizations, things, commodities, and cultural circuits that cross national boundaries. The constant and intensive interconnections between communal and social, international and local, and national and transnational levels are unleashed and explained. On national and international stages, ethnic, national, and religious diasporas have also been redefining their character and reach. The idea of diaspora's revival, if not resurgence, and the rise of transnationalism as an analytical strategy may both be utilized to examine key issues in social change. Both ideas provide fresh interpretations of historical realities while shedding light on new ones in a globalized and highly mobile environment. The two names represent different conceptual ancestries even though they may relate to the same processes and individuals and are used interchangeably. The contemporary literature acknowledges that they pertain to cross-border activities, but new formulations that

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recover and reinterpret traditional characteristics have emerged in response to the diaspora's shifting boundaries and abundance as a result of novel migration and dispersion modalities. In a globalized society, people and organizations compete for recognition on the cultural and public spheres. Groups are identified by distinguishing marks of their time's imaginary as collective and minority identities take center stage in public debate, and new contacts lead to new kinds of involvement. But in recent decades, a new phase has made extraordinary claims about globalization.

The communication media, which intensify the density and speed of cross-border connections as a result of the numerous, diverse combinations between telecommunications, digital computers, audiovisual media, and satellites, are among the changes that most obviously affect spatial and temporal referents. The globalization process also reaffirms a few cultural bases for sovereignty. Diverse groups, communities, and/or classes establish identities and loyalties over and above national feelings as a result of more extensive cross-border interaction. Instead of examining diasporic practices as resulting from the upkeep of borders between those communities, transnational studies focusing on the diasporic practices of émigré ethnic communities have emphasized processes of cultural hybridization, fluidity, and creolization, as well as religious syncretism. A "world on the move," defined as the interconnectedness of civilizations and nations, migrant flows, individual and group relocation, and other factors, required the extra analytical perspectives offered by the notions of transnationalism and diaspora.

1.11. Cultural Perception

How those aspects of the universe are viewed within the framework of a person's culture influences how they perceive things like art, language, religion, etc. So, whereas perception takes into account how a person views the world, culture takes into account how they live, speak, connect with others, and create. The way that people perceive the world is thus greatly influenced by culture. One refers to this as cultural perception. Different individuals perceive behavior and gestures

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differently, and culture has a significant impact on how we develop into the persons we are today. It fosters an atmosphere where those individuals interact according to a common set of beliefs, perspectives, and practices. It is dynamic and ever-evolving over time (Joyner, 2016). Your interactions with family, friends, and strangers will be governed by the social standards that your society has established. Subcultures also occur inside cultures. Your cognition and perception are affected by religions, communities, regional dialects, and customs. Since culture has the power to alter how we perceive the world, a cultural viewpoint is also the vantage point from which each individual observes a given circumstance. It sounds too simple to be an argument at all.

The majority of research in this area concentrated on the contrast between Western and East/South Asian cultures, where one is noted for individualism and the other for being holistic (Goode,2000). Since everyone has a distinct cultural environment surrounding them, it stands to reason that this environment has probably had an impact on them. Without forgetting the experience of feeling torn between several major civilizations and unable to identify with any one of them. A case was presented for "cultural" effects on perception by Nisbett and Miyamoto (2005). In contrast to Westerners, who are more prone to attend to, perceive, and remember the characteristics of salient objects and their category memberships, Asians are more likely to attend to, perceive, and recall contexts and connections, according to a substantial body of research. It should be observed that the attentional and perceptual differences previously mentioned are typically fairly considerable, coming close to one standard deviation in certain cases. Indeed, in the usual investigation, it was discovered that the behavior of Asians and Westerners was substantially different (Nisbett&Miyamoto,2005,p. 469). Therefore, the globe would not be a "global community" but rather a diverse and violent collection of ethnic groupings, as seen in more traditional regions of the world, if any culture was determined by any ethnicity, as it formerly was.

Since people are building a worldwide and collectivized culture, culture is playing a less and smaller role in shaping individual perspectives as globalization

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progresses. So, understanding oneself is essential to understanding others. Intercultural communication is often difficult, but it may be made easier by being clear about your message and your delivery. Cultural background also plays a crucial role in all of this. The establishment of safe places for minorities is facilitated by representation. It makes it possible for people of all ages to identify with characters in the media and feel that they are recognized and taken seriously. Racism, stereotyping, and xenophobia may all be fought with this kind of instruction. This kind of incident would have been avoided if various Asian ethnic groups, for instance, had been more accurately portrayed in the media, which would have also helped people realize that Asia including India that it is home to a variety of unique ethnic groups, each with their own distinct customs. They can learn through media depiction that individuals are different and have a variety of qualities that are not only dependent on their identity. It enables individuals to freely explore their identities without being forced to fit any stereotypes presented in a certain film or television program.

Minorities can learn that they are more than the stereotypes that surround them with the aid of representation. Representation creates the groundwork for anti-racist attitudes and actions, as well as for compassion and understanding for others. Reverse racism, in which characters are included just for the sake of "diversity," is one problem. These kinds of characters shouldn't be viewed as representation, and media outlets need to do more to provide diverse, non-tokenized personalities.

1.11.1. Cultural Stereotypes

When judging someone, one tends to simplify, generalize, and classify them. Stereotyping is the term for the categorization. One's view is narrowed by such stereotyping, which also eventually erodes one's capacity for inquiring into and learning about others. In social psychology, the word "preconceived thought," particularly about a group of individuals, is first used by Lipman in 1922. Many stereotypes are homophobic, sexist, or racially biased. In other words, a stereotype serves as a symbol to distinguish between many opposing binaries while acting as a

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mediator between them. Understanding the development of the Otherness and the idea of its word is made easier by looking at the stereotypes that have been developed. The stereotype may be defined as generalizations formed by an entire group into one through simplification and neglecting social, cultural, and other forms of distinctions, according to the Journal of Education Culture and Society (Brandt & Reyna, 2011). The traits are shown as being hereditary traits that cannot be altered.

Furthermore, Mengstie (2011) claims that the method used to teach these traits is dichotomous moralizing. Therefore, "Us" and "Them" set borders based on the levels of power that exist between the various social groupings (pp.4-15). The influence of these preconceptions on an individual's identity is significant. Additionally, Hall (1997) states that the majority of stereotypes result from racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic disparities (cited in Mengstie, 2011, p.257). Because of this, it is thought that stereotyping has to be critically investigated in order to comprehend how the portrayal of gender, ethnicity, and race actually operates. Stereotypes, in the words of Kramsch (1998), are "conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and culture" (p. 131). To put it another way, stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes held by a group's members about others based on scant or no evidence. Stereotypes, among other things, can span certain social categories and be both good and bad. Some preconceptions are open to challenge, even though this is more likely to perpetuate them (Madon cited in Bordalo, et al., 2013, pp. 803-843). Various studies contend that stereotypes can be useful because they occasionally include accurate information (Whitley & Kite, 2006). In other words, generalizations can frequently be useful for improving interpersonal interactions. They are occasionally labeled as "inappropriate judgments" (Schweinitz, 2011).

Occasionally, stereotypes are only viewed as "linguistic formulations that take the shape of standardized terms" or as "naturalized repeating patterns of storytelling" (Lippmann cited in Schweinitz, 2011, p. 03). This was typical with Indian-Americans, who have historically been stigmatized in American culture. The

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cultural differences between East/South Asians and North Americans in terms of attention, perception, cognition, and social psychological phenomena like the self, have emerged as one of the most important subjects in recent years (Murray, 2011).

Therefore, stereotyping sees people as uniform products of culture. The attitude that interrupts proper intercultural perceptions and communication. If one doesn't know enough about people from different cultures, cultural or ethnic-racial identity separation and/or uniqueness may be provoked, which results in discriminatory treatment. Perhaps any stereotypical knowledge has to be updated. As a result, individual differences are not taken into account; rather, the group's generalizations apply unilaterally to all of its members. Particularly, the media affects how we see other people, with whom we may have little regular contact. As a result, preconceptions of "character types" are created, and Stereotypes about cultures are the outcome of careless reasoning. When individuals base their decisions on stereotypes, they objectify people by making them look like two-dimensional figures that are interchangeable with everyone else. They treat a person's sense of self-identity, which is the most significant and valued aspect of them, as though it were a generic quality.

There were many **prejudices** about nations and individuals in the past; some of them faded with time, while others have persisted and gained strength in the present. Prejudices, in contrast to stereotypes, are frequently unfavorable. A prejudice is "an unreasonable dislike of a person, group, custom, etc., especially it is based on their race, religion, sex, etc." (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2017). Therefore, biases strongly held unfavorable beliefs maintained by a group of individuals toward other people or cultures. Prejudice between cultures is essentially negative antagonism directed against a group or an individual because of his or her affiliation with that group. For instance, scapegoating theory assigns blame on a minority group rather than taking personal responsibility. Other interpretations place more emphasis on how prejudice may be better understood by linking it to issues of power, class, and social status. These issues can generally and

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literally result in discrimination, including attitudes and behaviors that are vocal and nonverbal.

1.11.2. Racism and Discrimination

A social construct that separates individuals into separate groups arbitrarily based on traits including physical appearance especially color, ancestral background, cultural affinity, cultural history, ethnic categorization, and the social, economic, and political necessities of a society at a particular moment, and it is also the direct effect of and practice of discrimination which the group may experience from the host culture once it becomes a well-known phenomenon. Conflict or rivalry may be to blame, which can expose weaknesses in the social process of collaboration. Such intolerance has also been practiced towards Indians. The General Assembly of the United Nations declared 1971 the International Year to fight Racism and Racial Prejudice in an effort to prevent discrimination in 1969(Guatam,2013).

1.12. Conclusion

In this chapter, the exploration of concepts such as Self/Other, hybridity, cultural identity, and transnationalism, along with the examination of cultural stereotypes, aims to understand their relevance to the development of modern global and cultural studies, as well as their connection to the central theme of this thesis, the diaspora. Additionally, the issues of assimilation, resistance, alienation, and memory concerning cultural identity are also investigated.

Recognizing the theories' significance in the context of globalization is essential to lay a strong foundation for the next chapter, which delves into the second part related to the status of Indian cinema in the Western world. The primary focus of this research revolves around comprehending the distinct culture of Indian diasporic subjectivities, especially within the context of diasporic cinema. Terms such as "appropriation," "globalization," and "transnational flows" are academically acknowledged categories that carry considerable importance and require artistic

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exploration. These concepts play a vital role in understanding how filmmakers grapple with their identities, navigate hierarchical systems, and contribute to the broader discourse on ethnic diversity and representation within cinema, particularly in specific cultural and national contexts.

CHAPTER TWO

**Conceptualizing Transnational Cinema and the Case of the Popular
Indian Cinema**

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to define transnational cinema as a theoretical and practical concept, taking into account the numerous overlaps with national cinema, focusing on the Indian one that is mentioned at this point. Bollywood or the Popular Indian Cinema as a case is the most financially successful form of Indian cinema, and it presents an intriguing term paradox. The majority of today's movies are the work of organizations and individuals from various locations. A large studio with headquarters in another nation may produce a movie using cast members, crew members, and technical support from many locations. These movies are typically promoted internationally and are meant to be broadly appealing.

Additionally, as a result of globalization, filmmaking has in fact grown more deterritorialized and intertwined with migrant patterns. As a result, a complicated academic field known primarily by a variety of labels, including diasporic, intercultural, transnational, exilic, postcolonial, crossover, multicultural, minority, or world cinema, has emerged. Additionally, unique professional channels, including film festivals, production and distribution companies, and some funding schemes, have been established. Although the interest in this newly developed cinematic genre has come from a wide range of theorists and film critics, in general, they believe it to have more national than international worth.

When theorizing diasporic visuality, one observes that cinematic visuality is becoming a more potent weapon for swaying public opinion across international boundaries. Due to the globalization of the production, consumption, and distribution of films nowadays. These interactions, however, are not free from the influence of neoliberal systems, commercialization, colonialism, and economics. A lot of the presumptions and foundations of conventional understandings regarding all the specified notions that were already alluded to in the first chapter are challenged by this body of criticism.

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2.2. Cinema Defined

Cinema is a widely used form of mass consumption that is important in forming attitudes, creating images, and sustaining prevailing cultural norms. The complex cultural challenges, history, conflicts, and lessons existing in other cultures are expressed and illustrated in movies. Movies provide cultural information that has been acquired throughout a variety of situations and eras. Seemingly, the film is very significant to society because it can have an impact on some individuals, but the real reason, to take it in consideration, is that it allows the ones to think about their own lives as well as the lives of others who are different from them and can provide them with a fresh viewpoint. Today, cinema is regarded as one of World's most well-liked creative forms and may perhaps be its most significant contribution to global culture.

Factually, it's difficult to fathom life without motion pictures those flitting, projected images that have come to symbolize the inner and outward realities by transmitting thoughts and emotions from one person or culture to another across distance and time. Some people just care about the fun and pleasure it brings them. The majority of moviegoers attend in order to enjoy themselves. They want to spend two hours in a different place, away from the pressures of their daily lives and their stressful jobs. Others find it easier to relate to the people in the movies they see or to be fascinated by the technical skill that enables high-quality movies. As an extremely effective medium, cinema may be utilized to create societal change. Films may open viewers' minds to new ideas and present them with a different perspective on society than what they are accustomed to, they serve as a tool for social change and an art form in this way. It may be used to study significant societal issues or to entertain or educate.

Furthermore, Cinema is a very powerful tool for expressing drama and especially for evoking emotion. Motion picture art is incredibly sophisticated and complicated, needing contributions from almost all other disciplines as well as a wide range of technical abilities. Film was rapidly acknowledged as maybe the first really widespread form of entertainment since it was a successful business endeavor

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that provided fictitious narratives to sizable crowds in theaters. The media also evolved as a way of artistic expression in disciplines like acting, directing, scripting, cinematography, costume and set design, and music, all without losing its broad appeal (Hayward, 2013). Film production corporations, film studios, cinematography, animation, scripting, pre-production, post-production, film festivals, distribution, and actors are all included in the film business, also known as the motion picture industry. Although the cost of producing films almost immediately forced production to concentrate under the umbrella of established production companies, improvements in accessible filmmaking technology and a growth in the availability of sources for outside investment capital have allowed independent film production to advance.

The assistant professor of film studies at Cornell University, located in the United States, is well known for her extensive work in cinema and media studies. The potential of cinema to be entwined with other areas is one of its unique characteristics, as revealed by Amy Villarejo's (2013) definition of the term. She explains: Cinema's dynamism, its capacity to arrange and rearrange time and motion, thus reveals its dimensions that are deeply social, historical, industrial, technological, philosophical, political, aesthetic, psychological, personal, and so forth (p.9), and so cinema is the culmination of these various elements.

Cinema therefore portrays history and feeds off of it; it reflects societal conditions and is impacted by them itself, making it imperative not to study films in isolation. In other words, cinema is frequently considered to be a kind of cultural expression unique to a certain region. National cultures have also been given precedence within the taxonomy of film. Even studies that emphasize auteur or genre analyses typically use national cultural settings to understand certain aspects of cinema texts. From the opposing perspective, John Hill (1994) asserts that the concept of cinema itself is up for debate if some theatres are. In other words, what precisely do we mean when we talk about "cinema"? A cinema is made up of three basic parts: the distribution and screening of films, the textual qualities of films, and the structures of film creation. These three elements have made it possible for film

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academics to analyze differences between, say, European movie and European cinema, a distinction that may conceal as much as it reveals about the sense of location in cinema (Nagib, 2006). Films, in contrast to other types of art, are made exclusively for mass consumption. Every audience member has the opportunity to see "the actual thing." In many developing nations, television technology and exhibition entrepreneurs have made movies accessible to both urban and rural audiences. However, the majority of films that are released abroad are made in Europe and the United States.

Accordingly, filmmaking is an art, but what matters is what the filmmaker can offer that no other person can. Viewing movies as a business has somehow robbed cinema of its artistic aspect and made it tougher for filmmakers to create what is worthwhile and get the audience to respect it, they have significantly changed throughout time. Despite the fact that English actor Charlie Chaplin and French filmmakers like Melies helped establish cinema as an art form, it was Germany that did so after the chaos that the Great War caused allowed for the growth of the film industry. There were many wonderful films made during the silent period. Until the 1920s, it emerged as the dominant film style, leading to the creation of numerous groundbreaking movies. As a result of the production of various silent films, the audience developed a heightened appreciation for art, displaying attentiveness, mindfulness, and deep emotional and mental engagement with each narrative and the performances of actors in silent cinema were particularly impressive.

Furthermore, it is essential to establish clear definitions for frequently used and sometimes interchangeable terms such as movie, film, blockbuster, cinema, and motion picture. The cinematograph, a film camera created in the 1890s, is really the term's acronym, according to Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies (Hayward, 2013). However, a distinction must be made because the term denotes both institutions where film is produced and exhibited as well as film text, language, form, sounds, style...etc., which are also denoted by the same term. The term refers to films, movies, and all institutions through which films are produced, distributed, and

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exhibited to the public (Kuhn & Westwell cited in Doughty, 2017, p.333). A film, movie, or motion picture is also defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary as "a recording of moving images that tells a story and that people watch on a screen or television" and "a series of pictures projected on a screen in rapid succession with objects shown in successive positions slightly changed so as to produce the optical effect of a continuous picture in which the objects move" (Merriam-Webster, 2020, pp.269-473). As it participates in polemics about the demise of cinema, film studies, immersed in the oceanic promises of neoliberal globalization and an unrelenting techno-determinism, excitedly declares the end of the postcolonial and the national. Many academics have called for new categories and paradigms, but without always providing a compelling argument that goes beyond the glibly obvious as to why we need such rethinking and re-articulation.

One may outline some of the characteristics that set the media industries of the twenty-first century apart from those of the American Century by keeping these shifts in mind. Of course, many other cultural items continue to appeal to audiences in their local and national markets, but due to pressures from competition made possible by new technology, transnational finance and development have rapidly increased. The growth of streaming services like Netflix, Amazon, Tencent, and iQiyi is also having a significant impact on distribution geography. Second, as the expense of blockbuster entertainment that primarily relies on digital special effects has increased, social relationships in media creation have spread across space, continuing a pattern that started in the feature film business. Major producers started to pursue international partners and labor pools as budgets grew to hundreds of millions of dollars. Subsequently, professional methods are also influencing various facets of the media industries, not just in studios and postproduction facilities. Similar to this, film festivals and award shows offer forums for discussion of aesthetic and professional practices and have developed into significant locations for the global promotion of initiatives, talent, and personalities.

Significantly, another well-liked source of inspiration for cultures that employ figure of speech is the film industry. A film's plot, cinematography, sound

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design, mise-en scene, and editing are all included. The five factors listed below might help gauge a movie's quality. It is quite astonishing how well the film business is able to grab the imagination, mold, and influence the sense of what is genuine, true, and preferred. Through changing representations, testing audience morality, and shifting viewer perceptions, movies may have a huge influence on society. Hollywood films "Americanize" other cultures' values and beliefs in order to devalue national cultures and support US traditions. They claim that people frequently mimic American culture, traditions, and beliefs in general. There are additional types of popular culture than movies, advertisements, art, fashion, cuisine, and drink. The demand for entertainment, as well as for products and services associated to the film business, increases along with the desire for movies. Thus, the cinema medium has been portrayed as being universal and cosmopolitan, capable of minimizing cultural barriers and putting its texts into circulation across the world.

2.2.1. The Cultural Aspect of Cinema

The cinematic culture in diasporic communities may be crucial for making sense of and expressing complicated transnational identities, in addition to serving as social occasions that strengthen social links within the communities. In his book *Transcultural Cinema*, David MacDougall (1998) provides a helpful definition of ethnographic films. He states that while they have "been widely understood as transcultural, in the familiar sense of crossing cultural boundaries, indeed the very term implies an awareness and mediation of the unfamiliar," they are also transcultural in the sense that they "defy such boundaries"(p.245). The idea of cultural boundaries is helpful for this study because it implies that media may not only be produced for one domestic market, but also for diasporic audiences, for subcultures in other countries, for regional cultures, and for audiences who participate in what Matt Hills, following Benedict Anderson (1983), has called the "communities of imagination" that form around media texts (Anderson cited in Kraidy, 2006,p.180).

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Moreover, the goal of the culture industry, which is a result of capitalism, is financial gain or business. Adorno and Horkheimer (2019) contend in their article that the production of cultural commodities is regulated to use ethical practices and make an effort to scientifically quantify consumer preferences and expectations in order to increase profitability. As a result, they concentrate on Hollywood as a particularly clear illustration of this phenomena since Hollywood creates a never-ending stream of films that are categorized in accordance with the preferences of specific groups (pp.80-96). In addition, the culture industry develops fictitious wants and makes individuals passive, and it creates a number of tactics, including consumerism, mass influence, and manipulation.

Its cultural and creative vitality may be understood in terms of the political, social, and economic factors that influence the development and dissemination of expression. Film, the arts, and culture are becoming increasingly important to the growth of these cities' economies and sense of community. Neighborhood-level film, art, culture, and creativity frequently feature ethnic, racial, and special interest groups' cultural manifestations that may not be well reflected in established cultural organizations. In addition to expressing the concerns, values, and beliefs of the cultures they portray, movies also contribute to the formation and reaffirmation of such cultures' beliefs. One of the most important cultural influences that movies have is their capacity to shape how young people view the world. Like other aspects of modern culture, movies are continually impacted by the media. Young adults might gain a sense of escape and a sense of imitation from movies, which can help them in whatever they do.

According to some researches, one has already entered the 21th century, and popular movies are appearing more often to the point where they are nearly universal. They are frequently screened in movie theaters and on the big screen. Hollywood films and blockbuster movies are two examples of the typical mainstream films that are only temporarily exhibited in theaters. The film's producers and filmmakers advertise it using practically all available channels. They are making good use of their marketing techniques, and you can practically always

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watch their trailers. By the use of the internet, radio, television, magazines, posters, and radio, they are promoting the movie trailers. One of the most important elements to consider while making major films is marketing since it is how they reach out to the audience and generate revenue for the movie. Take into consideration for instance Independent films, that are produced exclusively by large studios, and which are rarely the norm, and are not typically seen by the general public.

2.2.2. Cinema and Globalization

Recent years have seen a significant globalization of culture through the cinema. This has been the case to the point that the majority of academics who link globalization and westernization tend to base their arguments on how imperialistic Western film, especially Hollywood, appears to be. In essence, the majority of critics who link Americanization to globalization base their arguments on Hollywood's hegemony over the world of cinema. In other words, one of the major drivers falling into cultural globalization in recent years has been the film industry. Henceforth, the film business has gradually grown in several countries. As a result of globalization, the Hollywood business now faces intense competition from both European and Third World regional theatres. Bollywood, Nollywood, the Korean film business, and Australia are all excellent examples (Endong, 2018). The cinematic medium has developed into a magnificent tool in the field of cultural diplomacy as a result of its enormous potential. Hill argues that "it might be feasible for there to be a prosperous European film business which is yet neither creating nor exhibiting European pictures" given Hollywood's hegemony over European movie theaters and the big studios' investment in uncontrolled production (Gasher, 2002, pp.54-5). Hollywood is not only a parallel "other," which may be disregarded in the understanding of indigenous cinemas (Hill cited in Gasher, 2002). He thinks that it could be more beneficial to view Hollywood as a global cinema, which both Europeans and many other nationalities have contributed to the creation of and have incorporated into their own popular cultures.

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The perceptions of space and location have changed, according to academics who have studied the phenomena of globalization from a variety of disciplinary angles. They also highlight the crucial part that the mass media play in the intricate process of how people envision and create conceptions of place, as well as notions of community, culture, society, nation, and identity that are tied to it. According to Morley and Robins, the rise of "global image industries" due to technical and market changes as well as the growth of regional audiovisual production and distribution networks are two important components of the new spatial dynamics of globalization (cited in Gasher, 2002, p.1-2). However, if satellite television is the pinnacle of international mass communication, as noted by Stuart Hall (1995), "the most significant cultural change has resulted from the edges coming into representation" (p.27). He contends that storytellers and image creators have gained room in the global media landscape to assert their own particularity: The ability to identify themselves as anything other than decentered or subaltern has been acquired through struggle, sometimes in extremely marginalized ways, by new subjects, genders, ethnicities, regions, and communities that were previously excluded from the main forms of cultural representation (Hall, 1995, p.34). Of course, people watch movies all across the world to learn more about various cultures in addition to for amusement. Films can even assist their viewers to develop their own sense of self by adopting the concepts and principles they encounter on screen. In this sense, the creation of conceptions of ethnicity, religion, culture, and nationality is largely and significantly influenced by film, or the larger field of media. It advances how sex and gender are conceptualized and how their roles and social mores are presented to the audience it is trying to reach (Kubrak, 2020, p.86). Therefore, with globalization, the spread of ideas through movies or cinema is at its most flexible zenith. Nowadays, content is sent beyond national borders, frequently promoting and even evangelizing cultural relations.

In terms of commercial power and global reach, no other region in the world's motion picture or television program industries now even come close to Hollywood. In a similar vein, Hollywood has long served as the leading hub of

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marketed culture in general throughout the modern globe. Globalization is the interaction and cooperation of individuals, businesses, and governments. This philosophy aids in the dispersion of global trade and interchange of ideas (Scott, 2005). This is particularly evident in the cinema industry, where the ability of a work to appeal to a worldwide audience serves as a key criterion for its globalization as a major source of entertainment and social impact. As an illustration, "*Avengers: Age of Ultron*" (2015), the newest smash in the Avengers franchise, premiered in theaters recently and generated more than \$200 million in a single weekend. Its success can be attributed to the global awareness of the Hollywood film industry. The shocking aspect, though, is that it made \$200 million outside of the United States before the film even debuted here. Foreign film production is facilitated by globalization, which puts pressure on the Hollywood film industry (Sliwinski, 2015).

But even so, viewing a movie for fun and studying it are two entirely different activities that call for different strategies because being motivated by a particular academic goal calls for efforts, concentration, knowledge, and a profound understanding of how images are produced that contain codes and ideas. In fact, the earliest graphical statements carved and painted on cave walls were the beginning of the art of cinema. Arjun Appadurai (1996) states that "electronic media, such as the cinema, offer new resources for self-imagining as an everyday social project, thereby creating communities of sentiment, that is, groups of people that share the same feelings or imaginings" in his explanation of the phenomenon of cinema and how it generates new ideas of "self-imagining". Movies have a significant role in helping diasporic communities navigate their own identities by exoticizing the majority as the unwanted "other" and making them seem unhealthy (p.4).

Also, pop culture has flourished with the development of technology, and this has contributed to an increase in globalization, which is the interdependence of many cultures and communities. Individuals are exposed to new ideas, people, and cultures as a result of globalization. When done efficiently, the film business offers viewers the chance to discover the variety of the globe and move closer to

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appreciating cultural differences rather than appropriating them. While tackling diversity theories, which draw attention to how cultural variations affect how texts are received and producer techniques for localizing media material, collide with the premise that media globalization is truly cultural imperialism and that it will result in one homogeneous world culture (Kraidy,2006). The distribution of media items is more significantly impacted by cultural and language variations than the distribution of commodities in other economic sectors.

Indian popular film is a good example of how national frameworks remain despite their widespread global distribution. The majority of academics agree that South Asia's media production and perception structures have changed significantly as a result of globalization. While the process of globalization is increasing certain borders, it is also hardening others, including those of culture, identity, and self. In other words, as a result of globalization, people's "perceptions of time and place" are shifting.

2.3. Transnational Cinema

The word "transnational" first appeared in studies of the globalization of mass media and communications in the middle to late 1990s. Transnational cinema in particular is a relatively recent area of film studies that encompasses various methodologies to examine and portray films revolving around migration, cross-cultural experiences, national borders, and connections with diasporas. It introduces significant concepts and theories, such as genre, remakes, diasporic, exilic, postcolonial, and crossover cinema, all of which are closely related to the understanding of transnational cinema. One prominent critic, Steven Rawle, contributes significantly to our comprehension of transnationalism and transnational cinema in his book *"Transnational Cinema: An Introduction"* (2018). Rawle's work becomes especially vital in the current societal landscape, where far-right cultural nationalism and fear of the cultural Other are on the rise, posing threats to the movement of people and cultures across narrow national boundaries.

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By emphasizing these aspects, Rawle sheds light on the shifts in film studies, moving away from a binary classification of cinema as "us-vs.-them" and embracing a more inclusive approach that examines film cultures from across the globe within the context of globalization. This is taken into consideration when the author examines the nomenclature of transnational cinema. Therefore, it is crucial to define, clarify, and streamline transnational cinema in this context so that its unique components and critical potential are given the attention they deserve. Transnational cinema does not replace national cinema; rather, it complements it. Significantly, films and cinemas that cross national lines and/or design their narrative and aesthetic methods in relation to several nationalities, cultural traditions, or communities are the focus of this field.

Moreover, Transnational cinema is a component of this larger nexus of forces, which also includes Hollywood's hegemony over international film markets and the enormous global increase in film circulation brought on by the availability of delivery technologies (Kuhn & Westwell, 2012). The idea of "transnational" in this still-emerging area of film studies, borrowed from fields like anthropology, migration, and postcolonial studies, remains very variable, leading to frequently disputed operational definitions and analytic methodologies. In here this concept is used to describe a movement in filmmaking and distribution that aims to go beyond national boundaries. Film academics and researchers are paying more attention to subjects like co-productions, postcolonial theory, and globalization than local theaters as a result of the rise in the number of movies labeled as transnational movies. Ezra and Rowden (2006) assert that transnational cinema "comprises both globalization [...] and the counter hegemonic responses of filmmakers from former colonial and third world countries, and further that the transnational can link people or institutions across the nations (p.1) .The transnational works like a partnership which is joined together through several mediums, such as cinema. In connection to this, Sheldon Lu has identified what she calls 'an era of transnational postmodern cultural production' in which borders between nations have been blurred by new telecommunications technologies as a means of explaining the shift from national to

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transnational cinema (Higbee& etal, 2010). To put it more clearly, this term is occasionally used in an oversimplified manner to denote international coproduction or partnership between, for example, the cast, crew, and location without any real consideration of what such transnational collaboration might entail in terms of aesthetic, political, or economic implications. In essence, the many definitions of "transnational cinema" offered by diverse scholars have sometimes been in stark opposition to one another.

The wide range of topics related to transnational cinema has led to some debates over its precise definition, as Mette Hjort notes:

(...) to date, the discourse of cinematic transnationalism has been marked less by divergent theories and approaches than by a propensity to treat the term "transnational" as a largely self-evident qualifier requiring only minimal conceptual clarification. Following this, other authors including Hjort, John Hess, and Patricia R. Zimmermann have made an effort to precisely describe the application and use of transnational film ideas. As an illustration, Deborah Shaw and Armida De La Garza meticulously compiled a list of fifteen different types of reading films through a transnational perspective (Hjort & Mackenzie,2000).

The inclusion of various elements in films, such as different modes of narration, national and transnational aspects, multiple locations, various production and distribution methods, collaborative networks, and cultural exchanges, has led to the emergence of the concept of transnationalism in cinema. This concept has been applied to foreign films viewed by people of diverse nationalities with the help of subtitles, as well as to films that explore and challenge notions of national identity. Some experts trace its origins to the early days of filmmaking, while others associate it with the onset of globalization's impact on the cinematic art (Shaw,2017, pp. 290-298).

Additionally, it is perceived by some as a category encompassing low-budget diasporic and exilic films, while others view it as big-budget blockbusters influenced by global corporate capital (Berry, 2010, p. 114). It also delves into

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various categories, including modes of production, exhibition, and transnational influences, which contribute to the complex and dynamic nature of transnational cinema (Berry, 2010,p. 114).

In the same vein, examples of popular Hollywood productions from diverse and international backgrounds that support this include Christopher Nolan's relaunched Batman movies *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2008). Which are essentially British, but the movie can't be categorized under just one country, thus it embraces the notion of transnationalism by highlighting how studio-financed movies and franchises don't require an American or British effort to succeed. Film festivals, such those at Sundance, Cannes, London, and Toronto, show international and independent films to a diverse audience known as the "Big Five," adding another viewpoint to the industry that might be taken for granted. As these Film festivals are increasingly showing certain films outside on annual events, such as :the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, the Sundance Film Festival, the International Film Festival of India, the Telluride Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival, and the Venice Film Festival are a few of the world's major film festivals. Other notable ones include the Cannes Film Festival, the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, and the Berlin International Film Festival. Even the Oscar show creates a transnational link because it is broadcast in more than 200 countries globally. Millions of viewers worldwide have tuned in to watch their favorite actors walk the red carpet and their films get awards in recent years as The Oscars have been televised online. The Oscar show is ultimately a significantly more significant worldwide media event than the Academy Awards (Levy cited in Turow, 2011). Even the prizes that come before The Academy Awards, like the SAG and BAFTA awards and, more crucially, the Golden Globes, are watched by millions of people across the world on television and the Internet. As a result of the globalization caused by this event, a transnational culture is created. Its acceptance transcends national boundaries and becomes universal.

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This implies also that international cinema is now widely accepted and that mainstream viewers are not necessarily only interested in films that are dubbed in English. When academics in the United States think of the term "transnational film," their thoughts often gravitate towards Hollywood. Interestingly, Naficy and Marks choose not to use the phrase "transnational cinema," which is not surprising since Hollywood represents a type of movie they are not interested in and do not wish to promote. The term "transnational" is commonly associated with Hollywood-style films and Asian martial arts blockbusters. Moreover, the concept of "transnational cinema" presents challenges in terms of historical periodization and defining the specific kind of film that falls under this category (Berry, 2010, pp. 111–127). This explanation highlights the broad range of interpretations that can be attributed to "transnational cinema," implying that it assumes a point of origin within a geographical context.

So, many films lack a consistent link between their country of origin and/or locale and the nationality of its creators and actors, making it impossible to attribute a definite national identity to them. This is not a brand-new occurrence in and of itself; rather, what is brand-new are the ways that cinema is currently financed, produced, distributed, and seen. The transnational includes Hollywood's hegemony over international film markets, as well as the counterhegemonic responses of filmmakers from former colonial and Third World nations. The idea of transnationalism helps us better comprehend how current worldviews are shifting from a collection of more or less independent states to one in which a growing number of filmmakers across genres see the globe as a single, interconnected system.

Moreover, theoretical and historical study on transnational cinemas has been the subject of a number of important publications and conferences, but there has also been a long tradition of teaching classes on "global cinema," with each session often focusing on a different country cinema. Those that focus on the national vs. transnational dichotomy, argue that the concept of national cinema can be seen as a constrained approach in this context, one that limits the globalization and

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internationalization of production, distribution, and exhibition. Although still under development, the idea of international film has only just come into focus. It covers a wide variety of underlying hypotheses on the economic influence of cinema in particular and the globalization of society in general that cuts over national boundaries. In addition to a wide range of other ideas and subjects, discussions of transnational cinema also cover the influences of postnationalism, postcolonialism, consumerism, and third cinema. Transnational cinema, on the other hand, indicates a worldwide communication that culminates in a movie that is universally accepted by the audience rather than a specific social class, economic class, gender, or culture.

The idea or qualities of transnational film, however, raise certain questions. In fact, you can anticipate the following topics to be brought up specifically in relation to transnational cinema: the requirement for movies to be "Western friendly" and have well-known genre conventions, movies with a global cultural focus, and movies that can be "easily" accepted on a multinational level. With all of these significant causes for worry surrounding international cinematic productions, it is understandable why many movies will not be suitable candidates for such a strategy.

Fundamentally, Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden write in the introduction of their (2006) collection *Transnational Cinema: A Film Reader* that:

The global circulation of money, commodities, information, and people is giving rise to films whose aesthetic and narrative dynamics, and even the modes of emotional identification they elicit, reflect the impact of advanced capitalism and new media technologies as components of an increasingly interconnected world-system. Globalization in cinematic terms, Hollywood's hegemony over international film markets and the counterhegemonic reactions of filmmakers from former colonial and Third World nations are both parts of the transnational (p. 1).

Except from a few countries, like India or South Korea, where Hollywood has long had a stronghold, the majority of the world's media markets, its dominance

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has frequently been viewed as a type of cultural imperialism where its foreign influence is seen as a danger to the local cinema culture. So, the "foreign" impact may not be merely perceived as a "invader," but rather may be amenable to localization.

In this way, transnational commodities can frequently take on a culturally odourless quality that makes them more likely to be absorbed by a process of localization (Rawles, 2018,p. 46). Nonetheless, it might be difficult to understand international cultural flows in these terms. Similar to this, numerous American films and television shows frequently cross international borders to film; occasionally, these films substitute foreign settings for American ones, such as Toronto, which has a striking similarity to several US cities. Deborah Shaw and Armida De La Garza (2010) defined 15 distinct categories or themes linked to the study of cinema's transnationalism, each of which one shall go into at various times in this research:

These categories or topics include: 1. Modes of production, distribution and exhibition 2.Co-productions and collaborative networks 3.New technologies and changing patterns of consumption 4.Transnational film theories 5.Migration, journeying and other forms of border-crossing 6.Exilic and diasporic film-making 7.Film and language 8.Questions of authorship and stardom 9.Cross-fertilization and cultural exchange 10.Indigenous cinema and video and the cinemas of ethnic minorities 11.Cultural policy 12.The ethics of transnationalism 13.Historical transnational practices 14.Inter-relationships between local, national and the global 15.Transnational and postcolonial politics (p. 4).

Factually, the search for an alternative paradigm repeatedly centers on the phrase "transnational" as concepts of "national" film are called into question across modern studies (Lim,2019,pp.1-12). Such methods identify the activities of production, distribution, and consumption as places of cultural mixing by assuming a polycentric connection amongst industries, providing rich ground for complex socio-historical study. Alternatives to the word are frequently used; the most popular one is "transcultural," which recognizes that "culture" is not always linked

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to geographical imperatives. In fact, by framing itself as an alternative paradigm, the mere term "transnational" might be viewed to favor the "national" referent.

Most frequently, the terms "transnational," "international", "transcultural", or "global" are employed as synonyms for each other. Although if the idea of transnationalism has frequently been dismissed as mundane and subject to simple exploitation in marketing, it has gained special relevance in the global era (Higbee & Lim, 2010). The ties that support the creation, dissemination, and consumption of film are increasingly global in nature. Transnational distribution and exhibition networks as well as circulation patterns made possible by new technologies like internet streaming and digital media are also present.

2.3.1. Diasporic Cinema

Another genre in cinematic medium is Diasporic cinema which generally refers to a body of films or other media works created by members of demographic groups, and frequently their descendants, who have undergone mass, sometimes forced, emigration from their countries of origin in order to survive in the face of discrimination on the basis of race, politics, or religion, or who have been uprooted due to war or other economic necessity (Curry, 2016). Numerous books and articles that show the complex relationships between the forms have been produced as a result of extensive study, especially that done during the 1980s, which has led to a new and field-shaping knowledge of transnational and diasporic cinema's deep origins.

Referring to both as a joint area of study that has developed with more general intellectual trends away from unitary viewpoints and toward more multivocal, de-centered ones, as seen, for instance, in cultural and critical race studies. Movies on the Indian diaspora, for instance, include "*Monsoon Wedding*" (2001), "*Water*" (2005), "*Bride and Prejudice*" (2004), "*East is East*" (1999), "*Mississippi Masala*" (1991), "*Bend It Like Beckham*" (2002), and "*Mistress of Spices*" (2005). While examining what is increasingly referred to as "transnational"

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media phenomena from critical cultural, historical, or interpretative perspectives, the overlapping issues of transnational and diasporic cinema have sparked an active film studies debate and scholarly interest. The specifics of border-crossing techniques that have made it possible for media flows to operate concurrently with or even in opposition to what have attracted the attention of scholars of transnational and diasporic cinema.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in the study of media and movies, particularly in connection with human migration. This interest is part of a broader transnational movement within the social sciences and humanities, focusing on the impact of globalization and the role of media technology in facilitating communication. Consequently, filmmakers exploring the theme of migration come from diverse backgrounds, including immigrants and their descendants who have moved abroad in search of economic, political, or cultural opportunities, as well as refugees escaping war and occupation (Smets, 2015,pp.1-9).

The term "diasporic cinema" refers to the filmmaking of any group of immigrants or exiles who have left their homeland to live elsewhere. This genre of cinema covers a wide range of subjects, genres, and subgenres. Unlike traditional national cinema, diasporic film places a stronger emphasis on cultural rather than national issues, largely due to the absence of linguistic and cultural barriers. These films explore various topics such as colonialism, capitalism, ethnicity, race, culture, and identity. They delve into the cultural and social experiences of people living in a foreign land and frequently depict their interactions with the host nation. Additionally, diasporic films often address complex themes like the challenges of exile, belonging to diverse groups with potential exposure to xenophobia, and the collision of multiple identities (Kayal & Saha,2022).

Despite the fact that diasporic films are now seen as an international genre, according to Laura Marks, they nevertheless ignore the notion that cultural interchange is "never a politically neutral exchange," implying instead "a dynamic interaction between a dominant "host" culture and a minority culture." Regardless

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of the absence of a unifying topic, diasporic films are nonetheless a vital component of cinema culture and an effective political instrument (Kayal & Saha, 2022). It is a broad and infrequently used phrase that encompasses a wide range of filmmaking cultures, including German immigrants to Hollywood in the 1930s, beur cinema in France, modern Turkish-German cinema, and the cinema of the Jewish diaspora (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2010, pp. 12-49).

Hamid Naficy proposes a separation between "exilic," "diasporic," and "postcolonial ethnic identity filmmakers" in his research *An Accented Cinema* (2001). Diasporic film inherently reflects a group experience, whereas exilic cinema represents an individualistic one. ' [...] Postcolonial ethnic and identity cinema is dominated by the demands of life here and now in the country in which the filmmakers are located. Exilic cinema distinguishes itself through its exploration of the distant past and the homeland, while diasporic cinema stands out for its interconnectedness with the homeland in a vertical sense and its engagement with the diverse diaspora communities and their experiences in a horizontal sense. Ethnic identity films frequently deal with what Werner Sollors has called "the core drama in American society," which arises from the clash between consent relations, which emphasize self-made contractual attachments, and descent relations, which emphasize heredity and ethnicity (Naficy cited in Higbee & Lim, 2010, p. 15).

The above-mentioned accented filmmaking, in the opinion of Naficy, one of the most influential theorists in this field of "Accented cinema," includes a variety of filmmakers, including diasporic, exilic, and postcolonial ethnic ones, but they frequently have in common a focus on the paradoxes of exile, the negotiation of difference and belonging, and the struggle for recognition, community, and citizenship. Nevertheless, it is crucial to highlight that the movies produced by representatives of the prevailing cultures in Europe and other regions owe their current state to the empowerment of migrant and diasporic communities, often comprising ethnic minorities. The efforts of diasporic filmmakers to gain access to production resources, control over representation, and the infusion of their unique

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perspectives and transcultural influences have played a significant role in shaping these films as they are today.

While one must fight the sociological fallacy and read these films as representations, not as mirrors of "reality," they should not be disassociated from cultural politics and societal critique. Migrant and diasporic filmmakers have been, and continue to be, a significant source of inspiration and corrective (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2010, pp.12-49). Therefore, the method, style, aesthetics, and ideologies used in the making of the films made by exiled and diasporic filmmakers usually exhibit notable commonalities. Displacement is typically used to denote the opposite meaning of the word emplacement, which refers to a position or a location. As a result, a location does not seem to be anything that is exclusively physical; rather, it has just recently become a notion. Aside from their travels from their "place" (of origin) to another "place" (host nation). The concerns surrounding the rate and causes of this particular set of filmmakers' movement (migration) process serve as a driving force behind who they are. Some other elements, such as social, emotional, and psychological experiences, set accented filmmakers apart from the others (Naficy cited in Maira, 2002).

Diasporic filmmaking broadly refers to a diverse spectrum of filmmaking by any dispersed community living away from its country of origin, including imperial/colonial and cultural/hybrid diasporas. In fact it is a vast transnational film movement and film style located within multiple sites of diaspora space. Hence, directors of many forms of cinema from Hollywood and Bollywood, to independent and art film use the subject matter of migration, diasporas and identities to inform, entertain, educate, and stimulate discussion over mainstream and alternative cinemas.

2.3.2. World Cinema

Films created outside of the American motion picture business, especially those that are in opposition to the aesthetics and ideals of commercial American

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cinema, are referred to by this phrase in film theory. Various national cinemas and the Third Film of Latin America are frequently mentioned as examples of international cinema. The phrase has drawn criticism for being Americanist and for downplaying the variety of other film traditions (Nagib, 2006, pp. 30-37). With Hollywood adopting American exceptionalism, the "world" in cinema studies has always been the "other" of the global empire. It develops as the identity politics stage, portraying the rest of the world as postcolonial, incidental, or simply not like Hollywood.

In actuality, "global cinema" has never meant the impartial sum of all films produced worldwide (Jeong, 2021, pp. 29-38). Later, American audiences were unimpressed with the English-dubbed versions of popular foreign films including *Un Indien dans la ville* (1994), *Godzilla 2000* (1999), *Anatomy* (2000), *Pinocchio* (2002), and *High Tension* (2003). *Shaolin Soccer* (2001) and *Hero* (2002) for instance were originally going to be distributed in American theaters with English dubbing, but Miramax decided against it after seeing how poorly the English-dubbed versions of the movies performed in American test screenings. World cinema is not a passing trend; rather, it is an audiovisual corpus that is constantly expanding and being seen in a variety of historical, geopolitical, and cultural contexts.

Undoubtedly one of the most active and rapidly expanding fields of film studies is the study of international cinema. World cinema is a broad, critically adaptable concept that encourages discussion and contestation. It encompasses popular genre films, international art cinema, and both. Here, the non-Western filmmakers, also known as "world cinema," "postcolonial," and "diasporic," exoticized their own cultures to increase the films' appeal to a wider audience. The same is true of international film, which must move from its place of production in order to be seen by viewers from various countries, regions, or cultures. In other words, the transnational aspect of the idea of world cinema is created during the reception process, when a film enters another national realm after leaving its own. Additionally, a large portion of current world cinema is transnational in terms of the

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ways that it is produced and funded on a worldwide scale (Kuhn& Westwell,2012). Over and above that, its global appeal frequently forms an intentional technique used by non-Western filmmakers to appeal to the preferences and standards of Western reviewers and audiences.

2.3.3. National Cinema

The concept of "national cinema" refers to the whole domestic film industry, and may be described in economic terms. A text-based, consumption-based, or criticism-led method to discussing national film might also reduce it to "excellent art cinema"(Gasher, 2002,p.5). In other words, the term "national cinema" is frequently employed in a prescriptive rather than a descriptive manner, offering examples of what should constitute the national cinema rather than elaborating on the real cinematic experiences of mass audiences (Gasher, 2002,pp.36-7). Neither can it be assumed that all film industries are national industries, nor that classifying cinema as national cinema is the most suitable category of study for a body of films made inside a certain nation-state. Transnational business, local or regional cultural workers, and cultural producers whose identity is unrelated to geography challenge the categorization of cultural output as national cultural production. Thus, critical categories like national cinemas contribute to the definition of cinema by designating the medium's specific social function, determining the scope of the conversation, including certain film texts, and excluding others.

In an effort to recognize that there are more types of national cinema than is commonly implied by that phrase, Stephen Crofts (1993) names seven of them. "Regional and diasporic movie production not only refutes the idea of national cinemas as potential self-sufficient national companies (p.61). The majority of national cinemas are profoundly unstable market entities as a result of Hollywood's dominance of the global film markets, marginalized in the majority of domestic and all export markets, and thus easily vulnerable, among other things, to projected appropriations of their indigenous cultural meanings. This explains both the diversity of local filmmakers' objectives and the presence of the global commercial

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film industry in the same environment. Too many cinemas today defy the national category, either because there are too many cinemas for the term to be meaningful or because filmmaking in any given country is becoming more and more entwined with transnational networks of finance, production, distribution, and exhibition, or because the production community is not a national community in any meaningful sense (Gasher, 2002, pp.36-7).

Moreover, National cinema theories have been largely understudied, although playing an indisputable influence in globalization. Simply said, a "nation's cinema" may be identified by the nation that funded the movie, the language used in it, the ethnicities or attire of the characters, and the location, music, or other cultural elements that are featured in it (Shohat & Stam, 2003). Philip Rosen (1996) argues in *Theorizing National Cinema* that national cinema is a conceptualization of: (1) Selected "national" films/texts themselves, the link between them, and how they are related by a common (generic) symptom. (2) A comprehension of the "country" as an entity that exists in tandem with its "symptom." A third requirement is knowledge of historical or historiographic "symptoms," which influence the systems and "symptoms" of the present (cited in Vitali & Willemsen, 2019). It could be referring to the spectatorship, spectacle, or the cultural backgrounds of people who create the movie and those who appear in it.

2.3.4. Third Cinema or Third World Cinema?

As mentioned earlier, Diaspora describes the dispersion of individuals who were formerly members of one nation, country, or shared culture. One must not overlook the existence of other diasporic groups within the American context, including Native Americans (incorrectly referred to as Indians), Chicanos, and Asian-Americans (of Eastern Indian and Asian origin), the latter of which has been particularly visible in cinematic production (e.g., Wayne Wang and the Indian filmmaker now based in the USA, Mira Nair, whose film *Mississippi Massala*, is about Indians settled in the USA, 1991). This problematic word is used to describe theaters that are not from the First World (the USA/Hollywood film industry) or the

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Second World (the European film industry), but rather originate from a third place, frequently a colonized and later post-colonial one (Hayward, 2013, p.397).

The use of another concept in this context, Third Cinema, which describes a cinema of resistance coming from so-called Third World nations, further, complicates the situation. The term "third cinema" was first used by the Argentine film theorists and directors Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino (1997) in their manifesto *Towards a Third Cinema*, which calls for a counter-cinema to "decolonize culture"(pp.1-10). This Third Cinema was named as a satirical hit at both economics and the predominate Western theatres. Clearly, films from the so-called Third World, or those outside of the industrialized industrial nations, are referred to as "Third Cinema." So, it's crucial to avoid conflating the words Third Cinema and Third World Cinema.

To use popular Hindi films as an example, it is clear that, despite its own film-making practices having little in common with Hollywood production styles, it is an entertainment medium designed to promote popular music, its stars, and the portrayal of a fictitious, mythical India like epic melodramas of self-sacrificing mothers and swashbuckling heroes. It is not a protest against First or Second World film; in fact, Bombay, one of its primary studio cities, originally built its production methods on an "imitation" of Hollywood as Bollywood. India has produced and continues to develop another film that resists, nevertheless. *The Third Cinema Manifesto* was published in 1969, the same year that the so-called New Indian Cinema got its start. These movies aim at the mainstream cinema in their native country and have a political aesthetic. With the exception of India, which has a sizable film industry and exports successfully to other continents especially African, American and European products have saturated the screens of these Third World nations with their pro-capitalist messages.

Notably, in comparison to the USA's 400–600 films per year, which are typically made in a single language, it produces between 700 and 800 films annually in twenty-two languages. In terms of consumption inside its own film

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theatres and venues alone, India's cinema industry is highly profitable and dominates the cinema market in the United States. Despite significant disparities, the Third Cinema nations have a desire to redress the effects of colonialism, particularly on the Indian subcontinent. An aesthetics of liberation in Third Cinema is the preservation of popular indigenous cultures and the depiction of them in contrast to the prevailing colonial and imperialist ideals proclaimed by the ruling classes. Indian cinema has a long history of Third Cinema practices, which dates back to 1969, when state funding allowed for the emergence of a new generation of filmmakers. This New Indian Cinema is credited to Mrinal Sen and Mani Kaul as its founders. The Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), a powerful communist-backed theatre and film movement, launched its first film production, *Dharti Ke Lal/Children of the Earth* (1946), in 1946. Satyajit Ray's art cinema from the 1950s also played a role in the development of this contestatory and politicized cinema.

This amalgamation is not actually viable, as it has been stated above. It developed into a notion that could be used to other films that weren't produced in the Third World, but rather by filmmakers from communities of Indian descent. Due to India's rich theatrical history, there were "readymade" locations where these early short films could be screened as attractions after shows. Again using India as an example, we can show that film theory began to form in 1948 as a result of Satyajit Ray and Chidananda Das Gupta's essays on the significance of a post-independence cinema that would serve as a culturally unifying force for the country. Their essays from the 1960s and 1970s, together with those of Ritwik Ghatak and Kobita Sarkar a little later, served as the theoretical basis for discussions of nationalist cinema vs regional cinema, modernism versus avant-garde, and other topics. Films that discuss the current political situation in India began to appear in the 1990s within the inclusion of . thus, the one deals with this type of film since it is a term that the West developed and that Third World countries were forced to adopt as a means of identifying their identity, namely through international economic position. The Bombay studios have earned the moniker "Bollywood"

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thanks to their background. It was composed of the following categories on a global scale.

In fact, the usage of the phrase Third World itself is problematic, much as the term Third World Cinema is ill-defined and problematic as a result. Homi Bhabha (1994) argues that even if we are required to use the phrase, it nevertheless poses significant problems because of its negative connotations and assumptions about a geopolitical worldview. The "actual" film of North America and Europe is depicted as though it were the inferior, shadow cinema of this cinema (pp.112-13). It is obvious that these Third World Cinemas will gain greater recognition as the Western nations continue to diversify and as postcolonial theory and practice studies grow more common. In order to create a new emancipatory popular culture, filmmakers of the Third Cinema went further their forerunners in demanding an end to the separation between art and life and insisting on a critical and intuitive cinema as opposed to a propagandist one. In conclusion, Third cinema is distinguished by its closeness to and familiarity with culture, both in the narrower meaning of cultural output such as music, dance, theatre, rituals, cinema, and literature and in the larger sense of the word the nuances of everyday living.

2.4. The Rise of Hollywood and the Cinema of the United States

From the early 20th century, American cinema, which consists mostly of big film studios and some independent movies, has had a significant impact on the worldwide film industry. The forty-foot tall and three hundred and fifty-foot long sign perched atop the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles, California, that towers over the numerous golden celebrity stars of the Hollywood Boulevard's Walk of Fame, has long been a symbol for Hollywood as a "American" location for film production. Hollywood, one of the most well-known film industries in the late nineteenth century, emerged as the business prospered throughout time. It is more than just a location; it is regarded as the hub of the greatest movies ever made and as the "American Dream" for individuals who want to establish a name for themselves as well-known actors, filmmakers, screenwriters, directors, or

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producers. It gave rise to a number of cinematic genres, including comedy, drama, action, musicals, romance, horror, science fiction, and war epics, and it has served as an inspiration to other nations' film industries.

Classical Hollywood cinema, which evolved from 1913 to 1969 and continues to be a staple of the majority of movies produced there, today is the predominant cinematic style in the United States. After China and India, it generated the third-highest volume of films as of 2017, with an average of more than 600 English-language movies being released annually. While making movies in the same language, the national theaters of the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are not a part of the Hollywood system. Yet, Hollywood has also been referred to as a multinational cinema and has created several language versions of numerous films, frequently in French or Spanish. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are frequently used as production outsourcing locations in modern Hollywood (Craig, 2013, p.70).

The ability of this sector to manipulate people's ideas and values is undeniable given that it can translate societal viewpoints into visual representation and appeal to a variety of audiences in this way. The Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC), often known as the Movie Trust, Edison Trust, or the Trust, predominated the motion picture business before the decade of the 1910s. The majority of nickelodeons where movies were shown, and they were often about fifteen minutes long. People tended to watch French-made movies around that time since France was the industry leader and the American business was still trying to establish itself. French film releases, spearheaded by the Pathé Company, took over the globe by 1908 thanks to the development of contemporary studio infrastructure and advancements in cinematic technology, which included 70% of the American market. Hollywood had the chance to seize control of the industry during and after the First World War (1914–1918), when France was no longer the dominant force and the United States had become the new superpower.

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Factually, Hollywood's expansion turned into a stunning global phenomenon. According to Tom Brook (2014) in a BBC story titled "How the global box office is altering Hollywood," "Hollywood is like an octopus with tentacles reaching around the world "(BBC,2014).Overall, there were several major eras in the American film business. It underwent significant alteration from its inception to the present, giving rise to several films that were all unique from one another. Hollywood's domination over other film industries is a double-edged sword since, in addition to entertaining viewers, it can also be used to subtly advance certain viewpoints, values, and beliefs (DeBauche,2017). There are a number of reasons why Hollywood became so well-known worldwide. Because its films are so entertaining and attract to audiences of all ages, they are culturally universal and can be enjoyed by anybody, regardless of language or culture.

Along with laughter and pleasure, Hollywood has been successful in instilling in Americans sentiments of fear, anxiety, and prejudice. Hollywood's activism and liberalism also served as more of a visual mirror for American society than just helping to define and construct the parameters and atmosphere of the American ideal. Basically, American films accomplished a fantastic job in defining, consolidating, and propagating the contemporary American national identity, including all of its elements and traits. But via American film, new ideas were portrayed as an essential aspect of the American ideal and therefore of American political movements. Hollywood , hence refers to the complete phenomena of popular entertainment cinema and identical with the film business in the United States, away from the geographical connotation (Kuhn &Westwell cited in Doughty, 2017). Hollywood is owned by US-based yet globally expanding mega media corporations, which use international film production, distribution, and exhibition subsidiaries as cash generators.

Seemingly, the cinema industry, which in America first served only white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, drew many minorities from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, but not as many as the Jews, who saw the industry's potential and worked to control it. The Bourgeois and Aristocrats, who had felt that film is

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socially hazardous because it spreads unwanted notions, had also believed that cinema was a matter of enjoyment for the Proletariat and immigrants but seldom for them. Additionally, eight major Hollywood production corporations as the Big 5, the Little 3, and businesses like Warner Brothers, 20th Century Fox, Columbia Pictures, and Universal Pictures held oligopolistic control over the industry. Additionally, the star system, which is still in place today with more lenient standards and political leanings, elevated some actors to the status of gods who created new rules for behavior, philosophy, and standards of beauty. In light of the genres that were approved by Hollywood's big studios to accomplish advancement and growth Film festivals made it clear that studios' use of block booking, feature films, film stars, and vertical integration methods finally persuaded them to export their films on a global scale, keeping the spotlight shining to this day (Eliashberg & Leenders, 2006, pp. 638-661). The big five studios did in fact encounter a number of challenges, but their success was enormous and contributed to Hollywood's ongoing development and expansion.

Outside of the United States, several of Hollywood's highest-grossing films have made more money at the box office and through ticket sales than movies from other countries. Hollywood has lately emerged as a major global cultural source as globalization has begun to accelerate and the US government has been aggressively pushing free trade policies and trade in cultural goods. Hollywood travels everywhere the global media behemoths do, and everywhere Hollywood goes, they go too. The Walt Disney Company, News Corporation, 20th Century Fox, NBC-Universal, Sony Corporation, and Time-Warner are the owners of Warner Bros., the Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group, the Walt Disney Company, Paramount Pictures, and Sony Pictures Entertainment, respectively.

Significantly, author Ana M. Lopez (2000) uses the traditional Hollywood film industry as an example of how such people were never treated kindly (Cristian & Dragon, 2007, p. 195). López emphasizes that stereotypes in Hollywood were a common occurrence that "easily and regularly" moved from picture to film, with "minorities and ethnics being especially visible" (Cristian & Dragon, 2007,

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p.195) due to the lack of genuine portrayals of these groups. Ethnicities were seldom the main characters; instead, they served as comedic relief, local flavor, instantly recognized villains, and dramatic foils. Its marginalization or denial, when combined with the widespread use of stereotypes, completes the typical "pattern" of Hollywood's ethnic depiction, which is often seen as harmful, offensive, and unfavorable (Cristian & Dragon, 2007, p.195).

Due to the spread of democracy and economic and cultural globalization, which provides Western cultural influences and entertainment methods to an increasing number of economically successful and educated individuals in Asian nations, traditional cinema faces economic problems. With the impacts of the Indian, Hong Kong, and Korean film industries, Hollywood is becoming more Asian. A cosmopolitan audience that is open to consuming and appreciating foreign cultural influences without completely rejecting their own is likely to benefit from the two-way cultural symbiosis as it grows to meet their entertainment and cultural demands (Athique, 2017). These developments have been accompanied by media liberalization and media globalization, the social effects of which the developing world is just now starting to recognize.

Notably, the extent to which American culture is exported may be seen in a number of mediums, including films, television shows, and increasingly the Internet. In addition to the cultural dependence hypothesis, at least two more elements need to be taken into account in order to fully understand how Western media, particularly American media, has an impact on indigenous media sectors in emerging nations. First, it has been discovered that the American entertainment industries' lowest common denominator production principle which tunes material for mass audiences is the most effective for boosting sales, circulation, and advertising income (Chen & Shen, 2021, pp. 205-212). Second, as a result of economic globalization and the rapid industrialization of developing Asian nations, the income levels of their citizens have increased, enlarging the market for both printed and electronic media. In order to understand the restructuring of the film

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industry in several Asian nations, these theoretical concerns and the notion of cultural reliance will serve as the background.

Obviously, this image of Hollywood as territorially American is itself marked by this sign. Non-US exhibition companies are more than happy to purchase many of the movies they show to audiences from Hollywood's major studio-distributor combines because they are eager to acquire, schedule, and screen movies that will draw an audience commodity, or alternatively, a viewer that will pay for a ticket or subscription. The global blockbuster, which studios create to sell to viewers from many other nations, not just those in the US, is Hollywood's fourth approach for integrating non-US film industries.

Around the middle of the 1990s, a Hollywood blockbuster's overall revenue was frequently less than half of what it earned at the international box office. Hollywood engages and incorporates a worldwide audience by producing international blockbusters like *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015), *Avatar* (2009), *Jurassic Park* (2015), *The Avengers* (2012), *The Dark Knight* (2008), etc. Hollywood had been observant. Again when it comes to comparison, Bollywood can be suitable in this context as it had previously been known for entertaining musicals and reviled for blatant copying. Now, however, the size of its ticket sales (which frequently exceeded those of Hollywood) and, more significantly, its expanding global presence have drawn in Hollywood studios to either open branches in India or collaborate with already established companies. Disney, Viacom, 20th Century Fox, and Sony Pictures all had agreements in place for their services in India by 2008. These media behemoths announced a new age of Bollywood filmmaking with their worldwide expertise: budgets could be increased, promotions could be more elaborate and costly, adaptations would be licensed rather than stolen, etc. (Maheshwari, 2017).

Moreover, Cross-border production is Hollywood's second method for integrating other film industries. To clarify this, the Indian film industry, is perhaps the most striking illustration of how Hollywood production techniques have been

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incorporated into its works in recent years. Yet, social commentators are concerned about the possible effects of the new tendency in Bollywood films on Indian culture. The Indian people's morals and culture are viewed as being threatened by the current Hollywood-inspired change in filmmaking. Even The Film Federation of India, a body in charge of overseeing film content, laments how overly Westernized the New Bollywood movies are and how they diminish and devalue India's true cultural identity. The frequent re-release of recent hit Hollywood movies is another cause for worry. Menon asserts that "you can assume that there existed a Hollywood original somewhere down the road if you point to each new Bollywood blockbuster. *Koi Mil Gaya* is a confused version of *ET*, and other recent movies like *Bhoot* (Ghost), *Raaz* (Secret), and *What Lies Underneath* both featured Indian exorcists. This emphasizes the industry's unsettling reliance on its Hollywood equivalent (Rampal, 2005, p. 43). There are currently enough movies being made in India to satisfy traditionalists, but whether this trend will continue will depend on how well these movies perform at the box office.

Due to the high cost of film production, it is typically less expensive for a Third World country to import an American television series or purchase a collection of US films than to produce their own. Because of this, many moviegoers in the Third World choose to see technically proficient international films over amateurishly produced home productions. Consequently, in nations like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Turkey, Thailand, South Korea, Brazil, and Mexico, Western films are frequently screened on television (Callimanopulos, 2022). Many would contend that Third World countries have more serious issues to deal with than funding cinema projects. Yet, the importance of the connection between mass media and economic reality is emphasized by indigenous artists and producers in these nations. Few critics have been able to assess how films affect audiences as a whole or as individuals since each audience receives a distinct message from films, and each viewer responds differently to each film. Several films that look to be "British," "French," "Italian," or even "Indian" are actually made with American funding, which is to the West's "benefit."

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More importantly, Hollywood may profit from Asian native film industries' growing Hollywoodization, even if this process takes place inside specific local sociocultural contexts. To produce and distribute movies in languages other than English, Columbia, Warner Brothers, Disney/Buena Vista, Miramax, and Universal have established specialized international divisions or collaborations in recent years. For instance, the Hong Kong-based subsidiary of Columbia Pictures, which is owned by Sony, has created a number of Chinese-language movies. Hollywood studios are increasingly funding and distributing Asian movies. Asian filmmakers have benefited from this trend, like Indian director Mira Nair, whose 2001 smash *Monsoon Wedding* was released in the US by Universal Pictures.

Also, "foreign" movie stars are able to become well-known in America because to the growing globalization of the film industry. The second repercussion of Hollywoodization of Asian cinema is on Hollywood's own future. The projections indicate that China and India will have greater movie markets than Europe due to the growing globalization of the film industry. This indicates that Hollywood is becoming into an export sector, producing films largely for audiences outside (Klein cited in Rampal, 2005). More knowledge and respect of other world cultures may be a greater advantage of efforts to globalize the film industry from the perspective of humanity than from that of corporate interests. The aforementioned makes it clear that various Asian film industries are through a process of self-reinvention to retain their economic viability in the face of the West's, particularly the United States', globalizing media culture. Thus, Hollywood culture is frequently regarded as glitzy and upscale and is frequently linked to fortune and prominence.

2.4.1. South Asian Diversity and Representation in Hollywood

Many studies have criticized Hollywood's propensity to demonize and stereotype other countries, ethnicities, and people groups, claiming that the perpetuation of stereotypes has detrimental effects on the populations represented. Hollywood's vast breadth has allowed for the mass consolidation of colonial master

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text replication and derogatory portrayals of Africa. Greco Larson (2005) provides a thorough assessment of minority group representation in American journalism, cinema, and television on a national scale (cited in Emelobe , 2009). This has been a recurring theme in Hollywood films, which frequently portray India, for instance, as being full of tradition, mistaken ideas, and individuals who never rise above a particular socioeconomic stratum.

Hollywood movies have been under more scrutiny recently due to racism and sexism, which may be seen in the actors and directors, as well as how characters are portrayed on-screen, and frequently all three. As Film stereotypes reflect and influence widespread attitudes. Representations of Asians as nerdy, black males as violent, and Latinas as fiery might affect perceptions. In the past, Hollywood used to see a lot of this technique. Production companies frequently choose to utilize white actors in their place of any form of minority actors since they were unwilling to recruit them (Johnson, 2004). Nonetheless, Asian groups in the US have traditionally been routinely ignored. Even now, the majority of Asian and Asian American depictions on television were not made by them. The cliché became more prevalent when self-censorship was replaced by the current system for grading movies, showing that this preconception of Asian women and men predated their representation on film. Hence, the "model minority" is currently the most prevalent representation of Asians and Asian-Americans in US media.

It's challenging to determine on a broad scale whether there are now or have ever been less stereotyped representations. Hollywood continues to use these clichés despite growing awareness of racial prejudices. Movie stereotypes are especially damaging to historically disadvantaged and underprivileged people. But, Hollywood has more than enough clichés to go around. Yet for populations that do not experience the negative consequences of stereotypes in their daily lives, having oneself depicted inaccurately produces significantly less suffering. In order to create the next big box office smash, Hollywood film companies are relentless in their stereotyping and demonization of minority groups, a country's cultural heritage and customs, and even entire continents. The portrayals of ethnic groups by production

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studios in their feature films are detrimental and destructive, and they have the power to sway and affect how viewers interpret a nation's identity and its people's cultural heritage. The lack of ethnic and racial diversity in Hollywood's major motion pictures can only serve to further marginalize these minority groups since they risk being excluded from a plot in which they might have a direct role (Malik, Hopp, & Weber, 2022, pp. 208-253). Not that white Hollywood actors, some of whom are notoriously insensitive to issues of race and culture, are solely to blame.

While culture cannot be considered as unchanging, says Menon, who holds a Doctorate in South Asian media and entertainment from New York University, South Asian stories have grown increasingly prevalent. Technology moves quickly, and being able to demonstrate changes frequently conflicts with the pursuit of authenticity. In our search for "authentic representation," we frequently dig up the past (Desai, 2004). Even though wide, generalized words like "White," "Black," and "Asian American" fail to capture the individuality of each person, general ethnic and multicultural identities still serve to describe the profound richness of these people.

Diversity must go beyond the numbers game in order for it to happen. It's crucial to keep in mind that South Asians have more complicated lives than what the rest of the world assumes. Hollywood is now recognizing that the ones have stories to tell, experiences to share, and battles to win by providing them the film and television representation they deserve. For instance, Apu from *The Simpsons* has been replaced with Kamala Khan from *Ms. Marvel*, a wildly successful recent Disney+ series produced by women of Pakistani ancestry who are the best at writing for women of color. By now, it's probably become apparent that South Asian stories aren't exactly being told in Hollywood or by British production companies like the BBC, and haven't been for decades. While it is not the task of non-South Asian filmmakers to create films about South Asians, it would be beneficial to see someone who is accurately represented on screen, or simply a South Asian who is not limited by stereotypes, in a film or television program. The few South Asian-themed films that have attained some kind of mainstream fame are

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Slumdog Millionaire (2008), *Lion* (2016), and *Four Lions* (2010). The fact that all of the screenplays were written and directed by white men, though, confuses to no end, especially given how integral these tales are to the South Asian experience.

In the meanwhile, it's undeniable that the domestic film industry favors promoting specific romantic narratives, maintaining specific gender roles, and supporting a particular light-skinned image. These are some of the pitfalls that the western film and television industries are trying to atone for in their own long history of poor cinematic decisions, and they can all be harmful for audiences. Moving again to speak about stories coming from the orient that are unable to capture the particular experience that immigrants and children of immigrants endure, and representation for diasporic South Asian themes in particular in western culture is surprisingly limited. Back to the initial remark, it is absurd to accept media on South Asians produced by white teams as they are unable to understand this experience (Malik, Hopp & Weber, 2022, pp. 208-253). One of the most important reasons to personally favor representation is the fact that it gives South Asians who live in the west more opportunities than they otherwise would have. South Asian creatives may already find it challenging to grow in their chosen industry because there is still stigma attached to taking an "unconventional" vocation. Unfortunately, clichéd characters like geeks or fat individuals are still frequently used in Bollywood films and western media, such as Raj Koothrappali from *The Big Bang Theory* (2007-2019), as humorous relief. These characters are never given a compelling story to follow.

More authentic stories and characters that connect with any Asian American on a deeper level than Bollywood tales are created when South Asian culture and western concepts are combined. Although you enjoy singing along to the tunes and *Kabhi Kushi Kabhi Gham* (2001) (a diasporic song) feels nostalgic, it isn't the most relatable thing you have ever seen. Even some recent attempts to produce more relevant television, such as the Netflix series *Mismatched*, have fallen short and come off as cringe or superficial to fans. Not to mention that most Bollywood celebrities have fair skin, since numerous South Asian nations have been unable to

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overcome the colorist attitudes that were instilled in previous generations. One looks at how South Asians are portrayed in the west because it is believed they are the most urgent and relevant.

For example, how could a film like *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002) have been made without Gurinda Chadha, a creative British-Indian writer and director. One should create room for more of our stories to be told since people from South Asian diaspora have quite different perspectives on their culture. For South Asians, representation has clear psychological advantages; witnessing someone from a similar background go through a similar experience reassures the fact that their own perceptions of difficulties relating to race, gender, sexuality, cultural expectations, or familial struggles are legitimate. In the end, representation gives them a sense of belonging, of being seen, of being recognized as a part of society, and of being empowered by their own voices. As minority representations have often been reductive and filled with prejudices. The South Asian population has frequently been left out of complex character depictions in Western movies, if not completely obliterated.

Film has always featured several Orientalist, Whitewashed depictions of the people. By perpetuating the cycle of emasculated and exotified depiction that one sees on screen, their experiences demonstrate the significant influence that this sort of representation may have on the roles that are created for South Asian males or females. It is a fascinating subject when the one considers the power that executives and production firms possess. In other words, accurate representations of South Asians in Hollywood had long been disregarded, and like many other South Asians from the diaspora, have struggled with their identities. A noticeable increase of South Asian authors, filmmakers, actors, and singers in recent years demonstrates how young South Asians are fundamentally redefining what it means to be "Brown" in Hollywood. Namely, Hasan Minhaj, a comedian, headlined the White House Correspondents' dinner in 2017 and hosted the late-night talk show *The Patriot Act*. Also, first-generation South Asians like Mindy Kaling and Aziz Ansari both created and starred in major TV productions in the 2010s, *The Mindy Project*(2012), *Never*

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Have I Ever(2020), *The Sex Lives of College Girls*(2021), and *Master of None*(2015), respectively. In *Quantico*, Bollywood star Priyanka Chopra played an FBI agent from 2015 to 2018. In *Spin*, Avantika Vandanapu is planned to play the lead role and is expected to be the first Indian-American actress to feature in a Disney Channel movie. All of these artists, as well as many others, are redefining what it means to be a young person of color who is fully in charge of their sexual orientation and cultural identity.

Even though South Asians have gradually started to make their impact on television, there has also been a noticeable shift in the film industry. It's a scenario that South Asian males in Hollywood don't frequently appear in. That feels like a move in the right direction finally with *The Green Knight* (2021) and *Sound of Metal* (2019). With its nuanced representation of South Asian-Americans, Hollywood has demonstrated its commitment to diversity, much to the chagrin of white American conservatives. The majority of the time, movies will simply include a single token Asian character so that the directors can check the diversity box and get some points. There has been an extraordinary influx of South Asian artists with the stature to call out Hollywood's double standards and act as change-makers.

With his work in the 1990s and *the Harold and Kumar* series, Kal Penn is among the first South Asian artists who paved the way for aspiring South Asian actors. The actor turned to Twitter to highlight the most bizarre and stereotypical screenplays he has gotten during his career with being offered jobs ranging from a 'Gandhi lookalike' to 'snake charmer' and 'fire-eater'. South Asian actors are putting themselves out there through more than just words; they are charting their own course and gently holding up a mirror to Hollywood through their work (Anand ,2018). It is also disappointing that despite South Asian stars calling out Hollywood for its bigotry, the actors have failed to publicly address the advantages in which their community participates. The majority of the performers come from wealthy, upper-caste origins and have not used their position to combat the widespread casteism and colorism in South Asian nations as well as in their diaspora groups in the West.

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Nevertheless, especially for performers of South Asian heritage, the pace of development in the Hollywood environment has sometimes been exasperatingly glacial, and the depth of characterization is prone to caricature. Wes Anderson's navel-gazing *The Darjeeling Limited* (2007) to lighthearted Disney productions like *Million Dollar Arm* (2014) are just a few examples of Hollywood films set in the East that similarly give one-note ethnic characterization and a checklist of national clichés. These movies did a fantastic job of conveying the cultural difficulties South Asian families in Western countries encountered, with a special emphasis on the interactions between second-generation children and the desires of their demanding parents. These films were essential in highlighting advancements in Asian representation by presenting universal themes and well-known cinematic motifs through a distinctly ethnic perspective.

Moreover, the recent release of "*Aladdin*" (2019) may have appeared to demonstrate an upsurge in South Asians of the worldwide media, even the significant Disney release was not without its problems. With the casting of Naomi Scott, a non-Arab performer, as *Princess Jasmine* in the movie in July 2017, there were allegations of whitewashing. Also, in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005), Padma and Parvati Patil were given an absolutely laughable outfit, which was both disrespectful and demeaning to the culture.

The glamorization of poverty coexists harmoniously with the white savior attitude. Obviously, measures to reduce pollution and clean up the environment are necessary, but the skies aren't constantly yellow and there isn't always so much pollution everywhere. India is more than just deserts, forts, and Goa, and Hinduism is not the only faith practiced there. Simply put, unless the most apparent few locations are displayed, such as the Taj Mahal, which is already a well-known landmark across the world, it isn't India.

Significantly, the specific relationship between the recent history of the Indian popular film industry and how audiences in the South Asian diaspora have responded to the films produced by this industry has focused attention on the larger

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process of diasporic cultural consumption as constituting an act of nostalgia, an attempt to maintain an imagined connection to a lost homeland. The very mention of "diaspora" in this context suggests the necessity of discussing loss of homeland and identity.

Amidst the enduring divisions caused by politics, culture, religion, nationality, and caste among the contemporaries on the subcontinent, those residing in the diaspora who clung to xenophobic, racist, or communal beliefs found acceptance. Despite this, an effort can be made to establish connections of unity. On the flip side, the community might become secluded and is already moving away from the need for South Asian narratives with distinct political and cultural characteristics in the mainstream. This need became evident through events in the United States following the tragic incident of 9/11. Subsequent to that fateful day, a period of widespread bias, surveillance, violence, and enactment of anti-Islamic and pro-immigrant laws transpired. Each member of this community possesses a unique viewpoint on South Asian identity, and none should be compelled to represent the entire group. However, one adverse outcome of inadequate representation is the reinforcement of the notion among minority group members that they wield minimal influence over the dominant culture. This leads to a perception of limited access, constrained opportunities, and the likelihood that their own stories will either be overlooked or distorted through stereotypes. However, there is a noticeable shift happening now. The prevailing sentiment in US culture is moving towards rejecting stereotypes, as evidenced by the rise of the slogan "down with brown."

Despite this change, actors of South Asian descent are still frequently asked to portray clichéd roles and adopt accents. Over the past few years, individuals born in South Asia who are involved in the arts have transitioned from being minor and overlooked figures to becoming significant phenomena in American pop culture. Notably, South Asians are not only making a mark at the Met Gala, but their presence is also becoming increasingly common. This shift is especially striking in the US, where South Asians constitute a smaller and more recent segment of the

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population. Historically, they have played a negligible, if any, role in the collective awareness of the nation.

Significantly, Hollywood and American television are notorious for their lengthy history of disparaging preconceptions of Asians, and frequently it is popular children's programs and films that have contributed to the upkeep of these prejudices. Stereotypes have an influence on how south Asian innovation is evaluated as well as the sorts of positions that are provided to south Asians. Iyer says in a piece in the New Yorker that critics "used to try to situate me by othering me, by putting me outside the tradition of jazz. Everything I accomplished was viewed as unique rather than continuing a long-standing tradition. Despite John Coltrane's interest in mathematics, critics seldom refer to black music as rigorous, intellectual, or mathematical. I was viewed as having just my brains to employ because I am Asian. It's incredible that people who are hired to study media and culture wouldn't immediately see this. "They aren't entirely white, but they also aren't as different as African-Americans. Hence, poking fun of south Asians is not considered to be outright racism. Indian actors frequently portray their roles in Hollywood as an accepted sort of diversity. Certainly, they are different, but we can still make room for their diversity (Matusitz & Payano, 2011, pp.65-77).

Historically speaking, South Asians have been moving to the US for more than a century, but it wasn't until the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 that they began to arrive in significant numbers. Hence, one factor contributing to the increasing representation of south Asians in American popular culture is demographics. South Asians have lived in the US long enough to have offspring who are successful in the arts. A feeling of being expected to act like "Uncle Taj," as Dev describes him in *Master of None* (2015). And it's true to say that south Asians haven't been outspoken about criticizing the racial gap in the US for a very long time. The racial division has, after all, historically been extremely black and white, with south Asians reluctantly permitted to stand on the white side if they behaved well and didn't bring attention to their otherness (Mahdawi, 2017). Television continues to reinforce racist attitudes and prejudices about Indians in

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American society, despite the fact that it is clear that consumers do not have a dislike for minorities. South Asians are accustomed to appearing in American culture as the strange cab driver, computer prodigy, convenience shop owner, or ambiguous racial minority.

Hollywood struggles to capture the true essence of one of the world's most culturally rich regions – South Asia. The South Asian identity encompasses a tapestry of numerous subcultures that have evolved from a blend of religions, languages, dialects, foods, and traditions. The shift towards increased recognition of diverse artists within the industry signifies a growing acknowledgment of the importance of representing different communities. Conversely, the more positive portrayal of Asians in Western media has catalyzed a movement where people are more inclined to embrace, rather than distance themselves from, their cultural heritage.

The makers of *"Never Have I Ever"* (2020) for instance have removed the conventional portrayal of Asians as grade-obsessed and thick-accented, making us feel seen rather than merely caricatured as being radically different from our white counterparts. This may be utilized to change the stereotypes about Asians that many Americans have unconsciously created while creating future Western television programs and motion pictures. Although there has been a substantial improvement and expansion in the representation of Asians in Western cinema over the years, it is still not at an optimal level. The development has been tremendous, going from being an outsider to playing a supporting part to now becoming the lead. One got the opportunity to talk about the idea and development of South Asian representation in cinema with some of the top Hindi film actors, which is wonderful news for all the artists. Whether referring to India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh, the name "Desi" is used. Desi people in the nation reportedly felt more included when well-known streaming providers like Netflix and Disney+ published famous South Asian series. Of particular significance, participation entails more than merely participating in or being included. A true depiction avoids generalizations and accurate representations.

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2.5. A Take on the Evolution of Indian Cinema

After attaining independence, India has blossomed into a thriving constitutional democracy and has achieved numerous significant milestones across various domains such as politics, commerce, entertainment, and sports. In comparison to its post-independence phase, India boasts a much lengthier history. It stands as the world's foremost producer of films, with an annual release of nearly 2,000 movies in 20 different languages. The evolution of Indian cinema has seen it transition from being independently funded, high-risk ventures to a well-structured industry with a global viewership. The term "Indian cinema" encompasses a diverse array of cinematic hubs that can be distinguished based on their geographical origin. At the heart of Indian cinema lies Bollywood, which produces Hindi-language films in Mumbai, often referred to as the fusion of Bombay and Hollywood. Other prominent cinematic hubs include Kollywood, centered in Chennai and focused on Tamil films; the Malayalam Cinema of Kerala; the film industries of Kashmir and Marathi; Karnataka's Kannada or Sandalwood industry; and Tollywood, the epicenter of Telugu cinema headquartered in Hyderabad. Telugu stands as the second most widely spoken language in India.

Furthermore, even though the portrayal of caste and religious conflicts is "constitutionally prohibited" in India, these themes persist in movies as an underlying subtext beneath societal class disparities (Virdi, 2003, p.2). While Hindi cinema and its stars undoubtedly dominate the market, each of these cinematic domains commands an international fan base and contributes to enhancing India's cultural influence globally.

Yet, melodramatic genres that depict love or caste and class conflict in the home sphere are not the only focus of Indian cinema. The peasant uprising from the 1950s, famines, shortages, and the green Revolution in the 1960s, the rise of the workers', women's, and ecological movements in the 1970s and 1980s, the rise of Hindu fundamentalism, the intensification of caste wars and regional separatist movements in the 1980s and 1990s, economic liberalization in the 1990s, the Indo-Pak Kargil War, and nuclear testing by these two nations are all significant

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historical events that are the most significant cliché through which Hindi films "create the notion of the nation" is the socioeconomic hierarchy, which is the source of the majority of conflicts in Indian movies (Virdi, 2003, pp:11-16).

Interestingly, the rise of Indian film coincided with the nation's struggle against British colonialism. As a result, the definition of an Indian cultural identity in all of its "allegory, shape, and form" has always been greatly influenced by film. With the advent of "talkies" in the early 1930s, the Indian film industry was able to escape the "shackles of Western influence," and linguistic barriers offered "natural protection" to Indian filmmakers. There were "profusions of songs" in the vernacular tongues of the movies. *Alam Ara* (1931), the first talkie in India, boasted 12 songs and was billed as "all talking, all singing, and all dancing."

A conflict between modernity and tradition, westernization and indigenusness, developed in the cinematic imagination. A distinctive idea of Indian identity developed as a result of these dialectical confrontations. Directors like Raj Kapoor and Bimal Roy depicted the world of the impoverished in the 1950s by labeling Indian society as "iniquitous and unequal." The directors expressed a social message in movies like *Awara* (1951), *Bandini* (1963), *Do Bigha Zameen* (1953), *Jagte Raho* (1956), *Shri 420* (1955), and *Sujata* (1959). Hindi movies promoted the nation's homogenization strategy in the 1970s by appealing to the underprivileged by instilling confidence in the "benevolence of the nation-protective state". The underlying presumption was that, like in the movie *Zanjeer*, the (poor) "angry, young man" was these films' main target audience (1973).

In the 1990s, the "liberalization of the Indian economy" brought about developments that aided in the expansion of Hindi cinema production and distribution. But, with the introduction of satellite television, Indian filmmakers started working in a new media environment where audiences at home had a wide range of alternatives, including simple access to Bollywood and Hollywood films. The financial equations in Bollywood also changed as a result of liberalization. A big-budget movie's international distribution rights cost around twice as much as

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they did in the Indian market (Rao, 2007, pp.57-76). Film producers increasingly focused on specialized audiences who "paid more, purchase more" and needed to be represented in the movie's contents as multiplexes proliferated in big cities, where ticket prices were ten times higher than those at family-owned, small-town theaters.

Consequently, numerous Indian films function as visual documentation of the societal, cultural, and political transformations transpiring across the continent. In the continuum of accomplished talent, luminaries such as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, and Mira Nair have risen to prominence within Indian cinema. Among these, Satyajit Ray, active from the 1950s to the 1990s, stands as one of the most renowned Indian filmmakers; Mrinal Sen, his collaborator from the 1960s to the 1990s, gained recognition for his innovative approach. Mira Nair, a contemporary filmmaker of Indian origin based in America, has also achieved significant acclaim. Her films, such as *"Salaam Bombay"* (1988), *"Mississippi Masala"* (1999), *"Monsoon Wedding"* (2001), *"The Namesake"* (2007), and *"Shantaram"* (2022) exhibit a distinct link to India. Notably, Nair established and leads the "Maisha" film lab initiative, aimed at aiding filmmakers, particularly from Third World regions like East Africa and South Asia, in producing their cinematic works.

Nair operates as a "crossover" director, championing transnational cinema. Priya Lal's assessment suggests that Nair's films possess an artistic and scholarly appeal, resonating with both cultured foreigners and academia, whether depicting the gritty streets of Bombay or capturing the enchanting splendor of Hindu weddings. Hence, transnational cinema emerged in reaction to a change in the way goods and services are traded internationally, transitioning from a focus on individual nations to a global scale. This transformation was driven by the growing interconnectedness of economies and the rapid removal of technological constraints. As a result, the local film industry in less central regions can now adopt a global outlook in terms of both creating and disseminating films by embracing transnational cinema practices.

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Due to the fact that , these technologies offer viewers a way to identify and comprehend. In musical sequences that explore diasporic duality, this acknowledgement of a changing audience and Bollywood as a worldwide movie is progressively expressed. The fusion of Hindi cinema's representational systems with the diasporic imaginary opens onto a third place, sometimes called to as "Bollystan," in its attempt to convey a sense of national identity that inscribes the NRI through shifting discursive operations.

By simplifying the process to an illogical, idealistic division of physical indicators and mental moods inside the South Asian in the Western environment, the Bollywood story seeks to simplify the process. Since the subject negotiates divergent cultural norms, a cultural hybrid of potential conflicts is created, which is unstable. Bollystan can provide diasporic viewers with a blend of South Asian and Western codes while promoting an underlying fascination of India and its culture both at home and abroad through the migration of exegetical musical moments in Hindi film to South Asian locations. The informal patterns of nationally-focused tales hint at the existence of a more general South Asian cultural heterotopia across global networks and marketplaces by realigning the musical sequence as a long-standing motif of unmarked space.

This is discernible in the tight connection between the diaspora and India is shown in movies like *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*(1995), and musical interludes may either accentuate or ease underlying cultural tensions. Successive movies have provided a greater possibility to establish the South Asian musical sequence as the primary exegetical setting as Bollywood tales have increasingly inhabited these Diasporic locations. This change jeopardizes the status of unmarked space, nevertheless. The geographical settings of India are depicted as exotic, tradition-rich locales while Diasporic and South Asian audiences deal with the rising consequences of westernization and glocalization (Rao, 2010). So, the musical sequence's mutations in terms of Hindi cinema's generic hybridity preserve projected cultural consistency despite significant changes in Bollywood audiences

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as a result of widespread foreign migration, increased urbanization, economic affluence, and media globalization.

Furthermore, digitalization, the influx of over-the-top (OTT) platforms (applications and services that are accessible over the internet and ride-on operator networks offering internet access services, and foreign theatricals as revenue earners in the industry and are some of the main causes of this exponential growth. In India, the consumption of content has undergone a seismic upheaval as a result of the digital revolution. OTT platforms made significant investments to get the exclusive rights to cinematic films in line with the worldwide trend toward digitization, and as a result, India's first digital-only film industry was established in 2018. Because of this creative freedom, OTT players and digital platforms are able to deliver premium, mainly uncensored material that is precisely catered to the desires of particular audiences.

In a similar vein, viewers are allowed to select the content they want to view at any moment. This flexibility of choice, together with the accessibility of a vast variety of online content, has helped digital films attract more viewers in an age where convenience is paramount. For instance, movies with fantastic casts like *Lipstick Beneath My Burkha*(2016), *Stree*(2018), *Badhaai Ho*(2018), and *Dear Zindagi*(2016) also had compelling, new messages that sparked discussions about topics with current relevance.

Again, small budgets and small casts allow filmmakers creative freedom when it comes to cinematic premises and content, and bring new talent to the market. This approach not only drives the growth of the sector, but also takes into account the social dynamics and consumer demands. The Indian cinema industry has experienced a significant transformation from being a source of masala enjoyment to what it is today a platform for social criticism. The Indian film industry has advanced by embracing new technology and igniting discussions on a range of crucial societal issues (Hong, 2021, pp.345-363). Indian movies have broken down barriers of language and geography, achieved popularity among all

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demographics, and gained a cult following as they spread outside of their home country. Obviously, Indian films are distinctive for fusing dance, drama, music, and poetry; they do this by relying on old Indian theater traditions like Kathakali from Kerala, Terukuttu from Tamil Nadu, and Thamasha from Maharashtra.

Adding to that the cross-border co-productions and location filming in India that have gained popularity as a result of Indian films' success in global markets. It's interesting to notice the impact Indian films have on regional filmmakers. Malaysian directors greatly incorporated melodrama as a narrative method and other elements of Indian cinema that focused on family, gender roles, and emotional storylines, with many of their films sharing more in common with *Devdas* and *Shree* than with Hollywood productions (Heide cited in Roy & Huat, 2012). The impact of Indian cinema as a soft power is best understood when this awe of Indian movie actors, films, and shooting techniques has a positive knock-on effect on other industries. The films pique viewers' curiosity in India, which leads them to want to consume anything and everything Indian. So, Indian film was already widely distributed before globalization. Without forgetting, despite Bollywood's all-encompassing fame, regional film has successfully carved out its own global markets and strengthened India's soft power.

2.5.1. India's National Cinema; Criticizing the Property

The very idea of "national cinema" has multiple meanings and is defined through negotiations or conflict with, and resistance to "other cinemas," especially the industry that most successfully imposes itself on a global level, i.e. Hollywood. At the same time, Indian cinema's own identity as a "national cinema" has frequently been built, as it is still today, in relation to an international and increasingly "global" element. Telugu actor Chiranjeevi recently stated in an interview that he felt it offensive, upsetting, and troubling that films from the south or anywhere else were not included in any national discourse on Indian cinema (Rajadhyaksha, 2009, p. 12). Members of the Indian diaspora, including those who are Dutch, Surinamese, Trinidadians, British, and Maldivians of Indian descent,

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would quickly recall how much they loved whatever Mumbai's film studios produced, while showing little interest in films made in 'regional' film economies and locations. Not completely their fault, since Bollywood has long enjoyed the status of "national cinema," primarily serving the Hindi-speaking communities in India and across the world but also making significant advances into areas where other languages were spoken.

As India marks 75 years of independence, these are important topics that touch on a variety of issues, including cultural homogeneity, scale economies, production locations, and the politics of language. Bollywood has recently come under criticism for cultural conceit in addition to other, less serious offenses, as the entertainment sector becomes more heated and politicized than it has ever been. Bollywood has not benefited from the recent box office successes of some of the marketed as blockbusters movies such as *Shamsher* (2022), while films produced in the Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada film industry with far lesser budgets have triumphed. *KGF* (Parts I & II)(2018-2022), a mostly Kannada film, captivated the Hindi audience, whereas *Pushpa: The Rising* (Telugu) (2021) left the audience wanting more.

The impending return of the on-screen angst that made Amitabh Bachchan the matinee idol of the 1970s and 1980s is a factor that is frequently overlooked due to the overwhelming dominance of the political-economic perspective in cinema. This is in addition to the commercial and, in some cases, critical success of films from the southern film industries. Films like *Zanjeer* (1973), *Sholay*(1975), and *Trishul*(1978) heralded the beginning of a period of masculine wrath on the silver screen by reflecting the underlying discontent and anger that then permeated metropolitan environments.

Despite the fact that the action is transferred to Bangalore and other locations, Bombay is nonetheless a constant presence throughout the movie's plot. The key takeaway from this is that these all-Indian movies have revived the Indian movie going tradition of whistling, applauding, and hooting. Another aspect that

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requires additional investigation is the striking contrast between Bombay and the south in terms of the makeup of the film production regimes. For instance, the Tamil film industry has established a model for the development of a cinema star culture free from severe caste and class systems. Suriya, Vijay, Vijay Sethupathi, and Chiyaan Vikram have emerged as the leaders of a large social revolution with origins in the Tamil Dravidian movement, if Rajnikanth was among the top non-Brahmin public celebrities. Since the pan-Indian success of *Pushpa* and *KGF*, critics and reviewers have been remarking on the "rootedness" of south Indian cinema. This "rootedness" is a result of the genre's close relationship with daily politics, larger social movements for caste and class mobility, and its propensity to depict various Hinduisms and Hinduism-related ideas.

It is beneficial for Indian film to show the actor's originality and to emphasize the real-world implications of society and humanity, but it should also work to strike a balance between what the audience needs and what should not be offered. Bollywood has continued to serve as the sole point of reference for Indian culture and variety, from the early post-independence themes of nation building to the post-Emergency vision of the angst-ridden ostracized hero and the post-liberalization ostentation and diasporic message. In reality, movies like *Do Bigha Zameen* (1953), *Sujata* (1959), *Pyasa* (1957), and *Mother India* (1957) were pioneers in tackling complex caste, class, and gender issues. With movies like *Anand*(1971), *Golmaal*(1979), *Rajnigandha*(1974), and *Gharaunda*(1977), among others, Hrishikesh Mukherjee directed the resurgence of the middle class in Hindi cinema, while *Saleem Langde Pe Mat Ro*(1989), *Jane Bhi Do Yaaron*(1983), *Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai*(2019), and *Mohan Joshi Haazir Ho* (1984) introduced a new cinematic form that highlighted the raging urban underclass. *Aligarh* (2016) delves into questions of homosexual behavior and social acceptability, previously confined to the parallel cinema universe.

More importantly, the 2000s saw the emergence of a hybrid cinema that refused to relegate contemporary social and political issues to the margins. Films like *Haasil* (2003), *Gulaal*(2009), and *Masaan* (2015) engaged with questions of

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caste dominance and discrimination. Yet, with the absence of innovation in plots, storylines, and screenplays during the past five to ten years, Bombay cinema's filmic language and form have slowly begun to fall apart. Large audiences have gradually lost interest due to the obvious contrast between the entitlement and luxury scenarios shown on film and the reality experienced by millions of Indians. Regarding the conceptual viability of a national cinema in a nation as diverse as India, Hindi cinema's gradual and nearly complete cultural subjugation of language cinemas gave it the right to brag about claiming territory that was not necessary for it to do so, either aesthetically, conceptually, or politically.

By serving more people and eliminating competition from other film businesses, Bombay cinema grew to be regarded as national cinema. As a result, a myth developed that Bollywood was the paradigmatic symbol of Indian culture. This myth is now dissolving as the film industries of the south begin to recover the cultural space that had previously been closed off to them despite consistently generating more films than Bollywood. Bengali and Assamese movies have carved out unique places where one observes political problems regarding the underprivileged being addressed with comparatively easy cinematic access. Marathi cinema has been creating content-driven cinema for some time. However, considering the inherent diversity of cultural spaces and their ongoing evolution, it's possible to question the necessity of standardizing cinematic language and production methods.

2.6. What Is Bollywood?

In a diverse and multilingual country like India, the appeal of mainstream Hindi cinema is widespread. This film industry stands out as one of the rare examples that has effectively challenged Hollywood's global dominance and garnered international appreciation. Tejaswini Ganti (2013) argues that the selection of Hindi as the language for movies produced by Bombay-based studios was based on its prevalence among the Indian population. This detachment of the language

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from specific regional ties contributed to a more "nationalistic" essence in these films (p. 11).

Notwithstanding the significant historical and industrial developments, Hindi film still has a connection to the general population in terms of its address, reception, and aesthetics. Films made in the 1970s during the Emergency period critique the government and its institutions, and the 1980s Avenging Women film genre shows the impact of women's movements. The development of videocassettes, satellite TV, and cable in the 1980s, together with the liberalization of the economy, resulted in ideological changes that were reflected in novel genres. The "family film" gained corporate importance in the 1990s, influencing its creation and release, which in turn affected the target audiences and the film form as the "New Bollywood," which equated it in the marketplace.

Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, is the hub of India's Hindi-language film sector, famously referred to as Bollywood. It's remarkable that Bollywood, rather than terms like Hindi cinema, Mumbai cinema, or Indian popular movie, was soon coined and rose to prominence. This industry, a blend of "Bombay" and "Hollywood," stands as the largest among India's film realms, contributing significantly to the country's cinematic output. While Bollywood remains the primary contributor to the film landscape, various films are also created in regional languages like Bengali, Tamil, and Telugu. These Bollywood productions hold sway over India's societal and cultural spheres, mirroring the shifting values and convictions of the nation's heritage throughout time (Therwath, 2010). Beyond its role as India's predominant film enterprise, Bollywood boasts a prolific output, churning out over a thousand films annually and thereby securing its stature as the world's most extensive film industry. This dynamic sector yields substantial revenue, wielding a profound influence on India's economy. Yet, Bollywood's significance stretches beyond its economic prowess; it wields a profound cultural influence and has metamorphosed into a phenomenon deeply embedded within Indian culture.

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Historically speaking, the release of the silent film *Raja Harishchandra* in 1913 marked the beginning of Bollywood. Bollywood emerged as a counter to Hollywood, the thriving American film industry. During the colonial era, people in India sought to produce their own versions of English movies after seeing their appeal and success. At that period, religion and spirituality had a profound impact on India's culture. The majority of the films made during this time period were mythological tales based on Hindu religious texts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, but their sole purpose was to amuse the audience, primarily the lower and working classes who used Bollywood films as a form of escapism because these films are primarily set in India.

In addition to patriotic films, historical dramas showcasing India's rich culture were produced in large quantities during the 1940s and 1960s. After India gained independence, many Bollywood films reflected patriotic themes and recounted tales of the Indian uprising against the British, including the blockbusters *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960), and *Mother India* (1957) as the new source of national pride. Up to the 1980s, it was common for the lead character to be a "Angry Young Man." The action and combat scenes in these movies were almost always filled with weapons and other forms of violence, and the manly rugged hero was portrayed as the perfect male. Women had a much smaller role in these movies, serving more as eye candy or the girlfriend or wife of the hero. As a sizable portion of India's population was young adults, many popular movies from the 1980s to 2000 focused on topics that are appealing to young people, such as college, love, education, and friendship.

As the influence of Western trends waned in India over the course of several decades, the artistic elements of Bollywood films underwent a renewed transformation. Numerous movies from that period incorporated increasingly prominent facets of Indian heritage, encompassing significant rituals and cultural activities. These cinematic works captured essential Indian principles revolving around marriage, family, and festive celebrations. The majority of songs were exclusively composed in Hindi, and traditional dances such as bhangra and garba

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took center stage. Simultaneously, a growing community of the Indian diaspora emerged as more individuals from India chose to reside abroad. Bollywood productions set in renowned cities like New York, London, and Paris gained immense popularity, offering those within India a glimpse into the Western world's aesthetics. However, these films did not achieve significant success, primarily because they focused on the lives of Indians living overseas in countries like the United States, Canada, or England. This narrative resonated with Indian immigrants in these nations who could relate to the depicted environments and experiences.

Interestingly, the characters in the movies would still wear Western clothing, but each one was guaranteed to have some sort of wedding dressing up in Indian outfits and participating in their cultural practices, like the hit movie *English Vinglish* (2012) accurately portrays the above mentioned, as the majority of Indians living abroad are still intact with their roots and appreciate and take part in their culture. Bollywood films are reflecting Indian audiences' interests and changes in values and beliefs as more Indians become socially aware and educated about the nation's issues.

From 2010 to the present, there has also been another shift as filmmakers and producers have come to understand that Bollywood can accomplish more than just entertain. Films have been produced that address societal subjects including drug misuse, gang violence, gender inequality, education, and sexual assault, among other pressing problems in India. A good illustration is the 2016 movie *Pink*, which is centered on the problem of rape and the Indian court system. The blockbuster hit Bollywood film *Dangal* (2016) is an example of a movie that celebrates women's strength and urges Indian society to treat women as equal to men, end gender inequality, and become more inclusive and representative of minorities in India. These changes reflect the growing awareness and movement for women's rights in India. More roles are being created for women, and many films are featuring themes of gender inequality.

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The rising popularity of Bollywood in the general public has been reflected in the academy and the higher education book market, despite the fact that the prominence of Indian cinema in Western Film Studies is still only minimal. These introductions can be seen as highly specialized continuations of the groundwork set by more contemporary publications concerning significant structural or aesthetic elements of Hindi cinema, such as their songs, costumes, villains, or love relationships. In order to effectively shape, consolidate, and popularize a canon of mainstream Hindi films, a number of historiographical books and other publications that are essentially annotated lists of the films that their authors believe to be significant have been published. These publications have given newcomers and aspiring connoisseurs a diachronic overview of the alleged key works of Hindi cinema (Ganti, 2013).

In keeping with this notion, the critics' viewpoint on Indian film has changed not just in terms of the medium being evaluated, but also in terms of the geographic range of its distribution and reception. More and more focus on issues other than actual films, such as how Indian mainstream cinema is doing in the face of broader cultural trends like celebrity culture and convergence culture. Thus, Commercial Hindi filmmaking is predetermined by previous successes, whereas contemporary creators embrace Bollywood as a means of cultural survival.

2.6.1. Bollywood as a Representative of India

Unsurprisingly, India's success was the fame of its movies. The most recent statistics from a trade paper published last year show that India released 1,602 productions in 2012 from all its various language industries, with Tamil, Hindi, and Telugu language cinema industries producing the most films. India is the country with the most prolific film industry, producing up to a thousand films annually. Bollywood, the brand name for Hindi cinema, has an unrivaled worldwide reach, predominance in South Asia, and is frequently used to refer to "Indian cinema." Bollywood's India is the ideal primer for the newly smitten newbie and was put together by Professor Rachel Dwyer from the School of Oriental and Asian Studies,

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University of London, in consideration of these preconceptions and expectations. Bollywood's India views the liberalization of the economy in 1991 as the major turning point that changed the course of the cultural sector, portraying in vivid detail the fresh and unstoppable fantasies that were liberated with the relaxation of economic restraints. Any national ideal is flimsy and unstable, just as the American dream has changed over time. Bollywood's India goes some distance toward tangibly identifying its reasons, but it has always been difficult to describe what the Indian dream is (Dwyer, 2014).

In the context of Bollywood, terms like "dream factory" and "dream merchants" are examined for their efficacy and authenticity. For instance, Dwyer effectively demonstrates how there has been "an indisputable shift in the idea of Indianness, in the ways that India perceives itself and how Indians view India in the world today" in a debate on the changing nature of "Indianness" in Bollywood. During the past 20 years, there have been significant changes in self-perception toward a more aggressive and self-assured nation that wishes to declare its entry on the global scene. One ridiculous example of the trend Dwyer has detected is the more international exploits of the Bollywood action hero, whose heart remains Indian, in far-off places fighting a variety of foreign villains and gyrating with exotic supermodels (Banerjee, 2018).

One example is the Bollywood action hero's expanding international journeys, when he fights a variety of foreign adversaries in far-off places while gyrating with exotic supermodels. Of course, the inescapable ultimate query is: to what extent is Bollywood, and consequently, Bollywood's India, sufficiently representational of India? While the latter does clearly define the scope of its investigation by arguing that regional cinemas like Tamil, Telugu, or Bengali cinema have a "different sphere of reference" and are more frequently associated with local and regional politics than Bollywood's aspirations for a global audience, the exclusion seems glaring, if not outright incorrect.

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The popular knowledge and impression of Indian movie reviewers throughout the world have seen a significant transformation in just 15 years. Bollywood has achieved so much and gained so much respect that it should no longer be consigned to the periphery of Hollywood and European art film in major global cities. The openings of Bollywood films and other events, stars and events, and industry concerns are frequently covered by major news outlets in the United States and Canada.

The live musical extravaganzas featuring Bollywood actors, singers, composers, and dancers draw sold-out audiences in locations all over the world. Another thing to mention is that stars have what marketing professionals refer to as "aspirational value." In other words, the products that their favorite on-screen heroes endorse clothing, watches, jewelry, purses, pricey cosmetics, diamonds, and international travel are the ones that their admirers most want to purchase. Major Bollywood actors are frequently seen these days serving on the juries of important international film festivals like Cannes, Toronto, and Berlin. Hollywood movies have included Shabana Azmi, Amitabh Bachchan, Anil Kapoor, Nandita Das, and other actors. Again, this interest and recognition on a global scale may seem overwhelming, but Indian popular film has long been a part of the cultures of the nations to which Indians came throughout the colonial era, whether as indentured servants or for commerce, education, or other reasons.

The primary subject of interest has been Bollywood's response to the movement of cultures and people on a worldwide scale by developing distinct family, displacement, racial attitudes, citizenship, and home storylines. Bollywood is the designation given to the Indian film and movie industries since they are well-known worldwide. It has a sizable target market in the Middle East, Europe, Hong Kong, Britain, and even Africa, and is just as well-known as Hollywood. In addition, Bollywood now produces more movies annually than Hollywood. "Bollywood, not Hollywood, spins the screen dreams of hundreds of millions of admirers throughout the world" (Mazumdar cited in Bhatia, 2007).

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On a worldwide scale, movies and theatres have been crucial in spreading messages, ideas, and educational material. A universal realm that is electronic, disinterred, and in which borders and limits have been removed is what is created by media globalization. The globalization of both culture and commerce has been greatly facilitated by movies and the cinema. Examples may be seen in films like *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2004), which is about an irate young lady whose father commits himself and leaves her mother trying to raise the children alone, and *Mississippi Masala* (1992), which is about a romantic connection between an Indian woman and a Black American man. While though it perfectly matches the neoconservative romance subgenre, it also has elements of an older subgenre, the prototype Bollywood film, with its unique mapping of gender and sexual roles. These movies give diasporic viewers a nationalist reflection of themselves, which they then absorb and consume. By using upbeat screenplays to demonstrate to the public that different races can always get along and work together without hostility, film producers occasionally utilize diverse races in their works.

2.6.2. Bollywood Films as a Cultural Expression and the Visual Culture of Popular Indian Cinema

Bollywood, the primary hub of India's film industry, wields substantial economic sway and contributes billions of dollars annually to the country's financial landscape. The public domains where Bollywood's visual narrative thrives, encompassing billboards, film posters, and various visual mediums, offer distinctive avenues for novel interpretations. These remnants of Bollywood's cinematic heritage, stemming from its roots in the film sector, have exerted a considerable impact on aspects like Indian politics, religion, and contemporary art. As a result, Bollywood stands as an enduring and pervasive influence within the realm of popular culture.

Interestingly, it has been one of the most prevalent and recognizable aspects of Indian culture for the past 100 years. One of the most effective and prominent ways to use script to address various social concerns is through Indian film. The

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amount of films produced makes it the largest film industry in the world, but not in terms of revenue. Bollywood, however, is not a sector based on linear programming. Indian film has been experimenting with several genres, from mythology to comedy to thriller and horror, in order to develop a winning formula that appeals to audiences and leaves a lasting impression at the box office. Expats may experience some cultural surprises due to the country's unequalled diversity and difference that may be both fascinating and confusing. India is a thriving, multi-cultural nation, as seen by the abundance of historical sites, delectable cuisine, Bollywood films, love of yoga, and cricket. It's conceivable that if expats are patient and give themselves time to adjust, they will eventually view the nation in a very different way.

2.7. The Bollywoodization of the Indian Cinema

Within global cinema studies, the popular Indian film, or Bollywood, is posited as a national cinema that recently underwent a "transnational shift". When speaking about aspects of transnational Cinema in Bollywood Films, one of the biggest hubs of film production in the world, may serve as another illustration of how transnational elements can be found in films from various regions outside only Europe and Asia. Music and dance are two of the most noticeable elements in Indian cinema. This is one of the ways Hollywood films have inspired Indian cinema. While musicals were extremely popular in Hollywood from the 1920s to the 1950s, Indian filmmakers diverged from their American counterparts in a number of areas. For instance, the Hollywood musicals included the entertainment industry as their central theme. Indian filmmakers employed song and music as a natural means of articulation in a specific context in their films, while emphasizing the fantasy aspects that are so prevalent in Indian popular films.

In fact, Indian dance components and Western dance forms frequently converge. In many song-and-dance sequences in Indian movies, the location or costume change between verses is excessively fast. A duet between an actor and an actress is frequently performed in stunning natural settings or opulent architectural

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settings. Emerging cartographies of Indian cinema's acceptance in non-diasporic and non-occidental cultural ecologies, seen as indicators of vernacular modernity or alternative cosmopolitanism, offer a fascinating mosaic of the genre's global reach while also highlighting enormous gaps in our knowledge of the scope of Indian cinema's transmission in modernizing cultures, especially in comparison to Hollywood's well-documented global (Virdi, 2017, pp. 1-22). In order to inform readers who are interested in globalization studies, cultural studies, popular culture, and international communication, Indian cinema turned to strengthening its national identity by asserting nationhood through the diasporic figure, esthetic, and new global sensibilities that also revitalize cinema by social identities and texts moving between locations.

Accordingly, Bollywood exists for and primarily serves an Indian diaspora audience. Even while Indian cinema desperately wants to reach this "non-resident" audience, it very infrequently succeeds in doing so. In nearly every case, it can only do so when it "Bollywoodizes," a transition that very few Hindi films and very few films in other languages are really able to make (Rajadhyaksha, 2003, pp. 27-29). This is to emphasize how the cultural aspects of globalization have changed the standing of "Bollywood" movies, making them a specific object of trendy fascination in the "Western" world. Some of these comments from local and international audiences often have a subtle effect from the unfavorable preconceptions that they have been linked to through time. India's Bollywood has become a worldwide phenomenon, putting Indians in the limelight and igniting discussions about the potential of Indian film to boost the soft power of south Asian nations and its diaspora on a socio-cultural and political level throughout the world. Bollywood, an Indian film business, not Hollywood, weaves the screen dreams of hundreds of millions of fans worldwide.

Bollywood, while occupying a sector akin to the cinema business, is perhaps better viewed as a more diversified cultural agglomeration that spans a variety of distribution and consumption channels, from websites to music cassettes, from cable to radio. If so, all of it actually goes back to the producer, as decided by the

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film industry itself purely in terms of its box office revenue and sales of print and music rights (Athique, 2011). So, this name currently refers to a very particular story and presentation style. Very few Hindi films, and scarcely any in other languages, are genuinely able to make this transformation.

Knowing that it is a commercial cinema because Indian movies, despite their flaws and blatant stupidity, symbolize some of the future potential for India. One observes endlessly complicated spheres of cultural creation as a result of the concomitant growth of global capital and diasporic nationalism. Bollywood's success on a worldwide scale may be linked to the Indian diaspora and a larger audience outside of India being prioritized by the Indian film industry. With well-known movies, globalization has really re-territorialized the diaspora. Together with the works of Gurinder Chaddha's *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002), Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Bombay Dreams* (2002), and Baz Lurhman's Bollywood-inspired *Moulin Rouge* (2001), the Oscar submissions *Lagaan* (2001) and *Devdas* (2003) that put a critical mass of Indianness on show. The following mentioned movies are some of the several that have vividly shown the South Asian diasporic experience: the Gurinder Chadha-directed film *Bhaji On The Beach* (1993), *Chutney Popcorn* (1999), a Nisha Ganatra-directed film *American Desi*, a 1999 film by Piyush Dinker Pandya, Geeta and Ravi Patel's film *Meet The Patels* (2014)...etc. Thus, Cinema has the ability to tell scenarios that may make people feel seen from all over the world. Whether they reside in Toronto, New York, or Mumbai, the transnational Indian bourgeoisie portrayed in the wish-fulfilling narratives are self-assured and happy to be Indian.

However, modern movies frequently concentrate on the private or romantic sphere, and they have supported this tendency by setting the majority of the story in the homes of the diaspora and fostering myths about Indian family values and morality; this effectively distances the lives of the protagonists from socio-political realities. To Bollywood's globalizing producers, who portray transnational Indians as technologically astute and ideologically inclined toward vast consumerism, evidence of Western capitalism's endorsement of individuality, alienation, and

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general imbalance is completely irrelevant (Roy & Huat, 2014). Even a very simple comparison with some western countries reveals, for instance, that despite their close physical vicinity, Bollywood has been received significantly differently in each nation since the turn of the millennium (Krämer, 2015, pp. 1-14). This section is particularly interested in the various constructions of Bollywood in the United States and the changes the concept goes through when the traveling goods, which are Indian mainstream films, are locally consumed and adapted for American texts and contexts, in addition to asking the questions of who actually consumes Bollywood, how, and why.

The issue of film circulation has started to spark some interest, particularly in the Indian industry and its regulation, in light of a number of transformations, the distribution dynamics of the modern media and audio-visual industries, and this because of the increasingly noticeable effects of globalization. Although some contributions have addressed the changes in distribution, circulation as a barometer of the current state of the broader industry, and, from a historical perspective, the drive for exportation in the 1960s, cinema and media economics has first and foremost focused attention primarily on production.

Second, media studies has given particular prominence to the "Distribution Revolution," or the radical transformation of delivery and fruition systems for audio-visual content, which also had repercussions on production and professional cultures, in the age of digitalization and so-called "media convergence". The deepening of ties between film production and the TV business at various phases, including distribution, has been highlighted in the research that has articulated the "transmedia" interconnections between cinema and other media in the age of convergence. It has also concentrated on the gradual expansion of film exhibition and visibility spaces, particularly between the theatrical release and arrival in a "library" (home video, pay-per-view, transactional video-on-demand, pay TV, subscription video-on-demand, free-to-air TV, not to mention less obvious methods of distribution). For example, film festivals, which are a crucial moment for international circulation (Holdaway & Scaglioni, 2018, pp. 341-355). Nevertheless,

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in as much as film distribution, particularly in terms of international cinema, is mainly a planned and organized process that aims to generate financial value through the "windowing" system, movie theaters continue to serve as a vital point of departure.

Moreover, the term "circulation" refers to the flow of content over place and time, taking into account both formal and industrial distribution networks and their "windows" as well as a number of additional unofficial networks and participants. In media and television studies, the industrial modes of post-theatrical dissemination are emphasized, from the numerous television platforms to OTT services; moreover, a cultural point of view is required to show how Indianness is defined in film. For a generation that was raised in the 1990s or earlier, the change from decrepit single-screen theaters to opulent multiplex theaters serves as the finest illustration of how economic liberalization affected Indian film. The film industry began to flourish with the gradual abolition of the license-permit raj, especially after 1998, when the National Democratic Alliance government awarded cinema the status of an industry. The way that movies are financed has changed, and corporations are now producing films.

In the 1990s, there were two main themes in movies, the first step is to make films that non-resident Indians (NRIs) would watch. This required the casting of prominent actors, the portrayal of grandiose romance, opulent lives, and the usage of exclusive venues. But, it never seemed to matter as much as it did in the 1990s, when three filmmakers Sooraj Barjatya, Aditya Chopra, and Karan Johar helped usher in what cinema critic Anupama Chopra refers to as "a generational transition" through their respective works (Jha cited in Datta, 2008). The opposite is also true, according to Komal Nahta: "There was a turnaround, Indians and Asians living abroad started connecting with our films because directors like Johar and Chopra gave them a taste of India and Indian traditions and values presented in a very modern approach. They couldn't argue that it didn't measure up to Hollywood since there was a fair balance of heritage and contemporary (Jha cited in Datta, 2008).

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In essence, globalization fundamentally altered the kind of movies that were previously being produced by directors. In order to foster a sense of nationalism and foster a sense of identity in the midst of the upheaval that followed the partition, the government used film as a key instrument following independence. With Bollywood's worldwide influence, it should not be surprising that it became focused with propagating a specific "politics of nationalism" in the wake of globalization. Although the "new family films now focus on consumer oriented families, referring to tradition yet geared to global mobility," and Hindi cinema continues to be obsessed with the themes of family and love. As films like *DDLJ*(1995), *K3G*(2001), and others are considered box office successes even outside of India, it would appear that Bollywood was attempting to convince a worldwide audience that everything is 'OK' in the country, unaffected by decades of antagonism across the borders. To raise awareness of the desi culture is one of the main goals of this film. Together with the expansion of the Indian diaspora, satellite television, and the internet since that time, Indian popular film has broadened its appeal around the world.

Researchers have explored how Indian mainstream cinema, popularly known as Bollywood, is received and accessible in various countries such as Nigeria, Indonesia, Canada, Senegal, Bangladesh, Germany, Australia, the United States, South Africa, Guyana, and notably, the United Kingdom. This examination is documented in an increasing number of books focusing on the intersection of Bollywood and globalization (Krämer, 2015, pp. 1–14). This demonstrates that the Hindi film industry has a presence on every continent, and its influence is evident in regions like South America, North Africa, and the Middle East, showcasing a clear instance of global media expansion.

Significantly, this new global movement is continuing to structure and reconfigure the world's artistic, economic, and political landscapes. This current tendency has disrupted current cinematic engagements, including those in Indian cinema, and established what is now referred to as transnational Bollywood cinema (Okpadah, 2019, pp.78-89). The aim to make Bollywood international and

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cosmopolitan is known as Transnational Bollywood, which is the Indian movie culture of the Global Diaspora. Bollywood has gained international notoriety thanks to transnational Bollywood, which has also pushed the Indian film industry to the forefront of discussion. Most excitingly, though, is that this issue has a real champion for Indian film talent who, long before it was fashionable, was bridging the gap between Bollywood and Hollywood.

Examples of this expanding international cooperation include the Oscar-winning success of *Slumdog Millionaire*, which was produced and directed by British talent, as well as the \$1 billion plan by India-based Reliance Entertainment to co-develop and co-produce films with Hollywood heavy hitters. Also, a large number of independent producers and filmmakers from the US, Europe, and India are promoting the expansion of these global creative networks. First-generation immigrants are viewed as a possible investment opportunity since diasporic groups (NRI) are found in many regions of the world (Punathambekar, 2005, pp. 151-152). The Internet and the video game industry's digital and virtual media convergence, as well as the fast-growing and bi-directional media content outsourcing by American and Indian digital graphics and visual effects companies, have had a significant impact on the general output of the Bombay film industry in postmillennial India. The superhero genre, for instance, in Hindi is a highly self-aware, referential importation of an inherently American genre that had hitherto only been superficially translated and indigenized by adding Indian character names, rarely Indian settings, and the standard song-and-dance sequences like in the movies *Krrish* (2013) and *Ra.One* (2011). So, it is important to pay greater attention to how the Bollywood superhero genre mimics the pre-release advertising, merchandising, branding, and transmedia franchising of Hollywood superhero blockbusters.

Today's culture, television, and film are examples of global consumer products. One of the largest distributors operating in India is Eros. In comparison to its domestic counterpart, it is more focused on the international market. The business also engages in connected ventures. Examples include "Home Entertainment," "Television Syndication," and "Theater Organizations." The

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diasporas provide their permission to companies that produce and distribute media, including Eros and Dharma Productions. Bollywood has generally tried to market its goods to NRIs. Indians who live in the west are frequently portrayed in art. Adventure sports, designer clothing, and custom living have all shown often in movies during the previous ten years. To appeal to the preferences of the second generation of migrants, these western initiatives have been "Indianized."

Notably, a tiny number of privately owned, Indian-owned businesses formerly promoted the movies. The top distributors that introduced Indian entertainment to American shores were Eros International and Video Sound. Major Indian businesses started direct distribution in the US, Canada, and other markets in the early 1990s after observing the popularity of movies in those regions. For example, Yash Raj Films opened a location in New York. Similar to this, Sony Entertainment Television, which has a considerable influence in India thanks to SET, made the decision to enter the film distribution industry and subsequently started funding Hindi movies. To handle its Bollywood distribution activities in the U.S.-Canada markets, SET opened an office in New Jersey. South Asians are present in these two nations in significant numbers, and their economic influence is significant due to both their population and strong purchasing power (Pillania, 2008). Bollywood draws viewers from all across the world, not only Asian Indians. Indian businesspeople had opened multiplexes to show Bollywood films in parts of the United States where there were larger populations of South Asians.

Since a few years ago, Bollywood has helped young people overseas socialize. In order to create an assemblage that has pushed textual meanings and viewing pleasures to the background while emphasizing forms of production and consumption derived from Bollywood visual matrices, the Indian culture industry of which popular Hindi film continues to be the centrifuge successfully combined extensions and/or marginal reflections of this central element, such as theatre, fashion, and media at large. The diverse crowd at the multiplex, arguably one of the most internationally connected groups, seems to relish the advantages brought about by these advancements. As they stroll by the renowned international product labels

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in the radiant shopping center, they have the opportunity to savor the finest offerings from Indian and even Hollywood films.

Bollywood movies are a fantastic illustration of transnational or international cinema. In this Hollywood-dominated world, it is the second-most successful and prolific hub for film production. Bollywood movies, which are well-known for its distinctive tropes, are hugely popular not just in India but are also frequently exported to West Africa, South Asia, and Europe notably, the UK. For such international cinema, it is vital to think about who the movie makers are targeting as their core audience. So frequently see a lot of transnational film that has its culture eliminated and deterritorializes itself for implicitly global audiences.

So, Bollywood has a significant cultural impact. It is more than simply a film industry; it is a phenomenon in culture. Bollywood is greatly inspired by Indian life and portrays India's lively and distinctive culture. Bollywood movies have mirrored Indian culture's shifting morals and values throughout their history. Nearly every facet of Indian culture is included into Bollywood films (Ganti, 2012). As most big-budget Bollywood movies are released around significant festivals like Diwali, Holi, Ramadan, or Eid, they have assimilated into Indian celebrations of holidays. Indian society is also greatly impacted by Bollywood movies, music, and celebrities. For instance, Bollywood movies create new fashion trends, and people look to Bollywood for inspiration.

Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, the transnationalization of production, marketing, circulation, and reception, propelled by new dynamics, posed a challenge to conventional ideas of language, genre, nation, and culture. Indian cinema has been reinterpreted as Bollywood, distancing itself from its particular setting and establishing new transnational identities that harken back to pre-national conceptions of home, belonging, and community. Several outstanding films, like *Rang De Basanti* (2006), *3 Idiots* (2009), *Chak De India*(2007), *Dangal*(2017), *Mary Com*(2014), and others, have greatly inspired young people to make positive changes in their life. The youth's lives, thought patterns, ideas, and

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thoughts are now greatly influenced and changed by the Bollywood films, which are no longer only a source of amusement but truly rule over their brains. These Bollywood movies and dance are two prominent aspects of Indian culture that are becoming more well-known worldwide. The hybridization of the West and India, migration, and the internationalization of Bollywood with the rise of India as a superpower make these Indian movies great instances of globalization. Globally recognized Bollywood can help India financially and economically achieve attention, but it also feeds misconceptions.

According to Komal Nahata, a Mumbai-based film trade analyst and reviewer, Bollywood film makers have long been eager to attempt their hand at crossover filmmaking. But according to him, their attempts were unsuccessful because Indian and Western viewers are very dissimilar. Nahata added, "I believe it is this desire to access newer markets, to capture newer consumers. "But our directors are unaware that what is missing is the kind of movie they like. You can't just change Bollywood movies and claim that you did it for a diverse public. Additionally, their sensibilities and preferences are totally distinct (Hirji, 2005). Therefore, many people are hopeful that Bollywood films will have an impact outside of the conventional markets in India and Asia. Indian film producers are attempting to break the mold and investigate more modern topics in their quest to attract viewers from abroad.

2.8. About the Astute Filmmakers

The link between cinema and location is further complicated by the transnationalization of Hollywood's film industry, which came about as a result of the Hollywood studios leaving the factory-like studio system of production in the postwar era. The "new international division of cultural labor," as described by Toby Miller (1996), who refers to the fact that local film industries across the world comprise both indigenous filmmaking and runaway production, which is often created and financed by American film studios (cited in Gasher , 2002, p.77). The

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hybrid motion picture business is focused mostly to foreign location production in countries like British Columbia.

Obviously, local film industry professionals have been more and more involved in the creation of Hollywood movies and television shows by taking on creative roles as actors, directors of photography, assistant directors, and even directors. Alfred Hitchcock, Steven Spielberg, Walt Disney, Martin Scorsese, Kathryn Bigelow, Roman Polanski, Jane Campion, George Lucas, Agnès Varda, Brian De Palma, Mira Nair, and Quentin Tarantino are a few filmmakers that had a significant social impact. Among order to connect with a larger audience and express and share identity among diasporic groups, film has been a crucial medium. It can portray the dislocation, prejudice, and stigmatization that migrants suffer, as well as the conflicts that arise among families that are separated around the globe or attempting to settle in new places. The subjects of migration, diasporas, and identities are used by filmmakers of all stripes, from Hollywood and Bollywood to independent and art film, to enlighten, amuse, educate, and spark discussion.

Notably, a collective of filmmakers and artists from developing nations, referred to as Third Cinema, has offered a potent critique of the organizational framework within the Third World film industry. These creative minds express a fervent disapproval of the establishment of growth zones for the communication sector in the United States, seeing this expansion as a significant obstacle to the progress of self-reliance and societal development in emerging countries. While Third World nations grapple with the challenge of cultivating a distinct "national culture" to counter Western influence, a growing proportion of minority groups find themselves marginalized without proper representation in the realm of national artistic expression.

The foundation of the creative infrastructure is made up of filmmakers and artists. Many foreign filmmakers put in a lot of effort to create and present tales that have personal meaning for them, tell a narrative from an original angle, or even have an incredibly unexpected ending. Thus, foreign-produced Indian movies are

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well-known all over the world. These movies successfully straddled several genres, including historical epics, thrillers, and adventure. Also, several of the movies had a big budget. The Oscars, the BAFTAs, and many more foreign accolades have been bestowed upon Indian films. The popularity of Indian movies has led to some of them being offered on Netflix and other digital platforms. A really innovative mix is created when international filmmakers collaborate with Indian talent. Hollywood continues to make the most money, though. Bollywood has reached the worldwide markets as a result of the expansion of the Indian market and globalization. Hollywood is said to have a significant effect on Bollywood since globalization is sometimes misinterpreted as the spreading influence of western culture.

2.8.1. Case of Indian Filmmakers in the Diaspora

During the latter part of the 20th century, individuals from the Indian Diaspora began producing films to portray their lives in diasporic environments and to offer a new perspective on their homeland, India. Despite emerging later than diasporic Indian literature, the realm of diasporic Indian filmmaking swiftly garnered immense popularity, gained worldwide recognition, and received prestigious accolades. These movies predominantly originate from diasporic countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The majority of these filmmakers belong to the first generation of postcolonial professional diasporas, a group that has been the subject of previous scholarly investigations. While a relatively recent artistic representation of the Indian diaspora, films crafted by diasporic Indians across the globe are presently analyzed within the intersections of postcolonialism, feminism, diaspora studies, transnationalism, and queer studies. Numerous scholars from both Western and Indian backgrounds have authored academic papers and comprehensive studies examining this form of cultural expression (Desai, 2004).

For a long time now, international directors of Indian descent, such as Mira Nair, Gurinder Chadha, Deepa Mehta, and Shekhar Kapur, have carried the banner of popular Indian cinema abroad more frequently than Indian-based directors. The

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genre of diaspora films is expanding. According to popular belief, Indian filmmakers have not actually created The Great Crossover Film. Though Raj Kapoor had succeeded in penetrating the mass market in the former USSR and central Asia, even Satyajit Ray largely avoided the mainstream and stuck to the art house circuit.

Hence, the development of the diaspora genre is fascinating, for instance, Shekhar Kapur didn't include any song or dance in his Indian movie *Bandit Queen* (1994), but he did in his very British movie *Elizabeth* (1998). While Mani Ratnam's remarkable fusions of art and business come near, Mira Nair's *Monsoon Wedding* (2001) offered the common "Bollywood wedding video" template of the 1990s an international twist that none of any domestic directors could do at the time.

While Bollywood asserts its position as the second-highest-grossing film industry globally, Indian-American directors have also garnered international acclaim and attention. Notable examples include Tarsem Singh, whose comedic creations, Babu Subramaniam's philosophical productions, and M. Night Shyamalan's mind-bending thrillers highlight how the Indian diaspora has steadily carved a niche in the global film arena. While a few Indian-origin filmmakers have already made significant waves with their exceptional work in Hollywood, the majority continue to strive for recognition. Tarsem Singh, the director behind the 2011 blockbuster "*Immortals*," which raked in almost USD 200 million, emerged as the first director of Indian descent to lead the US box office. His collaborations with renowned talents such as Ryan Reynolds and Lady Gaga span across directing well-known Hollywood music videos, films, and commercials.

Gurinder Chadha, the first British Asian woman to produce a full-length feature film, is another filmmaker profiled. Her feature films, including *Bhaji on the Beach* (1993), *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002), and *Bride & Prejudice* (2004), were all commercially and critically successful in India, the UK, and the United States. She also received numerous international honors, including nominations for the BAFTA and Golden Globe awards, solidifying her status as one of the leading

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filmmakers of her generation. Moreover, Deepa Mehta is regarded as the spokesperson for Indian feelings in Canadian cinema. Her other notable films include *Paradise on Earth* (2008), which earned actor Preity Zinta her first foreign best actress prize at the Chicago Film Festival, and the frothy *Bollywood/Hollywood* (2002), which established Bollywood a sensation in Canada.

Similar to Black filmmakers, Asian filmmakers were driven to address prejudice, express their unique identities, and present new perspectives on their host society. Asian filmmakers started to appear in the 1970s, and their films probed identity conflict and addressed racism. USA Hollywood's native country, the United States of America, is another place where diasporic Indians have been making movies since the 1980s. It's interesting to note that many of them, like M. Night Shyamalan, make blockbuster movies exclusively for the Hollywood market rather than documenting the lives of Indians living abroad or making movies that attempt to recast India.

The bulk of other diasporic Indian filmmakers have had careers that are similar to Mira Nair's. The focus of diasporic filmmakers in the United States of America is similar to that of diasporic filmmakers in the United Kingdom as racism and generational differences between first and second generation diasporics in the country are among their main concerns. Filmmakers like Piyush Dinker Pandaya, the director of *American Desi* (2001), Anurag Mehta, the director of *American Chai* (2001), and Viral Lakhia, the director of *Namaste*, are represented here(Berghahn, & Sternberg, 2010,pp. 12-49). Given their ethnic background and the apparent challenges they face in securing funding, distribution, and marketing, independent filmmakers would find it incredibly challenging to keep making movies. This is the problem, despite the fact that many of these diasporic filmmakers of the first and second generations were influenced by Hollywood, not Bollywood. The bulk of them were raised in the 1970s and 1980s and disapproved of the drawn-out, overly musical Hindi films that had not yet been dubbed into Bollywood. The first generation of diasporic directors, like Mira Nair, who grew up watching Indian movies and whose work is, as one shall see, greatly affected by this cinema, do not

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share this viewpoint. These movies may have profited from a certain crossover appeal, leading to financial success and box office success, if they had been a hit. As a result, these films have attracted global notice and introduced a whole new demographic to India. These movies demonstrate a significant gap between the present and the time they were created, which makes them both objective and problematic.

Considering the reception of these movies in India holds significance as well. In a world where India's global presence is expanding, any attempts to portray its difficulties, no matter how current and authentic, often don't sit well. Navigating this delicate balance between appealing to international viewers and respecting Indian sensitivities requires caution. Some filmmakers have approached the edge of this balancing act, but most have managed to recover and successfully showcase their films to audiences worldwide, including in India. The films also shed light on India's transformation in the 1990s, coinciding with the emergence of cross-over films from Bollywood. Nevertheless, filmmakers from the diaspora remain cognizant of Bollywood's sway and potency. So, Bollywood currently benefits greatly from the rich ethnic diversity of India, and the filmmakers are showing many communities, fusing various cultures, and creating an intriguing image. Since that ethnicity and culture play a significant role in Indian cinema, when Bollywood began imitating English films, the settings and aesthetic of the movies began to resemble more western and also creating stories with NRI themes as their central focus.

2.9. Bollywood and its Diaspora

Three characteristics of post-1990 Hindi cinema the language used , the styles, and conventions, and the importance of the family help diverse South Asian populations have a shared and unified cultural narrative. Notably, Bollywood is another rising film industry that, in certain ways, is prospering and succeeding on the global stage. As a film industry, it is India's most potent cultural ambassador, that has made a great contribution to reversing the formerly unfavorable perception

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that people abroad had of India. This has helped to increase India's soft power around the world.

The industry has, to a reasonably large extent, supported initiatives aimed at dispelling stereotypes that once painted India as a nation of abject poverty, "snake culture," caste atrocities, breaches of human rights, racial unrest, and religious extremism, among other things. Bollywood, in the words of Kishwar (2016), "has synthesized the emotional lives of NRIs living in distant and various cultures and has helped them feel "Indian" by making them feel linked to their cultural values." These movies are "the heartbeat of the Hindustani dil, both of the resident and the non-resident kind" in almost every environment (cited in Endong, 2018, pp.77-90). The projected multi-disciplinary network will pay close attention to issues of representation in an increasingly globalized visual culture as it focuses on the relationship between Indian Diasporas, identity formation, cultural legacy, and performance.

For this population, Bollywood, or Hindi films from Mumbai, is an essential part of their existence as diasporans. To give you an indication of the enormity of the industry, over 3.2 billion people globally watch Bollywood movies, which is about double the size of Hollywood (Matusitz & Payano, 2012, pp.123-138). The performing arts have the power to either reinforce the unified and homogenized images of cultural heritage that exist between India and the Indian Diaspora or convey other viewpoints. After the Indian economy was liberalized in the 1990s, the Bollywood film industry began making films aimed at the diaspora as well. These films include *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (The Large-Hearted Will Take Away the Bride, 1995), *Pardes* (Foreign Country), *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (Something Happens in the Heart, 1998), *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* (Sometimes happy, sometimes sad, 2001), and *Dev* (Own Country, 2004). These films include NRI/PIOs who encounter India for the first time and turn it into a place of desire that emphasizes family, culture, and national identity (Dwyer, 2014).

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Also, Bollywood acts as a visual culture, a social institution, and a language resource for the group of young desis. These resources are assimilated into daily life in different ways based on class, linguistic, religious, and geographic backgrounds. The movies are available for viewing on DVD, online, or in theaters with friends and family. Music from movies become well-known, and is used as mobile phone ringtones, that are played everywhere, and are even heard at parties. As a result, cinema music and dialogue become a part of diasporic communities' daily lives, shaping their experiences and providing a means of self-expression. The outfit on show is popular and may be copied at weddings and festivals, giving guests a way to express their "Indianness."

By doing so, they are presenting a global youth culture that is influenced by American and European consumerism and has access to branded goods. Although while many Bollywood actors and actresses have adopted Western standards of beauty, such as having pale complexion, exceptionally lean bodies, and dark eyes and hair, their South Asian accents, mannerisms, and values frequently mark them as Desi. Yet, given that India is a heterogeneous nation, the "Indianness" that unifies the various age groups of the diaspora will always be an imagined one. The Indian diaspora is therefore always torn between clinging to their original culture and integrating into the new. With around 25 million individuals living in nations like the US, UK, UAE, and other places across the world, the Indian diaspora is the largest in the world. Since more and more Indian areas are represented overseas, this group is among the most diversified diasporas in the world.

Perhaps Bollywood, the Indian film industry, provides the solution for how they are able to preserve their Indian identity despite residing abroad. The narratives of more contemporary movies have changed. Hence, in this context, the NRI, who is always struggling with identity issues, turns to Bollywood, which prominently highlights several situations with such films that emphasize this particular group's distinctive experience in the diaspora. The dichotomy of identity raises the issue of what constitutes a "Indian" in the diaspora. Others could argue that it's practicing religion, participating in rituals, or even enjoying holidays like Diwali and Holi.

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These traits are only surface-level nevertheless. Bollywood makes use of this to appeal to Indian prejudices that viewers in other countries may have.

In a manner, the movie suddenly turns into a sobering warning about what would happen to the audience if they travel overseas. There are just as many variations among expatriate populations as there are ethnic and regional identities inside India. Bollywood movies are shown all throughout a South Asia that is constantly growing, as well as in North America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, East Africa, and other places. Accordingly, diasporic film should ideally focus on the upsetting impacts of globalization, migratory cultures, and the postcolonial. It is impossible for this film genre to be monolithic in terms of language or culture. But take a deeper look at British-Asian movies, American-Indian movies, or even Indian movies that are set overseas and feature Indians who have lived there (Desai, 2004). With a variety of diaspora films like *Freaky Chakra*(2003), *Leela* (2002) , *Cheeni Kum*(2007), and others, a group of young, urbane filmmakers have given desis all over the world a different taste. This is done to emphasize how Bollywood has become the most effective producer of Indian identity and the pervasive worldwide Indian of these films. Salman Rushdie produced startlingly original Indian-style language, and by being able to see and hear current Indian modernity portrayed in fresh ways, Indians like myself suddenly felt a sense of active participation with our own decolonization (Kayal & Saha,2022).

Yet, it's important to note that young people were first drawn to new films because they show a more modern India and an Indianness that they can easily relate with. At the same time, the globally assimilated diaspora, including well-known Indian authors like Jhumpa Lahiri, Rohinton Mistry, or Shashi Tharoor, has had a significant impact on representations of global Indianness and provided Indians and South Asians in general with a greater range of styles, personas, stories, and situations from which to "imagine" themselves, if the one accepts Benedict Anderson's theory of imagined nations being created out of actual nations.

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Also, since Deepa Mehta, Gurinder Chaddha, and Mira Nair started employing Bollywood actors as protagonists in their films, the lines between Bollywood and diasporic cinema have become increasingly indistinct. The diaspora is now more visible than ever, and India has accepted the need for immigrant ideas. It may sound paradoxical, but former Indian administrations are now joyfully pushing mainstream Hindi film after years of disparaging it. This is because they are using Bollywood to market India overseas. These of which have aided in developing the "cool" perception of India that has quickly spread through the diasporic capillaries of cuisine, clothing, and movies that immigrant groups often use to express themselves. One example that comes to mind is that while Yash Chopra films rarely accurately or meaningfully depict immigrant life, they are still very popular with audiences who are Indian diasporic because of the Hindi language culture, fashion, and commercialized ritual that they offer, which is eagerly consumed by the second generation diaspora, who also make up a significant portion of foreign film viewers. Also, these movies contest the idea that Indians living abroad are a part of other worlds and cannot be re-territorialized or brought back to India unless given chances that would provide them advantages or privileges.

Thus, Bollywood has made millions by creating the ideal of the "perfect Indian," then evoking or, in some cases, reinforcing a sense of longing for the homeland while also instilling a sense of pride in one's Indian heritage, and finally, subtly implanting a certain distinct idea of nationalism in the psyche of the diasporic community. Indian souls dreaming Indian dreams in a vibrant foreign environment is an excellent description of the usual Bollywood films aimed at a diasporic audience, according to filmmaker Subhash Ghai(Takhar, Maclaran & Stevens, 2012,pp.266-279).

Consistently, a larger South Asian identity is emerging, where an Indian, a Pakistani, and a Bangladeshi can dine together in a relatively modernistic bungalow in London and mock each other for being of a different nationality, breaking down barriers of nationality and the pervasive animosity displayed by Indo-Pak citizens

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towards each other in their respective homelands. The movie *Dhan Dhana Dhan Goal* (2007) for example, appears to underline the necessity for the minority population to unite and create a "cohesive whole" in order to define its own identity in a country where race is not a factor. As a result, Hindi cinema has been welcomed by the Indian diaspora with great enthusiasm, and they have helped to make sure that it is successful where they live. It may be characterized as the nationalistic identities of diasporic communities as well, the behaviors of a country's diaspora that want to gain control over its nationalistic identity but is unable to or does not wish to leave its diasporic community. The Third Wave of migrants are viewed in this way in terms of diasporic nationalism since their transition occurred in the 1960s, a period of significant expansion for the Bollywood industry (Mishra, 1996, pp. 421-447).

It painstakingly crafts the idea of the ideal diasporic community to cure some of the pain of adjustment, trauma of uprooting, suffering, and discrimination based on race as the main themes of diasporic experiences. It is a way for people, even social groupings, to declare their cultural allegiances, and the many ways it is constructed alludes to various social milieus, groups, and sectors. The investigation of the mechanisms underlying the adoption of one's group identity is what gives the films directed by immigrant Indian filmmakers such a captivating quality (Matusitz & Payano, 2012).

Additionally, Gurinder Chadha's film "*Bride and Prejudice*," released in 2004, contributed to the existing trend of Austen-inspired movies that gained popularity in the 1990s. However, "*Bride and Prejudice*" stands apart from typical Anglo-American historical period dramas. Despite its simultaneous release in two distinct languages (English and Hindi) and distribution in three different countries (the UK, US, and India), the film is undeniably unique. Characterized as a fusion of "East meets West," Chadha's creation combines the quintessentially English narrative of Austen's "*Pride and Prejudice*" with the traditional structure of Bollywood, effectively transitioning from corsets to saris, the Bennetts to the Bakshis, and pianos to bhangra rhythms (Mathur, 2007). As such, it's evident that

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"*Bride and Prejudice*" falls within the emerging subgenre of South Asian crossover cinema in its diasporic manifestation.

Such hybrid filmmaking purposefully serves as a link between at least two different cinematic traditions of Bollywood and Hollywood. *Bride and Prejudice* rejects to fit into a tidy East vs West cross-cultural model as a representation of current globalized post-coloniality in its narrative span, covering not just Amritsar and LA, but also Goa and London. *Bride and Prejudice*, in Gurinder Chadha's opinion, is a "full Hindi movie" in which she has "deliberately referenced the film of Manoj Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Yash Chopra, and Karan Johar" in order to do "honor to Hindi cinema" (Mathur, 2007). This group of directors is linked to a particular Bollywood subgenre called the patriotic family romance combining elements of the "social" and the "romance" genres of Bollywood (Virdi, 2003,p.178).

Since then, Indian filmmakers have taken extra attempts to target fans among the Indian diaspora in the west. So, Hindustani youth may now proudly watch Hindi films without feeling bad about enjoying "poor budget" and "kitsch" musicals. With non-Hindustani peers, they may discuss the newest movies at school more readily than before, and many do so with great passion. Given all of this, it should come as no surprise that Hindustanis prefer to refer to the bulk of commercial Bollywood blockbusters as "Hindustani movies" instead of "Indian movies".

2.10. Film Industries' Cooperation Pact

Hollywood and Bollywood stand out as prominent entities within the global film landscape. These labels encompass various aspects of the film industry, encompassing its productions, artists, traditions, and more. Hollywood, which boasts international film distribution, essentially represents the entirety of the United States' film sector (Rajadhyaksha, 2003, p. 12). Within Hollywood, one finds a diverse array of internationally recognized stars hailing from various nations and ethnic backgrounds. Hollywood movies and their actors enjoy widespread recognition across the globe. On the flip side, Bollywood is a distinct facet of the

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Hindi film realm. The term "Bollywood" gained prominence as Hindi cinema surpassed Hollywood during the 1970s.

In the creation of some Hollywood films, special effects and other technologies are used. The films typically have gore, blood, intense emotions, violence, sex, and other contentious subjects and are in English. Also, several films deal with a variety of local and worldwide and sorts of concerns social, political, and others. Bollywood movies, on the other hand, frequently focus on families and human sensitivity. Musicals featuring big casts and lots of song and dance scenes are the main themes of these films. Another recurring feature in these kinds of films is drama and these films are primarily in Hindi, Hindish, or Hinglish. Hollywood controls the market in terms of revenue. In addition to the money made from the movie itself, the franchise system brings in extra money for the business. Several additional media, including TV networks, home recordings, and periodicals, are frequently linked to the film. Hollywood films frequently have premieres abroad. Hollywood films cost a lot to make, not just in terms of technology but also in terms of other production costs. Hollywood generates 75% of all movie profits on a global scale.

While dealing with the international market for and consumption of films, Hollywood's relationships with its Indian equivalents provide a challenge to the distinctive viewpoints supplied by capitalist production regimes that are based on strong national identities. This demonstrates how contemporary cinema necessitates new critical frameworks addressing spectatorship, production, consumption, nationalism, and hybridity in the process of border-crossing. It also asks for a reassessment of problems like cultural identity.

Furthermore, production companies have switched from the traditional Bollywood practice of "risking" personal fortune amassed over many years or mortgaging property to fund a single film to the studio model, where there are systematic plans to "break even" before a film is released. Prior to liberalization, Hollywood movies would arrive in Indian theaters months after they did abroad.

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Full-length feature films are acquired, produced, syndicated, marketed, and distributed globally by studios including Viacom¹⁸ Motion Pictures, Eros International, Reliance Entertainment, and UTV Motion Pictures. Part-production and revenue-sharing post-production are recent techniques. In addition, other Indian media businesses have engaged into production and distribution contracts with major international media corporations, including the infamous alliances between Disney and Yash Raj Pictures, 20th Century Fox and Dharma Productions, and Warner Bros. ,and People Tree Films. The breadth of Indian cinema storylines has expanded in tandem with these commercial trends.

Not to mention the stampede of businesses vying to be linked to these movies as sponsors or characters in the plot. Hollywood "opened our audiences' eyes to the quality of cinema and technology of a much higher standard, as their films, action, and special effects were out of this world and that automatically raised the bar for us," says veteran filmmaker J.P. Dutta in reference to the influence and exposure of Hollywood films on the Indian audience. While Hollywood filmmaking techniques were a major influence, the producers of movies like Rakesh Roshan's *Krrish* (2006) and Shah Rukh Khan's *Ra.One* (2011) employed international experts in their action, make-up, and special effects departments.

Once economic liberalization gained hold, foreign studios recognized the possibility in the Indian market. One draw was the natural glitter and promise of the Indian film market, but another was how the multiplex business was transforming the face of the country's entertainment sector. A number of foreign competitors have become significant players, including Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., Fox Star Studios, and The Walt Disney Company (India). More precisely, the multiplex's introduction marked the largest transformation of the 1990s. People stopped attending to movie theaters in the 1980s, explained Bhawana Somaaya, a writer and film critic (Guan & Lu, 2020,p.270). Within a short period of time, the federal government allowed 100 percent foreign direct investment in the exhibition industry, and several states streamlined their entertainment tax structures. Without ignoring a different factor in this process, "Exhibition is the one shift brought about

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by liberalization that sticks out, "added Nahta. He said, "The first week or the first three days are what the entire game is about. Also, you must aggressively sell your movie to get people "Nahta stated(Ganti,2013). The similarities between cinema and television are best evident in the film marketing industry (Hirji, 2005). On the other hand, as more movies were chosen for channel screenings, a higher percentage of funding gradually began to come from satellite channels, improving the profitability of the business, according to Nitin Keni, CEO of Essel Vision Productions Ltd (Punathambekar, 2005).

Likewise, the distinctive blend of spices that defines Bollywood's identity is meticulously crafted by the tireless efforts of directors, writers, and producers, all working relentlessly to transform their ideas into captivating spectacles. However, it's not uncommon for Bollywood to draw a touch of imaginative influence from its larger counterpart, Hollywood, as exemplified by the movie '*Inspiration*.' Notably, blockbusters from both realms have resonated with their respective target audiences. For instance, consider '*Salam-E-Ishq*' (2007), which bears a resemblance to '*Love Actually*' (2003). In both films, the central theme revolves around couples grappling with relationship challenges, interweaving their individual narratives in a meaningful manner. Another one is *U, Me Aur Hum*(2008) – *Notebook*(2004). In order to stay alive, an elderly husband reads to his ill wife about their love tale linked since the wife has Alzheimer's disease. The narrative is the same regardless of any storyline variances between the films. Other works with comparable features in their formulaic parts that seem familiar after seeing them include *Dil Bole Hadippa* (2009) - *She's The Man*(2006), *Partner*(2007) – *Hitch*(2005), etc. Hollywood's influence over other film industries, however, has a double-edged effect, although it might amuse the audience, it can also intentionally advance views, values, and beliefs of any kind.

When it comes to any finance or partnership in the world of the film industry, the scientific and commercial justifications of the Indians were also backed by strong cultural and nationalistic arguments. A number of social and economic links are established across the whole spectrum of both production and

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consumption thanks to the connection between specific items' cultural aura and commercial merchandising.

The modern movie industry is so cutthroat that producing a high-quality film alone will no longer guarantee a large return. Hence, Hollywood is used as a benchmark for all motion picture productions across the world because of the high caliber of its movies and other media. Hollywood leaves its impact on films of all sizes, be they indie or big-budget productions with megastars and action.

The economy of this evident replication stems from the process of duplicating American cinematic elements, while simultaneously substituting "unnecessary" components with culturally enriched elements, catering to an expanding Western audience's desire to connect with a sense of Indianness. Hollywood's approach to filmmaking, embracing multiculturalism, is an attempt at blending and appropriating cultures. What the American audience assimilates is a Hollywood-adapted portrayal of Indianness, featuring oriental and stereotypical attributes (Andersson & Webb, 2016). Recent instances, like the production of Hindi films like *My Name is Khan* (2010) and *Kites* (2010), *Kambakkht Ishq* (2009), *Kaante* (2002), and *Pardes* (1997) are a few high-budget Indian productions that were shot in Los Angeles. This is the second major step towards economic development and cooperation between Hollywood and the Indian film industry this year (Naharnet, 2023).

Other recent joint ventures and co-productions between Hollywood studios and Indian production companies include *Chandni Chowk to China* (2009), *Quick Gun Murugan* (2009), *Raaz the Mystery Continues* (2009), *Roadside Romeo* (2008), *Saas Bahu Aur Sensex* (2008), *Saawariya* (2007), *My Name is Khan* (2010), *Atithi Tum Kab Jaoge* (2010), *Lahore* (2010), *Jaane Kahan Se Aayi Hain* (2010), *Khich* (2007). Several others, like *Zokkomon* and *Dum Maro Dum*, are planned for 2011. It highlights this trend, garnering support from notable figures such as Antonio Villaraigosa, the Mayor of Los Angeles. Accompanying him were Brad Grey, the CEO of Paramount Pictures, Amy Lemisch, Fritz Attaway, a Senior Policy Adviser

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at MPAA, and Bob Pisano, the President and interim CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America. Pisano emphasized the growing relationship and co-productions between the two film industries, considering the present step as a significant advancement in this collaboration (Naharnet, 2023). Leading Indian figures like renowned producer Bobby Bedi and L Suresh, Tamil producer and President of the Film Federation of India, headed the Indian delegation, which included representatives from the country's best-selling products.

While there are many inventive aspects of independent Bollywood cinema that can be seen, there is also an emerging component of innovation that has to be highlighted. Notably, Hindi films are viewed worldwide, India has signed film co-production agreements with several international nations and welcomes producers from around the world to come and invest in Bollywood films. The two largest film businesses in the world have agreed to collaborate more on filming, distributing, and marketing projects. The majority of commercial cinema produced worldwide is created by the well-known Hollywood and Bollywood film industries in America and India, respectively. The agreement also intends to promote co-productions and encourage Indian filmmakers to conduct American filming. In comparison to its local Hollywood rivals Sony, Warner Bros., and Universal, the corporation does business significantly differently. Fox Star Studios actively promotes its Hollywood productions, such as *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Rio*, *Avatar*, and *Life of Pi*, and wherever it can, it gives American movies an Indian twist. Fox Star Studios is now looking for more significant Hollywood and Bollywood projects. According to Singh, it will continue to increase Hollywood's presence in India by producing more Bollywood films, signing more co-production agreements with Tamil and Hindi-language directors, and dubbing forthcoming action movies in those languages (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 2014). So, these successful partnerships, despite their low visibility and little share of the Bollywood pie, will nonetheless help Hollywood studios improve their top and bottom lines, at least until they have a better grasp of Indian film and its audience.

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It's well-known that Bollywood has been influenced by Hollywood movies, and vice versa, highlighting the mutual exchange of cinematic ideas. A case in point is the film "*Delivery Man*" from 2013, which takes inspiration from "*Vicky Donor*" (2012), a story revolving around a teenage organ donor. "*Delivery Man*" echoes certain elements of this concept, where the protagonist contributes sperm, resulting in the birth of 533 children, compared to the 53 in Ayushmann Khurrana's "*Vicky Donor*." Similarly, "*Leap Year*" (2010) is often compared to the acclaimed "*Jab We Met*" (2007), but the resemblance in narrative is so striking that it becomes challenging for audiences to fully embrace the claim of originality. Another instance is seen in "*Just Go With It*" (2011), which mirrors elements of "*Maine Pyaar Kyun Kiya*" (2005). In this scenario, Adam Sandler's character hides his carefree lifestyle by pretending to romance a young teacher and enlisting his assistant, Jennifer Aniston, to pose as his ex-wife. This illustrates that creative concepts can be shared and adapted in various ways across different film industries.

2.11. Conclusion

The obvious spread of the phenomenon is a factor in the expansion of transnational and diasporic film studies. In contrast to the previous national cinema system, transnational cinema represents a new arrangement of cinematic cultures and industries. Without India's diverse national cinema and without its representative Bollywood, the country's film industry cannot possibly be comprehended. Because of how fragile the idea of national film is in the age of globalization. The idea of transnational, alternative modernities' practices, aesthetics, and politics formed by decolonization, migration, displacement, and diaspora will serve as the project's overarching theme and through which the visuality of minorities will be shown.

Using the medium of film, the ultimate goal was to understand the transnational dynamics influencing diasporic Indian American visual practices; to get familiar with modern films about diasporic formation; to complicate these analyses by bringing up cinema studies on culture, transnationalism, and

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globalization in conversation with them. The intersection of culture, values, languages, ethnicity, and religion has nearly completely taken over the world. The way in which thoughts and ideas are moving from one to the other has been compared to how a leech might behave as a parasite on a human body; the effects are indirect but persistent. Information may travel quickly since communication and media channels can reach so many different demographic groups.

Thus, for the sake of amusement or cognitive comprehension, diasporic emotions are generated and documented in plays, books, movies, music, and other forms of art. Transnational mobility within specific diaspora networks aids in bridging the gap between theories of international relations and international migration. These ideas specify what it means to have influence over something. Because of migration, more people now subscribe to and adopt western ideologies and behaviors. But residing in a foreign country, engaging in non-traditional customs, and lamenting the loss of one's native country introduces something of a paradox of American hegemony. Almost the entire world has been seduced by this philosophy of soft power into thinking that what is presented must be accepted. The aftereffects of transnationalism and the impact of soft power exercised on weakly established geographical spaces are the results of a global and linked society. We can clearly observe the consequences of transnationalism and transnational cinema adding to the effects of globalization in many areas of work, life, and culture.

Chapter Three

**A Reconstruction of the Cultural Identity and Hybridity in the
Movie *The Namesake* (Questioning the Diasporic Identity)**

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3.1. Introduction

The primary objective of this chapter is to examine immigration and the Indian diaspora in the United States and shed light on the role of diasporic filmmaker Mira Nair. By analyzing Nair's work within the global and cultural context, the chapter aims to gain a better understanding of her various approaches and creative directions and the portrayals of India as viewed by an "Indian Artist and Filmmaker living in the US". This film achieved significant success, not only in America but also in other regions, due to the prominence of the Indian film industry as the most popular and widely consumed form of entertainment while challenging the American one. Mira Nair delves into the complexities of the Indian diaspora's quest for self-identity and the profound emotions of displacement and trauma. She explores these themes in the context of the potential cinematic adaptation of Lahiri's renowned novel, *The Namesake* (2006).

Certain film adaptations tend to overpower and transform literary masterpieces, reshaping their narratives and characters to convey their messages effectively, as the larger-than-life portrayal on the movie screen can influence audience perceptions. Consequently, some cinematic depictions of India are often considered as distorted representations of reality. The researcher is analyzing how India and its diasporas are portrayed in various film genres. Our goal is to explore different perspectives, narratives, and personal accounts to present a diverse and authentic depiction of India and its diasporas. The film depicts the complex experiences of diaspora, delving into how the characters deal with dual identities and manage contradictory societal expectations as they adapt to a new cultural environment. We anticipate that a new screen technology will enable us to showcase India in a refreshing and multifaceted manner, emphasizing the human connection in these portrayals.

Numerous allegories exist that highlight popular filmmaking techniques akin to those employed in Bollywood, serving as a major influence in defining Bengali culture. However, the transnational director takes a different approach by presenting diverse interdisciplinary perspectives, allowing audiences to gain insight into the

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current global prominence of Indian cinema. Over time, it has become the primary medium through which South Asians engage with storytelling, providing them with a sense of self-identification and belonging. This conceptualization greatly aids in the exploration of cultural identity, particularly through the utilization of diasporic spaces as experimental grounds for understanding notions of Indianness, transnational circulation, cultural and generational conflicts and hybridity. Through an analysis of these elements, this transnational Indian film aims to present thought-provoking perspectives.

Presently, the Indian cinema industry has left a profound impact and gained significant popularity worldwide. Over the last two decades, Indian filmmakers have flourished, capturing global recognition. Recently, Indian diasporic filmmakers have shifted their focus from economic, social, and political subjects to delve into personal struggles of individuals and universal societal themes. Themes such as migration, homelessness, exile, loss of identity, rootlessness, and assimilation have become central concerns for modern Asian-American and diasporic filmmakers. So, the concept of diaspora is prominently portrayed in Indian films, inspiring several Indian authors to craft compelling screenplays. Indians who migrated to other countries but maintained strong cultural and emotional ties with their homeland continue to cherish their connections, frequently visiting and reflecting upon their motherland.

3.2. About the Director

Mira Nair, born on October 15, 1957, in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, is an Indian director renowned for her films and documentaries that tackle contentious topics. In 1975, Nair enrolled at the University of Delhi, but she departed the following year to pursue studies at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was during her time at Harvard that she developed a keen interest in the realm of documentary filmmaking. As part of her sociology thesis, she crafted her inaugural documentary, *Jama Masjid Street Journal* (1979), which chronicles the lives of a traditional Muslim community. Nair subsequently embarked on a

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series of compelling and authentic documentaries that explored India's customs and culture. Notable works include *Children of a Desired Sex* (1987), an examination of the country's patriarchal society and its impact on unborn female children, and *India Cabaret* (1985), a portrayal of two aging striptease dancers (Richards, 2017).

Mira Nair, an acclaimed Indian filmmaker, is widely recognized for her visually rich and vibrant films that exude vitality. Affectionately known as "the Indian lioness" by her devoted fans, Nair is a remarkable and prolific director, screenwriter, and producer who effortlessly transitions between Hollywood and Independent Cinema. Initially focusing on documentary filmmaking, Nair made a dazzling entrance onto the global stage with her debut feature film, *Salaam Bombay!* (1988). This film has since become a revered classic and has garnered over 25 international awards, including an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film in 1988 and the prestigious Caméra d'Or Award at the Cannes Film Festival. A film that shattered conventions in Indian film industry by featuring street children and showcasing real cities instead of artificial studio sets. When *Salaam*, the movie, achieved immense success, Nair made a personal commitment to not abandon the children she had cast.

Consequently, she established the Salaam Baalak Trust, aiming to assist homeless children. Presently, after several decades, this trust operates 17 centers, providing support to approximately 5,000 children annually. These centers have not only influenced government policies but also facilitated children in reuniting with their families, obtaining healthcare services, and fostering an appreciation for art. Her second film, *Mississippi Masala* (1991), received three accolades at the Venice Film Festival. It tells the story of an Indian woman who falls in love with an African American man after her family is forced to leave Uganda by the government and settle in Mississippi. This film became a symbol of cultural blending and resonated with audiences worldwide. Mira Nair, the director and an Indian woman herself, expressed that she embraces all three cultures - India, America (her adopted home), and Uganda (her husband's home) - which greatly impacts her approach to filmmaking and the subjects she selects to explore, and she

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has truly transformed into a global citizen. Her identity, however, is constantly shifting because she belongs to so many different cultures and religions.

Throughout her career, Nair continued to create compelling works such as *The Perez Family* (1993), *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* (1996), *My Own Country* (1998), and *The Laughing Club of India* (1999). In 2001, her film *Monsoon Wedding* won the esteemed Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and became one of the highest-grossing foreign films of all time. Nair made the choice to start anew and develop an inexpensive film as a tribute to her cherished city, Delhi. The inspiration behind her work, *Monsoon Wedding* (2002), stemmed from this decision. Nair explained, "To me, it revolved around the theme of love." The film's upfront depiction of our true selves contributed to its triumph. The key factor was the freedom from external constraints, allowing Nair to create a movie that was both cost-effective and within her creative control. Following this success, Nair directed *Hysterical Blindness* (2002), which won a Golden Globe award.

After directing the epic adaptation of William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (2004), Nair attributed both Jhumpa Lahiri's work and the loss of her mother-in-law as the sources of inspiration for her most personal film to date, *The Namesake* (2006), which she directed. The novel's protagonist, an Indian-American man, uncovers the challenges his parents encountered when they migrated from India to the United States. Despite sharing this deeply intimate story of the Ganguli family, Nair emphasized that her aim was not to create a film solely about Bengalis or Indians living in America. Instead, the movie captures the experiences of many individuals who navigate between two distinct realities and the frequent movement of an immigrant's life. She further expanded her repertoire by helming the biographical film *Amelia* (2009), *Queen of Katwe* (2016), and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) which, in contrast to popular culture films, depicts the Diaspora differently.

Mirabai Films established an annual filmmaker's workshop called Maisha, aiming to support creative writers and directors from India and East Africa. In her

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films, the protagonists not only navigate the complexities of life but also honor their cultural heritage, making them a study in cross-cultural identity. Nair, the founder of Mirabai Films, is well aware of the joys and challenges that come with homesickness and feeling like an outsider. Her production company specializes in creating movies that act as cultural ambassadors, providing insights into Indian culture and society for global audiences. Additionally, Nair has also produced several concise documentaries exploring the American diaspora and India. While some of her commercial films employ Hollywood talent and resources, they remain distinctly popular in nature, blending Asian elements while being rooted in Western ideals.

Drawing from her extensive experience in the world of filmmaking, she expressed her desire to be cremated and have her ashes returned to the earth, specifically in her garden in Kampala. However, she playfully suggested that sprinkling her ashes in other significant locations like the Ganges and Hudson River wouldn't be a bad idea, spanning three continents effortlessly (Richards, 2017). Alongside her cinematic endeavors, she aims to break cultural barriers and foster global inspiration for mutual cultural respect. Nair believes that creativity knows no borders or boundaries; rather, it should be fluid and adaptable, bridging gaps and connecting people from all walks of life.

3.3. The Movie's Synopsis

A Fox Searchlight production, inspired by Jhumpa Lahiri's 2003 novel *The Namesake*, beautifully captures the culture of the Bengali diaspora. The film, skillfully directed by Mira Nair, follows the journey of Ashoke and Ashima, first-generation immigrants from Kolkata, as they face the challenges of relocating to the outskirts of New York City. Portrayed by talented Bollywood actors Irfan Khan and Tabu, the couple makes a heartfelt effort to preserve their Indian customs while adapting to their new lives in the United States. Their American-born son, Gogol, played by Kal Penn, struggles to connect with his parents' native country and traditions. He often rebels against their expectations, leading to a clash of identities.

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Throughout the film, we also encounter other diasporic characters like Gogol's sister, Sonali Ganguli (Sahira Nair), and his wife Moushumi Mazoomdar (Zulheika Robinson), both second-generation immigrants, who grapple with assimilation and transcultural tendencies. As the story unfolds, Gogol's perspective shifts when he travels to India for his father's funeral rites. This experience helps him discover his Indian roots and understand his true identity.

The film portrays the struggles faced by fellow Indians who strive to maintain their cultural identity while living in a vastly different society. While depicting aspects of Indian life and poverty in Kolkata, the film also acknowledges the use of certain images that may cater to Western stereotypes of the Third World. However, Mira Nair's direction ensures a blend of Indian and American lifestyles, creating a unique and sometimes confusing environment for the younger generation. *The Namesake* (2006) serves as a poignant exploration of the complexities of cultural adaptation and the challenges faced by those trying to hold onto their heritage amidst a foreign backdrop.

3.3.1. A Film Version for a Diasporic Adaptation

In 2004, Jhumpa Lahiri released her debut work, *The Namesake*. Initially, it appeared as a novella in *The New Yorker* before being expanded into a full-length book. Similar to her award-winning short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), which earned her the Pulitzer Prize, this novel delves into various emotional and societal themes. The narrative intricately explores the challenges of straddling two contrasting cultures with distinct religious, social, and intellectual backgrounds. Set in Calcutta, Boston, and New York City, the story revolves around a Bengali couple seeking a fresh start in America, away from the familiarities of their past life.

Following its well-received showings at the Toronto and New York film festivals, Mira Nair's directed film *The Namesake* made its debut as a feature by Fox Searchlight Pictures on March 9, 2007. The script was an adaptation of Sooni

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Taraporevala's novel Mira Nair, an Indian-diaspora filmmaker, has previously explored similar themes in her work, including *The Namesake*, which faithfully captures the essence of the book. While Jhumpa Lahiri's novel primarily focuses on the second generation's struggle to define their Indian/Bengali-American identity in the aftermath of 9/11, Nair shifts her attention to depicting the experiences of the first generation more than the second generation exploring the challenges that emerge when Bengali immigrants in the United States strive to maintain their parents' Indian customs while embracing American culture.

The movie utilizes the immigrants' encounters to delve into the concept of identity. In essence, the narrative explores the Bengali diaspora's cultures through a detached perspective, occasionally adopting an all-knowing vantage point. Unlike the text, the visual representation lacks the same level of ambiguity found in numerous passages, which often demand interpretation. Mira Nair effectively employs audio-visual mediums to faithfully portray Bengali cultures, relying on the progression of time and space as depicted in written texts.

Although literature and film are distinct mediums, a successful adaptation of a literary work for the big screen necessitates careful consideration of various cinematic elements. In the case of "*The Namesake*," Mira Nair's film remains faithful to the book while not perfectly aligning with Lahiri's fiction. Both the book and the movie revolve around the lives of immigrants, delving deeply into themes of displacement, identity crises, and creativity. The movie preserves the narrative, characters, subject matter, and overall aesthetic of the book, with the primary difference being a linear storyline from Ashoke's railway accident to Gogol reading the book his father gave him (Nair,2006,3:02/1:51:38).

Through its compelling storytelling, the film effectively portrays the experiences of the Ganguli family, capturing myriad issues among first- and second-generation immigrants, complexities of family relationships in a diasporic context, nostalgia, cultural assimilation, and the generation gap. These elements

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prominently contribute to the portrayal of the diasporic sensibility of Bengali immigrants in the film.

The film begins by introducing Ashoke Ganguli, a recent Bengali college graduate embarking on a train journey from Calcutta to Jamshedpur during the 1970s. Mira Nair, through the chaos of a train accident that Ashoke experiences, alters the traditional portrayal of time as a continuous and solitary progression within the hospital setting. After the train crash, Ashoke becomes bedridden and limited in his movements (Nair,2006,4:03).

The speech and pacing of *The Namesake* are mostly taken verbatim from the pages of the original book, but Nair also uses minor sections to fill out events and create larger threads that link the Ganguli family members over the centuries (Bose, 2021). The scenes are remarkably true to life, and the movie glides slowly and carefully through each one. It doesn't matter if the setting is set in the United States or on a street in Kolkata; everything is shown so vividly and so flawlessly.

In the beginning of the movie, Ashima, one of the characters, is introduced while attending a classical music lesson. As the story progresses, she arrives home and her mother summons her to the drawing room. The reason for this is that a potential suitor, who has been arranged for marriage, is coming to meet her. The subsequent scene displays a vivid depiction of a Bengali wedding ceremony through a kaleidoscope-like image (Nair, 2006, 9:44-1:22).

During Moushumi's post-wedding visit to her in-laws before Christmas, Ashima prepares sizable samosas for the occasion. Nair chooses to illustrate only Sonali's rice ceremony, possibly due to the limited time available to portray two rice rituals. It's conceivable that Nair's intention is to showcase the cultures of the Bengali diaspora rather than encompassing the entirety of the novel (Nair, 2006,27:35-35:54)

In a remarkable way, all the visual elements managed to stay true to the original essence, as Nair artfully crafted a unique and honest portrayal of her fellow

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artist Lahiri's diasporic experiences. Drawing from her own personal journey and emotions, Nair fearlessly tackled the subject matter with astuteness and bravery. The resulting story and characters feel relatable and realistic, devoid of any exaggerated or extraordinary traits. In an interview with CNN, Nair shared that she discovered "*The Namesake*" while traveling from New York to Johannesburg in early 2004 to finish her work on "*Vanity Fair*." At that time, she was deeply mourning the loss of a loved one, her mother-in-law, and the poignant depiction of a parent's death in an unfamiliar place in Jhumpa's book resonated deeply with her. The connection between Calcutta and New York City in the narrative mirrored her own life's trajectory, and she felt an unmistakable calling to bring this tale to life through a movie. Consequently, just a few months later, the filming of "*The Namesake*" began.

Significantly, Mira Nair's movies explore diverse narratives centered around transformations of identity, all the while shedding light on the intricacies of South Asian Diasporic cultural expression. Despite the varying settings portrayed in her films, they share a recurring theme that revolves around matters of "authenticity, tradition, nostalgia, and home" (Chakraborty, 2014, p.610). Nair's works exhibit certain departures from strict realism, as the cinematic medium allows for imaginative visualizations that contrast with pure observational realism. The completion of the filming process did not aim for any preconceived or expected outcomes. The authenticity of the narratives originates from this very fact. There is a strong focus on a particular individual who vehemently rejects mainstream portrayals of marginalized communities, giving rise to the genuine essence of these stories. Deepika Bahri further points out that Nair's works diverge from the stereotypical representations often seen in popular cinema. The director's remarkable ability lies in infusing conventional elements with the profound depth and ambiguity they truly deserve, but seldom receive. Consequently, Nair's films, particularly "*The Namesake*," are viewed as a contemplative trilogy exploring the clash between the clamor and harmony of globalization, and the losses and gains experienced in migration (Bahri, 2007, p. 10).

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In the context of diasporic or exilic films, the dominance of imported media content is inevitable, given their nature as global cultural productions. This interaction with a broad range of transnational territories is an inherent aspect of these films' existence. This is the way in which her cinematic vision blends Western and Indian cultural practices. Through these films, she employs visual and narrative strategies that not only illustrate her approach to portraying her perspective on the screen, but also prove to be successful and integral in her recent works. According to Athique (2017), feature films have been traditionally believed to have a profound influence on the cultural identity, behaviors, and beliefs of their local audiences. However, in the context of transnational cinema, the question arises whether the emphasis on their impact on "non-domestic" viewers is appropriate, as it has often been viewed negatively, being seen as a tool for counter indoctrination or cultural imperialism (p. 107).

In this film adaptation of Jhumpa Lahiri's acclaimed 2003 novel, the research topic centers around a prevailing feeling of displacement, akin to what was portrayed in the movie "*Mississippi Masala*". Director Mira Nair strives to weave an unfamiliar world into something more recognizable, infusing it with the poignant sense of being in exile. "*The Namesake*" can be described as an experiential film that delves into emotions of melancholy and loss, emphasized through various episodes. Nair's primary aim is to focus on individual experiences, as evident in her concentration on the subject as well (Manjapra, 2016).

The central theme explored in a recent diasporic film revolves around isolation, and this is effectively depicted in the movie adaptation of "*The Namesake*." The film delves into the lives of an immigrant family from India who have settled in the United States, encapsulating what author Bahri succinctly describes as "the story of the Other"(2007). Throughout the movie, you witness the profound sense of loss experienced by both generations of characters, reflecting their struggles with assimilation and disconnection from their roots.

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In this narrative, Nair crafts a storyline where Gogol the son of Bengali immigrants residing in New York, embarks on a journey to construct not only a tangible framework for physical surroundings, but also an intricate representation of the characters' emotional landscapes. As a student of architecture, Gogol endeavors to bridge the gap between his two distinct cultures as a second-generation immigrant, aiming to carve out a space that can truly be called home a place where his identity can seamlessly embrace its dual nature, and where cultural clashes no longer alienate or marginalize him.

Nair's perspective diverges from other diasporic cinema producers regarding the portrayal of displaced identity, and this contrast becomes evident through the character of Gogol. Gogol's name changes play a pivotal role in reflecting shifts in his personality. When he was just six years old, despite his elders approving a "good name" for him as Nikhil, he adamantly refuses to abandon his given name, Gogol. However, it's not until he faces his first "crisis of identity" in high school that he gets the chance to embrace his American identity more profoundly. At this stage of his life, the American aspect of his identity holds greater significance, and he finds it relatively easy to align with it through this simple shift.

As a result, his interactions with others are inevitably influenced by this dual aspect of his identity. Ashima's journey of self-identification bears a resemblance to Gogol's, as both must confront various forms of isolation. However, Ashima's experience stands apart due to an additional physical dimension. Unlike Gogol, who was born in the United States and has a more psychological journey, Ashima doesn't feel a sense of belonging in the country. Her identity is deeply connected to her Indian roots, which become the dominant part of her identity despite being surrounded by American influences. The loss of her spouse, who was the only link to her Indian heritage amidst the overwhelming American culture, intensifies her feelings of alienation and loneliness.

Without him, her isolation becomes unbearable, as he was the only person who truly grasped the significance of her relocation and what it meant to her. Nair

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explores themes such as the Indian-American and American-Indian identities, delving into the experiences of displacement faced by new immigrants. Through her films, she presents a nuanced portrayal of how these identities evolve over time. This approach has garnered widespread acclaim from both viewers and critics, as her storytelling allows audiences worldwide to empathize with the characters and gain insights into diverse narratives.

Mira Nair's latest film takes on a fresh approach by delving into the world of the silent first generation of immigrants. In doing so, the movie successfully breaks away from the usual stereotypes associated with immigrant stories, offering an emotionally moving and profound cinematic journey. As an acclaimed director behind movies like *Salaam Bombay* (1988), *Monsoon Wedding* (2001), and *Kama Sutra* (1996), Nair, now residing in America, brings her unique perspective to the cinema she creates. Rather than being confined to a specific physical location, her work embodies the essence of diasporic imagination, inspiring films such as *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002), *Bride & Prejudice* (2004), and *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1995).

The filmmaker employs an authentic approach, eschewing idealized portrayals, to delve into the inner world of the characters in the movie, displaying a remarkable understanding of their psychological depths. The term used here describes the ongoing struggle faced by immigrants who strive to preserve their identities while simultaneously attempting to assimilate into a new culture. This struggle entails daily decisions to avoid standing out in an unfamiliar land. Despite the title not fully capturing the Native American experience and the film's somewhat one-dimensional style, it still leaves a significant impact.

3.4. Hyphenated/Transnational Identities

A transnational collective is comprised of migrants, refugees, ethnic diasporas, corporate networks, and individuals with varying skill levels. These migrant ethnic groups establish a connection with both their native and adopted

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cultures, resulting in the emergence of hyphenated identities. Immigrants find themselves caught between two cultural realms, and this film intriguingly highlights how identities are shaped within these cultures. The act of migration juxtaposes diverse cultures and nationalities, leading to a challenging quest for identity as culturally displaced immigrants find themselves in an in-between state.

In today's interconnected world, transnational organizations play a crucial role in shaping the social, cultural, economic, political, and literary landscapes of multiple nations. Consequently, these influential entities and locations have exerted a profound influence on creative expressions. Within the context of globalism and transnationalism, diasporic communities are situated within the framework of cultural production, using diaspora as a means of fostering cultural creativity. Sociologists have long been interested in migration; the sociological examination of migration involves a variety of migration-related topics, including social and cultural integration, as well as regular and atypical migratory patterns.

To describe transnationalism within the context of film, it refers to a cultural realm where both immigrants and their American-born offspring bring in customs from their native lands. These customs are then modified to suit the new surroundings. Additionally, they embrace practices from their present environment, which they modify in innovative ways to establish a greater sense of belonging. While numerous nations around the world have their origins in dynasties and empires, many others have formed through a blending of diverse ethnic groups. The resulting diversity has led to the emergence of transculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and transnationalism. Migration has played a crucial role in shaping this hybrid landscape, whether it occurred during periods of colonial rule or in the postcolonial era. As migrant communities dispersed, they created "transnational social fields" that transcended physical, cultural, and political boundaries (Nanda, 2014, p. 2). As a consequence, behaviors, interactions, relationships, and pursuits that cross these boundaries are termed as transnational. The current trend of neoliberal globalization further brings together diverse cultures, and transnational immigrant activities play a pivotal role in promoting and advancing diversity.

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Transnationalism, driven by globalization, blends diverse cultural traditions to encourage assimilation into the dominant culture. It enables stronger connections among people, groups, and societies across borders. Despite adapting to new societies, immigrant ethnic groups preserve their distinct identities and cultural richness. Indian emigrants living abroad, for instance, maintain and pass on their Indian socio-cultural heritage wherever they reside. These cultural identities serve as pivotal points in shaping historical and cultural discussions (Hall, 1996, p. 226). In this chapter, it's demonstrated that transnationalism is a cultural occurrence. It involves the preservation of ethnic characteristics by both initial immigrants and their native-born American offspring. This preservation happens even when they aren't facing racial prejudice and marginalization in traditional manners. Moreover, they establish links between their current country of residence and their country of origin.

Notably, the movie *The Namesake*, directed by Mira Nair in 2006, delves into the processes that either nurture or suppress cultural preservation among generations raised in America. Within the Bengali immigrant family portrayed in the film, cultural differences are evident in aspects like parenting and marriage. This cross-cultural interaction also promotes openness and peaceful communication between different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the foundation of race is essentially built upon elements of identity and tradition. Discussions surrounding the challenges of ethnic boundaries lead to a reconstruction of identity. This exploration delves into the concept of global identity, which arises from the integration of diverse cultures. As globalization exerts its influence, local identities resist its impact, creating a sharp contrast with the emerging mixed identities characteristic of the modern era (Hall, 1996, p.619).

Figure N° 01.A Familial Photo of both Generations in USA

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Source: (Nair,2006,25:09-26:10)

Similarly, Mira Nair, in her film *The Namesake*, delves into the complexities brought about by immigration, such as the feelings of separation, displacement, identity crises, and cultural dilemmas. The movie presents a juxtaposition between Bengali traditions in Kolkata and their adaptation to a distinct American society. Despite its primary focus on life in the United States, Bengal continues to hold a significant role in the fictional setting portrayed in the film.

While Du Bois' explanation of double consciousness aids in clarifying the dual nature of American identity for certain individuals, comprehending a transnational identity doesn't hinge on adopting another person's perspective. In the case of Gogol, his transnational identity stems from his engagement in two distinct cultural spheres. Gogol grows up within two entirely disparate cultural contexts. Despite regarding India as a foreign land that's distant from his true home both physically and emotionally, and even though he initially resists certain Indian traditions, he becomes assimilated into an Indian identity and observes Indian rituals and customs within his household (cited in Khrais,2020,p.118). Simultaneously, both within and beyond his home, he adheres to American practices.

Consequently, the initial wave of Bengali immigrants in the United States foster a sense of camaraderie and embrace their distinct identity. They fondly refer to Bengal as their "desh" or homeland. Through the preservation of their traditions

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and cultural practices, the first-generation immigrants successfully strike a balance between their past and present lives. Furthermore, their yearning to go back to their homeland significantly influences their cultural identity as they adapt to their new home in America.

This evocative portrayal captures the deep-rooted feeling of belonging to a transnational space, evoking a sense of national ambivalence that fluctuates. This eloquently describes how multiple immigrant generations adeptly traverse different nations, crafting intricate transnational and cultural identities. The movie portrays Ashima's journey from a traditional Bengali woman to someone with a global identity, providing viewers with specific insights into the "third space" of the "other." Initially experiencing isolation, homesickness, and self-doubt, Ashima eventually develops a strong sense of self-awareness and independence. Nair effectively captures the essence of different cultures beyond borders, successfully uncovering the transnational identities of her characters, who represent '*the Diasporas of the Border*'. As was already mentioned, second generation immigrants reveal a partial experience of cultures, because they search for a space where their parents and their own American cultures may collide and be discussed on amenable terms. Consequently, after going through the Third Space procedure, the selected individuals exhibit a fresh perspective on their in-between status (U.S Bureau of the Census,2000).

The focus lies also on Nikhil and Sonia, two individuals striving to establish their own lives in America. Nikhil, who goes by the name Gogol, begins dating Caucasian American women but keeps this aspect of his personal life hidden, ensuring his parents remain unaware of his American adolescence. Sonia, Gogol's sister, is aware of all this information but chooses to withhold it from their parents. Both Sonia and Gogol trust each other implicitly, confiding in one another and working together to maintain secrecy about their social relationships from their parents.

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Being a second-generation immigrant, Gogol has fully embraced the American way of life, which includes habits like consuming meat, drinking, engaging in live-in relationships, and having female companions. Gogol experiences a perplexing duality, yet the loss of his father brings about a newfound understanding of his identity and connection to others. *The Namesake* delves into the exploration of immigrant identities, skillfully examining the current situation. By delving into complex layers of identity, the film presents a unique perspective that could potentially change how people, both at home and abroad, view themselves and others. Moreover, Gogol's reactions to his father's death subtly reveal a struggle between the Indian identity instilled in him by his parents during his upbringing and the self-cultivated American identity he has developed.

When exploring the concept of "being at home," the one discovers that familiar surroundings, weather patterns, eating habits, cultural practices, and ethnic traits all contribute to this notion. Consequently, home becomes a physical place that evokes sensory experiences, sentimentality, and comfort. Conversely, the term "outside" encompasses everything that deviates from this comfort, encompassing new and unfamiliar elements. It encompasses foreign territories and all the unique attributes they possess, including unfamiliar locations, unfamiliar individuals, and different traditions. As a result, the idea of "home" becomes a reflection of one's own identity or inner self, while the "outside" serves as a point of comparison, representing the unfamiliar.

While the hyphen transforms into a slash, the idea of contrasting spaces undergoes a shift. The identity of being both Indian and American also encompasses a merging of distinctions such as local/global, internal/external, household/community, and individual/outsider. Embracing a transnational "connection" entail dismissing the notion of a fixed home and embracing the value of flexibility. It supports the creation of landscapes that continually traverse boundaries.

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Considering the specific characteristics of nation and nationalism within the Indian context is of utmost importance. This includes understanding the historical implications of nation-building in India. Furthermore, the focus of this study is on one of the films of Mira Nair, a renowned female filmmaker from the Indian diaspora. It is worth noting that the selected movie for this study is set exclusively in India, in contrast to the filmmaker's other works that have a transnational perspective and are situated in foreign locations.

One of the primary ways in which Mira Nair's film aims to redefine the nation is by surpassing and dismantling the established boundaries of purity associated with nationhood and national cinema. The art presented in this film possesses a transcultural and transnational quality, exhibiting a remarkable range and complexity of ideas. The filmmakers' transnational or diasporic identities and experiences enable them to perceive beyond national borders and from a broader perspective. Nair humorously acknowledges her perpetual outsider status and feeling of being out of place, being seen as "a weird novelty" in India and "a complete novelty" abroad, as highlighted in the episode "Mira Nair Master Class" of *The Fabulous Picture Show* hosted by Amanda Palmer (2009) for Al Jazeera T.V. Nair has resided in various places such as India, New York, Uganda, and South Africa, leading Hilda van Lill to describe her as a "citizen of the world." Nair has developed a multicultural voice, creating films centered around themes of relocation, immigration, and multiple national identities, thereby accumulating a vast array of experiences (cited in Varga, 2018,p.23).

In contemporary times, concepts such as hybridity, diaspora, post-coloniality and transnationalism have gained significant popularity and have become marketable. This phenomenon coincides with the prevalence of hyphenated identities, which are both celebrated and criticized in mainstream culture. In other words, the widespread usage of these terms has resulted in a rise of what researchers refer to as fashionable hybridity, where performative portrayals of individuals with hyphenated backgrounds and their cultures dominate mainstream media platforms like television, cinema, and music. While these representations may seem to

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challenge the status quo and promote positivity and progress, they often overlook and obscure the unpleasant realities that arise from everyday interactions within different parts of a community.

In a way or another, cultural hybridity significantly influences individual identity. This concept of identity is closely tied to self-awareness and self-perception and is studied across various academic disciplines. The construction of identity revolves around ascribing meaning to specific cultural traits or a set of related characteristics, prioritizing them over other sources of significance (Castells, 1997). Regardless of whether it pertains to a person, a place, or a moral ideal, identity formation requires a point of reference.

Additionally, the notion of "the other" is intricately connected to identity, as it serves as a contrasting and defining aspect. By establishing one's own identity, the notion of "the other" is consciously excluded, contributing to the unity and internal coherence central to the idea of identity. Hence, the paths taken by the central figures, Ashima, Gogol, and Moushumi, highlight the inadequacies of names as related to their identities in capturing and reflecting the true nature of their personalities.

It is fascinating to note that the transnational domain comprises diverse institutions, forces, and individuals that effectively establish fresh linkages between domestic and international matters. Additionally, one believes that a shared space of consumption acts as a representation of the transnational realm inhabited by Indians in the USA. The Indian diaspora has seen a massive influx of people moving to different parts of the world, reflecting a wide range of backgrounds, such as diverse religious affiliations, ethnicities, regions, and social classes. Consequently, the social and cultural context of the Indian diaspora, as well as the academic research about it, exhibit substantial breadth and variety, shaped by the distinct circumstances of their host countries.

Interestingly enough, one recurring theme in the film is the portrayal of the mother and father as a prime example of a transnational couple. Ashoke is depicted

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as having assimilated well into his new culture, appearing to be the one who adapted the best. On the other hand, Ashima is portrayed as someone who struggles more to let go of her Indian heritage.

Despite their differences, Ashoke and Ashima balance each other out in their unique approaches to cultural integration. Ashoke takes on the role of a confident and supportive pillar for his family, maintaining a deep connection to his original culture and gradually helping his children understand it. On the other hand, Ashima openly embraces both cultures and proudly displays her love for India by dressing patriotically throughout the movie. This is clear in this scene “I want to go home. I don't want to raise Gogol in this lonely country. This is the land of opportunity, Ashima. He can become whatever he wants, study whatever he desires. Here the options are limitless” (Nair, 2006,24:09-26:03).

Until this moment, the concept of transnational identity has offered new opportunities and broadened perspectives for many, but it has also exposed individuals to a unique kind of sorrow that those living solely abroad may never encounter. This film delves into various aspects of the Indian diaspora and transnational identity because one of the most challenging transitions a person can undergo is moving away from the place, they have always called home to a foreign country. It's important to consider that one's culture is deeply influenced by the environment they grew up in.

In contrast to his family's expectations, Gogol faced a struggle with the land of his birth. In an ideal world, he wished to embrace his identity as a human being and explore his true self, detached from any specific location. However, he failed to realize that he hadn't truly delved into his own identity or potential until his father's passing. Throughout the movie, he experienced two different extremes before eventually finding clarity and self-discovery at the end. In one scene he tells his parents complaining about the history of his name: “Did you guys know all the stuff about him when you named me? That he was paranoid, suicidal, friendless, depressed?” (Nair,2006,33:18-33:48).Until the scene where he went to see the

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corpse of his father in Cleveland, crying “I’m sorry baba!!” (Nair, 2006, 1:15:51-1:18:08).

Again, the term "transnational" can be perplexing due to its connection with diaspora, multiculturalism, and global experiences. Transnational identities are formed through movements from specific locations, leading to the creation of imagined communities and spaces. These multifaceted transnational identities are crucial in understanding and resolving the challenges faced by "Others" in their host nations. Historically, migrants in Western countries who were seen as the "Other" experienced marginalization (Shohat & Stam, 2003). The conflicts arising from the clash of immigrants' cultural identities result in various personal concerns and identity issues. However, this process also empowers them to confront and negotiate with existing social institutions. As a result, the third space is redefined as an empowered condition rather than a diminishing and puzzling one.

Coming back to the core of the film, Nair explores the intergenerational dynamics and conflicts, focusing on two female characters, Ashima Ganguli and Moushumi. Ashima, a traditional Bengali woman, faces the challenge of adapting to new cultures far away from her homeland, leading to feelings of displacement and homesickness. Like many South Asian immigrants in the USA, she employs a novel approach known as "adaptation." This strategy involves neither completely forsaking their native culture nor wholly assimilating into the host society. Instead, they strike a delicate balance between preserving their traditional values and embracing aspects of the modern culture. As a result, they opt to live as locals within their homes while embracing their American identity outside. Remarkably, while Gogol experiences unease due to his extensive ties to his cultural background, he cannot evade these connections as he senses a responsibility to uphold these cultural customs for the sake of his parents.

Moushumi, a second-generation Bengali with a hybrid upbringing, embodies the clash of multiple cultures. The film delves into the struggle to maintain one's original identity amid cultural collisions, replacing the concept of a fixed homeland

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with fluid identities and temporary homes across nations. Furthermore, the story delves into the complexities of immigrants like Moushumi, who embrace multiple cultures but don't claim a single one as their own. The dilemma of accepting the "Other" and finding recovery through survival becomes intertwined with the retention of ethnic identity. Mishra's(2007) idea of "imaginary homelands," constructed from distance to cope with unspoken traumas, resonates throughout the narrative (p.16).

Thus, individuals like Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi, who belong to the second generation of Indians, find themselves in a constant struggle with other cultures. They gravitate towards their traditional customs from the developing world due to their difficulty in adapting to the norms of the more advanced first-world society. This is in a first contact with Gogol, “hey what are you reading? Bonjour Tristesse....do you wanna go watch some TV? No I detest the American television” (Nair,2006,35:39-35:54). Emphasizing her interest in a different culture which is French neither Indian nor American.

Figure N° 02.Traditional vs Modern Bengali Women



Source:Nair,2006,<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433416/>

In his search for individuality, Gogol's journey is influenced by two significant women: his mother, Ashima Ganguli, and his ex-wife, Moushumi Mazoomdar. Despite both being born to Bengali-Indian parents, their upbringing differs considerably. Ashima experienced her formative years in the traditional Indian Bengali society, while Moushumi was raised in American culture. The names of these characters play a role in reinforcing their identities. Ashima's name

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reflects her association with the traditional Bengali-Indian values, whereas Moushumi's name represents her identity as a modern Bengali-Indian woman.

Both Ashima and Moushumi possess charm and intelligence, but they belong to distinct social circles Ashima to the world of housewives and Moushumi to the realm of academics and socialites. During Gogol's early life, childhood, and adolescence, Ashima plays a significant role in defining his identity, upholding and preserving Bengali-Indian customs. On the other hand, Moushumi, who is unaware of Bengali practices, inadvertently shapes Gogol's identity during his adulthood and marriage. Her exposure to a different culture impacts Gogol's growth in unexpected ways.

Overall, when immigrants settle into a new cultural environment, their life experiences lead them to adopt elements from the host culture while still holding onto their original identities. This dual process allows them to be influenced by both their native and host cultures, resulting in the formation of a hyphenated identity that represents a blend of the two.

3.5. Cultural Hybridity and Defining the Roots and Routes

The director deliberately incorporates cultural hybridity into her work by portraying it through the main characters, leading to the emergence of a Third Space, which is achieved through multiculturalism. This Third Space exposes the characters to unfamiliar cultures and environments, which they may be unaware of or only vaguely familiar with. Individuals of Indian descent living in diaspora identify themselves as "Indian" due to their cultural connections. Notably, these individuals (Ashoke, Ashima, Gogol, and Sonia) experience a sense of displacement or rootlessness due to their "hyphenated status". They do not fully belong to either traditional Indian cultures (their perceived space) or their adopted societies (their conceived space). Instead, they choose to live a life that incorporates both, thereby establishing their own Third Space.

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The movie *The Namesake*, which explores the diasporic experience, skillfully captures the profound sense of isolation and suffering that pervades the lives of individuals in diaspora. By tracing the historical reality of diaspora, the film portrays the agony and passion of Indian Americans. The director's remarkable ability to establish connections between the theme of exile and universal forms of anguish in their everyday existence is what imbues her work with exceptional sensitivity. The presence of the Indian diaspora, residing between two nations, currently wields a significant and distinct influence on global culture. Contemporary Indian filmmaking extensively addresses the multifaceted challenges arising from migration and diaspora, encompassing themes of displacement, alienation, rootlessness, fragmentation, racial discrimination, marginalization, identity crises, cultural clashes, and numerous other issues.

In Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Ashima embodies the essence of a traditional Bengali housewife, characterized by her submissive nature and adherence to cultural values, despite having occasional encounters with Western influences. However, Mira Nair's portrayal of Ashima introduces a shift in this perception. Initially reserved and confined to her Boston home, Ashima gradually adapts to the vibrant environment and lifestyle of New York City. Her transformation is evident as she ventures outside, engaging in activities like laundry and purchasing fish from Fulton Fish Market (Nair, 2006, 15:06-15:25).

Considerably, Beatrice Knerr (2012) suggests that there has been a significant increase in the number of individuals living abroad compared to the beginning of the 21st century. These individuals have relocated in pursuit of employment opportunities, financial stability, or simply personal independence for themselves and their surviving family members. This trend is reflected in the global surge of international money transfers. As family members migrate, familial relationships undergo redefinition, and those who remain in their home countries experience shifts in their roles and responsibilities. These changes have a direct impact on the everyday lives of those left behind. The contemporary nation-state, particularly in the millennial era, now encompasses a population that is increasingly

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hybridized. The construction of individual and collective identities is no longer confined by physical national borders. This is facilitated by the growing influence of aestheticization in advertising and the intensified movement of cultural and economic capital within diasporic communities (Silk cited in Knerr,2012).The interplay between race, national identity, and cultural significance becomes particularly evident in the ever-changing tensions that arise at the grassroots level of these transitory border crossings, especially in the emotionally charged realm of popular culture.

Culture represents a way of existence, deeply rooted within individuals from childhood, and its influence on one's life is inevitable. The inherent familiarity of culture creates an unspoken connection with its people, rendering it an integral part of their lives. Only when exposed to a different culture can individuals truly grasp their profound attachment to their own cultural identity (Nair,2006,4:10-4:56).

Instead of linking identity to fixed notions like ethnicities or nations, the idea of cultural hybridity compels researchers to examine how identities are shaped during migration, mobility, and transcultural experiences. Cultural hybridity has the potential to erode or blur the lines between one's own identity and that of others. Nevertheless, the debates surrounding cultural hybridity primarily revolve around the concept of identity. In this context, this notion offers an alternative perspective on cultural identity that rejects exclusion and rigid boundaries, emphasizing the emergence of novel and inclusive cultural spaces.

The relevance of the movie "*The Namesake*" is no longer a concern, as its entire narrative, from beginning to end, captivated with its wonderful music and informative portrayal of various emotions. Moreover, the film's significance lies in its ability to aid immigrants in comprehending the diaspora, the experience of being uprooted and placed in an unfamiliar environment all alone or being on the verge of two cultures. Through "*The Namesake*," viewers gain a unique perspective on a completely different society. The movie explores the idea of cultural hybridity and

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the choices individuals must make between different cultures. It also delves into the possibility of embracing both cultures simultaneously.

The hardships experienced by numerous immigrant families are intricately portrayed in these small details. Nair's decision to focus on these aspects in her film is not only genuine but also inclusive, given their rare representation on the screen. Through this approach, she has created and shared a world accessible to many others, drawing from her personal experiences as well. To convey the sense of being caught between two worlds, the filmmaker skillfully blends New York and Calcutta into a unified metropolis within the movie.

The majority of the diaspora group maintains their unique identity by adhering to their traditions while residing in a foreign country. This creates a sense of nationality, culture, and community, allowing them to uphold their distinctiveness. The fact that they all live within the same nation facilitates interactions and the establishment of their own ethnic group and community. For example, first-generation immigrants like Ashoke and Ashima, actively engage in Bengali holidays and religious ceremonies, which, as their son Gogol grows older, expands their circle of Bengali friends and acquaintances. Consequently, the Gangulis develop a hybrid culture that blends elements of Bengali and American lifestyles (Nair,2006, 27:26/52:43).

Essentially, the presence of immigrant and minority communities as distinct groups, their detachment from the dominant culture, and their individual cultural and social identities all influence their interactions with the larger society. Additionally, their identity, culture, and position in relation to others are significant considerations. The filmmaker effectively portrays the external and internal struggles faced by immigrant families regarding their cultural heritage and identity, showcasing impressive storytelling skills. Experiencing life as a second-generation immigrant with parents who are reluctant to fully integrate into a new socio-cultural environment can evoke emotions of frustration, alienation, duality, being caught

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between two worlds, being a blend of two cultures, and identified with a hyphenated identity.

The attempt is to capture the vibrant personalities of colorful characters and how they adjust to the new reality, a postcolonial phenomenon known as cross-culturalism or fusion of culture. This involves a global mix of cultures and identities crossing national and continental boundaries. Third-world migrants, experiencing the cultural melting pot of the first world, find it perplexing and develop coping mechanisms. Many of these immigrants with indo-American backgrounds face personal struggles and dualities, leading them to feel schizoaffective, neurotic, ambiguous, and suspended between two worlds.

Pithily, the movie portrays Ashima and Gogol as examples of cultural survival in America's diverse environment, as depicted by the filmmaker Nair, who shares the same name. They embody concepts like hybridity, liminality, and living in-between cultures. These characters cannot maintain complete cultural isolation, and like many other Indian immigrants, they incorporate elements of American culture into their daily lives. Therefore, the movie's lead character highlights the importance of the "third space" when studying diasporic groups. Here a scene where Ashoke explaining to his son Gogol the fact of being from a diasporic community after giving him a present which is a book of all Nikolai Gogol's stories, "I feel a special kinship with Gogol more than any writer, do you know why?... he spent most of his life outside his homeland like me (Nair, 2006,37:33-38:51).

The origin of this perspective can be traced back to public media and research, which still portray diasporic communities as permanently "displaced" from their original homeland. The division between "home" and "abroad" creates a mythical perception of India as the sole repository of so-called "traditional" values, thereby marginalizing diasporas in mainstream Western societies.

Rather than avoiding this apparent paradox, many individuals of South Asian descent (desis) embrace their hybrid Indianness and enter what Bhabha refers to as a Third Space. In this unique realm, they embark on personal journeys, navigate

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between cultures, and express their identity through various media forms like music and film (Bhabha,1994) .Notably, desi films occupy a distinct genre, characterized by their "in-between" nature directed by expatriates and migrants, shot in locations across America, Britain, Australia, and Canada, and positioned between the prominent movie industries of Bollywood and Hollywood.

These desi films primarily serve as channels for self-expression and exploration of the lives of migrant hybrid citizens – individuals who are intricately woven into and influenced by both Western and Indian cultures within the framework of the Third Space (Wang, 2004). The popularity and prevalence of these films are on the rise, with titles like *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002), *American Desi* (2002), *American Chai* (2001), *Bhaji on the Beach* (1993), *The Guru* (2002), *Bride and Prejudice* (2004), *Mississippi Masala* (1992), and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid* (1987) being prime examples. While not overlooking the fact that *the Namesake* itself identifies it as a desi film that blends two hybrid movie industries, the cast also consists of a mix of transnational performers.

In an attempt to create a divide between his past and present, the protagonist adopts Maxine's lifestyle and resides in her home. Nevertheless, despite his best efforts, Gogol finds himself unable to escape the memories of his upbringing, his name, his parents, and his Indian heritage, as these elements have shaped his identity and define who he is as a person (Nair,2006,52:20). Over time, Gogol gradually realizes that he cannot simply distance himself from his roots, especially when a loss in the family brings about shifts in their dynamics. He deeply values his family and embraces both the positive and negative aspects of their Indian traditions (Nair,2006 ,1:15:44).

Regardless of Gogol's attempts to distance himself from being labeled an ABCD, his situation of residing in what Robin Field (2002) refers to as "an intermediate realm of cultural frontiers" between the United States and India generates momentary discord and bewilderment within him (cited in Lewis,2020,p.166). Gogol experiences a sense of perplexity primarily because he

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fails to grasp the importance of his Indian cultural background; it's possible that he perceives Indian culture as lesser in comparison to the dominant American culture. Put differently, he is unable to completely evade the numerous ties he is immersed in. Yet, it's only following his father's passing that Gogol starts grasping the societal truth that, due to his entwined existence within Indian traditions and American lifestyles, he needs to embrace a blended identity.

3.6. A Bollywoodian Twist in a Real Transnational/Diasporic Indian Movie:

Films, as a significant form of mass media, wield a considerable influence on the attitudes, social norms, behaviors, construction of reality, and transformations of identity in viewers. In recent times, Bollywood movies have excessively delved into portraying the Indian diaspora, encompassing aspects such as clothing, appearance, viewpoints, and attitudes. Through the medium of film, individuals have been able to utilize their talents to bring about positive changes in society since the advent of cinema in India. It is almost impossible to find anyone in the nation who remains unaffected by the impact of Bollywood, as it has become an integral part of people's daily lives.

Figure N° 03. Tabu & Irfan Khan as Famous Stars of Bollywood



Source: <https://wallpapers.com/irrfan-khan>
<https://www.cineserie.com/persons/158965>

Creating films by Indians in the diaspora is a relatively new endeavor when compared to the longstanding tradition of literature produced by diasporic Indians. However, due to its extensive outreach, the realm of cinema has rapidly connected with an expansive viewership within a brief period. This medium has swiftly gained

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international recognition and accolades, despite its relatively short existence. The United States, known as the birthplace of Hollywood in particular, has also been a significant hub for Indian diaspora filmmakers since the 1980s.

Often, diasporic fiction arises from the complexities of families embracing multiple national identities, rather than solely from the experiences of first-generation migrants. In Mumbai, starting from the early 1990s' global Bollywood expansion and continuing into the twenty-first century, there has been an increase in the production of films that depict the stories of diasporic communities living in various parts of the world. However, it can be argued that these films, while retaining the essence of Indian cinema, diverge from the transnational filmmaking style that often caters to a Western audience.

Nair possesses a distinct and captivating approach to filmmaking, which is apparent in the majority of her movies. She employs vintage visuals and cinematic references from the past. Her works feature an energetic musical backdrop, blending various genres like traditional Indian wedding/folk songs, Jazz, and Indian film music. In crafting the desired visuals, she frequently employs evocative lighting and cinematic symbols, like the employment of the bridges' metaphor in *The Namesake* (Nair,2006,20:29).

Similarly, Desi films explore the way identity is expressed and understood, especially in terms of how individuals learn to embrace their Desi heritage and experience it emotionally. Diasporic movies serve as a cross-border educational exploration, a voyage through intermediate cultural realms, as described by Wang (2004) as the state of being "simultaneously inside and outside" both Indian and "Western" cultures. These films centered around diasporic Indo-Canadians, Indo-British, and Indo-Americans, shed light on the perceived and tangible boundaries between cultures' places where cultural distinctions are most prominently visible and historical conflicts have emerged (cited in Ausman, 2012).

More specifically, the film "*The Namesake*" depicts Gogol as a victim of cultural circumstances, where his immigrant parents unintentionally fail to fully

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understand his American identity, apart from his Indian heritage. This authentic portrayal resonates strongly with immigrants, especially the desi youth in North America, who often experience cultural aimlessness. The characters in the movie are driven by a deep longing to explore different cultural realms while grappling with the significance of their past and the potential sacrifices it entails. According to Appadurai (1990), Desi films are capable of crafting "mediascapes" that revolve around specific communities. These mediascapes primarily consist of image-centric and narrative-based depictions of various aspects of reality. Through these portrayals, they offer elements like characters, plots, and textual forms that serve as building blocks for envisioning imagined lives, both of individuals within the community and those residing in distant locations (p.9).

Diasporic films, in particular, serve as such mediascapes, meticulously constructing visual representations of Indian communities living abroad. These films establish a thriving industry that spreads the symbolic identity of an entire generation, embodying a sense of ethnicity. Generally, Desi films extract fragments of diasporic realities and transform them into fictional stories, incorporating genuine events that resonate with Desi families worldwide. In doing so, these films universalize and reinforce the symbolic significance of Desis on the screen. Consequently, both the objects depicted in these films and the viewers' engaging with them experience diversity and hybridity, resulting in a myriad of reactions to the cinematic portrayals.

It's particularly noticeable that, this film stands apart from Hollywood's mainstream productions known for their significant investment, innovative camera techniques, use of light contrasts, modern soundtracks, rich symbolism, and other post-modern elements. Independent filmmakers find it challenging to create such elaborate productions. In contrast, Mira Nair adopts the techniques commonly used by traditional commercial Bollywood filmmakers. Despite winning awards at film festivals and receiving nominations in various categories, this film remains on the fringes of the dominant Hollywood film canon. Its critical acclaim is attributed to its

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skillful exploration of contentious issues and diasporic themes relevant in today's multicultural and globalized world.

The movie "*The Namesake*," directed by Mira Nair and featuring immensely talented actors Irrfan Khan and Tabu, along with American stars Kal Penn and Jacinda Barrett, explores the story of a Bengali couple raising their children. Although they spend their early years in India, their son's identity becomes a mystery after they move to America. This film, produced by American, Japanese, and Indian studios, received positive responses from both countries, underscoring the importance of its success. "*The Namesake*" focuses on a reality that goes beyond sentimental patriotism or nostalgic portrayals, shedding light on issues that Bollywood is now inclined to address, particularly concerning the Indian diaspora in the United States. The film uses both the English and Bengali languages, switching visually between the Gangulis family's house and the westernized New York. Thus, it establishes a "culture of migration" within society.

Over the past two decades, transnationalism has gained popularity in academic circles, challenging the previous notion that immigrants should sever ties with their home countries and assimilate entirely into the host community. These ideas are relevant in understanding the cultural allegories presented in the movie, which is rooted in Indian cinema but possesses a transnational outlook, owing to the collaborative effort involving Hollywood's presence.

Exploring the central idea, each immigrant can initially relate to Gogol's childhood insecurities. Being a second-generation Indian American, they have experienced the embarrassment of their name being perceived as odd. However, as they mature, they come to embrace the significance of their name and culture. Nevertheless, Ashoke emphasizes multiple times that in America, "anything is possible" (Nair, 2006,51:20).

The intriguing aspect lies in the tone of his voice when he utters these words. He convinces Ashima that unlike in India, their children can attain anything, a sentiment that gains strength with the birth of Sonia. Yet, as the film progresses,

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when their child requests a name change, he repeats the phrase, this time in a more solemn manner. Even Ashima, by the film's end, admits that the United States is now her home, where she also developed a profound love for her husband (Nair,2006,1:50:45).

Another aspect of the film that requires discussion is its portrayal of relationships and the impact of transnationalism on these bonds. One particular example is how transnational influences shape the connection between Gogol and Maxine. Initially, their relationship is portrayed as delightful, despite encountering a few challenges like encountering sexist remarks from some guests at her parents' party and facing some parental disapproval (Nair, 2006,53:36). Nevertheless, for Maxine and Gogol, their relationship seems to be progressing positively. Gogol is well-received by Maxine's parents, and any cultural disparities are not portrayed as significant obstacles (Nair,2006, 1:4:59).

As previously mentioned, this film effectively depicts the challenges of being multicultural and being pulled in different directions by various cultures. Gogol serves as a prime example of this, mainly due to his name, which plays a significant role in shaping his experiences. Throughout the movie, Gogol consistently finds himself frustrated with his parents deeply rooted Indian customs, seeking solace in American rock music and even dating Max, this quintessential American girl. This intricate tale of a diaspora's coming of age is both intricate and moving, portraying Gogol's quest for independence and liberty while maintaining a deep reverence for tradition and family bonds.

A different example can be mentioned, after Ashoke's passing, Ashima finds herself in a foreign land without her husband or children, facing a sense of isolation. Meanwhile, Gogol eventually starts embracing his Bengali heritage as the story progresses (Nair,2006,1:18:08). However, in the moment when Ashima hung up the phone, the room felt desolate, cold, and silent (Nair,2006,1:14:58).

In traditional Bollywood movies, female voices are notably absent, reflecting the real-life socio-cultural scenario where women are marginalized in these films.

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Film critic Katey Rich, in her article "Women on Film-Will Bollywood Best Hollywood in Opportunities for Women," argues that just like its Los Angeles counterpart, Bollywood also relegates women to small roles, both in front of and behind the camera. However, in the film, Mira Nair challenges this image to some extent by deconstructing the character of Ashima. Initially portrayed as passive in her life in the US around her Boston home, Ashima gradually adapts to the vibrant environment and lifestyle of New York City, taking on tasks like going out for laundry and buying fish from Fulton Fish Market (Rich, 2009). Also, in the novel, Moushumi has numerous sexual relationships before marrying Gogol, revealing her sexual freedom. Mira Nair also depicts this aspect in her characterization of Moushumi in the film adaptation (Nair, 2006, 1:43:55-1:44:18). As a result, this film serves as a platform for multiple forms of resistance, defying societal norms and expectations.

Indian culture, in its unique manner, calls out to those who have crossed borders and transformed into the "Westernized" Indian, thereby shaping their identity. Consequently, the spaces where these individuals identify as desi offer more than just a division of the self along various dimensions. These spaces also embrace the quantum concept, allowing contradictory emotions of being both American and Indian simultaneously and enabling the coexistence of temporal and spatial representations of both cultures. This liberating approach allows individuals to embrace both identities fully, breaking away from the confines of a linear hybrid description that merely exists in the transition between Indian and Western cultures, and in a way being inspired by Bollywood's tendency to infuse Hollywood with Indian elements.

3.7. Straddling the Culture Line and Challenging Diasporic Attitudes

The concept of cross-cultural mixing encompasses the fusion of multiple cultures and is frequently used by advocates and scholars of cross-cultural studies to refer to works that showcase the blending of diverse cultural elements. Immigrant

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filmmakers have embraced and closely examined this phenomenon within their transnational experiences, leading to its growing popularity and application.

Moreover, the core theme of post-colonial studies revolves around culture and identity, which are closely intertwined, particularly in what Mary Louise Pratt (1992) refers to as the "contact zone." This zone emerges during colonial encounters or in the post-colonial context of diaspora and emigration. Immigrants often find their cultural identity clashing with the host country's identity, compelling them to adapt their cultural customs to align with the dominant culture (p.75). As a result, their emigrant culture undergoes a hybrid transformation as it blends with that of the host country, inevitably becoming an integral part of their new identity.

Diasporic cinema occupies a crucial role within the film industry, centering its attention on themes such as cultural challenges, the quest for identity, diversity, and aspects of human life that resonate universally. Given the heterogeneity of the diaspora, it grapples with issues related to identity, culture, power, multiculturalism, and transnationalism. While immigrants are generally accepted in foreign lands, they often face racism and other challenges. The coexistence of two distinct cultures leads to a focus on cultural conflicts concerning immigration and diaspora matters. It is quite essential to clarify that diasporic groups consist of immigrants from diverse backgrounds with different languages, cultures, identities, and ancestries. Consequently, individuals experience emotional conflicts akin to "emotional jetlag," as they feel torn between multiple directions.

The Namesake, a highly successful movie adaptation of a best-selling diasporic novel, boldly embraces disorientation and offers a unique cultural perspective. It revolves around an Indian family's struggles to assimilate in the United States while holding onto their roots. This film stands out as a significant example of an immigrant filmmaker skillfully navigating the dual identities of India and America, becoming a defining feature of its era, and shedding light on the contemporary Indian diaspora. Rather than focusing solely on assimilation, *The Namesake* also delves into the universal bonds between parents and children. It

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explores the profound journey that every individual must undertake, connecting them to their parents and ancestors through the powerful force of memory, particularly for those who have left their homeland.

The film also highlights how certain aspects of American culture may feel familiar and comfortable, but beneath the surface, both American and Indian cultures possess fundamental codes that shape their societies. In her work, Amardeep Singh, the assistant professor of English, identified common themes and aesthetic resemblances in Nair's photographs. She introduced the term "diaspora vérité" to describe Nair's approach to storytelling, wherein she employs documentary realism to portray how migration, displacement, and even exile can serve as avenues for her characters to break free from societal and cultural constraints (Roy, 2017). Consequently, Nair has utilized cinéma vérité techniques to explore diverse diasporic encounters in her body of work.

Throughout history, people have always been on the move in search of better opportunities and an improved way of life. As they migrate, they carry not only their knowledge and skills but also the customs, lifestyle, and beliefs of their final destination. This is true for the Bengali community, who, though marginalized in America's urban areas, actively participate in their cultural traditions. During their short visits to places like the planetarium, zoo gardens, Victoria Memorial, and Hindi films in Calcutta, they remain connected to their roots (Nair,2006,44:30-49:56).

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Figure N° 04.Reconnecting with India and bonding with Bengali culture



Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/09/movies/09name.html>

In Gogol's experiences, you can detect subtle influences of Indian cultural practices, likely stemming from his appreciation of his mother's new apartment in Boston adorned with a colorful picture of a camel caravan in the Rajasthani desert (Nair,2006 ,58:32). As a result, both the opportunities in the new country and the ties to the homeland intertwine in a complex and emotionally charged pattern due to the presence of the past in the present.

Nair's movies are widely appreciated for addressing social issues, making her a beloved figure in the Indian film industry. She is often referred to as the industry's Nightingale. Diasporic filmmakers, despite living in unfamiliar surroundings with different cultures, can use their creativity and conscience to portray India in their films. The idea of "home," "homeland," or "Motherland" holds immense importance for these directors as they maintain a strong connection to their 'matrubhumi' (Motherland). Therefore, being a prominent director representing the Indian/Bengali diaspora in the United States, she skillfully merges her cultural heritage with mainstream American culture, giving rise to a hybrid piece of literature that profoundly explores her dual identity as an Indo-American or South Asian-American.

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According to Morris Beja(1979), a significant majority of Best Picture Awards since 1935 have been awarded to film adaptations of novels (cited in Kline,1996, pp. 70-83). This study aims to explore the intertextual connections between *The Namesake's* literary and cinematic adaptations, with a particular focus on adaptation theories and the ethnographic and autobiographical aspects of the artists involved. To comprehend the mysteries within an artist's work, it is crucial to delve into their life and culture. Examining the backgrounds of the writer and director reveal that pivotal moments in their lives have shaped their artistic expression.

In fact, the literature that underscores the contrasts between Indian and American cultures gives rise to cultural tensions. The first-generation immigrants strive to infuse Bengali-influenced foods, pet names, good names, rites, and rituals into Indian nests on foreign soil. Nevertheless, their offspring struggle to fully identify as genuine Americans, grappling with cultural conflicts that lead to the development of a hybrid identity and an enduring sense of identity crisis resulting from the mistakes made during their cross-cultural journeys. Lahiri's semiotic rendition of *The Namesake* and Nair's photographic adaptation of the same work employed distinct linguistic approaches for communication. While Lahiri's version relied solely on symbols, Nair's adaptation creatively utilized cinematic codes to convey its message. Even though the film lacked traditional linguistic elements, it was still shaped and defined by the language of cinema (Monaco ,2000, p. 175).

In the film *The Namesake*, the theme of journey is evident not just in the characters' movements between the conflicting Indian and American cultures, but it also encompasses the concept of self-discovery. This goes beyond emphasizing solely cultural identity, highlighting that the ultimate destination of this journey is a sense of identity that goes beyond cultural categorization.

Again, Nair effectively incorporates three aspects of Bengali culture into the American setting. By integrating Bengali habits, traditional costumes, rituals, ceremonies, and language, she skillfully portrays her cultural identity. The film

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showcases significant Bengali rituals and ceremonies associated with birth, death, and marriage, emphasizing the Bengali heritage of the characters.

Figure N°05. Bengali Wedding Rituals of Ashima and Moushumi



Source: (Nair, 2006, 9:46-10:30/1:31:32-1:33:18)

During his early years, Gogol presented himself as a cultural 'outsider,' but the passing of his father and the subsequent rituals stirred a longing within him to reconnect with his cultural roots. Shortly after the mourning period of eleven days, Gogol made the decision to end his relationship with his American girlfriend and instead marry Moushumi, his chosen Bengali partner in an arranged marriage. This type of ceremonial union exposed him to the unique customs of Bengali culture (Nair, 2006, 1:28:07).

The unspoken intention behind this marriage ceremony was to bind Gogol and Moushumi together as a Bengali couple, thereby ensuring the preservation and promotion of their culture within the American society. This goal would have been different if he had married a Caucasian or white American girlfriend. Despite the possibility of divorce, this marriage allowed Gogol to come back "to the embrace of his ethnic community" by marrying an Indian American woman through a traditional ceremony and subsequently returning to his home and family after the divorce (Friedman, 2008, p. 120).

Hence, the emergence of re-orientalism becomes apparent when one acknowledges that the initial wave of Indian immigrants, particularly women,

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distinctly represent the core characteristics of Oriental culture. In contrast, the succeeding generation of immigrants symbolizes the progressive, open-minded, and advanced perspectives associated with Western civilization.

Moreover, the film utilizes the Bengali language to signify moments of intimacy, distinction, comfort, and seriousness. When Ashoke provides Ashima with directions to Fulton Fish Market after their temporary settlement in the US, Ashima responds in Bengali, expressing her concern about getting lost. In response, Ashoke reassures her in Bengali that he will ensure she doesn't get lost (Nair,2006,17:42). As time passes, they start conversing more in English, but their final phone exchange before Ashoke's passing occurs in Bengali (Nair,2006,1:11:11).

As Gogol remains unable to grasp the significance of Ashoke's near-death encounter, his father, Ashoke, chooses not to disclose the incident to him. Consequently, Ashoke also decides to withhold the revelation of his son's name for the present. Following his father's demise, Gogol undertakes a significant Hindu ritual by shaving his head at a bar (Nair,2006,1:18:53).

Notably, while journeying back home along Pemberton Road after the passing of Gogol's father, Gogol becomes profoundly unsettled by the traditional customs of an Indian funeral. However, with the passage of time, he gradually grows to find value in and accept his Indian heritage. Furthermore, Gogol finds himself troubled by the act of cremation, as he holds the belief that the American practice of interring a body in the earth alongside a marked gravestone is more fitting. He vocalizes his wish to avoid cremation after his own demise, as he holds concerns that it could sever his connection to his American identity. As a result, he begins to view himself primarily as an American. The disregard for Indian cultural rituals by Native Americans serves to bolster the inclination of individuals to adopt an American sense of self. This stems from the conviction that American society, in contrast to Indian culture, places a high regard on and commemorates life through its approach to death.

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This relevant scene occurs when Gogol returns from Cleveland with a shaved head, surprising his mother. She remarks that it was unnecessary, but he unexpectedly responds in Bengali, explaining his reasons for doing so (Nair,2006,1:20:02). Through Nair's film, the audience is consistently reminded that language serves as both a bridge and a barrier to communication.

Figure N° 06. Bengali Death Rituals



Source : <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433416/>

Therefore, emphasizing the significance of indulging in Bengali cuisine, donning traditional Bengali attire, participating in Bengali customs during significant life events like birth, death, and marriage, and using the Bengali language are the essential ways in which the Bengali/Indian diaspora preserves their cultural heritage and establishes their cultural presence within the diverse fabric of America.

Accordingly, this movie explores the theme of the "immigrant experience and cultural clash in the U.S." It follows the journeys of Ashoke and Ashima, who are first-generation immigrants, and their children, Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi, who belong to the second generation. Living in a foreign country, each character undergoes a distinct form of alienation. The first-generation immigrants left their homelands either by choice or necessity, and they retain stronger ties to their ancestral roots compared to the second generation. Despite being in a new land, they can't fully detach from their homeland due to a profound sense of displacement

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and longing for their home country. The central theme of *The Namesake* revolves around the struggle to find a balance between preserving traditional customs and embracing Western ideas and lifestyles. When someone joins a new cultural setting, culture shock cannot be avoided. Besides, confusion, anxiety, and irritation result from cultural differences between the host culture and the original culture.

Furthermore, Nair's meticulous adaptation beautifully portrays Indian cities such as Calcutta, Alipore, and Agra through the loving lens of the first generation Gangulis. As Gogol and Sonia experience their visit to India, they find themselves unable to feel a sense of belonging in Calcutta; instead, they long to return to their American surroundings. “what’s wrong with you? Said Gogol to his sister Sonia after being bored, I wanna go home !! she replied (Nair, 2006,42:13-42:59). Meanwhile, Ashima and Ashoke face challenges in assimilating as they lack the familiarity of their homeland (Nair,2006,45:46-48:48).

The film underscores India's role as the origin of identity by incorporating various symbols of Indian culture. One such symbol is the statue of the goddess Saraswati, a presence absent in the novel but which appears at pivotal moments in Ashima's life, happening thrice throughout the movie. This recurring depiction highlights its significance in representing India as the fundamental cornerstone of Ashima's identity. Furthermore, the movie showcases the Taj Mahal, an iconic Indian monument, in contrast to Yale's influence on Gogol's path to becoming an architect.

Figure N°07. The goddess Sraswati Festival



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Source: https://fr.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Goddess_Saraswati_dressed_in_yellow_sari_for_Vasant_Panchami_Festival,_Kolkata.jpg

Figure N°08. Taj Mahal as the First Contact with a Cultural Element from the Roots



Source: <https://rodolfogrimaldi.com/2012/07/the-namesake/>

These inclusions of Indian cultural elements serve to emphasize the enduring impact of India in shaping the characters' life choices and identities. The cinematic adaptation of *The Namesake* overtly accentuates India as the origin of identity. By embracing India as the fundamental wellspring of Ashima and Gogol's identities, the film undergoes a substantial transformation in its central focus and priorities.

This still maintains that, in the United States, Ashima experiences a new sense of identity, which is primarily influenced by her connection to her spouse rather than an independent identity. She finds solace in relating to the cultural environment of Calcutta, the place she considers home. As she embraces her improved social standing, she actively engages in local events, secures a job at the library, and builds meaningful relationships with her colleagues. Throughout this transition, Ashima develops a distinctive personality that beautifully blends elements of her heritage and Bengali culture, reflecting their impact on every aspect of her life.

This is noticeable, after recognizing the strong emotional ties and loyalty he shares with his family, Gogol makes the decision to incorporate his cultural heritage

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into his life. Just like his mother, he embraces his dual identity and accepts her choice to relinquish their long-term family home on Pemberton Road, even though it held countless cherished memories from his past (Nair,2006,1:48:51).

Also, after Gogol's father passed away, the family observed the Bengali mourning tradition by adhering to a special diet known as the "mourner's diet," which primarily consists of vegetarian fare. During this period, they consumed plain dishes like rice, dal, and vegetables (Lahiri,2004, p. 180). This ceremonial practice, typical among Bengalis in the United States, was also observed when Gogol and his parents mourned the loss of his grandparents, highlighting the enduring influence of their cultural customs. Despite being born and raised away from their motherland, Gogol's close connection to his cultural identity remained steadfast from his childhood into adulthood.

In fact, Mira Nair's film showcases a plethora of captivating artistic elements. Throughout the movie, the bridge stands out as a potent symbol of connection, often contrasting with scenes of solitude. Additionally, Maxine's attire in black during Ashoke's passing is highlighted in the movie as a means to underscore the distinction between eastern and western cultures.

Figure N°09: Maxine in Ashoke's Funeral



Source: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433416/>

Clearly, Nair's film skillfully incorporates two bridges within its diasporic setting: the Howrah Bridge, a bustling cantilever bridge connecting Calcutta, and the 59th Street Bridge in Manhattan, linking New York City. Nair likely intends to convey that the journey with a suitcase symbolizes arriving at a significant point,

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represented by these bridges as crossings. These two bridges, each belonging to a different country, symbolize the mobility and ties of the diasporic people to their past and their journey into the future. As Giuseppe Balirano (2008) puts it, the numerous shots of these bridges serve as a metaphor of division and reunion, calling for reconciliation between cities, East and West, and the first and second generation of Gangulis (pp. 87-96).

Figure N°10: The Bridge in Manhattan vs in Kolkata



Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/my-kolkata/places/a-walk-across-new-yorks-brooklyn-bridge/cid/1919986>

By confronting the challenges of crossing boundaries through the integration of dual spaces, the film prompts viewers to reconsider the notion of limitations. Additionally, it celebrates acculturation and cultural hybridity, which arise from the blending of diverse cultural influences in the contemporary world.

Arguably, the story's author and director depict the Indian culture among American Indians with caution, as well as the differing attitudes of the younger generation of American-born Indians toward their parents. Indians relocate abroad for business, education, employment, family wellbeing, and other reasons. They also give up their native soil, air, food, happiness, and family conditions in the other country, as is very well shown in the film (Malik, 2013).

The narrative fuses two distinct realms, where the echoes of ancient Indian and contemporary American cultures intersect, giving birth to a fresh cultural identity. The characters grapple with embracing this novel identity in a diverse country like the US. Despite the challenges, they refuse to surrender to the task of

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adapting to their new lives. Instead, their determination to confront obstacles exudes a subtle message of positivity to the audience. Instead of solely concentrating on the intricacies of ways of living, displacement of cultures, and the struggles of blending in, and instead of simply depicting characters torn between honoring their familial customs and embracing an Americanized lifestyle, hence, Nair's film commemorates a cultural blend that naturally emerges due to the interdependencies of the contemporary global society.

3.8. Representation of Diasporic Themes in *The Namesake*

The majority of South Asian people face inequality, discrimination, biases, prejudices, and feelings of isolation in their adopted countries due to the historical forced exile of some Indians and the voluntary migration of others to diverse foreign regions, as previously explained in the different phases of diasporic community immigration. Mira Nair's film, *The Namesake*, explores numerous themes related to living in two countries, being part of a vast diaspora, and experiencing a transnational sense of identity. The film tackles with grieving, marriage and family problems, and juggling their dualism identities. Names play a crucial role in reflecting various identity-related characteristics, including race, gender, and sexuality (Culler, 1997, p.110). The passage explores a range of feelings, such as longing for home, isolation and solitude in an unfamiliar land, a sense of not belonging, the loss of one's identity, the challenges of adapting to a new culture, and other related issues.

3.8.1. Name and Cultural Identity's Struggle and Quest

In *the Namesake*, a sense of disorientation is prevalent among all the characters, stemming from a profound feeling of loss. This feeling arises as nearly every individual grapple with the allure of different cultures, traditions, and aspirations, leading them to wrestle with the quest for their true identities. By comparing Eastern and Western customs regarding naming, the film offers a thoughtful reevaluation of the societal assumptions tied to the communal

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importance of naming versus the individual encounter with receiving a name. Consequently, the book explores a wide array of topics, including symbolic lineage, the lack of a central cultural connection for diaspora individuals in their adopted nations, and the proper and improper utilization of labels.

The director of the film focuses on how American culture influenced the way people in the country identified themselves. In the movie, the naming of Gogol is driven by Bengali customs, leading to him being given a pet name instead of a name considered appropriate in their culture, following Indian practice. In Bengali tradition, individuals are given two names, one for formal use in public settings, academic transcripts, postal addresses, phone briefings, and academic credentials, and the other, known as the "good" name, which represents intelligence and dignity (Lahiri, 2004, p.53). Because of the forced migration, the diaspora's struggle to find their identity and a feeling of not fitting in becomes even more challenging and urgent. The lack of a stable home, along with the uncaring behavior of the host society, contributes to an intensified feeling of being outsiders.

Moreover, the film portrays Ashima and Ashoke's predicament as they are compelled to give their child a pet name while they await the arrival of the "good" name, which was supposed to be sent in a letter from Ashima's grandmother in Calcutta but never arrives (Nair, 2006, 22:45-25:02). The movie effectively captures this particular aspect of their cultural journey. The name Gogol holds a significance far beyond the usual connotation of a simple nickname. It goes beyond being trivial, humorous, sarcastic, or imitative, which are typical traits of pet names. Instead, it carries a deeply personal significance for Ashoke. It's not just about his admiration for the author; Ashoke believes that Nikolai Gogol played a crucial role in rescuing his life; "it is more than that!" (Nair, 2006, 1:00:41-1:03:28) after narrating to his son about the train incident and how he got his name.

Throughout the movie, Gogol carries his name like a constant companion, and even when he tries to adopt the name Nikhil, he realizes that he cannot shake off his past identity. The challenge lies in unraveling his true self, as he grapples

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with the notion that both Gogol and Nikhil are integral parts of who he is. Interestingly, when Gogol eventually adopts the name Nikhil, he doesn't truly embody the identity of Nikhil, as he has been Gogol his entire life. This implies that his pet's name Gogol has become an integral part of his being. Moreover, the connection between Nikhil and the Russian name Nikolai highlights the complex and adaptable nature of Gogol's character, capable of integrating into diverse cultural contexts.

Balancing these two identities proves to be difficult, particularly when his parents use the name Nikhil in front of his friends, exposing his vulnerabilities and leaving him feeling abandoned. Gogol finds himself in a constant struggle to understand his true identity, caught between the two personas. He repeatedly declares, "I'm Nikhil now," (Nair, 2006, 1:37:01), but each time, the weight of having to repeat this statement troubles him, prompting him to metaphorically pin an errata slip to his chest, desperately seeking recognition from others. Considering this, it can be inferred that Gogol held a preference for the American identity over his Bengali heritage. He favored the American naming system as opposed to the traditional Indian one, which involves naming children after their ancestors, as exemplified by Maxine and other American kids.

In the United States, having a birth certificate allows parents to take their newborns home, while in Indian customs, a child's name is regarded as solemn and sacred, not passed down through generations. As time goes on, Gogol develops a deep appreciation for American naming customs and starts to feel more at home in the United States than in his native India. This is reflected in the author's portrayal of the American identity with respect, recognizing the significance of cultural diversity in shaping it (Lahiri, 2004, p.54). In reality, diaspora functions as a platform embodying cultural contrasts. Here, the parents put forth their utmost efforts to establish a Bengali atmosphere for Gogol and Sonia. However, as they mature within the blended Bengali-American culture, their inclination to shape a sense of home in America diminishes significantly.

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Nikhil embodies the amalgamation of American cultural influences within Gogol, while Gogol, in turn, represents his Indian heritage. Throughout his experiences, Gogol realizes the significance of establishing an identity that isn't solely defined by his ancestry. Despite growing up in America, he remains distinctly Indian in the eyes of the American society. This necessitates Gogol to navigate a dual existence, skillfully balancing both American and Indian cultural values in his life. Indeed, Gogol grapples with his sense of self and experiences a profound feeling of not belonging anywhere, evident in his various relationships. His life is characterized by emotional turmoil, a constant battle between love and hate for India, internal conflicts, growing confusion, and an inability to fully assimilate into Western culture. When he returns to his birthplace, he is labeled an NRI (Nair, 2006, 38:11-40:20).

As a matter of fact, Gogol's quest for self-discovery remains boundless since he finds himself unable to fully adopt American norms or completely let go of his Indian heritage. This ongoing journey proves to be a relentless and arduous endeavor for him, constantly posing challenges and demanding his utmost efforts. Throughout the entirety of the film, Gogol has consistently defied his parents' wishes. However, a significant transformation is evident in him, as he is no longer at odds with his own identity as an Indian-American. He has embraced his cultural heritage and no longer seeks to reject Bengali traditions or yearn for the American lifestyle of his former girlfriend.

Another example illustrating the same concept involves Ashima, who refrains from addressing her husband, Ashoke, by his name throughout the movie. In Ashoke's presence, she has never uttered his name, creating a divide between his name and his identity, particularly in the context of their relationship. This divide persists even after Ashoke's passing, as Ashima refuses to mention his name when recounting his story to their friends, stating that she won't utter it "even in death, to utter her husband's name" (Nair, 2006, 1:50:30). This refusal to say his name reflects her inability to fully grasp the connection between his name and his

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identity. The film's creator maintains the theme of respecting one's original identity and cultural conventions.

3.8.2. The Cultural Clash and its Diasporic Features

As migration and expatriation become increasingly prevalent, the transnational movement has led to the predicted blending of languages, diverse cultural expressions, and the emergence of hybrid identities in the post-modern global order. Although notions of home and homeland identities have been dissolved and reshaped by new acquired identities, the immigrant community still struggles to completely detach from their past. One of the most widely discussed issues today revolves around immigration and migration, offering fresh insights into the complexities of diaspora populations in terms of their adopted and ancestral homes.

The primary focus of diasporic cinema lies in depicting the challenges faced by those who have left their ancestors' homelands to establish new lives in distant lands. Filmmakers in this genre often explore themes such as displacement, exile, dislocation, socio-cultural alienation, as well as intricate intergenerational connections, rootlessness, and the uneven process of self-integration. Works by diaspora filmmakers frequently emphasize the feelings of homesickness, rootlessness, social and cultural exile, painting a vivid picture of the immigrant experience.

In the meanwhile, experiencing cultural shocks in unfamiliar territories has left them susceptible in these foreign lands. They had to navigate between two vastly distinct cultures: one that they brought with them from India and the other they encountered in these Western countries. As a way to express their emotions and experiences as part of the Indian diaspora, numerous immigrants have attempted writing. The clash between cultures actually functions as symbols representing fundamental human connections, a theme highlighted in this research.

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In the film "*the Namesake*," the characters often explore the contrasting aspects of Indian and American culture. Ashima and Ashoke, as Indian immigrants, find many elements of American culture unfamiliar, leading to a sense of detachment in the American society they now inhabit. Despite this, they strive to maintain certain Indian traditions while also embracing American customs, such as celebrating Christmas. The Indian-American characters, Gogol and Moushumi, grapple with a unique sense of alienation, feeling like outsiders in both India and America. They are caught between the world of their immigrant parents and the one they were born into. Similar to visitors, they experience a sense of displacement, but unlike typical tourists, they don't have the option to return to their original home.

This cultural tug-of-war shapes their identities and impacts their perspectives on life. In a figurative sense, the way they relate to each other is reminiscent of the way Gogol related to Indian culture. It appears that Moushumi possesses an understanding of the notion that individuals should actively shape their own identities rather than merely adopting pre-existing ones, as evidenced by her self-discovery in Paris. However, her path towards self-definition is intricate, and her union with Gogol is more of a detour in her journey rather than a definitive endpoint. Gogol doesn't possess a similar encounter with reinventing oneself. It appears that embracing their Indian heritage became a crucial step for both individuals at some juncture. However, this was just one component of a more extensive and all-encompassing process of discovering their identities.

Remarkably, the potential dissolution of their marriage could hold symbolic significance, as it suggests that Gogol and Moushumi's journey towards understanding their true selves, reflected in their Bengali names, involves more than just coming to terms with their backgrounds – it's a step along their personal paths, not the ultimate culmination.

Mira Nair's masterful work, "*The Namesake*," explores the clash between the past and the present, as well as the conflict between traditional values and modern ethics, within the immigrant experience. The story revolves around the struggle of

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immigrants attempting to preserve their customs and antiquated socio-cultural beliefs while also assimilating into a new way of life. However, the host societies' perception of these immigrants forces them to reevaluate their sense of belonging in their new homes. During this phase of migration, the concept of "home" encapsulates its transient nature, upheaval, and loss. In the film, Ashima's sense of belonging is intertwined with her native land, India. Similarly, the identities of Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi are also associated with their country of origin, the USA.

Typically, immigrants strive to linguistically connect themselves to their homeland, a theme mirrored in the movie adaptation. The use of language, particularly the Bengali spoken in their native region, plays a significant role in anchoring Ashima to her Indian roots. Interestingly, American English seems to hold less significance for Ashima compared to the Bengali language, which keeps her connected to her life in Kolkata. As previously mentioned, the central settings being discussed, namely America and India, are characterized by familial connections in *The Namesake*. These personal bonds, which shape the characters' perspectives on the two locations and their cultures, introduce a global aspect to the cultural struggle. It critiques the inclination of first-generation Indian women who immigrated to confine their lives within their homes, displaying unwavering resistance to change, modern ideas, personal freedom, and outdoor pursuits. This behavior is questioned and disapproved of by their children, who, as second-generation Indian immigrants in America, wholeheartedly adopt Western cultural norms and strive to align themselves with Western society.

Thus, the complexity of navigating old and new values becomes deeply ingrained in the immigrants, pushing them to find a delicate balance between the two. This quest for a hybrid identity results in a state of in-betweenness and rootlessness, with both advantages and drawbacks. Demonstrating commitment to a specific idea of the state becomes challenging for those with a hyphenated or hybrid identity.

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In this context, "*The Namesake*" portrays the post-mortem of an immigrant family struggling to let go of the past and adapt to a new social environment. The conflicts between the first and second generations of immigrants in the family arise from differing beliefs influenced by Eastern and Western cultures. The story also delves into the loneliness experienced by the second generation in their ancestral houses and the alienation felt by the first generation in their adoptive home. Mira Nair offers an insightful glimpse into the intricate and affectionate family bonds of individuals striving to preserve their traditional Indian values while pursuing the American dream alongside their U.S.-born children, who they hope will cherish those values from their homeland. This dynamic reflects the essence of a transnational world, where people are not compelled to strictly identify with a single nation or country.

Actually, the key to living harmoniously between the past and present lies in the exchange of ideas and adapting to new sociocultural norms for immigrants. This challenge persists beyond the first generation, becoming even more demanding due to the widening ideological gaps between the original immigrants and their U.S.-born offspring. Those who yearn to uphold their former ideals in new surroundings are likely to encounter feelings of isolation, estrangement, and a sense of not belonging.

Many movies have portrayed the story of ambitious immigrants striving for success in America, while also grappling with the clash between their traditional values and the modern way of life in the melting pot. This particular variation of the theme is compassionate and thoughtful. The film stands out by avoiding excessive drama, yet it is emotionally powerful as it delves into the profound longing for their cultural roots experienced by these uprooted middle-class Indians. Though it may not possess grandiose spectacle, as it unfolds, you develop a deep connection with the characters, becoming attuned to their inner struggles and journeys.

For instance, Ashoke Ganguli, despite his desire to provide the best for his family, experiences a degree of uneasiness in fully assimilating into the new

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society. This leads to a disjointed sense of self, the development of a hyphenated identity, and a heightened feeling of being adrift in the world. The traumatic experience appears to have prompted Ashoke to shift his life perspective. The most noticeable alteration was his transition from being passive to actively engaging in shaping his identity. This incident motivated him to assume accountability and independently make choices regarding substantial life changes (Nair, 2006,12:31-15:25).

More so, Gogol gradually assimilates into American culture, despite his parents' hopes that he would uphold the traditions and values of their homeland, including pursuing engineering studies. Like many first-generation immigrants, his parents moved to America to enhance their professional and academic prospects, and they have high expectations for their children to excel in both their studies and careers. As Gogol grows older and reaches a stage where he can interact with his parents as a child, the dynamics of the parent-child relationship become increasingly significant. This becomes particularly noteworthy as Gogol's connection with his father, which had typically been characterized by impatience, starts to evolve into a more sensitive and emotional bond after his father's passing.

Furthermore, the movie explores a recurring theme of alienation and being a foreigner in an unfamiliar environment. Ashima expresses sadness over the absence of her immediate relatives during Gogol's birth, which symbolizes the somewhat random and incomplete nature of experiences in America. After returning home from the hospital, Ashima vocalizes her concern about raising Gogol alone in this country, finding it inappropriate and desiring to return to her homeland (Nair, 2006,25:02).

Also, Gogol's sense of alienation is heightened by the fact that nobody he knows, whether in Russia, India, America, or anywhere else, shares his name or its origin. Gogol is not fond of the unique name given to him by his parents and the challenges it brings. Unaware of the identity issues it would cause, his parents chose the name for him. However, when he discovers the truth about the person his name

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is derived from, Gogol's perspective on his own name undergoes a significant transformation. With the adoption of the name Nikhil, his personality changes, leading to increased self-assurance and a sense of belonging in his country (Nair, 2006). Previously, he lacked confidence and was troubled by his namesake, but the name change allows him to fit in better.

Another sequence to discuss is the fact that Gogol and Sonia share a strong dislike for visiting their family in Calcutta. Whenever they find themselves in Kolkata, they yearn to be back in their more familiar Western lifestyle. In addition to Moushumi who, like Gogol and Sonia, also feels out of place. She seeks solace in exploring her roots through France's third language and culture. In fact, she discovers herself existing within a third cultural realm, distinct from both her Indian and American identities, yet strongly influenced by French culture.

Significantly, the experience of alienation and isolation among immigrants leads to a psychological imbalance, pushing them towards situations of powerlessness, displacement, and discomfort. The second-generation immigrants, having been born in the new country, are more inclined to embrace their life there rather than longing for traditional values that seem distant from their way of life. The movie centers around Gogol Ganguli, the protagonist, who embodies the struggles of a second-generation immigrant. Growing up in a cultural crossroads with parents hesitant to fully integrate into the new society can leave one feeling frustrated, alienated, torn between two worlds, a blend of identities, and connected through a hyphen.

Notably, Gogol and his parents embrace contrasting ideologies, as they consider Bengal to be their authentic homeland, while Gogol and Sonia view America as their true home. Gogol vividly portrays the experience of a second-generation immigrant, reflecting on the challenges and joys of this unique journey.

Clearly, the majority of immigrants often face difficulties due to cultural differences and the process of integration. When living abroad, immigrants are deeply attached to preserving and adapting their national culture, especially when

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confronted with a dominant alien culture. Assimilation and cultural adaptation are complex tasks, which become even more challenging as new generations grow up in their adopted countries. For immigrants, the process of assimilation and resistance can be compared to a dual-sided coin. On one side, it proves difficult to relinquish cherished ideals from their home country in favor of the adopted one. Conversely, persistently resisting the demands of the adopted country can also present challenges. Assimilation may appear straightforward initially, but it necessitates engaging in dialogues and making sacrifices, leaving behind certain old-world ideals to blend into the newly adopted society. However, this process doesn't always succeed for every immigrant, as some individuals strive to preserve elements of their old-world values during assimilation, impeding their effective integration into the new socio-cultural environment. Consequently, psychological imbalances, feelings of socio-cultural alienation, and a sense of being torn between two worlds often characterize the struggles faced by those in the hyphenated existence.

Again, in "*The Namesake*," Nair explores the theme of assimilation through the character of Ashima, the female protagonist. Ashima, while living among westerners, engages in activities like crafting Christmas cards during her leisure time, and gradually embraces the customs of her chosen country to counteract the sense of isolation in an unfamiliar land. As a responsible and progressive mother, she grants her children the freedom to explore the world and pursue their desires. While Ashima imparts knowledge about their native culture, she refrains from imposing its boundaries on them, allowing her kids to choose whether to embrace Western customs or retain their own heritage. Both Gogol and Sonia, both born in the United States and valuing their freedom in the country, chose to live independently from their parents in different places. The Gangulis family came to symbolize the clash between the first and second generations, the struggle between tradition and modernization, and the complexities of Indian and American identity.

Meanwhile, despite their best efforts to pass down their heritage to future generations, parents' unwavering passion and affection for their origins remain unchanged. Immigrants, living in the midst of a dominant alien culture, are deeply

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committed to preserving and transforming their national identity while abroad. The cultural legacy they carry becomes a symbol of their identity and sense of belonging in a distant land. In his pursuit of self-identity and recognition in his birthplace, Gogol endeavors to change his name, symbolizing his connection to both the new world and his ancestral roots. Both generations experience a profound sense of shock, facing an identity crisis and a struggle for sociocultural belonging in their adoptive countries. Assimilation into the new global order poses as the primary challenge for the immigrant population in their new societies. Amidst these changes, second-generation immigrants, employing hyphens to express their dual backgrounds, grapple with finding a harmonious balance between the two distinct cultures they embody.

In this part of the research, Ashima and Ashoke undergo a cultural shock as they face the naming customs of Western culture. Unfamiliar with the tradition in America where infants are named before leaving the hospital, they decide to wait for a letter from Ashima's grandma to name their child after her, as all the family members have names given by her. To keep the name a surprise, Ashima puts it online without informing anyone. Anxiously awaiting the letter, they encounter various problems when it doesn't arrive. When the doctor asks for the baby's name, they find themselves in a cultural dilemma. To resolve the situation, they decide to temporarily name the child Gogol, in honor of the Russian author Nikolai Gogol (Nair,2006,23:38).

In Bengali tradition, there are two names given to an individual: one is a pet name or *daknam* used within the family and the house, while the other is a *bhalonam* used when introducing oneself to others. This practice has influenced their relaxed attitude towards naming their children. On the other hand, Western culture follows a different naming heritage where a son is given his father or grandfather's name, and a daughter is given her mother or grandmother's name. In the movie, "Nair," the director explores these cultural distinctions by delving into the perspectives of immigrant children.

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Furthermore, another cultural contrast found in the work is when Gogol has been involved in romantic relationships with American women, one of whom is Maxine Ratliff. After spending time with her family, Gogol observes and highlights the contrasting aspects of Indian and Western cultures. He also keenly notices the differences in the dynamics of marriage between his parents and Maxine's parents. Consequently, Gogol frequently draws comparisons between his parents' way of life and his own, encompassing their dietary preferences, dining customs, party hosting styles, openness about intimate relationships, and approaches to celebrating holidays.

Figure N°11: Maxine's First Meeting with Gogol's Parents



Source: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433416/>

Obviously, people move to foreign countries in pursuit of an improved quality of life and to elevate their standard of living. However, this relocation often presents challenges as they grapple with adjusting to the unfamiliar environment, culture, and society of the new nation, leading to a difficult experience. The clash of dual cultures gives rise to conflicting emotions, a phenomenon known as ambivalence, where certain matters, people, or actions trigger contrasting feelings simultaneously. Consequently, immigrants and their descendants face the decision of whether to hold on to their ancestral culture or fully embrace the culture of their new homeland. As a result, they may find a balance by adopting aspects of the new culture while still preserving their Bengali heritage. This situation creates a sense of uncertainty for immigrant children born in America, as they must navigate between

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their family's Indian cultural roots and the diluted version that persists in their parental home (Khrais, 2020).

According to contemporary sociologist Melvin Seeman (1959), individuals' social behavior is heavily influenced by their cultural alienation, leading them to endure oppression, marginalization, neglect, and mistreatment when they are abroad. However, for Gogol Ganguli, the name "Gogol" is simply a unique name he was given by chance, causing a complete transformation in his life. Gogol embarks on an ongoing quest to find a name that truly represents him and that he can identify with, torn between a conventional name and a nickname. Consequently, Gogol displays ambivalence in this situation, which, according to Young, is a psychoanalytic term denoting a constant oscillation between desiring one thing and wanting its opposite concerning an object, person, or action (Young cited in Khrais, 2020). Those with hybridized backgrounds, struggling to adapt to spatial changes, will find the subject relatable and empathetic.

Typically, the process of adaptation often leads to a reductionist impact on the original source, creating a category of categorical simulacra. However, both the novel and the film delve into themes like "Third Space," assimilation, acculturation, and alienation, resulting in distinct yet interconnected universes. Nair's portrayal of *The Namesake* transforms it into an emotional masterpiece, showcasing human poetry through visual representation. Drawing from their own experiences as cultural immigrants, both Lahiri and Nair use autobiographical and anthropological perspectives to shed light on the immigrant journey culturally in process. In an alien society, immigrants do not completely assimilate but rather adapt and reevaluate their roles to suit the new surroundings. They construct fresh identities, both within the real immigrant community and in their envisioned one.

A fascinating example of this negotiation and the emergence of unique hybrid cultures and identities is found in the diaspora of individuals with South Asian heritage who currently live in Western countries. Contrary to expatriates, who harbor nostalgic feelings for the past, immigrants fully immerse themselves in the

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present and develop a deep fascination for their surroundings. Immigrants embrace the joy of being alive in a new world, rejoicing in their rebirth and the acquisition of a fresh identity. On the other hand, expatriates tend to display their suffering and sorrow. Recent research on transnational diasporas has shed light on the complex nature of these communities' identities.

Throughout the film, Nair skillfully depicts the characters' conflicting desires, oscillating between family bonds and personal struggles, revealing the complexity of their inner selves. This artistic approach creates a delicate painting of emotional triangulations and literary parallax, offering a profound exploration of the immigrant experience. Nevertheless, if migration and exile are experienced as unpleasant and emancipating, it can lead to difficulties in hybridization, acculturation, and assimilation. Migrants may find themselves as a transnational, deterritorialized population residing between two cultures like separated twins, which often trigger an identity crisis. So, Indian diaspora filmmakers have beautifully incorporated this theme into their narratives, showcasing subject diversity and structural integrity.

This film frequently depicts the stories of individuals leaving their homeland, particularly for the USA, where dreams are believed to come true, just as many Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) do. Amidst this backdrop, there is a clear exploration of love that surpasses generational and cultural boundaries as these characters navigate the complexities of blending the Indian traditions, they inherited with the perplexing new world they now inhabit. Hence, the inability of the second-generation pioneers to truly establish a sense of belonging to the natural environment and form meaningful connections in either America or India can be attributed to the challenging circumstances they faced. The assimilation of a fresh culture within the diasporic community doesn't stem from the idea of embracing diversity and unity. Instead, it primarily emerges from misguided perceptions that blur authentic identities.

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3.8.3. Globalization and Culture of Home and Belonging

One significant aspect of contemporary globalization is the movement of people across international borders, which gained momentum after the Second World War. This increased mobility has been facilitated by advancements in communication and transportation technologies, leading to a compression of space and time. In contrast to the linear development seen in the wider world due to modernization, home cultures are often viewed as havens of stability. It has become a common perception to depict the native culture of diaspora or ethnic minority groups as places where cultural traditions are preserved and where resistance against complete assimilation into the broader national or global culture can be observed.

Due to the growing impact of globalization, an escalating number of Indians are moving towards advanced countries such as the United States and several other nations. This migration is driven by the promise of significant advancements and appealing achievements in these developed regions.

By and large, the first and second generations of diasporics strongly believe in the necessity of staying in their host country. In today's globalized world, transnational and diasporic lifestyles have become increasingly common. They advocate for a pluralistic approach, emphasizing the importance of cultural and ethnic development to foster emotional resilience and stability among diasporics. The adaptation methods employed by immigrant communities are often influenced by the dominant culture's pervasive influence. Immigrants now face two options: either living in isolated ethnic enclaves with limited interaction with the outside world or assimilating into the dominant culture, which requires severing ties with their heritage. However, in addition to cultural adjustments, immigrants should also be capable of adapting to a changing world. The movie depicts the clash experienced by the diaspora, involving the traditional Indian identity rooted in essentialism and the process of blending into America's diverse cultural values. This clash is particularly evident in the characters' situations, highlighted as they strive to balance conventional expectations with complete assimilation.

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Prior to the era of globalization, cultural identity used to be an unspoiled and inherent aspect of individuals, akin to an inheritance or advantage originating from a deep-rooted residence in a traditional setting, maintaining a connection with historical roots. During that time, identity, similar to language, held more significance than merely denoting affiliation with a culture; it represented a shared and valuable asset held by local communities. In contrast to the majority of modern diasporic narratives that compel their characters to select between opposing aspects of connection namely, love and customary matrimony, Nair's movie delves into the evolution of arranged marriages within an age of international movement. This evolution allows Ashoke and Ashima to forge a blended union of arranged and affection-based marriage.

Consequently, the customary portrayal of arranged marriage as a suppressive construct persists, even amid cultural shifts like urbanization, modernization, and the current force of globalization. This portrayal continues to subject Hindu women to subjugation, both within their homeland and across the worldwide Indian diaspora. In other words, *The Namesake* displaces Ashima's sense of belonging in order to anchor her across multiple places. She becomes an exemplary subject from a poststructuralist perspective, aligning with Stuart Hall's earlier idea of not being a stagnant core identity, but someone who embraces and thrives within differences. This transformation illustrates how the immigrant wife embodies the essence of her own name, as Ashima signifies "unbounded" or "unrestricted." The film's innovation lies in the fact that, akin to her marriage based on arrangement, Ashima exists in a state between various worlds. In the closing scene, as Ashima resumes playing her sitar, Nair reconnects her with the goddess Saraswati. This portrayal encapsulates her fluidity not fixed but perpetually influenced by tradition while also drawn by the potential of new beginnings (Nair,2006,1:53:09).

Fairly said, the idea of "home" holds a dynamic nature for diasporic individuals, as its significance evolves alongside their shifting perspectives. Nevertheless, it remains crucial for them to retain their genuine identity and cultural roots, which serve as the fundamental core of their authentic selves. Hence, one

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must recognize that culture is an integral part of a person, indivisible and not to be dismissed as inferior when encountering a more modern and progressive culture.

Furthermore, the challenges faced by immigrants, such as the Gangulis family, are significant as they endeavor to assimilate into their unfamiliar surroundings, leading to feelings of solitude, estrangement, and dissatisfaction. Their predicament arises from the clash between adapting to a new and foreign culture while still holding onto their traditional roots. This struggle takes on new dimensions when viewed through the lenses of biculturalism/multiculturalism and nationalism/globalization.

In the realm of immigrant literature and cinema, recurring themes emerge, highlighting the unfulfilled pursuits and shattered dreams of these individuals. Nostalgia for a home that only exists in memory, a sense of displacement and isolation, a loss of one's original identity, and the frustration, embarrassment, and humiliation endured at the hands of the host society become prevalent feelings. Additionally, the narratives often depict parents trying to maintain their cultural practices and beliefs, while their children strive for independence and search for new identities.

From now on, the impact of globalization or transnationalism has significantly influenced immigrant directors, especially in shaping novel immigrant identities. These directors, hailing from various countries, craft innovative hybrid or multinational personas. The term "transnational" now refers to substantial commercial entities that operate across borders and is commonly employed when discussing globalization. Consequently, both globalization and transnationalism play a role in shaping the literary approaches used by immigrant filmmakers to portray their characters in contemporary works.

Throughout the film, the essence of diaspora revolves around the notion of home, encompassing the idea of a homeland or place of origin. However, it extends beyond mere physical boundaries, embodying the spirit of one's motherland even when residing outside its imaginary borders. This dispersion leads to a profound

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rupture in an individual's sense of belonging. The term "diaspora" inherently carries a dual nature, as the diasporic subject simultaneously looks towards their past cultural identity and their present society of relocation (Ashcroft et al., 1995, p. 425). While the physical location may serve as the actual site for creating a sense of place, the culture of longing and aspiration also plays a pivotal role in the diasporic experience. According to William Safran and etal (2013), the relationship between a diaspora and its motherland is connected due to the interaction between at least two nations, where both nations officially allow their citizens to engage with one another (p.33). As a result, this relationship is considered a part of the broader framework of international relations. In the present day, diasporic groups have their populations spread across the globe, going beyond the connections between their homeland and the host nation-state. This sentiment is exemplified in the Gangulis family's experience when they visited India. While the parents were thrilled to reconnect with their roots, the children didn't have as positive an experience (Nair, 2006). So, there is a need to deal with the encounter between the Bengali culture and the American one.

In today's interconnected global society, the world has become smaller, bringing countries and people closer together through a deeper appreciation of their differences and mutual respect. This has given rise to transnationalism and multiculturalism, which have seamlessly integrated into daily life, particularly evident in metropolitan cities. These cities showcase a rich tapestry of diversity, boasting various temples, cultural centers, ethnic restaurants, charitable organizations, and businesses adorned with signs in different languages, alongside the official language. For instance, neighborhoods like Little Italy, Chinatown, or Little India exemplify how individuals straddle two worlds - their ties to their native country and their embrace of the host nation, effectively providing them with dual homelands. This phenomenon allows them to belong to both "here and there," affording them the freedom to embrace aspects of "this or that," ultimately shaping their unique and transnational identities.

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In the upcoming discussion, one can contend that Mira Nair's movie embraces the transnationalism framework to establish a vibrant interchange between established norms and modern relevance, as well as the concepts of belonging at home and being in a distant land. "*The Namesake*" presents a multifaceted depiction of living as an expatriate in a transnational backdrop, where the sense of home is both irrevocably lost and perpetually alluring. While Nair positions Ashima and Ashoke within the broader socio-historical context of American immigration, she avoids portraying the Western world as a simple escape from the constraints of traditional Indian society. The film embodies the essence of love shaped by the shared journey of residing amidst different cultures, navigating borderlines, and embracing hybrid identities. Ashoke and Ashima, by no longer being completely rooted in India and not entirely foreign in America, are reshaping the concept of the desi connection as citizens of the diaspora.

Clearly, the ongoing movement of South Asian diasporas has resulted in the emergence of communities worldwide, making a significant contribution to the global panorama. Specifically, the Indian film industry has played a vital role in instigating noteworthy transformations within Hollywood. Renowned for their musical components, Indian movies have gained international acclaim. Similarly, South Asian directors have achieved global recognition by presenting a range of dynamic and diverse themes, encompassing cultural adaptation, religion, socio-cultural establishments, hybridization, and assimilation. Mira Nair, a South Asian filmmaker, has skillfully depicted the reciprocal influence between the Western and Eastern cultures in her creations, thereby fostering cultural relativism, tolerance, and transnationalism. In her film '*The Namesake*,' she delineates the experiences of four characters, each symbolizing distinct facets of the diaspora encounter. Ashoke personifies the 'Indian molded by English norms,' illustrating the impact of the Western culture on Indian traditions. Ashima, Ashoke's spouse, embodies the concepts of 'cultural seclusion' and 'ethno-consciousness.' Gogol, their son, portrays assimilation and hybridization, while Sonia, their daughter, predominantly epitomizes transnationalism through her role.

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Among the four characters in '*The Namesake*', Gogol stands out as the most intricate. For a significant duration, Gogol experiences an enduring struggle to return home, both in the physical and spiritual senses. Throughout the majority of his life depicted in the film, his inclination to journey is primarily driven by a desire to evade rather than a specific longing for a particular destination. While Ashima exhibits a strong connection to her homeland, Ashoke remains relatively neutral, seemingly unaffected by the pull of either culture, and Sonia identifies more as a transnational individual. Each of these three characters is firmly positioned at one end of the spectrum, having chosen their path. Encircled by a culture that feels unfamiliar and distant, the household transforms into a wistful representation of the past that the Ganguli family longs for. This sentiment is further emphasized by the noticeable contrast in cultural values due to the prominence of American individualism.

In contrast, Gogol finds himself caught between two nations and cultures, occupying a middle ground. His character serves as a prime example of assimilation, as he neither fully embraces his Indian heritage nor completely adopts American customs. Gogol's struggle to find his identity in this cultural crossroads sets him apart as the most complex figure in the story.

3.8.4. Diasporic Identity's Exploration and the Sense of Adaptation

Cultural assimilation necessitates establishing both emotional and cognitive bonds with the new community. Each individual confronts a crisis of self-identity, inducing uncertainty and unease about their authentic selves. These emotions commonly emerge due to changes in societal norms and personal ambitions. Although Ashoke encounters a more subdued form of diasporic tension, the contrast is strikingly pronounced in the lives of Ashima and Gogol. They grapple with their bicultural heritage while acclimating to American life. The prolonged residency of immigrants in these unfamiliar territories has been instrumental in the process of integration, driving significant cultural metamorphosis. The transformation evident in Ashima's character arises from her time in America, yet it leaves her moral and

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cultural values untouched. As she adapts to life in the United States, she remains resolute in upholding her cultural legacy (Nair,2006,1:48:51).

Henceforth, Ashima and Ashoke, surrounded by American culture, actively work to maintain their Indian identity. Conversely, their son Gogol experiences inner conflict as he sees his uniqueness as more American and distances himself from his Bengali origins, leading him to feel disconnected. Interestingly, despite concealing his ethnicity, he is unconcerned about being recognized by his Indian name, Nikhil. His career choices mirror his strong connection to his Indian heritage, as he develops a deep passion for art and chooses to honor his artist grandfather by becoming an architect; “hey guess what! I think I wanna major in architecture” (Nair,2006,47:47-48:56), informing his parents. While *The Namesake* primarily examines the importance of names, culture, and family heritage in shaping identity, it also delves into how gender influences one's sense of self.

Over time, Gogol's name undergoes a metamorphosis, becoming a representation of his internal struggle with a fractured cultural identity. Although the later revelation sheds light on the meaningful origins of his name, Gogol's increasing assimilation into American culture and his internal conflicts compel him to confront a perceived misalignment between his authentic self and the connotations of his name. The cinematic adaptation underscores an essentialist viewpoint, underscoring India as an eternal and unwavering core of identity. For the second-generation immigrants, discovering a sense of belonging evolves into an endless voyage as they navigate between their parents' heritage and the prevailing culture in which they were raised, giving birth to a ceaseless pursuit of establishing their roots.

Certainly, the truth is that identity, an inherent aspect of one's character, remains inviolable and cannot be put at risk. The void that emerges when this aspect is absent perpetually prevents a tranquil existence accompanied by a feeling of ease. The movie delves into the concept of seclusion and selfhood, encompassing both personal and societal dimensions. In a diverse and heterogeneous environment such

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as America, where cultural and ethnic distinctions become indistinct, individual identity becomes susceptible to alteration. Gogol recognizes the significance of his cultural heritage, leading him to shift his focus away from seeking a purely American identity. Instead, he embraces a blended and cross-border identity that incorporates elements from various sources.

3.9. The Reconstruction of the Self and an Acceptance for the Real Self

Since the late 1990s, there has been considerable scholarly interest in the global popularity of Indian cinema. It is widely recognized that Indian movies play a significant role in the popular culture of Indian immigrants around the world. Some social scientists even consider Bollywood culture to be the most important "binding element" among diasporic Indians. This suggests that individuals of Indian descent in various countries share similar experiences when watching Indian films, contributing to the development of a global "public culture" and an "imagined community" (Clifford, 1997). When discussing diasporic films, it is important to explore the underlying causes of outcomes that may conflict with one's identity amidst memories and challenges of migration. Alongside feelings of nostalgia, melancholy, and identity loss, migrants who have had positive or negative experiences often grapple with a sense of belonging to a specific community and culture while also reminiscing about their lost homelands. These complex emotions, intertwined with the pressures of adapting to new environments, can lead to a sense of estrangement from their immigrant identity.

In point of fact, migration and integration with mainstream societies among diasporic populations lead to various consequences such as multiculturalism, hybridity, identity crises, and a hyphenated way of life. Diasporic communities often pincers with balancing their old and new worlds during the assimilation process, sparking discussions about the preservation of inherited socio-cultural values. In this context, the term "hyphenated existence" describes the necessity for individuals to maintain harmony between these two worlds to affirm their loyalty and sense of belonging, often resulting in an in-between or hyphenated identity. The

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migration of people to new territories for permanent settlement raises questions about their sense of identity and belonging, as well as the type of nation-state where they can find greater alignment with their sociocultural roots.

In the movie, it is observed that Ashima's feeling of belonging is closely tied to her native country, India. On the other hand, Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi's identities are associated with the United States, where they were born. Furthermore, names such as Gogol, Nikhil, Sonali, and Moushumi are suggestive of Russian and Indian origins, rather than American. The main male character's sense of self in the film is rooted in the process of becoming more Americanized, rather than identifying strongly with his Indian heritage.

In the same vein, the essence of American identity has been profoundly influenced by familial bonds, cultural traditions, and the encompassing surroundings. Essential factors like American naming norms, way of living, and culinary choices have played pivotal roles in effectively incorporating immigrants into society. Numerous newcomers have readily adopted the American lifestyle in place of their own cultural practices due to its conventional and pleasurable attributes. Furthermore, the arrangement and interactions within American families have also added to the smooth amalgamation of those who are new to the country. Indeed, struggling like a pendulum between these two worlds, Gogol remains unable to wholeheartedly integrate into American society. His continuous efforts revolve around harmonizing his American and Indian identities.

Similarly, the transformation of Bollywood to attract non-South Asians and diasporas also allows individuals to reconcile their dual identities, showcasing the power of media and its mechanisms. Using modern tools and techniques, filmmakers have the freedom to present their stories in any way they deem suitable. Moreover, the cinema of the diaspora disrupts and redefines national cinema, emphasizing heterogeneity and diversity. Migration and transnational movements have an impact on both the domestic economy and that of the host country. *The Namesake* film, with its strong and coherent direction, provides audiences with

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entertainment, personal experiences, and profound reflections. This film can be seen as a cultural translation as they depict the intergenerational struggles that arise at the intersection of Indian and Western cultures.

Interestingly, the influence of immigration and immigrants on the public and private aspects of the diaspora can be seen through the redefinition and relocation of geography, countries, cultures, languages, and identities. In contemporary times, the diaspora has become a contested space due to the remapping and recontextualization of various forms that contribute to diasporic experiences. The film under the study effectively portrays the behavioral and cultural distinctions. For instance, prior to his father's death, Gogol was seen as someone who embraced assimilation, transculturalism, and transnationalism while living in the US. However, after his father's passing, he returns to his ancestral home in Bengali Pemberton, Ohio, where he shaves his head. Ashima is taken aback by this sight and expresses her surprise while embracing him and placing her right hand on his shaved head (Nair, 2006). One of the most prominent illustrations of Bengali culture in both the book and the movie, amidst a world of diaspora, is Ashoke's mourning ritual (Nair, 2006, 1:21:02-1:25:05).

Nevertheless, despite being scattered, uprooted, and disregarded, diasporic groups have evolved into transnational communities with valuable human resources that both affect and are influenced by their home country, India, and the host countries such as the USA. This is so that everyone might have a homeland and a place of residence in the current period of globalization, privatization, and liberalization.

Apparently; this results in the concept of identity becoming dynamic, intricate, and even flexible. It undergoes changes across various dimensions, transitioning from one aspect to another, contingent upon the specific time and location that defines the "self." If we consider diasporic identity as a consequence of learning and adjustment, leading to a transformation in one's state of existence, then it should not be viewed as a unidirectional process. Similar to real-world employees

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who traverse boundaries, the characters in Nair's movie, *The Namesake*, similarly display a reflexive sense of identity. Amidst continual exposure to cultural tensions, they actively seek to transition between diverse modes of identity and discourse over the course of their lives.

Accordingly, Nair traces the transformations within the Ganguli family over the course of *The Namesake*. However, her intention is not to assert a complete upheaval of life's facets. Instead, she intricately orchestrates a sequence of continuous occurrences involving Ashima, Ashoke, and Gogol, encompassing various get-togethers, repasts, and social interactions. This serves to illustrate the enduring constants in their respective lives and the process through which characters unearth their identities and enduring traits. This assessment makes it clear that Gogol, the main protagonist, doesn't experience the sensation of being an outsider despite residing in America. He holds his Indian family dear and regards himself as more Indian than American when in his home country.

Hence, in this era of widespread migration, the notions of homeland and identity intertwine within an intricate structure. The concept of home encompasses more than just personal identity; it is interwoven with human emotions, sensations, sentiments, closeness, and personal connections. It extends beyond physical space, representing a realm of emotions and feelings. Every individual is skillfully managing their history, current experiences, and upcoming prospects in order to reconcile with their sense of self and the path they are evolving towards. Ultimately, it can be stated that forming one's identity is a self-reflective journey in which a person transitions between different modes of self-expression. This shift occurs intermittently, progressing in a linear fashion on occasions, while at other times, it follows a cyclical pattern.

3.10. Conclusion

Mira Nair's film, *The Namesake* (2006), signifies a grounding shift in her career from being a pioneering documentarist and filmmaker to entering the realm of mainstream popular cinema. The story cleverly intertwines various seemingly

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unrelated themes such as culture, identity crisis, immigration, cultural shock, the complexities of straddling two worlds and nations, the struggle with dual names, the importance of roots and traditions, and the challenge of self-expression during the process of assimilation or adaptation. In her usual Mira-style, similar to what we witnessed in *The Monsoon Wedding*, or in *Mississippi Masala*, *The Namesake* movie scenes delve into cultural elements and explore how the diasporic community embraces their heritage and roots. Through this adaptation, she presents a group of exiled individuals leading somewhat mundane lives, shuttling between India and the United States. The film effectively combines a team of Indian diaspora, showcasing their experiences.

While Mira Nair remained faithful to the original material, certain aspects were omitted. Alongside the exclusion of certain scenes, Mira Nair introduced a few that seemed essential in accurately representing Bengali traditions, such as the inclusion of Bengali folk music, a component absent from Lahiri's book. Mira Nair employed techniques commonly utilized by traditional Bollywood filmmakers to craft her film. Despite garnering numerous awards at film festivals and receiving other notable recognitions, this movie is regarded as being on the outskirts of mainstream Hollywood filmmakers. Its portrayal of controversial topics and diasporic themes, relevant in today's multicultural and globalized society, garnered acclaim from critics. Mira Nair's exceptional direction, coupled with commendable performances by Irrfan Khan as Ashoke, Tabu as Ashima, Kal Penn as Gogol, Jacinda Barrett as Maxine, Zuleikha Robinson as Moushumi, and other talented actors, contributes to the overwhelming success and lasting impact of this acclaimed film.

In essence, Mira Nair's *The Namesake* is a remarkable work that delves deeply into the experiences of the Indian diaspora. While Ashoke experiences relatively minimal diasporic tension, it's Ashima and Gogol who emerge as prominent characters dealing with the complex challenges of diaspora. This struggle is an increasingly pervasive issue among Indian immigrants, posing formidable obstacles to their resolution. Ashima's pivotal life choice appears transient,

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underscoring the transient nature of her diasporic conflict. Conversely, Gogol's trajectory mirrors that of countless Indian immigrants, perpetually grappling with emotional, cultural, religious, linguistic, and particularly relational divisions. These factors compound to illustrate the intricate predicament faced by these individuals. Nair skillfully portrays characters who embody the essence of cosmopolitanism, traversing different regions and defying traditional social, political, and geographic limitations. All in all, the movie vividly showcases various instances of cultural transformations, the reconstruction of identities, and cross-cultural encounters between India and the USA.

Chapter Four

**Reconsidering the Westernized Representation of India in
Hollywood through the Movie *Slumdog Millionaire***

Chapter Four: Reconsidering the Westernized Representation of India in Hollywood through the Movie *Slumdog Millionaire*

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4.1. Introduction

This chapter delves into the transformation of contemporary Bollywood cinema and its evolution as both a cinematic style and a media phenomenon, influenced by the element of transnationality evident in films like *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008). Following a ground-breaking Telluride premiere, *SDM*, directed by Danny Boyle, became a critical and commercial phenomenon in 2008 and raced through the awards season, winning seven further Academy Awards in addition to the Best Picture Oscar. The movie itself, however, would be better referred to be ‘Slum Underdog Millionaire’ given its unconventional journey to success and equally improbable odds. Hence, Bollywood movies once depicted characters in a simplistic and stereotypical manner, with both male and female roles often reduced to one-dimensional portrayals. Nevertheless, when Hollywood examined these portrayals through a Western perspective, they recognized cultural distinctions and the impact of post-colonial influences. The film's title clearly indicates its dual objective; examining the Western perspective on India and, concurrently, the reactions of the Indian diaspora to the inaccurate depictions and stereotypes propagated by Hollywood films.

Specifically, impacting primarily the Indian characters depicted in the acclaimed film which stands as one of the most beloved movies in India and worldwide. Evaluating this film should encompass not just the actors' performances and its captivating storyline, but also delve into its underlying purpose and profound significance. This chapter aims to analyze the movie through a post-colonial lens, examining three aspects; the glorification of the Western world, the spotlight on prevalent Indian social issues, and its linguistic portrayal among many other aspects. This analysis seeks to substantiate the notion of "poverty porn."

To emphasize the research aspect further, it's important to note that there are numerous connections between cinema and society, alongside certain tensions and rivalries rooted in cultural, social, religious, and economic contexts. This is precisely the terrain explored by *Slumdog Millionaire*, which delves into the unique

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facets and challenges drawn from the ordinary lives of individuals in authentic Indian society.

As films serve as noteworthy sociological and cultural records, molding our comprehension of both historical and contemporary times. Globally recognized is the fact that the Indian mainstream film industry, specifically Bollywood, centered in Mumbai, has significantly expanded its production of Hindi films that delve into real-life issues and offer meaningful content for its audience. This shift has been influenced by the adoption of certain conventions from Hollywood, the Western film industry. Bollywood has increasingly embraced the creation of dramatic social films aimed at promoting social justice and democracy. These films tackle pressing societal concerns, including corruption, poverty, and the growing urban-rural divide (Mishra, 2013).

Notably, cinema has been successful in depicting various social issues, such as unemployment, casteism, crime, addiction, harassment of women, and terrorism. On the other hand, it has also served as a means of communication, bringing cultures together by breaking down barriers related to gender, caste, class, age, and literacy levels. This multipurpose role in society is highlighted by Kothari and Raheja (2004, p.13). The film industry has harnessed the power of written screenplays and adapted literary works to create unique and compelling narratives. These narratives aim to engage the audience emotionally, evoking laughter or tears through their storytelling like the case study of this chapter. By discussing merely the Western, and thus, outsider's perspective of a movie that takes place in India and the problematic role popular media can play in determining our ideas of foreign places and concepts.

The main objective of composing this chapter is to offer an insightful portrayal of Indian films produced in collaboration with Western filmmakers. This portrayal aims to facilitate a comprehensive understanding and critical appreciation of these films among both Indian and international audiences. Essentially, it serves as a means for viewers, whether they are from India or beyond, to gain a profound

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understanding of a variety of Indian transnational films and engage in thoughtful analysis and response to them. Hollywood can be likened to a vulture, as it tends to consume the cultural elements of other film industries for its own financial gain. It shifts its focus from one cultural source to another, much like a bird searching for a new and unique flavor. Interestingly, film industries in South Asia have also profited from sharing ideas and working together. These collaborations among South Asian countries add an additional layer of transnational dynamics to the overall picture.

It is crucial to approach this international movie from several angles in order to analyze cinema, cities, and the presentation and portrayal of actual or fantastical urban culture, society, and rising locations. The primary focus of film studies is the movie as a text, which encompasses the visual language, cinematography, sound, story, and characters, and also to investigate the impact of filmmakers and media on shaping attitudes and preconceived notions about diverse cultures, societies, and ways of life. More precisely, it aims to delve into how the film *Slumdog Millionaire* employs a range of cinematic methods to incorporate elements of globalization, orientalism, and common human values into its storyline in order to appeal to a worldwide audience.

4.2. Biography of the Directors

The individual known as Danny Boyle, also identified as Daniel Boyle or Danny J Boyle, boasts a versatile career encompassing roles as a director, producer, and writer. Born on the 20th of October in 1956 in Manchester, England, he hails from Irish immigrant roots. His educational journey took him through Bangor University, followed by further studies at Thornleigh Salesian College. It was during his formative years that he discovered his profound passion for the world of cinema. In the mid to late 1980s, Boyle made significant contributions to the world of theater by working as a director with several notable companies, including the Joint Stock Theatre Company, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and the Royal Court Theatre.

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Before helming his debut feature film, *Shallow Grave* in 1994, he had directed several television productions. The crime thriller, scripted by John Hodge, is celebrated for its striking visual style, which has become a defining element of Boyle's cinematic signature. In 1996, Boyle marked a significant milestone in his career with *Trainspotting*. He and actor Ewan McGregor joined forces again for the romantic comedy *A Life Less Ordinary* in 1997, although it didn't achieve the same level of success as their earlier collaborations. *The Beach* (2000), a big-budget Hollywood production based on Alex Garland's popular novel about a seemingly perfect society on a secluded Thai island, marked Boyle's second foray into Hollywood. Despite featuring Leonardo DiCaprio, the film received negative reviews and didn't resonate with audiences.

In 2002, Boyle surprised everyone with the unexpected success of his post-apocalyptic zombie film, *28 Days Later*. He continued to showcase his versatility with *Millions* in 2004, a touching story about a motherless child who stumbles upon the proceeds of a bank heist. Following his science fiction thriller, *Sunshine*, in 2007, Boyle took an unconventional approach with the love story *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), which is set in India. There were doubts about whether audiences would be willing to watch a movie featuring explicit depictions of child abuse and torture, along with extensive dialogue in Hindi accompanied by English subtitles. Nevertheless, *SDM* managed to secure seven more Oscars, including the prestigious Best Picture award, while Danny Boyle earned an Academy Award for Best Director. Boyle's next project, *127 Hours* (2010), which he co-wrote alongside Simon Beaufoy, the screenwriter of *Slumdog Millionaire*, received acclaim from critics.

Boyle helmed six installments of the anthology series *Trust* in 2018, which centered around the J. Paul Getty family, renowned for their oil empire. In 2019, he humorously returned to the cinematic scene with *Yesterday*, a film that envisions an alternate world where the Beatles never came into being. Furthermore, Boyle marked his resurgence to the theater in 2011 by directing a Royal National Theatre

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rendition of Mary Shelley's classic work, *Frankenstein*, originally published in 1818.

Danny Boyle has consistently produced captivating cinema, firmly establishing himself as an exceptional filmmaker. His achievement in *Slumdog Millionaire* transcends the boundary between inspiration and a miraculous experience, evoking a profound emotional connection that outstanding cinema can deliver. While the packaging may have evolved and the content become more contentious, it undeniably transports us to exotic locales, expanding our awareness beyond our familiar surroundings and limited perspectives, all without sermonizing. There is a distinct sense of novelty in how the narrative unfolds, as we journey alongside Jamal from his early years in the slums to a determined man striving to protect his loved ones. He recognizes that the perfect fusion of a compelling narrative and evocative visuals can imprint indelible memories on its audience.

Slumdog marks the inception of Boyle's journey as one of the most innovative and gifted directors in contemporary cinema. Boyle breaks away from his established filmmaking style by incorporating tilted, Dutch angles, reflecting his deliberate effort to steer his artistic direction in a new direction from his prior body of work. Boyle successfully accomplishes this transformation, as *Slumdog Millionaire* doesn't exude his signature filmmaking essence, even though he is credited as its director. His directorial skills shine through at various moments in the film, especially in the juxtaposition of the early scenes of torture with the protagonist's potential triumph.

Distinguishing between clever filmmaking and exceptional filmmaking is essential. It's important to recognize that Danny Boyle is undeniably ingenious. In *Slumdog Millionaire*, he strategically targets the audience, crafting it as an unabashed crowd-pleasing approach which involves incorporating numerous stereotypes that Westerners hold about India. For instance, it portrays people living in squalid conditions amidst garbage heaps. In essence, Boyle opts for the safe route, confirming preconceived notions to elicit a "feel-good" response from

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audiences and jury members. Conversely, challenging viewers' prejudices can be disconcerting, and Boyle chooses not to venture down that path. What sets *Slumdog Millionaire* apart is its utilization of the millionaire game show element to propel its storyline, which I believe is a significant factor in why viewers become engrossed in the film.

Loveleen Tandan, an accomplished film director and casting expert from India, holds the role of co-director (India) alongside Danny Boyle in the acclaimed movie *Slumdog Millionaire*. She has also lent her casting expertise to numerous other films such as *Monsoon Wedding* (2001) and *Brick Lane* (2007), while serving as a casting consultant for *The Namesake* (2007). Loveleen's remarkable achievements have earned her a place in the "Annual Women's Big Impact Report," a project by Variety magazine in Hollywood, which showcases women who have made groundbreaking contributions to the global entertainment industry. Tandan's most notable accomplishment is her involvement in the film *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008).

While initially serving as one of the movie's casting directors, her pivotal role in its production led Danny Boyle to appoint her as the "Co-Director: India." Boyle attributed this decision to her indispensable daily presence, her crucial assistance in preventing significant errors, and her vital role in translating and adapting the script for the young actors. He emphasized the necessity of providing the young actors with lines that were culturally appropriate in Hindi to ensure effective communication. Loveleen Tandan has confirmed that she received the co-director credit by proposing to Danny Boyle and Simon Beaufoy, the writer of *Slumdog Millionaire*, that incorporating Hindi into the film was crucial for its vibrancy. Her role as co-director in the movie received recognition from the New York Film Critics Online Awards (NYFCCO Awards), which honored "Best Director" to "Danny Boyle with Loveleen Tandan".

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4.3. SDM Film Description

The movie *Slumdog Millionaire* unfolds its narrative within the confines of Mumbai's sprawling slums, with a primary focus on the Dharavi district, recognized as one of the globe's most extensive slum areas. The central plot revolves around the life of Jamal Malik, an eighteen-year-old orphan of Indian Muslim descent, who undergoes a transformational journey to wealth when he wins a massive prize on the popular Indian rendition of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" Jamal, who had once lived on the streets, takes center stage as the film delves into his relentless pursuit of success.

Throughout the movie, various aspects of India's socioeconomic landscape are vividly portrayed, offering viewers glimpses into the diverse challenges and opportunities faced by its characters. Jamal, lacking any formal education and employed as a tea server at a call center, is on the brink of winning an astounding twenty million rupees in a television show hosted by Prem Kumar. His pinpoint responses to questions raise suspicions of cheating, resulting in brutal torture at the hands of the police officers during his interrogation.

While being questioned, Jamal relives the challenging episodes from his life through a series of flashbacks. Each chapter of his life journey ultimately leads him to the correct answers, vindicating his innocence. These flashbacks unveil Jamal's narrative, intertwined with the story of his brother Salim, beginning from their childhood. Their mother tragically perished in the Bombay riots between Muslims and Hindus. Subsequently, they fled and encountered Latika, a girl from the slum who became not only Jamal's crush but also their third companion, akin to the characters in the novel *The Three Musketeers* (1844). However, their lives took a dark turn when they fell under the influence of a gangster named Maman, who forced them into becoming effective street beggars by blinding them. In a daring escape, Jamal and Salim left Latika behind, only to have her recaptured by Maman.

Over time, Salim and Jamal eked out a living by selling goods atop trains and masquerading as tour guides at the Taj Mahal. Jamal eventually insisted on

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returning to Mumbai to locate Latika, who had been raised by Maman to become a prostitute. After a confrontation with Maman that ended in his death, Salim joined forces with the crime lord Javed, while Jamal took up a job as a tea server in a call center. Despite his efforts, Jamal failed to find Latika. Knowing Latika's fondness for watching "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" regularly, Jamal decided to audition for the popular game show in a last-ditch attempt to reconnect with her.

Despite the host, Prem Kumar's, harsh demeanor and skepticism that someone from the slums could know the answers to complex questions, Jamal managed to reach the final question. To everyone's surprise, including the police, Jamal's stories checked out, and he was set free. Meanwhile, Salim aided Latika in escaping and sought forgiveness for betraying Jamal and keeping them apart. However, Javed discovered Salim's role in Latika's escape, leading to Salim assassinating Javed. In turn, Salim was subsequently killed by Javed's associates.

Jamal's last question in *The Three Musketeers* concerns the identity of the third musketeer, a piece of information he never got to know. To find out, Jamal decides to use his "Phone-A-Friend" lifeline and calls Salim's number. Fortunately, Latika answers the call in time, but she regrets that she cannot provide an answer, reassuring Jamal of her safety instead. The final question is presented by the host, who accurately predicts the Musketeer's name among the four options (Aramis), winning the grand prize. Jamal and Latika joyfully reunite at the train station, filled with confidence that they will never be separated again. The movie concludes with the couple performing a detailed Bollywood dance to the tune of "Jai Ho," which translates to "Be victorious."

4.4. The Transnational Movie and its Indian Adaptation

The movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, which was partly based on the novel *Q & A* by Vikas Swarup and was directed by Danny Boyle, is very different from the book, as can be seen by comparing the two. After winning a million rupees on the quiz show, the movie's main character is accused of cheating, which is obviously a

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reference to the book *Q & A*. The book *Q & A* was authored by Vikas Swarup, an Indian diplomat, and it marked his literary debut when it was released in 2005. It is set in India and follows the story of Ram Mohammad Thomas, a young waiter who achieved an unprecedented victory on a quiz show but found himself unjustly accused of cheating, leading to his unjust imprisonment without any substantial evidence.

Notably, this novel was adapted into the highly acclaimed and multi-Oscar-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire* in 2008. Additionally, a BBC radio production based on the book received recognition with the 2008 Sony Radio Academy Awards and the 2008 IVCA Clarion Award, and it also secured the Gold Award for Best Drama. Boyle was impressed with how Beaufoy seamlessly integrated the various narrative elements from Swarup's book into a unified script, prompting the filmmaker to undertake the project. The filmmakers have made adjustments to the events in order to cater to the Indian audience at home and at diaspora, strategically retaining scenes that would surely resonate with them while staying true to the core elements of the film. In the course of adapting the novel into a movie, they also streamlined the storyline by removing certain subplots. Adapting the novel into a screenplay posed a significant challenge, as screenwriter Simon Beaufoy noted (Buijk, 2010). The source material consisted essentially of twelve short stories, lacking an overarching narrative. Some of these stories were quite subtle, offering glimpses that barely featured the main characters at all.

Interestingly, *SDM* represents an unusual blend a director from Ireland, a co-director from India, a cast featuring actors born in London like Dev Patel, who had no prior experience in India before the film, distribution handled by the Hollywood-based Fox Searchlight studios, financial backing from British and American companies, and a soundtrack featuring hip-hop tracks by the Sri Lankan rapper M.I.A. It also received ten Academy Award nominations in 2009, securing eight wins, the highest for any film in 2008, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay. Additionally, it clinched seven BAFTA Awards, including Best Film, five Critics' Choice Awards, and four Golden Globes."

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Hence, the three major characters in a movie are frequently the antagonist, the heroine, and the protagonist, and the rests serve as supporting characters. Author of the script Simon Beaufoy cut the side storylines and supporting characters from the novel, keeping only the three main characters. Salim is the villain, Latika is the heroine, and Jamal is the main character.

Accordingly, nine teenage performers, all of whom lacked prior big screen experience, shoulder the weight of *Slumdog Millionaire*. Jamal exhibits resourcefulness, Salim possesses brawn, and Latika showcases unwavering tenacity right from the start. Even without the allure of the game show aspect, their journey as they grow and navigate the challenges of contemporary life in India promises excitement, albeit with moments that may tug at your heartstrings. The narrative is anchored by three adult actors. Ankur Vikal takes on the role of "Maman," akin to Fagin in the haunting *Oliver Twist*-style scenes, while Irrfan Khan, recognized by first-world audiences as Gogol's father, "Ashoke Ganguli," in *The Namesake*, brings warmth to the otherwise ungrateful role of a police inspector called in when Prem accuses Jamal of cheating.

Actually, Salim, the best friend of the main character, was in the novel changed into one of the bad guys and adopted the role of the hero's brother. This brother lacked Jamal's morality but had a knack for survival and street smarts. In addition to Maman a character from the book that Beaufoy appropriates takes advantage of street kids by bringing them to his "orphanage" and blinding or disabling them so they can ply their trade begging on the streets for more cash. The concept of retaliation is removed from the image. It has been replaced with a lavish melodrama about love and destiny, in which these two people overcome impossibly difficult challenges in order to be together.

Moreover, Beaufoy broadens the concept by making it about more than simply a poor boy from a slum who becomes wealthy. He is familiar with the way of living in Mumbai's slums. He is conscious that the tone of the film is crucial; this would be a melodramatic film with humorous scenes intercut with scenes of

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dreadful violence, agonizing poverty, and torture (Boyle,2008,05:04-06:13). Beaufoy is aware of the ongoing hostility that exists in India between Hindus and Muslims. He injects tensions between Hindus and Muslims into the film by staging a clash between the factions that results in the death of Jamal and Salim's mother (Boyle,2008,17:58-18:27) .The hero's entire personal past must be altered as a result.

Obviously, Jamal isn't an orphan at the beginning of the story; he only becomes one in the film when his mother is killed. Considerably, the film succeeds on every level, from the casting to the nine actors' performances as Jamal, Salim, and Latika at various ages to the way director Danny Boyle captures the insanely frenetic energy of the streets of Mumbai to the incredible use of music. The ugliness, filth, and rubbish of the slums are masterfully captured in the aesthetically stunning film *Slumdog*. The editing was done quite well. There are no breaks in the movie's brisk pace, as this film investigates the lives of its poor subjects without exploiting or sensationalizing them, finding empathy and hope amidst the anguish and despair.

Factually, Beaufoy believed that most Western moviegoers had not been exposed to the particular aspect of India explored in Swarup's book. He likened it to a rapidly changing city, akin to Dickensian London in the modern era. The transformation was swift, with the impoverished becoming even more destitute and the wealthy amassing greater fortunes than ever before. Amidst it all, there was a struggling group in the middle, striving to climb the socioeconomic ladder.

Notably, the screenwriter faced the challenge of preserving the essence of the novel while adapting its characters for the big screen. Unlike creating an entirely new concept, modifying a book comes with responsibilities to stay faithful to the source material. In conventional terms, the story is a comedy as it portrays a journey from chaos to harmony. However, it also delves into moments of intense drama, with poignant instances of sorrow and tragedy. It's a narrative that, like all great

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fairytale, contains elements of genuine darkness and sorrow, offering a captivating blend of emotions that can make you laugh, cry, and gasp.

Beaufoy argues that incorporating Jamal into the TV program and then delving into flashbacks of his life allows for a diverse range of genres within standalone segments. When the script reached a point where it was ready for a filmmaker, Danny Boyle became the team's top choice. While the director is often recognized for his distinctive filmmaking style and approach, he maintained a commitment to preserving the original dialogue in each scene. In a similar vein, Boyle viewed Beaufoy's writing as a guiding principle during the challenging and time-constrained filming process.

In retrospect, the film production team found that the infrastructure for shooting in Mumbai exceeded their initial expectations. They emphasized that despite some chaotic moments, they had access to comprehensive facilities throughout all stages of the production. Mumbai, being a global hub for the film industry, offered top-quality amenities, including exceptional crews, studio spaces, and telecine facilities. However, in Agra, they encountered some challenges due to local vendors who feared that the film might negatively impact their reputation. Recent media coverage extensively discussed Indian contact centers, highlighting their significance in customer service and brand-consumer communication. Nevertheless, Beaufoy and Boyle ingeniously leveraged a contact center in the narrative of *Slumdog Millionaire*, propelling Jamal from a mere teaboy (Chai-wallah) to a participant in the television program.

Significantly, the success of *SDM* in the Western world can be attributed not to its avant-garde, post-globalization qualities, but rather to its lack of novelty. The film relies on a well-worn narrative trope of a street-smart orphan in a bustling Asian city, a classic representation of the exoticized other. It also offers the familiar theme of social and economic mobility, making it a safe and relatable choice for American viewers. Fox Searchlight's marketing team, which ultimately acquired the

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film, was keen to emphasize its timely and relevant message, comparing it to President Obama's message of hope in the face of adversity.

Despite its Oscars and other prestigious accolades suggesting a connection to more serious Indian cinema, the film undeniably exhibits parallels with the Bollywood style." Ostensively, Bollywood films are characterized by their dramatic storylines, a fusion of action, romance, comedy, and emotional elements, lengthy durations, and vibrant musical sequences. In the Bollywood industry, celebrities engage in lively choreographed dances while synchronizing their lip movements to songs sung by "playback artists," renowned pop music stars whose recordings may be released well in advance of the film's premiere and contribute significantly to its revenue.

Apparently, the growing interconnectedness among global cultures has profoundly impacted the film industry. With cultural diversity becoming more, interconnected, filmmakers are seizing the chance to draw inspiration from various cultures, crafting content tailored for entirely new audiences. Clearly, even though our world is becoming more interconnected and cultural diversity is diminishing, there remains a significant cultural obstacle when trying to make an idea resonate with an audience that holds different values. However, an alternative perspective suggests that these films also serve as representations of "Cultural Hybridization" and symbolize a global film industry that extends beyond Western dominance. Daya Kishan Thussu (2012) suggests that in the second decade of the 21st century, the realm of global media and communication presents intriguing opportunities for reimagining cross-cultural interactions on a global scale (p.124).

More specifically, *Slumdog Millionaire* is a polished movie that boasts effective cinematography and proficient editing, encompassing all the components necessary for a successful blockbuster crafted by filmmakers from a developing nation. It truly deserves the accolades it receives, and one can only hope for more. Watching the film is not only aesthetically pleasing but also reaffirms the preconceptions about India and its impoverished areas, reinforcing the notion of a

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nation primarily serving Western interests. In this perspective, the entire country appears as an enormous call center encircled by slums and the film effectively underscores this perception. In the era of globalization, when cinema has evolved into a "transnational" entity, it's crucial to recognize that this newfound "transnational" or "global" nature is not devoid of influence or bias. Films created through cross-border collaborations inherently carry a predisposition towards the cultures involved, much like how national films may also exhibit a certain bias. While *SDM* may not be categorized as a strictly "foreign" film, it unmistakably carries the hallmarks of a production exploring a different culture, striving to adopt a "native" style and narrative approach.

Supposedly, this motion picture illustrates the dichotomy within Indian culture, showcasing both the rising elite class and the resistance against it. Director Danny Boyle included scenes in the movie featuring Western brands such as Coca-Cola and Mercedes-Benz without obtaining prior consent. These brands later requested the removal of their presence from scenes depicting them within the context of impoverished settings (Boyle,2008,53:18).These cinematic depictions and ensuing conflicts underscore a changing economic landscape that has created divisions in the common Indian identity. Reflecting the tenets of global capitalism, Bollywood has adopted a brand-focused approach, primarily catering to those with financial means. The emergence of new themes and imagery reflects an elitist culture cultivated by globalization and multinational corporations. Even the portrayal of Freida Pinto, the main actress, as 'the most beautiful woman in the world,' (Boyle ,2008,1:05:08) accentuates her fair complexion. Within India's evolving capitalist society, lighter skin has become a dominant symbol of grace and upward social mobility. This symbolism contributes to the exclusion of women with darker skin tones and signifies a noticeable shift toward elitist values influenced by Western ideals.

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4.4.1. *Slumdog Millionaire*'s Marketing and Concerns

The film received backing from production companies such as Celador Films, Film4, and Pathé Pictures International. These choices suggest that the intended audience is likely to be a more mature, adult group, around the age of 18 and above, who can better grasp and connect with the movie's profound themes. In fact, *Slumdog Millionaire* aligns well with the kind of films typically produced by these specific production firms, as it delves into serious and challenging subject matter. In August 2007, Warner Independent Pictures acquired the North American theatrical distribution rights, while Pathé secured the worldwide rights. Unfortunately, Warner Independent Pictures ceased its operations in May 2008, prompting the transfer of its projects to its parent company, Warner Bros.

Initially, Warner Bros considered a direct-to-DVD release for the movie, believing it wouldn't attract much attention in U.S. theaters. However, a distribution agreement was eventually reached between Fox Searchlight Pictures and Warner Bros. in August 2008. Under this agreement, Fox Searchlight acquired 50% of Warner Bros.' equity in the film and took charge of its distribution in the United States. By analyzing the content of the film, the distribution company was able to identify the target audience for the movie. In one particularly disturbing scene, a young child aged 9 or 10 suffers a horrifying incident where hot acid is poured into his eyes while he sleeps (Boyle, 2008, 31:02-31:25). This grim sequence warranted a higher age rating, ideally at least a 12 or even a 15, due to its intense content.

Obviously, the promotion of *Slumdog Millionaire* involved various strategies. As the trailer and exclusive clips were frequently aired on Film 4 and Channel 4 to generate interest. Additionally, the inclusion of the song "Jai Ho" in the end credits was a significant promotional move, as the song had already enjoyed chart success. Moreover, a music video featuring *The Pussycat Dolls* linked to the movie was uploaded on YouTube. The film's release in other countries on January 9, 2009, received positive reviews during the opening weekend in the UK, USA, and Australia. However, opinions in India were divided. Some critics raised

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concerns, such as Jamal's use of "British English" and the disparity in recognition compared to similar films by Indian directors.

Henceforth, Hollywood seems almost unbeatable in terms of its financial success and cultural influence. Though, Indian films may seem unfamiliar to many Westerners, as they require some time and patience to develop a taste for. As a result, Bollywood has been searching for a crossover movie in recent years. However, *Slumdog Millionaire*, produced for just \$10 million and earning nearly \$100 million worldwide, is the film that best reflects the strong Western interest in Indian literature (Leonard, 2009). Additionally, its multiple nominations and wins at major international film awards, including ten Oscar nominations, have played a significant role in its success. This film which is set in Mumbai, the country's largest metropolis, provides insight into the complexities of contemporary India, with its simmering religious conflicts and socioeconomic injustices. The film's widespread appeal can be credited to its portrayal of an underdog who achieves success against all odds. Especially that people universally root for such characters, regardless of whether the story is set in a disadvantaged African community or the economically struggling regions of the United States. The film, despite its \$15 million budget, emerged as the top-grossing movie at the global box office, except in North America. It raked in an impressive \$16 million from 34 countries in the week following the Academy Awards. As of now, the film has accumulated a staggering \$377.9 million worldwide, solidifying its position as the most lucrative production in the history of Fox Searchlight Pictures.

Considering that a substantial portion of the film was shot digitally, *SDM*'s victory in the cinematography category was celebrated as a significant achievement for the realm of digital filmmaking. Nonetheless, a considerable segment of the movie was captured using traditional 35mm film. The movie's unconventional and visually inventive director, Danny Boyle, who consistently pushes the boundaries of conventional filmmaking, played a pivotal role in the blending of genres within the film. This choice had a solid rationale, especially in relation to the scenes shot in the congested slums of Mumbai. He thought it was crucial to shoot in the bustling,

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actual slums to genuinely depict the atmosphere and backdrop of the neighborhood. Additionally, the film took cues from the Indian game show "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" for its cinematography. The lighting and camera techniques utilized in this popular television show diverged noticeably from those seen in other film genres, producing a distinctive aesthetic. The combination of these visual styles was crucial for the cast, as the game show served as the central focus of the film's narrative.

Certainly, the success of *Slumdog Millionaire* may have led people to believe that Bollywood is gaining traction among Western audiences. Nevertheless, diverse opinions exist on this topic. Despite being viewed as a crossover film with appeal for both Indian and global viewers, it seems to have a primary focus on attracting non-resident Indians. These movies strive to reach a broader audience, but Western and Indian audiences have distinct tastes, so ultimately, the director needed to make a strategic choice. This film has fared well and gained recognition as a film that showcases Indian talent making inroads into the Western entertainment industry.

A set of well-worn themes such as the power of love conquering all, the classic rags-to-riches tale, and the underdog's victorious journey seem to possess universal charm and serve as the imaginative foundation for Danny Boyle's Bollywood-influenced movie. Both Bollywood and Hollywood share common goals: to allude to genuine hardships without fully immersing in them, to elicit our compassion, and to neatly tie up the story, while incorporating a multitude of cinematic pleasures into one film. *Slumdog Millionaire* serves as compelling evidence of this truly worldwide objective (Pignol&etal, 2020, pp.183-188).

4.5. *Slumdog Millionaire*'s Inspiring Story

Slumdog Millionaire skillfully combines a narrative from the less privileged parts of the world with the use of advanced tools and techniques typically associated with more developed regions. It portrays the harsh lives of its main characters while still delivering a heartwarming and believable happy ending to audiences

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worldwide. The film's central character, Jamal (played by Dev Patel), is a young tea server at a call center in Mumbai who aspires to participate in the Indian version of the reality show 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire'. His dream becomes a reality, and the plot unfolds in a simple yet engaging manner; each time the show's host, Prem (Anil Kapoor), poses a new question, Jamal experiences a flashback. These flashbacks not only provide Jamal with clues to answer the questions but also reveal more about his life to the viewers. For instance, when faced with the question, "Whose face is on the American hundred dollar bill?" Jamal surprises Prem with his confident response, "Benjamin Franklin." (Boyle, 2008, 52:23-53:55). The shock on Prem's face is palpable, as he believes that someone in Jamal's position, a chai wallah, couldn't possibly know the answer. The moment is elevated by the sudden burst of flashing lights and lively music as Prem exclaims, "You're right!" (Boyle, 2008, 1:27:55-1:29:42). This cinematic moment is glorious because it showcases Jamal's ability to find courage and hope amidst his challenging circumstances. The television audience cheers not only because Jamal knows the answer but also because it allows him to continue playing for increasingly high stakes.

Conspicuously, Prem Kumar, the show's host, is unsympathetic towards the contestant who has transitioned from poverty to wealth. Prem, who himself climbed up from the streets, is reluctant to share the Millionaire spotlight and doubts that a young person from the slums could possess all the answers. He has the police waiting outside the studio, convinced that Jamal must be cheating, but the show runs out of time and takes a break for the evening before any action can be taken (Boyle, 2008, 1:27:55-1:29:42). Jamal is just as bewildered as everyone else about how far he has progressed in the competition, as the Police Inspector finds out after questioning him throughout the night. Jamal proceeds to explain how he arrived at each answer as they go through the questions one by one (Boyle, 2008, 10:13-10:44).

In doing so, the incredible story of his short life begins to unfold as Jamal's narrative mirrors modern-day India. Together with his older brother Salim and the orphaned girl he looks after and eventually falls in love with, Latika, Jamal is

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compelled to survive on the streets. Despite his challenging upbringing in the most impoverished parts of the city, Jamal's innate kindness remains intact. In stark contrast, Salim is driven by a thirst for power and wealth. As their paths diverge due to a heartbreaking betrayal, Jamal loses Latika just as he realizes his true emotions for her.

In an unexpected turn of events, the initially hostile inspector becomes intrigued by Jamal's narrative and starts to consider the possibility that this "slum dog" may be telling the truth. The true motive behind Jamal's decision to participate in the show is disclosed during a concluding conversation (Boyle,2008,1:36:23). Once fully convinced, the Inspector allows Jamal to rejoin the program and respond to the final question (Boyle,2008,2:39/1:30:20). Salim, gripped by remorse, makes a courageous choice and, aware of the dire consequences, frees Latika from the clutches of her abusive partner. While Jamal returns to the spotlight for the last question, Latika begins her journey to the studio, but she gets ensnared in the congested traffic of Mumbai. In a suspenseful moment witnessed by an entire nation, Jamal seeks permission to make a phone call, dialing the only number he knows his brother's cell phone. As the phone rings, Latika takes the device that Salim handed her for an escape route. At last, the long-separated lovers are reunited (Boyle,2008,1:40:46-1:52:35).

Interestingly, Colson the producer of the movie emphasizes that an outsider's viewpoint can bring distinctive elements to a film's visual design and storytelling, elements that might be overlooked or taken for granted by an indigenous writer or director. When the crew arrived in India, it had a profound impact on the local people, but it also served as a culture shock for the team, who had not yet experienced the vibrant chaos of Mumbai. Boyle believes that most of the filmmaking process revolves around the concept of control, where filmmakers and their crew strive to shape their environment to precisely achieve the desired visuals and mood they aim to capture. Recognizing this, Boyle believed that Dev Patel, who portrays the lead character in the movie, would benefit from immersing himself in Mumbai before filming began. Consequently, he invited Patel to accompany him

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on numerous location scouting trips. This allowed Patel to not only work on his accent but also develop a deeper understanding of the character, independent of the script's framework.

The team filmed in Juhu, a location situated close to the airport on the west side of the city, easily noticeable to anyone arriving in Mumbai. They also captured scenes in Dharavi, India's largest and most vibrant slum. Boyle aimed to include as many actual slum residents as possible in the film. In reality, Dharavi is a thriving and active mini-metropolis. Due to India's democratic nature, these slums have evolved into politically influential areas due to their high population densities. Boyle and his camera crew, which included the award-winning director of photography Anthony Dod Mantle, had to consider various camera options and filming techniques for the diverse and bustling locations visited during production. They opted to shoot in real locations whenever possible, even though the scripted scenes often presented complex challenges that took them to a wide range of places, from the awe-inspiring Taj Mahal to some more desolate settings. It was a lengthy and adventurous journey. In the heart of Mumbai, one of the enduring legacies of the British Raj is the Victoria Terminus, where they filmed the dancing scene featured during the end credits.

Figure N° 12. Dharavi, Mumbai, One of Asia's Largest Slums

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Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/mumbai-asia-largest-slum-new-business-district-dharavi-maharashtra-housing-5406668/>

In the initial moments of the film, when Jamal is accused of cheating on his appearance on *Slumdog Millionaire*, a show that spans overnight between live broadcasts, as he works as a tea steward for employees of one of the call centers outsourced from the English-speaking West, he subtly challenges the materialistic culture. The implication is that in contemporary Mumbai, the influence of the affluent is so profound that the police willingly execute the questionable tasks of a media conglomerate that suspects a humble tea vendor of deceiving them. Director Boyle also demonstrates his awareness of the colonial past, both for himself and the film's prospective audience.

The scene at the Taj Mahal, where the slum children from Bombay seize every opportunity to relieve affluent tourists of their money and shoes, possesses a mischievous charm while subtly rebuking Western viewers by briefly but pointedly highlighting one tourist's notably ample posterior as they follow a thin orphan (Boyle, 2008, 43:09-45:27). Nevertheless, other parts of the film display unexpected carelessness and inadequate planning. The characters' emotions appear to grow colder with age, yet the film's commitment to delivering uplifting spectacle remains unwavering. Were it not for the interruption of the narrative with several grand musical performances, the movie *SDM* would fully embrace its own whimsical nature and revel in the predictable resolution of its love story.

Figure N°13. Children of the Slums as Tourist Guides in Agra

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Source: <https://filmfreedonia.com/2009/03/18/slumdog-millionaire-2008/>

4.6. Speculating the Scenic Dimensions of the Movie

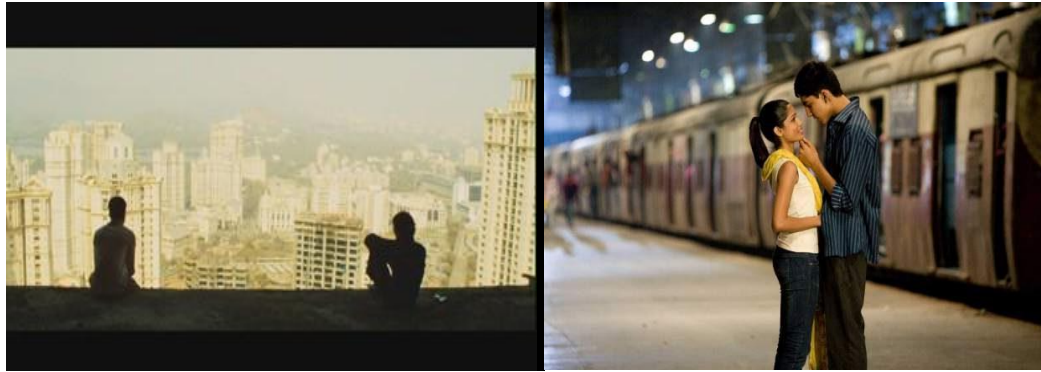
One can see that the film was first and foremost a foreign production that depicts the life of a boy from the slums who won the "who wants to be a millionaire" competition and became a millionaire. The film combines the boy's life progression with the development of the city while also concentrating on his own existence. The phrase "From Bombay to Mumbai" (Boyle, 2008, 15:23) refers to how the city, which had numerous slums, destitute residents, and a large population, evolved to be known as India's financial center.

Notably, the work under study highlights three components or architectural ideas that contributed to the development of this metropolis. The first one is the actual slum, which depicts the day-to-day activities of its roughly 1 million inhabitants and how they are adjusting to a way of life that no one can even begin to comprehend or adapt to. The second component was the Hiranandani Gardens, which depicts the transition from the modest homes in the slums to the tall buildings that surround them. The Victoria Terminus Train Station is the third component, which depicts the historical past of the nation and its relationship to British colonization. All of these things are depicted in the film, not only to disparage and separate the two lifestyles, but also to provide hope in the poor people's struggle (Mazumdar, 2021). After looking at all these instances, it is clear that Bollywood

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films are quickly emulating Hollywood productions in terms of showing Indians' struggles and slum existence.

Figure N°14. Scenes from Modern Mumbai and the Victoria Terminus Train Station



Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/18/mumbai-railway-set-to-shut-the-doors-on-quintessential-bollywood-image>

With that being stated a burgeoning field within the realm of cinema studies, transnational cinema explores a broad spectrum of theories pertaining to how globalization impacts both the cultural and economic dimensions of a particular film. Within the realm of transnational cinema, one intriguing area of study involves the concept of films that blend the visual, genre, and cinematic elements of one culture with the socio-political issues and themes of another. This was a thoughtful film that demonstrated the tenacity of a youngster from a lower class who had little and tried to push ahead. Jamal, the main character, was placed in a challenging environment of crime and destitution that tried his character. The film included all the necessary components to create a captivating and engaging film. Even if there isn't a compelling character development, the mechanics of the relationships are utterly interesting.

Moreover, this movie does a really interesting and great job using the camera angles, various views, and music that has been discussed earlier as important elements in the creation of films. The whole film is made up of flashbacks to Jamal's early years, and these moments demonstrate not just how the character learns the answers, but also how Jamal, Latika, and Salim all develop into distinct

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individuals. One can gradually witness their relationships breaking down and diverging thanks to the music and various viewpoints. Although the distinctive camera work and background music are essential to the creation of each scene in this movie, there is one sequence in particular that attracted one's attention. The camera slows down, the conversations fade away, and soft music begins to play as Jamal finally meets Latika in the train station for the first time in a long time. It seems as though that one scene brought back every childhood memory they had and every romantic sensation they ever shared (Boyle, 2008,1:51:29). These devices are used in some scenarios to depict the separation of class and even gender.

Towards the end of *Slumdog Millionaire*, there is also a Bollywood-style dance sequence, added by the directors to complement the thoroughly Indian storyline, even though the rest of the film adheres more closely to the typical Western-style production associated with director Danny Boyle. The movie's distinctive visual character is achieved through vibrant colors and expertly applied lighting and shadows, intensifying the emotions of the youthful characters and establishing a strong link between *Slumdog Millionaire*'s cinematography and its narrative. It comes as no surprise that the film received accolades for both Best Picture and Best Cinematography, recognizing its skillful mastery of these cinematic techniques.

An authentic Bollywood film can offer valuable perspectives on modern Indian culture, societal norms, gender dynamics, and various other aspects. This is just one of numerous significant revelations. In contrast, *SDM* is a predominantly fictional narrative loosely inspired by real events in India's past. It serves as a poignant depiction of the hardships endured by impoverished Indians. It explores familiar Bollywood motifs like dance and romance while maintaining a respectful tone, refraining from any attempts at ridicule. Furthermore, it delves into the societal issues in India, particularly the rampant corruption, skillfully intertwining Bollywood with the country's political landscape. For instance, this blend is seen when Jamal and Salim seek help from the police amidst the backdrop of Muslim

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riots in a flashback sequence, only to be dismissed with a curt "go away" from the officers (Boyle, 2008,19:23).

As a part of cultural customs, a film serves as a platform for conveying multiple interpretations and can be seen as a battleground for various significances. Cinematic techniques are employed within movies to establish both explicit and implied interpretations. In the opening scene of the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, a perplexed police officer and his constable interrogate Jamal Malik regarding his surprising triumph, all the while blowing cigarette smoke in his direction (Boyle,2008,1:24). This initial sequence serves to depict the stark contrast in urban life, where the police serve as both enforcers of order and a threat to the marginalized. In this context, the state apparatus possesses the authority to apprehend and relocate Jamal, much like organized crime groups or other lawbreakers.

Throughout the film, the director employs frequent close-up shots of the protagonist to highlight his innocence, notably showcasing his astonishment whenever he correctly deduces a solution. The movie portrays the living conditions within Dharavi, the largest slum in Asia in terms of land area, situated at the heart of Mumbai. In various regions of India, people have become economically worse off compared to five decades ago. Despite a non-linear progression, poverty has been linked to material progress. Hence, the film explores worldwide challenges through the lens of individuals from Mumbai, shedding light on the fundamental aspects of human nature and their environment. Through the picaresque adventures of Jamal and his elder brother Salim, the movie skillfully portrays their remarkable struggle for survival. Unlike typical flashback methods involving sepia tones or references to specific time periods, screenwriter Simon Beaufoy takes a different route, avoiding these conventional techniques.

Geographically and economically, Dharavi represents a collection of peripheral shanties, impoverished streets, and makeshift dwellings in the outskirts of Mumbai. The level of influence exerted by state authorities on the government of

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Dharavi is only partially evident. This is notably underscored in the film when the police attempt to pursue the youth from the slum as they navigate the crowded streets of the ghetto. The camera closely tracks young Jamal, Salim, and the law enforcement officers as they engage in this intense running scene (Boyle, 2008, 8:16-9:19). In this sequence, viewers are introduced to the harsh realities of life in the slums as the characters rush through the narrow alleyways on the film set. This particular point of view shot effectively establishes a strong connection between the audience and the authentic setting of the movie.

It is quite essential to clarify that it's a thriving community and a sanctuary for individuals from various religious backgrounds. The authentic denizens of Dharavi, often referred to as "slumdogs," proudly live and work here, cherishing it as their home. India's portrayal of a "slum" typically conjures images of a harsh environment where inhabitants contend with formidable criminal overlords and rampant corruption. Historically, these areas were termed "informal neighborhoods" where people both resided and worked. Even today, there's a lack of official infrastructure, with residents inhabiting substandard housing conditions. Life's challenges begin early in this environment, but amidst the adversity, there's room for friendship and goodwill (Gehlawat, 2013, p.195). The film's talented actors illuminate and bring to the forefront the slum's harsh realities, transforming it into a poignant spotlight.

Impressively, the filmmaker employs the train to serve a dual purpose; incorporating Indian scenery into his narrative and serving as a means to rescue his main character. Young Jamal queries a visitor from the United States, asking if they desire an unfiltered glimpse of India's true essence. In a more expansive context, this symbolizes the expectations of readiness among Western observers. The American tourists had anticipated experiencing the vibrant culture of India, but instead, they witness their chauffeur mistreating a young child (Boyle, 2008, 46:16). Consequently, Boyle's emphasis on the authentic cinematic scenery of India portrays a country grappling with issues of injustice, poverty, and violence. It is not astonishing that the film's central theme revolves around poverty, as this inevitably

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attracts tourists to the slums from Europe, North America, and other global regions. The children in India engaged in tasks such as cleaning railway cars and toiling in industries remain unnoticed.

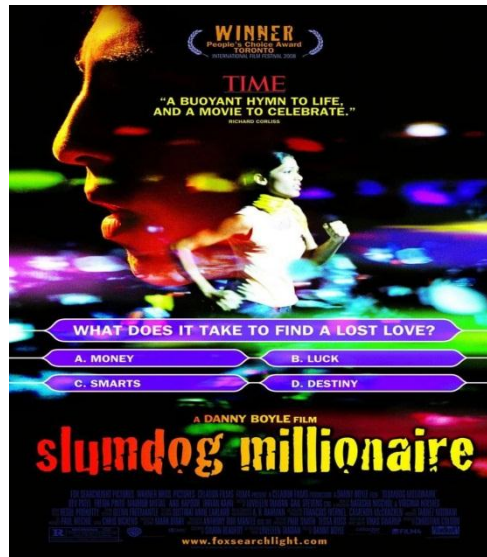
Interestingly, the source novel, *Q & A*, lacks such literary references, yet the director adeptly wove the storyline into the film's script. Despite facing criticism, Mumbai's diverse film scenes are effectively portrayed with a semi-documentary style that authentically captures the dynamic essence of the city in its entire lively splendor. This film not only rekindled interest in India but also propelled the phenomenon of slum tourism in Mumbai. Most of the research on tourism centered around Dharavi tends to attribute the rise of Dharavi as a destination for slum tourism primarily to *Slumdog Millionaire* (Dyson, 2012, pp. 254–274).

In simpler terms, the audience not only sees the Mumbai slums in *Slumdog Millionaire* but also feels like they are genuinely experiencing them. The film incorporates several ideas and techniques from Italian Neo-Realism to convince viewers that the Mumbai depicted in the movie is an authentic Indian slum. The first strategy involves using actual children as actors in the film. The second approach is to film in real locations, with a significant portion of the movie shot in the Dharavi slum, where a majority of Mumbai's residents reside. Additionally, the character Jamal Malik's job combines British contact center work in Mumbai with blending modern Western technology and Indian culture.

In all these respects, it is worth bearing in mind the cinematic representation carefully emphasizes the names of the locations that dominate the screen's most significant portion. Hindi represents a language that defines one's identity, whereas English is a language associated with empowerment. In this transnational motion picture, a delicate equilibrium is achieved between these two linguistic worlds. A prime example can be observed in the Hindi movie poster, where a deliberate fusion of scripts consistently highlights the actors' qualifications, capturing the essence of the film. What sets this movie apart is Danny Boyle's adept blending of Western literary elements, akin to those found in Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*.

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Figure N°15. The Movie's Poster in English Language



Source: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1010048/>

Certainly, *Slumdog Millionaire* unmistakably acknowledges its debt to beloved Bollywood films. For instance, it tips its hat to the world of Indian cinema with the thrilling police pursuit in Dharavi at the movie's beginning, drawing inspiration from a comparable sequence in Anurag Kashyap's *Black Friday*. This connection between impoverished urban areas and the art of Bollywood filmmaking is evident. Although not originating from India, *Slumdog Millionaire* skillfully interacts with Bollywood by incorporating elements such as fated lovers, familial melodrama, and even a direct allusion to the legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan (Boyle, 2008, 12:20).

4.7. Global Hollywood's Newest Co-Optation of Culture with a Bollywood Swag

The concept of assigning a clear national identity to contemporary cinema has become increasingly challenging due to the extensive transnational networks involved in the modern film industry. The movement of financial resources, filmmakers, and films across borders has eroded the distinct national and cultural characteristics that movies once possessed. Consequently, a global cinematic landscape has emerged, paving the way for a new genre known as crossover

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cinema. To transcend personal, artistic, and political boundaries, transnational creative filmmakers draw from a variety of cultural influences, resulting in a blend of content and form. This cinematic mobility has been further facilitated by international digital distribution platforms and global marketing strategies. As a result, filmmakers from various genres now perceive the world as a global system rather than a collection of largely independent nations.

Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* is a prime example of how diasporic Indian films can achieve international acclaim, earning accolades from both critics and audiences, as noted by Khorana (2010, p.1). The film is noteworthy for being one of the pioneering globalized movies, owing to its collaborative effort between a Western filmmaker and an Indian co-director, and it's a British and American production financed in London but created in India (Khorana 2010, p.4).

Today, Indian cinema has gained the distinction of being the largest filmmaking sector in the world. Dynamic and skilled, it appears that Indian audiences never get tired of watching images on the screen. This trend worries the Hollywood film industry, which has its eye on such a lucrative market and has recently attempted to translate popular American blockbusters into Hindi for theatrical release. While the one is engulfed by the immense impact of the *Slumdog Millionaire* phenomenon directed by Danny Boyle. The widespread acclaim and recognition it received are widely known. The film initially soared to stardom with a deluge of Golden Globe nominations, followed by an even more impressive array of Oscar nominations.

It's evident why this movie garnered praise; its gripping suspense captivated audiences. However, what truly left an impression was the depiction of urbanization and globalization within the film. The timeline closely aligns with the period of globalization from 1991 to the present which was marked by the Hindu-Muslim riots in Mumbai. These events began to affect Jamal and Salim around 1992-1993(Boyle,2008, 18:00-19:30). At the start of the movie, the two brothers reside in the slums of Mumbai, with the narrative weaving between the past and the present.

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Their life takes a bleak turn after losing their mother, leaving them in dire poverty, residing atop a literal pile of garbage. Since Jamal and Salim appear to have discovered a fresh technique to trick travelers, you may presume that this is a recent development, though it's also possible that they haven't visited the Taj Mahal or any other tourist traps since they haven't heard of them(Boyle,2008,42:03).

It becomes clear as day that things have changed as you follow Jamal into adulthood and throughout his stint on the game show. You also witness members of the underprivileged working class supporting Jamal while watching television, demonstrating how pervasive television displays have become. The increased use of modern comforts and the existence of game shows like “Who Wants to be a Millionaire” demonstrate how much Mumbai, India's culture, has been influenced by other countries. This movie is set during a time of fast cultural change in not only Mumbai but also the whole country of India. It is remarkable to see this transition depicted on screen in such a matter-of-fact way, just as a part of Jamal's life.

Adapted from an Indian author's novel, *Q&A*, *Slumdog Millionaire* occupies a unique space between mainstream Hollywood productions and popular Indian cinema, as Chakraborty (2013) points out (cited in Khorana 2010, p.2). Its rags-to-riches underdog story, combined with cinematic techniques such as montage sequences, wide angles, overhead shots, and jump shots, reflects the storytelling traditions of Bollywood (cited in Khorana ,2010, p. 3). Simultaneously, it incorporates Hollywood conventions, employing devices like adaptation, double plotlines, flashbacks, parallel editing, and an essentially American narrative emphasizing individual triumph and hard work (Khorana 2010, p.3). Despite only one-third of the film being in Hindi, *SDM* adopts a multilingual format, which better mirrors the diverse linguistic landscape of India (Khorana 2010, p.1). The film doesn't adhere to a single film grammar; rather, it employs a hybrid approach (Khorana 2010, p. 1).

Figure N°16.Remarkable Incidents of the Film in Flashbacks

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Source: <https://medium.com/@sadissinger/a-film-to-remember-slumdog-millionaire-2008-5b074055b216>

Furthermore, the film's international release, promotional efforts, and crossover marketing strategies leverage the distribution networks of both its home and host countries (Khorana 2010, p.9). The decision to release it in mainstream American theaters allowed the film to cross over to a non-foreign audience, making it eligible for a non-foreign Academy Award nomination (Khorana 2010, p.1). *SDM* also blends Indian classical music with Western hip hop and R&B, showcasing a rich diversity of influences (Khorana 2010, p.1). In contrast to Khorana's caution that "Indian filmmakers' pursuit of a Western audience may not materialize" (2013, p.5), the film instead exemplifies the box office potential of crossover films in the international market. Those that are Western-friendly, feature a compelling theme, an effective screenplay, a familiar narrative, and a universally relatable storyline are more likely to circulate globally and serve as easily digestible, apolitical cultural offerings, commonly referred to as "Cinematic McNuggets" (Ezra & Rowden 2006, p.6).

Although its subject matter diverges from reality, a post-colonial analysis can reveal how the film may misrepresent or distort Indian life. In essence, even as it's Hollywood imitating Bollywood, the film signifies Bollywood's maturation in the Western context. It's evident from *Slumdog Millionaire* that Bollywood's transition to Hollywood is apparent in its style, structure, content, and approach, as well as in

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the involvement of directors, actors, technicians, and musicians. In essence, Bollywood, renowned for bringing the seemingly impossible to life, finds its embodiment in the film's game show. Despite being created by outsiders on the surface, the movie mirrors Bollywood through its cinematic style, language, and fantastical story elements.

Figure N°17. Jamal Answering the Questions at the Studio



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCor9rW6PgxsQ9vUPWQdnaYQ>

Nevertheless, the film's engagement with the politics of representation makes it impossible to dismiss this connection outright. What might be less immediately apparent, yet equally significant, is that the film exemplifies the Hollywood-to-Bollywood phenomenon. The exchange of cultural influences flows in multiple directions, as opposed to being a unidirectional or bidirectional process. To put it differently, Hollywood and Bollywood encompass distinct systems of conveying meaning and possess differing modes of representation.

Simplifying Bollywood, one might classify it as a genre defined by intense emotions and passion. While it has been labeled as melodramatic, one believes this term may not be entirely fair or precise. Bollywood has faced criticism for its perceived departure from reality and inclination towards escapism, despite the fact that it engages with social and political realities more deeply than many other forms of artistic expression. Over the past two decades, Hollywood and Bollywood have progressively merged, resulting in an increasing number of Bollywood films being produced overseas. This expansion is not only aimed at catering to the affluent

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Indian diaspora market but also at providing Indian audiences with a broader perspective of the world.

Fitting perfectly, the immense triumph of *Slumdog Millionaire* may have given the impression that Bollywood is becoming more popular among Western audiences. Nevertheless, it's crucial to recognize that despite incorporating iconic Bollywood song-and-dance sequences, the movie is essentially an American production. Although it showcases Indian themes, actors, and a traditional rags-to-riches storyline, many other films share these elements. What distinguishes this film is its distinctive viewpoint from an American perspective.

Interestingly, certain theorists use the terms "transnational investment," rapid expansion of communication and information technologies, and influencing the impact of free market forces on local, regional, and national economies" to describe processes that function on a worldwide scale, transcending borders between nations. These processes facilitate the integration and connection of communities within a novel space-time context, enabling increased interaction among different populations. In the realm of academia, the transformation of Mumbai cinema into a phenomenon known as 'Bollywoodization' is perceived as a 'dispersed cultural amalgamation encompassing a range of distribution and consumer activities.' This is a manifestation of the intricate and contradictory dynamics brought about by globalization, privatization, and liberalization, which have fundamentally altered the way Mumbai films are both produced and consumed (Rajadhyaksha, 2003, p. 25).

Connecting the expansion of a global media network with a rising cultural homogeneity is a widely held notion. Nonetheless, international trade data fails to fully capture the immense popularity of Indian mainstream films. A significant factor contributing to the triumph of Indian cinema is its deep-rooted cultural affinity with South Asian countries, fostering the embrace of Indian movies. A fundamental principle of cultural imperialism underscores the influential role of media in molding culture. Recognizing the film industry as a significant player and the vast Western market that embraced it were the foremost milestones in the early

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21st century for the thriving Indian film industry. The globalization process heavily relies on effective communication and symbolic representation. In point of fact, when *SDM* was released in 2008, this blockbuster movie revived the era of insensitive cultural stereotypes post-"Apu-thank-you-come-again" and the post-9/11 period of bullying, giving new life to unimaginative schoolchildren. It felt like a seismic shift in the cultural landscape.

In concordance with this viewpoint, Hollywood often disguises its narratives using diverse cinematic approaches, all the while providing superficial, uplifting tales. Conversely, Bollywood has persistently sought to emulate Hollywood, yet this endeavor has mainly yielded a plethora of subpar movies. A transnational movie can be defined as a film that blends diverse elements from multiple countries, making it difficult to identify with just one nation. As films move from being solely connected to a particular country's film industry to being seen as transnational, there is a potential for cultural subtleties to be lost. This can result in the reinforcement of stereotypes or generalizations about specific races or cultures. In summary, *SDM* should not be exclusively classified as a Bollywood or Hindi film. It can be better described as a transnational movie that combines elements from both Bollywood and Western influences. This labeling error can result in Western audiences wrongly categorizing any film set in India as a Bollywood production, which is problematic because it reinforces racial stereotypes stemming from a lack of intercultural awareness. The film effectively resonates with Western viewers by including many references to Western culture.

In the last twenty years, there has been a noticeable increase in the global appeal and reach of Bollywood films, which transcends cultural boundaries. However, the extent of its growing influence on audiences, markets, and the entertainment industry beyond the Indian subcontinent has received less attention and study. This phenomenon has forged a connection between Bollywood, the United States, and the diaspora, and it appears that Bollywood is emerging as the dominant force in this dynamic. An example of this shift can be seen in the film *SDM*, which suggests that Hollywood is now taking cues from Bollywood. As

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evidenced by Frieda Pinto, the breakout star of this transnational collaboration, gracing the covers of prestigious magazines such as Vogue, Maxim, Vanity Fair, and Cosmopolitan, proving that the Bollywood culture industry is generating substantial revenues for various sectors, including fashion, beauty, cosmetics, cuisine, and jewelry, along with numerous related businesses that benefit from its popularity.

In the same context, the game show became increasingly popular in India, which is rather paradoxical given its British origins. Such shows are a product of globalization, and this phenomenon is also exemplified in the character of Dev Patel, who works in a call center in the film. This choice of occupation serves as another nod to the globalized economy. When Westerners think of call centers, the image that often comes to mind is that of people like Dev, situated far away in India, helping with our tech-related issues. Call centers have played a significant role in connecting the world, but they also offer material for satire, as evident in the scene where Jamal briefly takes a call (Boyle, 2008,1:10:26).

Another scene can be noticed is when a jet glides above while children engage in a game of cricket on an airfield, marking the viewer's initial glimpse into Jamal's earliest recollection (Boyle, 2008,7:00). This scene serves as a visual representation of both economic disparity and the impact of globalization. In a symbolic sense, the jet's passengers are embarking on a journey to a new destination, leaving Jamal behind in the impoverished slums. The aerial perspective of the slums vividly underscores this stark inequality. Ultimately, one finds this film to be exceptional. While it sometimes portrays mixed feelings about Western influence, it unmistakably advocates for the significance of global involvement.

It's particularly noticeable that *Slumdog* is an internationally crafted film that emerged from the collaboration between Hollywood and India's famed film industry, commonly referred to as "Bollywood." Widely acclaimed, with achievements such as eight Oscars and four Golden Globe awards, *SDM* might be regarded as the critical juncture when Hollywood took a major stride towards

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becoming a dominant force on the global stage. Although Hollywood had already transformed into a globally integrated industry, characterized by productions spanning various locations, outsourced workforce, and widespread distribution reaching significant markets, it aims to establish itself as the central hub for diverse creative expression in the 21st century.

Moreover, it adeptly weaves elements from Indian and Asian cultures and histories into its narrative, possibly to a greater extent than the opposite situation. Additionally, these films serve as a precursor to the concept of World Cinema, indicating that Hollywood is gradually relinquishing its cultural dominance by producing works that remind us of the diverse offerings within World Cinema. Despite drawing inspiration from various elements of world cinema, Accented cinema, and even Displaced cinema, *Slumdog Millionaire* undeniably bears the DNA of Hollywood. In essence, the film can be regarded as an Indian interpretation of the iconic Hollywood film *Forrest Gump* (1994, directed by Robert Zemeckis). It aligns so closely with the Hollywood storytelling paradigm that it almost borders on satire. In spite of the distressing occurrences, including the main character's shocking experience in jail and a child losing their sight due to the betrayal of the adults they relied on, Fox Searchlight, a renowned distributor of specialized films, had no trouble categorizing it as either a comedy or a drama, choosing the label that would most effectively promote the film at any particular time.

Equally, the film production companies themselves exhibit transnational elements, as they have origins in both the United States and the United Kingdom. These details emphasize the complex nature of creating a transnational film. As mentioned by Shaw (Shaw,2013,p.54), "transnational modes of production, distribution, and exhibition pertain to movies that enter the global market. *SDM* serves as a prime example of this genre because of its setting in Mumbai, India, where the native Hindi language is used intermittently, contributing to the director's pursuit of authenticity in the film. This aspect of the movie also underscores the adaptable nature inherent in transnational cinema. However, it is essential to

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question this global perspective for its omissions and concealments to allow for alternative interpretations to surface.

To put it succinctly, one contends that the film's popularity can be largely attributed to the filmmakers' foresight in selecting elements of local culture that resonated with Western and Northern audiences, while simultaneously suppressing other aspects that could have restricted the film's reach or disrupted its appeal to those audiences. Dissanayake (2006) underscores the significance of consumerism, commercialization, transnationalized sources of enjoyment, and their simultaneous influence on indigenous customs. According to her, this holds immense importance (pp. 26–27). Global audiences, in turn, experience the effects of globalization as local cultural expressions are recreated, piquing their curiosity and ambitions. This phenomenon is exemplified by how *SDM* reproduces a diverse array of Indian traditions, captivating audiences worldwide.

More so, rather than initiating a wave of stories set in Mumbai or similar settings, Danny Boyle's movie stood out as a remarkable exception. Exploring the domain of film marketing, what could be as important, or potentially more so, than depicting marginalized characters in these films is establishing a global production strategy aimed at appealing to a universal, 'transnational' perspective, aligning with the principles outlined by Appadurai in 1990. India, a nation defined by striking contradictions, embodies an identity shaped by the coexistence of starkly opposing extremes, extending beyond the negative facets highlighted in the film.

Whatever the underlying cause may be, Indian actors have undeniably made a significant impact in Hollywood, both on and off the silver screen. The 2008 film, which clinched eight Academy Awards, including the coveted Best Picture award, has undeniably played a pivotal role in this transformation. According to Christina Marouda, the executive director of the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, "It instilled confidence in U.S. studios that a film set in India can resonate across a multitude of global markets". "The movie arrived at a fortuitous juncture in the evolution of our show". "It affirmed the appeal of a series featuring Indian

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characters to American viewers. Thanks to globalization, the presence of Indians within Western society has become commonplace, leading Hollywood to cast them in diverse roles that may not necessarily center on their cultural background. These emerging Indian actors contribute a unique perspective, often being the first-generation offspring of immigrant parents "(cited in Buijk, 2010).

Through this innovative fusion of narrative styles, *Slumdog Millionaire* delivers a captivating and emotionally resonant experience, engaging viewers on multiple levels. Bollywood's influence on the film extends beyond its narrative, notably in the realm of music and dance. The iconic soundtrack, crafted by the renowned A.R. Rahman, not only enriches the storyline but also captures the lively essence of Bollywood's musical heritage. This heartfelt tale of love, destiny, and triumph over adversity showcases the potency of cross-cultural storytelling in crafting a universally immersive cinematic journey. The global triumph of the film *SDM* was nothing short of remarkable. It achieved unprecedented success worldwide after its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. The movie quickly garnered immense popularity and went on to secure numerous prestigious awards, including eight Academy Awards, four Golden Globe Awards, and seven BAFTA Awards. This cinematic masterpiece became a global sensation within the industry, resonating profoundly with audiences due to its universal themes of love, hope, and the pursuit of dreams. The film's title itself playfully references the conventional Bollywood tradition of incorporating the word "millionaire" into film titles, evoking the genre's renowned song-and-dance sequences. The movie adeptly captures Bollywood's grand storytelling through its dynamic visual aesthetics and fast-paced narrative. Furthermore, the rags-to-riches storyline mirrors themes commonly found in Bollywood classics such as "*Deewaar*" (1975) and "*Zanjeer*" (1973). These connections not only underscore the film's deep-rooted connection to Indian cinematic traditions but also highlight its remarkable ability to bridge cultural divides and appeal to a diverse, global audience.

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While it is incorrect to label *Slumdog Millionaire* as a Bollywood film, it undeniably played a significant role in raising Western awareness of Bollywood. Bhattacharya Mehta (2011) observes that the film's brief appearance of Bollywood elements led to a broader reach for Bollywood, surpassing what traditional Bollywood films could achieve on their own (p. 14). This expansion of the cultural industry's influence, evident in music performances, film festivals, and art exhibitions (including instances like the 2002 Indian Summer Festival in the UK), has embedded Bollywood in the Western popular imagination (Athique, 2008, p. 300).

Verily, the film "*Slumdog* " offers a consideration of the issue of Third World cities within the context of intensifying global transformations. Ironically, despite their disdain for the film, critics from both ends of the spectrum ultimately converge in their concerns about rampant globalization. Furthermore, they assume that globalization not only generates new narratives but also fosters risk-taking and profit-maximizing individualistic urban subjects. The underlying premise in this critique is evident: the more a story mirrors reality, the truer it is perceived to be. This epistemological perspective casts doubt on the idealized portrayal of *Slumdog's* world.

4.8. Representation and Clichés on South Asians in Film Industry through an Outsider's Perspective

Race and ethnicity-related problems are greatly influenced by the media, particularly in the way that specific racial or ethnic groups are portrayed in the media may affect how such groups are viewed by outsiders as well as by those who belong to those same groups. Little has changed for South Asians over the years; there are consequences to these prejudiced depictions of ethnic populations. However, when South Asians are portrayed in the media favorably, it strengthens the group and society as a whole. Understanding how individuals of color see themselves and how they are seen by others requires an understanding of racialized notions of gender.

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South Asians are stereotyped as being apathetic, intellectually focused, and driven by achievement. In a similar vein, these characters are likewise guilty of supporting racist ideologies and stereotypes while putting up a front of acceptance in the name of diversity. As Stuart Hall (1997) noted, racial and ethnic minorities are frequently portrayed in media in overt or subtly prejudiced ways. In the past, overt representations characterized people using unfavorable and restricting stereotypes. Due to globalization, we are witnessing an increase in the West's appropriation of South Asian culture through the sale of items like mendhi, bindis, and even the unassuming 'haldi doodh', a traditional Indian beverage made with turmeric and milk that is now more commonly known in the West as 'golden milk' or rather 'golden milk latte.' Other examples include the growing popularity of yoga studios and the use of Indian instruments in Western pop music (Hall, 1997).

Consider the song "Jai Ho," (You are My Destiny) which was written by Indian musician A.R. Rahman for the movie *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008). In 2009, the Pussycat Dolls reworked the song into an American pop version (Thakore, 2016). According to Rastogi (2010), the success of the movie *SDM* has aided in Indians' ascent to the status of the next major ethnic group in popular culture. While there have been more instances of non-whites being represented in the media since the 1970s, these representations continue to uphold "otherness" by showing non-whites as having traits that are outside of white racial standards (cited in Hall, 2003). Nonetheless, the nature of South Asian American depictions is constantly changing and remains controversial, despite the obvious rise of South Asian acting and writing talent in Hollywood.

More to the point, the movie shrinks and widens the global picture of the majority by providing information but never presenting a complete, flawless image, which is normal representation for underprivileged areas. *Slumdog Millionaire* was a delightful watch while showing the grim reality of children born into poverty. Its song and dance, its colors, and its romantic core. It gave the populace what they want, confirming and musicalizing their worst preconceptions about India. But most significantly, it brought India back into the spotlight as a location for Western

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projection through its environments, cuisine, or occasionally even through its people. Such kind of these movies had a significant influence on diaspora cinema as well. They frequently turn to become the benchmarks by which production companies and viewers with a preponderance of white people assess a film's success. When making tales for people like them in the West, South Asian filmmakers may have a variety of emotions about the white filmmakers' works; they may feel intense admiration for some and apathy for others.

Significantly, South Asian filmmakers' and audiences' expectations are shaped by the resources accessible to us. And a significant portion of the institutional machinery interested in South Asians is devoted to a certain genre of narrative (Agarwal,2022). Yet it wasn't until one truly viewed the film that the glossy exterior of its vibrant color scheme and action-packed plot began to crumble for many .Because the film was a confrontation rather than a means of escape. It felt inappropriate to portray the movie as some obviously brilliant, lovely thing. The viewers of such films, especially those who choose not to read any further, can passively learn about the reality of living in poverty and under corrupt regimes by watching them. They can't only be believed on the surface. That would imply that a tale this terrible is just for amusement. It was produced by a white British director and loosely based on the English-language Indian novel *Q & A* by a white British writer.

In a similar vein, South Asians give off the impression of being a captive market for Western perceptions of the region. One must pay attention to the softening of colonialism in a lot of British and American media. Frequently, talk of colonialism or imperialism is either totally absent or is dismissed with a hand wave. White filmmakers that employ South Asia in their storylines stifle the other and exclude them when casting them. They've done something quite brilliant by repurposing South Asia as a stage for Orientalist fantasies. White filmmaking snatches the country's images and shapes it for Western consumption rather than stealing products and money.

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Moving now to the gist of representation in *SDM* film, while you may be inclined to believe so, it's important to recognize that India is more than just slums, poverty, and suffering. These aspects merely reflect one facet of Indian society. It's crucial not to present the movie's depiction of India as an entirely "authentic" representation of the country, as this would be misleading for the audience. Rather than getting caught up in debates about authenticity and the potential influence of Western figures like Danny Boyle on marketing, distribution, and production, one should remember that the primary goal of a movie, or any artistic medium, is to amplify and emphasize to convey a message, and it's essential to acknowledge that when nearly half of India's population is considered impoverished, the portrayal in the film can hardly be deemed wholly accurate. According to Rodanthi Tzanelli, it transitions from a bleak portrayal of a city ravaged by migration, national division, and inequality. The film's creative choices align with Western artistic preferences, including a reduction in the melodramatic elements typically associated with Bollywood, the inclusion of Indian diaspora actors, and the presentation of social realist themes simplified into a clear-cut struggle between good and evil (cited in Christian & Misrahi-Barak, 2011, pp.15-29). Notably, the film portrays Dharavi, despite its high literacy rates, as predominantly illiterate, which has sparked criticism.

Ostensibly, the popularity of *Slumdog Millionaire* might suggest a departure from this conventional formula. Each question in the film triggers a flashback, creating suspense as we are unsure when the crucial information will surface, and unveiling Jamal's responses. Despite the apparent formulaic nature of the plot, it manages to captivate the viewers with its strong narrative hooks and well-developed characters, making all care about them rather than the film's self-conscious and calculated design. What makes this narrative particularly intriguing is its effort to convey the harsh truths of urban poverty in India through a set of techniques more suited to lighthearted musical theater. While certain scenes, particularly those depicting disturbing violence against children, are deeply unsettling, they are juxtaposed with a central romantic storyline that remains fundamentally optimistic.

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It's important to acknowledge that real underprivileged Indian children can find moments of joy and romance in their lives. Even as the film portrays life in a Mumbai slum as undeniably challenging, it does so with a stylized, almost Dickensian form of adversity, where youngsters unite in groups under the guidance of a Fagin-like figure and guided by cunning individuals (Boyle, 2008,26:18-27:35).

Despite its efforts to sidestep significant political consequences, *Slumdog Millionaire* remains hard to dislike, thanks in part to its sincere intentions. While the movie highlights the Hindu-Muslim conflict in Jamal's youth, it also revolves around Jamal's connection to a Qur'anic prophecy. Just as the Oscars fulfill the collective dream of seeing artists rise amid wealth and fame, this film also tap into the aspirations of working-class individuals for affluence. In the very least, the numerous awards garnered by Danny Boyle's *SDM* could signal an increasing fascination with international cinema. Regardless, there is only a minor resemblance. Punathambekar(2013) highlights that this movie marked a pivotal moment by demonstrating to Hollywood studios that films featuring India and Indian protagonists could resonate with a global audience, not restricted to people of South Asian heritage, both in the United States and beyond (p.255). Furthermore, he asserts that this film paved the way for the emergence of fresh South Asian voices and faces in the U.S., exemplified by figures such as Kaling, Aziz Ansari, and now Hasan Minhaj. He also contends that India has not yet received the recognition it deserves in Western film and television, and Hollywood's perception of India varies significantly between viewing it as a lucrative box office market and a source of talent and innovative concepts. With India ranking as the second-most profitable market after China, it is deemed ripe for distribution and co-production collaborations.

However, Punathambekar (2005) emphasizes that there is still a considerable journey ahead in terms of storytelling. It's important to remember that when India-related films gain global recognition, like *Slumdog Millionaire*, they often stem from English-language source material designed for an international viewership (pp.

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151-173). Consequently, the prevalent themes in these movies tend to revolve around depicting India as a land of profound spiritual experiences or delving into the controversial genre known as "**poverty porn.**" Think about the numerous books focusing on Mumbai's squalid slums or New Delhi's stark social disparities. It goes without saying that India's true essence extends far beyond these subjects. Most films like these are uncommon rather than common, and it seems that the general Western audience is not quite prepared to embrace narratives about everyday Indians. However, if these movies were made available on platforms like Netflix and promoted alongside other Indian content with a historical theme, American viewers might be more inclined to explore such material. Furthermore, there is the potential concern of how this film may shape the perceptions of other nations towards India.

In the wake of the remarkable success of *Slumdog Millionaire* in the United States, Hollywood studios have been keen to establish partnerships with Bollywood filmmakers. This achievement, based on an Indian novel and shot in India with Indian talent, is seen as a legendary moment that opened the door for an industry producing over 1,000 films annually and selling more than 3 billion tickets to enter the Hollywood scene. As a result, there has been a surge in creative and business collaborations between Hollywood production companies, studios, and celebrities, and their counterparts in Bollywood. Moreover, there is a belief that Indian filmmakers will capture the interest of their American counterparts, and the United States will have a strong appetite for Indian cinema, thanks to the success of *SDM* which clinched eight Academy Awards, including the coveted Best Picture accolade. The film industries in the US and India naturally complement each other. As stated by Amit Khanna, the chairman of Reliance Big Entertainment, "India, being a democracy with a substantial movie-going audience and an open entertainment policy devoid of government restrictions, presents a fertile ground. We aim to not only produce Hollywood films but also cultivate a global market for Indian films, content, and talent." Big Entertainment, one of India's fastest-growing entertainment companies, has entered into a debt-for-equity deal worth \$1.2 billion

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with Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks SKG, spanning 36 films over a six-year period. "We allow Hollywood's creative genius more breathing space," (Timmons, 2008). A potential partnership between Bollywood and Hollywood remains unlikely, particularly because recent Hindi films distributed by Walt Disney and Warner Brothers have faced commercial failure in the Indian market over the past six months. Uday Shankar, the CEO of Star India, a media network under the ownership of Fox, has raised doubts about whether "Slumdog Millionaire" would have received the same level of attention had it been helmed by an Indian director, given that it was directed by a British filmmaker (Timmons, 2008).

Another iconic representation of Indian culture and its essence is the fleeting scene depicting children deeply absorbed in a game of cricket. This popular sport, widely played in India's slums, stands as a powerful symbol of Indian culture (Boyle, 2008, 5:35) and Beaufoy's choice to include this scene subtly and effectively communicates to the viewers that the film's core theme revolves around India, aiming to provide a genuine and authentic portrayal of the nation. However, this authentic depiction of India takes a tragic and heartbreaking turn when Jamal and Salim arrive to find their mother's tragic passing.

Mainstream films like *Slumdog Millionaire* play a significant role in shaping the way many people perceive India's geographical and societal aspects. While the movie does shed light on a level of poverty that its intended audience rarely encounters, director Danny Boyle presents it through a distinctly Western lens. This Western perspective leads to the exoticization of India and the adoption of an American-style narrative, resulting in a distorted portrayal of poverty and a problematic association of Mumbai's slums with the entire nation. The term "slum" itself carries immediate connotations of squalor, filth, and overcrowding. Many have accused Boyle of producing exploitative content that sensationalizes poverty, presenting Indian slum life as a spectacle for curious Western viewers. By glamorizing their circumstances, Boyle portrays the slum residents as outsiders or "the Other." Even the film's cinematography techniques seem to reinforce the marginalization of the impoverished.

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As a matter of fact, one finds a connection with Jamal's charisma and his search for a lost love, rather than feeling a connection with his living circumstances. Above all, the audience feels a sense of self-assurance that, through watching the movie, they have enriched their cultural understanding. When questioned about whether the movie's resonance and attraction are linked to people's fascination with India and Mumbai, Boyle stated that this was indeed one of his motivations for creating the film. The initial reactions to the film primarily focused on its captivating storyline and the impressive portrayal of its characters. A common secondary observation was the film's intriguing nature, with many noting that it shed light on a facet of India previously unfamiliar to them. In fact, one person went so far as to assert that *SDM* transcended the typical Hollywood formula and instead offered an authentic depiction of reality. This acclaimed Hollywood movie exemplifies cultural hybridization, a sociocultural process where diverse cultures come into contact and blend with one another (Nongkhai & Phakdeephasook ,2017, p. 189). The film was designed for both Western audiences and non-resident Indians (Cox & Proffitt ,2014, pp. 49-50). This movie is a great example of “cultural hybridity”. This film combines aspects of both Hollywood and Bollywood movies.

In this respect, Boyle employs a storytelling technique inspired by Bollywood movies known as the "maturation cut," illustrating characters' progression from childhood to adulthood. This method aids in revealing their journey into adulthood (Cavallero ,2017, p. 840). The use of flashbacks, a characteristic often seen in Hindi films, is also evident in the portrayal of Jamal's childhood (Cox & Proffitt, 2014, p. 51). The film introduces hurdles in the paths of Jamal and Latika, impeding their union but eventually leading to their reunion (Cox & Proffitt, 2014, p. 50). Additionally, the movie incorporates elements reminiscent of Hollywood films by employing various film techniques such as parallel editing, dual storylines, flashforwards, adaptation, emotional connections, and flashbacks (Khorana ,2010, p. 3).

However, the film is seen as a manifestation of the director's orientalist ideology, wherein he seeks to distinguish the West from the East, consequently

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portraying Indians as irrational, superstitious, barbaric, and brutal. Boyle's attention in the movie is primarily directed towards the slums, rustic life, religious conflicts, coarse language, and behavior, as well as the ineffectual administration and security systems, all of which do not accurately represent the modern reality of India. The answer can be attributed to Boyle's historical background; as a British individual with an orientalist ideology, he interprets and presents the society depicted in the narrative through an orientalist lens. Consequently, he imposes this ideology on the film's storyline, characters, and dialogue, predominantly showcasing the darker, more pessimistic, and unsightly aspects while largely neglecting the positive aspects of modern India.

Actually, the film's meticulous attention to even the smallest details of life in this Mumbai slum highlights the precision of its direction. However, it primarily concentrates on portraying the Indian slums. In her article on the movie, Christie Davies (2009) emphasizes this aspect " The most frequently expressed negative criticism of the film was that it showed India and Mumbai in a bad light: as a country full of squalid slums. In Mumbai itself, there were fears that the film would dent the city's image as a successful center of trade, finance, and modern industry, where the wealthy live in splendid apartments overlooking the sea. In the background, there may well even be a fear that the sight of the slums will put off foreign investors as it has in dismal Detroit (p.31) .Davies offers a critique of how a Western director portrays the Indian setting and characters, while also highlighting potential risks that India might encounter as a result of such a portrayal. Likewise, she expresses the view that individuals of Indian origin residing beyond Mumbai have criticized the movie, viewing it as a portrayal of Western condescension towards their nation and an unveiling of third-world underdevelopment (p.32).

Furthermore, Boyle's choice of the title "Slumdog" has provoked strong negative reactions from individuals residing on the outskirts of society. In his article, Gautaman Bhaskaran (2009) documents the widespread discontent surrounding this title. He cites the perspective of Nicholas Almeida, a social activist and resident of Mumbai's slums, who has taken legal action by filing a complaint in

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a city court against Boyle, producer Christian Colson, and the distributor, alleging that the title is both detrimental and discriminatory. Almeida articulates his objection by stating, "[...] when the British ruled India, they referred to Indians as 'dogs.' Why would we want to label these underprivileged children depicted in the film as 'dogs' six decades after gaining independence?" (cited in Gautaman Bhaskaran, 2009,p.2).

It is possible that if the movie had been titled "Slum Boy Millionaire," it may not have garnered the same level of global popularity. However, the use of the term 'dog' appears to align with the stereotypes that colonial powers have historically associated with third-world countries like India. Salman Rushdie (2009), a critic and author, also offered his thoughts on the film. He examined the film from a new perspective and made a highly critical opinion about it. He states in his article "A Fine Pickle": In an interview conducted at the Telluride film festival last autumn, Boyle, when asked why he had chosen a project so different from his usual material, answered that he had never been to India and knew nothing about it, so, he thought this project was a great opportunity. Listening to him, I imagined an Indian film director making a movie about New York low-life and saying that he had done so because he knew nothing about New York and had indeed never been there. He would have been torn limb from limb by critical opinion. But for a first world director to say that about the third world is considered praiseworthy, an indication of his artistic daring. The double standards of post-colonial attitudes have not yet wholly faded away (p.2).

Rushdie highlights the challenges that arise when a Western director attempts to grasp the Eastern context, making it difficult for them to accurately depict the East. Mexican director, Alejandro Gonzalez Inárritu, voiced the hope that such recognition meant Hollywood was entering a new era. "In the global age," he said, "films must show the point of view of others, with respect and compassion, not as caricature." [...] That is exactly what Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* has done so splendidly, despite the misplaced rumblings of some Indian critics that it is "poverty porn." And, true to Gonzalez Inárritu's hopes, this love story about class

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and social mobility on the dark side of shining India [. . .]Echoing a similar sentiment, President Barack Obama pledged in his first TV interview—with the Arab satellite channel Al Arabiya—that under his watch would “listen with respect and not dictate” to the world (cited in Bhandari,2021,p.9).

Notably, representations encompass various forms, including vivid images, tangible reproductions, live performances, and lifelike simulations. Moreover, representation can be defined as the deliberate act of presenting facts or information with the intent to influence or impact the actions of others. As Ann Marie Maldonado notes, this term also carries significant political implications. Representation, in a broader sense, involves the creation of depictions of elements of 'reality,' including individuals, locations, objects, events, cultural identities, and abstract concepts (cited in Pujol-Tost, 2011). The film is clearly dedicated to helping the audience empathize with the characters as individuals and to recognize the humanity in their everyday lives, rather than reducing them to mere objects meant for the sake of entertainment. It became evident that *Slumdog's* success in America was influenced by a lack of knowledge and limited exposure to genuine Indian cinema.

The central focus of the Hollywood movie *Slumdog Millionaire* was the representation of Indian society, sparking a heated debate about its accuracy in depicting India through a Western lens, a concern shared by Indian scholars as well. Regrettably, for real-life individuals facing poverty in India, telling such a story is a formidable challenge as it is a theatrical spectacle based on fictional assumptions. Essentially, when a Western-directed film about India garners critical acclaim in the West, two interconnected phenomena tend to emerge: it often perpetuates negative stereotypes about the country and shapes how India is portrayed in popular culture. Saumitra Jha, for example, asserts that slums, like the ones portrayed in the popular movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, are intricate communities with diverse income strata, intricate interethnic dynamics, and political patronage systems (Murphy, 2009).A significant portion of India's urban upper class is deeply upset by the portrayal of their nation's less glamorous aspects in a public manner. They have every reason to

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take pride in the achievements their country has made over the past two decades. However, the act of romanticizing poverty once more, this time by a Western director, exposes the negative aspects of Indian society, rooted in stereotypical assumptions. Nevertheless, it remains a harsh reality that individuals born into poverty often find it exceedingly challenging to escape that situation, regardless of their intelligence or diligence.

4.8.1. Portrayal of (real) India through a Western Lens

Despite the potential symbolism associated with the movie's protagonist, Jamal Malik, his success can be attributed to a blend of intelligence, relentless effort, and sheer luck. However, it raises the question of what fate awaits other children who may not be as fortunate. Are they destined to endure the hardships of life from a young age, simply because some are blessed with opportunities while others are not? This harsh reality is reflective of India, where many individuals raised in slums are condemned to less prosperous lives, often resorting to crime or begging on the streets of Mumbai. Nonetheless, *Slumdog Millionaire* is a film that seamlessly blurs the lines between fiction and reality, drawing inspiration from well-documented real-life situations. It does so with the intention of conveying a profound message about collaborative efforts between various societies, organizations, and grassroots associations working together to provide essential healthcare, education, waste management, and address pressing issues such as child abuse and violence against women. Beyond the grim specter of poverty, these communities possess lives filled with value, warmth, compassion, and ingenuity that thrive within their own society. British-Indian author Salman Rushdie expressed his disapproval of the film, deeming it overly romantic and ultimately shallow. He also criticized the director, highlighting the director's lack of firsthand knowledge about India. The film might give Western audiences the impression that they have gained some insight into India, its poverty issues, and its culture, presented in a typical Bollywood style, which often depicts an escapist life in a negative light.

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Unfortunately, this portrayal can reinforce existing stereotypes about India, focusing on dirt and poverty while neglecting to showcase the modern India with its economic achievements and the brighter aspects of its reverse brain-drain phenomenon. Nevertheless, despite the film's surface being adorned with common clichés and stereotypical tropes that hark back to traditional East-West perceptions, the disparity between India's rhetoric and actual conditions remains stark. The representation of India in both Indian and Western cinema has consistently been a source of controversy. Some of these foreign cinematic portrayals have tended to glorify the most negative aspects of India's culture and society, contributing to a negative perception of a polluted India. However, *SDM* stands out as a compelling narrative with an intriguing plot that attempts to shed light on the real India. The film exposes the harsh realities faced by youngsters from these slums, including religious violence and child abuse. Nevertheless, in India, the portrayal of Dharavi residents as "slumdogs" has sparked significant controversy, as India has a historical sensitivity to depictions of its lower socioeconomic classes and their profound struggles, especially when the term "Slumdog" was used, which was met with widespread disapproval both within India and internationally.

However, various depictions in Indian films and other representations have spotlighted the darker facets of the nation, its slums, poverty, crime, and societal disparities" (Lau & Mendes, 2012/2013,p.138). This movie highlights Indian characters at the forefront, diverging from their typical background roles, portraying their experience with poverty that starkly contrasts the notions of 'grace' or 'spirituality.' Instead, poverty in these films is depicted as leading to violence, crime, and exploitation, often centered around the recurring theme of child abduction.

As Narain summarizes, the film's commentary touches on several important issues, including the exploitation of poverty, voyeuristic tourism in slums, a portrayal that evokes guilt from imperialism, the continuation of post-colonial inequalities, exposing and celebrating Bombay's darker sides, a visually striking film that is both brilliantly uplifting and a misrepresentation, a (anti-)Indian

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cinematic piece, and an expression of the fervor surrounding Bollywood (darkmatter,2009).

Desai (2011) observes that criticism regarding the absence of genuineness often arises from factions in India striving to project a modern, glamorous portrayal of "India shining" globally, dismissing any depictions of poverty in Western movies as indicative of Orientalism(p.77).This critique overlooks the reality that Hindi popular cinema has frequently addressed poverty-related themes in the past. Additionally, it disregards the fact that Boyle's film explicitly pays tribute to a Hindi film, *Deewar* (Yash Chopra, 1995, featuring Amitabh Bachchan), focused on the urban underworld. Narain also raises the question of whether this debate would have even occurred if Danny Boyle's ethnic background had been different(darkmatter,2009) . In the context of *Slumdog Millionaire*, Arundhati Roy (2003) argues that the contrasting portrayals of 'Dark India' and 'Shining India' aren't necessarily in opposition. She suggests that the film doesn't debunk the myth of 'India shining'; rather, it transforms the unglamorous aspects of India into another commodity in the market (cited in Goodfellow,2019). This viewpoint aligns with Indian actor Amitabh Bachchan's criticism, who disapproved of the exploitative representation of poverty in the movie, accusing it of sensationalizing and packaging Indian slum life for the curiosity of Western audiences.

The film significantly increased global awareness of Dharavi's slums, influencing how the West perceives the Indian subcontinent. Ananya Roy(2010) goes further to argue that the depiction of the slum in the film has become a symbol that represents India as a whole(cited in Goodfellow, 2019). Deepika Bahri(2003), linking poverty with the established dichotomy between Europe and the Orient, suggests that depictions of poverty and the portrayal of "the disorderly, malodorous mass of others" can serve to perpetuate notions of western supremacy (as cited in Mendes &Lau, 2015,p.711). However, this alone might not entirely elucidate the prevalence of 'Dark India' narratives, which emphasize crime, violence, and corruption. Despite the charitable intent to raise awareness about life conditions in Dharavi, research involving participants reveals the enduring presence of

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exoticizing narratives in how the slum is perceived. Rushdie's contemplation highlights a significant aspect contributing to the appeal of 'Dark India'; the perception that genuine India is synonymous with poverty. This notion is reinforced by studies conducted among tourists who frequent 'authentic' locations such as Dharavi.

Seemingly, in a 2009 article on dark matter, Atticus Narain, in discussions concerning the hype and responses to *Slumdog Millionaire*, questioned whether this portrayal from the viewpoint of slums might prompt Bollywood to reconsider its preoccupation with affluent power, consumerism, and Western diasporic life. Contemporary depictions of India as a realm of impoverishment in films continue to reflect the enduring influence of the orientalist discourse, using the concept of difference as a tool of authority (Bhabha,1994,p.100). These representations perpetuate the dichotomies of east/west, modern/primitive, rational/irrational, and ordered/disordered, reminiscent of the colonial discourse.

The way in which Indians reacted to this movie provides a noteworthy illustration of how cultural appropriation can stir different emotions. While a number of notable individuals, including filmmakers, academics, and even some politicians, openly condemned the film for perpetuating a Western distortion of India that they felt misrepresented its true essence, the majority of everyday Indians responded quite favorably to the movie. It didn't just receive a warm welcome from the local Indian audience but also found a positive connection with the global Indian diaspora. Critics scorn it as "poverty voyeurism" or "slum exploration" for depicting India as a tumultuous, extremism-ridden, litter-filled, and squalid region. Naturally, there is a substantial element of reality in this representation, even as India's privileged class vehemently rejects it while simultaneously daydreaming about the country's path towards a technologically advanced and prosperous future. This is the reason why such transnational film has generated such resentment. It serves as an illustration of Orientalism, a concept that portrays the Orient as a partly mythical construct, fundamentally representing a Western approach to exerting control,

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reshaping, and asserting dominance over the Orient. However, a box-office success easily outweighs critical acclaim.

4.8.2. Tracking the Bollywoodian Effect in Representing Authentic India's Slums

Bollywood's evolution remains unpredictable, as observed in earlier chapters. To comprehend its conflicting trajectories and define its identity, we must swiftly examine two distinct paths it has taken in the twenty-first century. These two current themes include how Hollywood portrays Bollywood and how contemporary Hindi popular culture increasingly reflects changes often associated with Westernization. A pertinent example in this context is Danny Boyle's 2006 adaptation of Vikas Swarup's novel *Q & A* into the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, which provides compelling instances of stereotyping Indian society, as outlined by Cardon (Cardon, 2010, pp. 150-165). Moreover, it's worth noting that numerous exceptional books have been adapted into remarkable films, many of which have received prestigious accolades like the Oscars.

India, particularly Bollywood, has witnessed the transformation of numerous Indian novels into outstanding films. While this phenomenon may not necessarily entail one-sided exploitation by neo-colonialist Hollywood, it raises questions about what South Asian cinemas stand to gain from this transpacific exchange and whether a mutually beneficial outcome is feasible. While analyzing this visual work, there are a lot of gritty aspects that need to be addressed. The use of transnational cinema often results in a reduced emphasis on the aesthetic, political, and economic consequences. This chapter aims to highlight the intricate connections among non-Hollywood film sectors by shifting the spotlight away from Hollywood's exclusive influence on global culture. Cultural Studies approaches the film as a cultural object, employing sociological methods to delve into the sociology of cinema production, distribution, and consumption across diverse societal contexts, encompassing both rural and urban settings. Consequently, *SDM* endeavors to investigate the fresh stereotypes associated with India that better align

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with the expectations and imaginations of contemporary audiences. This film incorporates these novel depictions of India, including cricket, call centers, Bollywood with its celebrity worship, poverty, slums, and, notably, the Taj Mahal.

Although *Slumdog Millionaire* has been examined from various angles, including its portrayal as a reimagining of romance within a postmodern and transcultural context (Duncan ,2011) and its reflection on the effects of post-national globalization (Mukherjee, 2013), the primary focus of scholarly discourse has centered on the film's depiction of poverty and slum life. This aspect of the film has garnered significant attention in academic circles, with notable contributions from Chandra (2013), Mendes (2010), and Sengupta (2013). One of the most captivating aspects of this success is its depiction of what is often considered the "true India," a portrayal seldom showcased on screen due to its focus on the poverty prevalent in the country.

This sentiment is echoed in numerous reviews and audience reactions. For example, in her film review, Jenna Roberts argues that *Slumdog Millionaire* offers a level of authenticity that surpasses most documentaries and reveals the harsh realities of life in India (cited in Dyson, 2012). These claims can, to some extent, be attributed to the film's distinctive visual style, characterized by the frequent use of handheld digital cameras in constant motion. Consequently, the film's cinematographic style, combined with the presence of actual slum children as actors, contributes to the perception of realism associated with *Slumdog Millionaire*. This authenticity, in turn, fuels the curiosity and fascination surrounding the portrayal of slum life (Valančiūnas, 2017). Mendes, in her report, highlights how a guide from *Reality Tours and Travel* noted that "everyone is talking about Slumdog" and that these film-inspired tourists want to experience the authentic Dharavi (Mendes,2010, p. 478). This reference is crucial for understanding our argument regarding how the slum has become a symbol of genuine India.

Consequently, the link established between the slum and the idea of an authentic India suggests that when tourists explore Dharavi, they tend to equate the

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entire country of India with the portrayal of this slum in movies, thereby associating India primarily with its impoverished aspect (Clini, 2021, p. 30). This paradox becomes evident when we acknowledge that the Dharavi depicted in films is, in fact, a composite representation of various Mumbai slums, including Juhu and Versova (Roy, 2011, p. 225).

The harsh lives of slum dwellers are portrayed in this movie, highlighting their struggles. Beyond its pictorial representation, however, the film's ending offers a deeper lesson. Although at first glance it seems to be centered on the battle to survive in the slums, it actually symbolizes the greater range of struggles and injustices that urban life imposes on the poor. For individuals living in urban slums, even getting a basic meal can be extremely difficult, to the point where some turn to illegal activity in order to make ends meet. Anna Cristina Mendes (2010) contextualizes Boyle's film within the broader trend of using poverty in India for artistic purposes, exploring how these representations circulate within the cultural sphere and contribute to the growing consumption of India-related narratives (p.472). Her perspective underscores that the movie portrays urban poverty, offering a glimpse into the harsh realities of slums in Mumbai and how individuals navigate their challenging living conditions.

While most of the tour's destinations have no direct link to the film and seem to be included primarily to enhance the tour package's appeal, the descriptions of the Mumbai and Agra segments are enriched with direct references to the movie. For example, the tour offers the opportunity to explore various iconic locations featured in the movie, such as the Chhatrapati Shivaji railway station (where the closing song "Jai Ho" was filmed) and the Taj Mahal (where Jamal and Salim served as tour guides). However, it also encourages participants to connect with and gain insights into the lives of "street children and slum dwellers," fostering a deeper understanding of how they navigate their existence. Apart from visiting the slums, these tour providers often incorporate a "Bollywood immersion" into their package deals.

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Initially, this pairing might appear to be somewhat paradoxical. For example, enterprises like Bollywood Tours present a "Bollywood with Slum Tour package," Tourradar offers a "Mumbai tour including a visit to Dharavi Slum and a Bollywood Tour," while Magical Mumbai Tours showcases a "Bollywood Tour combined with a Dharavi Slum Tour," among other similar offerings. Instead, the focus shifts to how the film is repackaged for a global audience of tourists who, even if they don't categorize the movie as quintessentially Indian, still associate it with Bollywood cinema. Consequently, they start linking Bollywood with slums as the two most prominent symbols of India. Furthermore, the connection tour operators establish between these two elements unveils a marketing strategy aimed at capitalizing on both, rooted in what can be described as a strategic form of "re-Orientalism" (Lau & Mendes, 2011).

The 2008 Oscar-winning film appears to evoke strong emotions that encourage tourism in the case of Dharavi tours. The merging of slum tours and Bollywood tours appears to be a seamless match. Given Bollywood's role as a portrayal of Indian culture and sentiments, tourists have the chance to explore cinematic pathways, which might lead them through the slum, and to engage in the "Bollywood experience," involving experimenting with dance steps. The increasing depiction of slums as a reflection of authentic Indian life, especially in connection with Bollywood films, naturally transforms them into a significant attraction for tourists who are drawn to India's cinematic world. These two elements are perceived as representing two distinct aspects of "authentic" India, albeit in contrasting ways.

Moreover, *Slumdog Millionaire* expertly emphasizes and maintains a sharp distinction between the contemporary and the traditional, which is most evident in the film through the juxtaposition of Mumbai's architectural landscape. Mitra, the writer behind the book titled *India Through the Western Lens* (1999), delves into the portrayal of Indians in over 60 films spanning several decades. Within the book, he also scrutinizes contemporary Western perspectives on Indian immigrants and the influential role that films play in shaping public perceptions.

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Indeed, Mitra (1999) observed, "In line with the tradition of storytelling about India, from '*Gunga Din*' to '*City of Joy*,' Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan have effectively transformed the brown-skinned child into an enduring source of inspiration for audiences in plush American multiplexes, as they reflect on the plight of the underprivileged on the other side of the globe" (p. 247). He pointed out that while the film *SDM* incorporates contemporary changes in India compared to the earlier film *City of Joy*, it falls within the same category of movies that exemplify Hollywood's depiction of India. He notes that the thriving Bollywood film industry directly influenced the aesthetics of *Slumdog Millionaire*, drawing on the recurrent theme in iconic 1970s Bollywood films of "running children escaping from adversity by leaping onto trains, getting separated, and then embarking on a lifelong quest to reunite," a motif exemplified in movies like *Yadon Ki Barat* (1973, directed by Nassir Hussain), which *SDM* repackages for its 2009 audience. However, when the perspective of the movie comes from someone who is not part of the culture it is portraying, how can it convincingly convey its supposed truths, such as being an authentic Indian narrative presented in a realistic manner? In fact, viewers generate their own interpretations from the intricate combinations of elements, depictions, and engagements that comprise a movie. What sets this film apart is its ability to explore these issues without seeming didactic or moralistic. Essentially, it stands as a distinctive cinematic work, drawing inspiration from a fusion of sources like the documentary "Born into Brothels," all within the backdrop of the Indian adaptation of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire". The film's commitment to authenticity is evident in its casting decisions and its sincere approach, eschewing the use of famous actors solely for the purpose of winning awards.

So, this film is a cinematic creation aimed at telling a story, and as a result, it may not accurately represent the authentic essence of India. The movie has been subject to scrutiny regarding its portrayal of India, with some arguing that it tends to emphasize negative aspects and stereotypes. Nevertheless, it's important to recognize that the film has received critical acclaim for its acting, direction, and

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storytelling. Moreover, many critics contend that the movie doesn't aim to provide a comprehensive portrayal of India, but instead, it focuses on a specific narrative within a particular setting or among a specific group of people. Regardless, it's crucial to keep in mind that films primarily serve as a form of entertainment and artistic expression, and they should not be seen as an exact reflection of reality. While there are indeed impoverished regions, even the most affluent and advanced nations also harbor underprivileged communities, albeit with some variations. Films frequently tend to concentrate on India's poverty, often overlooking the country's rich cultural heritage, contemporary landmarks, thriving industries, a burgeoning middle class with rising economic influence, and bustling airports.

In fact, the film tends to link slum life with what appears to be a common Indian socio-economic condition. However, upon closer examination, one might interpret the film's underlying message as having a condescending tone towards a country that is less economically, socially, and politically developed in comparison to the perceived superiority of the Western world. Throughout the movie, there is a recurring theme that subtly references the 'American Dream.' This theme is effectively communicated through the use of powerful symbols and the filmmaker's profound understanding of consumer psychology. In the context of this discussion, due to how *Slumdog Millionaire* portrays life in the slums, India is now portrayed in popular culture as a place characterized by corruption, squalor, and poverty, as endorsed by the elite class depicted in the film. The central motifs explored in the movie center on the notion of 'eternal law.' The film commences and concludes by delving into the concept of destiny, often referred to as 'kismet,' to underscore the Orientalist theme, which suggests that Jamal's life experiences are predetermined.

It also introduces the concepts of destiny and karma, which have their origins in Indian culture, but they are portrayed within a Western framework. In this movie Boyle intertwines images of poverty with captivating representations of Indian culture, including its religious aspects. The movie showcases the tensions between conflicting religious groups in a way that romanticizes them, presenting a skewed perspective of the developing world as something distant or uncharted. In this

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scenario, Boyle takes on the perspective of an onlooker, and the problem arises from the fact that the people he depicts in the movie lack any chance to communicate their thoughts, making the audience depend on his selective depictions.

Conversely, there were viewers who supported *SDM* 's depiction of India. Their responses suggest that they connect the poverty in slum life with India's cultural identity and believe that this aspect of India should continue to be depicted. Based on this analysis, it appears that the film does not undermine a more nuanced comprehension of India's socio-economic diversity. In fact, it may, to some extent, contribute to enhancing this understanding. Evidently, the team of work opted for *Slumdog Millionaire* because they believed it had something significant to offer in terms of cross-cultural comprehension.

Viewed through an anthropological lens, the significance of perception, context, and representation stands out prominently. Perception, often assumed to be entirely natural, is actually greatly shaped by cultural backgrounds. This challenges the misconception that perception is solely an inherent process. The interpretation varies among viewers due to the diverse cultural prisms through which they see it. This newfound recognition may prompt India to reevaluate this phenomenon. The film itself, through its glimpses of the slums, conveys these positive aspects. However, it's crucial to recognize that the film's primary aim is not to comprehend the slums but rather to utilize them as a visually striking backdrop.

The director Boyle himself states, "*Slumdog Millionaire* is a story that transcends borders. Its appeal lies in the significance of an individual starting from humble beginnings with a dream and somehow finding their way to success"(Raj & Sreekumar,2011, pp. 4-13). The film emphasizes universal themes rather than specific cultural traits. However, viewers from other cultural backgrounds, shaped by different systems of meaning and conflict, will interpret the film differently and notice various aspects. The film's most prominent element is often described as "realism and authenticity," even though it takes numerous implausible cinematic

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liberties. Focusing solely on one obscure corner of India and portraying it in a fantastical and enchanting manner cannot accurately represent the entirety of real, authentic India. It's undeniable that India faces issues like poverty, criminal organizations, begging rings, drug trafficking, physical harm, and various forms of abuse, as well as land disputes and communal conflicts. While some might criticize the film for its predictability and sentimentality, these qualities are precisely what the movie aims to achieve. It offers two Westernized perspectives on other cultures, emphasizing aesthetics and cinematic artistry, and in doing so, it has not only propelled careers but also shed light on aspects of filmmakers that were previously unexplored. So that this film presents a portrait of a society in transition, by addressing a pervasive issue found in societies worldwide.

4.8.3. Jai Ho and Bollywood

The movie has effectively maintained the core spirit of the original source material, which captures the hopeful and uplifting atmosphere found in the novel. This is largely achieved through the classic Hollywood-style conclusion where everything falls into place. Valuably, the closing dance sequence, "Jai Ho," adds an element of pure entertainment to the entire narrative, and the author acknowledges the presence of a subtle Bollywood influence throughout the novel. The whole team is mentioning this because of the way the movie concludes, with the credits set to a choreographed musical performance. It might strike you as peculiar that a profound and captivating film would end with a cheesy song and dance.

Factually, the incorporation of the song and the deliberate arrangement of the music contribute to the commercial attraction of the song's depiction for Indian audiences. The song's placement serves as a local touch that compels viewers to participate in a regional form of cinephilia. To enthusiasts of Indian cinema, these songs represent a crucial commercial element of a film, and musical interludes have been a consistent feature in the Hindi film industry for a considerable time. This song sequence extends a warm invitation to both Indian and Western viewers, presenting a visual delight that mirrors the style of a Hindi film. The final musical

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sequence symbolizes the integration of the Indian film industry into American music from a cinematic perspective (Boyle, 2008, 1:53:34).

In this light, Bollywood becomes a symbol of Indianness and serves as an alternative to Hollywood's American-centric approach, particularly in its Third World or postcolonial sensibilities and emotional resonance (Mukherjee, 2013, p. 26). Then, it is through their shared commitment to providing a glimpse of authentic India, beyond *Slumdog*'s references to Bollywood, that one can discern the reasoning behind connecting slum tours with Bollywood tours. As the movie nears its triumphant climax, one finds a momentary break from the overwhelming attention when you revisit the bustling and enchanting streets of Mumbai, which have now descended into turmoil. In this instance, the entire country is observing, with their expectations hinging on the hero's crucial concluding action.

4.9. Characterizing the Cultural Stereotypes

While *Slumdog Millionaire* receives accolades from American audiences, some Indians express dissatisfaction with what they see as another instance of foreign representation that perpetuates stereotypes about their nation, emphasizing issues like poverty, corruption, and the enduring struggle of the impoverished local population. Despite its Mumbai setting, source material from an Indian novel, and the presence of several Indian actors, certain critics argue that the film lacks a genuinely Indian essence. They contend that the film's substantial international success can be primarily attributed to its timely themes that strike a chord with Western viewers.

Boyle and Colson conducted an extensive search across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and India to find the perfect actors who could convincingly portray characters at different life stages in the story while delivering a believable performance in English. They also got acquainted with Loveleen Tandan, an Indian casting director, whose responsibilities expanded beyond merely identifying young talents to include translating and directing them alongside Boyle.

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While many of the young actors from Mumbai's Juhu slum naturally spoke Marathi, a regional Hindi dialect, the intention was always to film the movie in English. Numerous English-speaking actors from more privileged backgrounds were deemed unsuitable for two primary reasons; their appearance and on-camera presence, as well as potential difficulties they might face while shooting in a drastically different neighborhood from their own.

Significantly, the fusion of Indian and international talent in "*Slumdog*," complemented by a mixture of English and Hindi dialogues, has sparked a debate about whether the film should be categorized as an Indian or foreign production. Aseem Chhabra, a cultural critic and associate fellow at the Asia Foundation, noted that Western reviewers tend to fixate on the presence of moments of happiness within the slum (cited in Shresthova, 2008). During the glitzy premiere event, Boyle addressed the critique that the film placed excessive emphasis on topics such as prostitution, crime, and organized begging networks. He clarified that his intention was to depict the extraordinary resilience of Mumbai and the enduring sense of joy that people discover in spite of their challenging circumstances – a profound zest for life.

While some Indians may have mixed sentiments about the movie, experts believe that this uncertainty won't hinder its potential for significant commercial success in India. According to Sengupta (2007), a Mumbai-based film professor, there remains a strong curiosity among Indians to observe how white Westerners portray them, akin to a form of voyeurism (pp.100-118).

Despite some critics expressing skepticism, they highlight previous foreign representations of India that they perceive as inaccurate, distorted, or excessively focused on poverty and destitution.

The film's initial restroom scene for instance, humorously acted out in Hindi by a group of local kids, brought an unexpected burst of energy. This prompted an unplanned decision to move in this direction, a choice that Boyle believes added a notable level of authenticity to the movie. Furthermore, it led us to discover and cast

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three exceptional young talents. Rubina Ali and Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail, who portrayed Salim and Latika, the young characters from the slums, were initially found in those very slums and later, thanks to the production, had the opportunity to attend school (Boyle,2008). He faced significant challenges in his quest to locate the right adult Jamal. Despite auditions spanning across major Indian cities such as Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi, and Chennai, the production team encountered a noteworthy issue: the majority of applicants were either too old or, curiously, did not fit the role's physical requirements. Interestingly, Patel, who ultimately secured the role, hailed from London, making him one of the very few non-locals cast members.

Most of the cast was composed of Mumbai natives. Patel harbored concerns about portraying a character supposedly born and raised in the Mumbai slums. The pressure on him was immense, particularly when it came to adopting the authentic Mumbai accent. Boyle deliberately crafted Jamal and Salim's contrasting personalities to illustrate how their choices steered them along completely different paths. The tragedy of losing their mother impacted each brother uniquely, and even though they both endured early exposure to violence, Jamal retained his inherent goodness while Salim embraced a life of brutality and aggression. Despite their deep affection for each other, Jamal and Salim often clash because Jamal is too kind-hearted for Salim, while Salim's actions are too ruthless for Jamal. There's a fascination with the character and characterization found in this film. Jamal, the main character, embodies the classic archetype of the underdog. This archetype represents a well-known character type often portrayed by renowned actors who embody the physical traits associated with that stereotype.

Moreover, Freida Pinto, the actress selected by Danny for the role of Latika, possessed exceptional beauty and a profound sense of sadness, qualities crucial for her character in the film (Beaufoy,2008). Boyle aimed to convince the audience that the older and younger characters were one and the same individual, making it crucial to have physical and behavioral traits that transcended all three age groups. The actors switched roles, embodying different ages and meticulously referencing

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each other, with Boyle encouraging the ensemble to closely observe one another during rehearsals. Consequently, you will observe that a significant portion of the film primarily focuses on shooting scenes from behind the characters' heads, reinforcing the idea of their unity.

Additionally, in the film, Anil Kapoor, renowned for often portraying antagonists in Bollywood blockbusters, takes on the role of Prem Kumar, a character loosely based on the program's storyline. Kapoor's own journey in the industry started with minor roles and smaller parts before eventually landing significant lead roles in some of Bollywood's most iconic films. His personal experiences made it easier for him to relate to some of the character traits exhibited by Kumar. *Slumdog Millionaire* provides a unique opportunity to experience the essence of India, a feat that, for many fans remains unparalleled by any other foreign-made movie (Buijk, 2010).

Nonetheless, there has been limited attention given to the manner in which viewers perceive and construe the portrayals of Indians and the associated stereotypes within a specific facet of Indian popular culture, primarily in the context of the collaborative efforts between Bollywood Hindi cinema and Hollywood. To date, scholarly efforts have predominantly centered around investigating the influence of media on individuals, commonly referred to as the "media effects." Given that this research aims to delve into the depictions of Westerners in India and their underlying significance, its primary focus centers on the portrayal of Indians.

Interestingly, Indian culture is showcased on a global scale, particularly through the lens of globalization. The most evident manifestation of this globalized culture is witnessed in the call center, where Jamal acquaints himself with American and Western gossip and incorporates these customs during his phone interactions. According to film critic Aseem Chhabra, while watching the movie, he had an immediate realization. However, it's not solely the language that sets these films apart; Chhabra contends that Hinglish films also blend the emotional depth of Bollywood with the narrative sensibilities found in Western cinema. However, as

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the interaction between these two cultural traditions continues to expand, these movies are increasingly attracting viewers (cited in Shresthova,2008).

Looking through an Orientalist lens, it's clear that this film reinforces India's stereotypes. It introduces a unique viewpoint, infusing the storyline with moments of profound hopelessness. However, the director doesn't confine optimism to just the ending; instead, hope intermittently radiates throughout the movie, persisting as a constant element that leaves a lasting impression on the audience. When it eventually bursts forth in full force, it can only be characterized as an exuberant and spectacular display reminiscent of Bollywood's vibrant universe. His postcolonial viewpoint ultimately results in the most readily attainable depiction of the "other." This perspective grants the British director both aesthetic pleasure and an assumed sense of dominance when it comes to the native populations and their cultures.

Despite the considerable praise and the marketing as "the feel-good movie of the decade" at various film festivals, *SDM* did not receive unanimous acclaim. The film also faced criticism, particularly from audiences in India, who were troubled by its depiction, which some saw as a problematic exploitation of poverty. However, it's important to note that the intent here is not to engage in debates about whether individuals from different cultures can discuss cultures beyond their own. For instance, Anjana Mudambi (2013), in her analysis of *Slumdog Millionaire*, offers a fresh and redefined interpretation of Orientalism in the film. She argues that this intimate, public connection transforms the Oriental subject into a commodity, effectively concealing the racial disparities and colonial associations often perpetuated by Orientalist portrayals by wrapping them in conventional fantasies (Mudambi,2013,p.280). This, in turn, transforms the cultural "Other" into a unifying force, fostering a heartfelt global community that celebrates both commonality and diversity.

It also demonstrates how this film can serve as a direct example in the context of discussions on stereotypes, a topic commonly addressed in leading textbooks on intercultural communication. Additionally, it highlights how gathering

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survey data on the opinions of Indians regarding the movie can enhance serious discussions and uphold the cultural perspective. According to Mallinger and Rossy (2003), they assert that movies represent an exceptionally rich medium for exploring culture (p. 609). Furthermore, movies can serve as a valuable intellectual exercise in deciphering and understanding other cultures. Movies also serve as emotional workouts, depicting the aspirations, desires, difficulties, and anxieties of regular individuals. Scholars have discovered that films can promote empathy and the ability to withhold judgment, qualities deemed significant for intercultural competence. Many experts in intercultural studies approach stereotypes with caution, recognizing them as cognitive processes that arise from our limited capacity to process complex information (Dimnik & Felton, 2006, p. 130). This movie offers valuable insights into stereotypes. Consequently, the perceptions of Indian culture and society among many Americans might be heavily influenced by this specific movie.

Certainly, this global work captivates its audience by eliminating the need for a critical distance, effectively adhering viewers to its narrative, and even the swift montages don't allow for reflection but encourage everyone to wholeheartedly connect with the onscreen action. The director, Danny Boyle, discussed the idea of letting go of excessive control and embracing a certain level of innocence. The camera remains constantly in motion, attempting to capture the agile actions of the mostly local and non-professional cast, as well as the unrefined energy of the location, which transforms even the disorder into something endearing. For a Western audience, the fantastical adventure of an orphan from the East, fleeing a series of perilous situations, offers an equally thrilling form of escapism as his pursuit of wealth.

4.10. Critical Reception of the Film

From the moment it was first released, the popular film *Slumdog Millionaire* has achieved immense prosperity worldwide. It has drawn significant notice in print and digital media, sparking a variety of responses, both favorable and unfavorable.

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Critics from international locations, excluding India, have predominantly lauded the movie, emphasizing the novel combination of English and Indian characters, which they contend opens up a wider spectrum of storytelling opportunities. Nonetheless, contrary opinions have surfaced in Western and specific Indian diaspora publications, identifying shortcomings in the film's plot.

By examining the circumstances surrounding the creation and reception of the film and how it translates the book's narrative, the argument seeks to demonstrate that the film's global success hinges on its adept fusion of culturally specific elements and universally resonant themes. In a dramatic twist of fate, the brothers find themselves in front of India's iconic Taj Mahal, now as teenagers, hungry and resourceful. They adapt by becoming guerrilla tourist guides and resort to stealing visitors' shoes for survival. Despite the harsh circumstances, Jamal remains driven by an unwavering desire to return to Mumbai and reunite with Latika.

As the movie nears its triumphant climax, we find a momentary break from the overwhelming attention when we revisit the bustling and enchanting streets of Mumbai, which have now descended into turmoil. In this instance, the entire country is observing, with their expectations hinging on the hero's crucial concluding action. However, we are often asked to temporarily set aside our skepticism when watching a movie, and we all hold a special place in our hearts for "happy endings."

Nonetheless, when some of the film industry fans left the cinema, the anticipated smiles were missing for two main reasons. First, they had come across elements of this film in many other Bollywood movies, possibly in more polished versions. Second, the cultural aspect, particularly the reference to the "dog" part, left many somewhat disconcerted. Danny Boyle's choice to produce a movie focused on the slums of Mumbai is praiseworthy. He not only lived in these regions, but he also filmed there and featured slum children as the primary characters. This demonstrates his philanthropic efforts. Nevertheless, it can also be seen as an

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expression of capitalist and neo-colonialist influences. The primary issue isn't how the West depicts India as a "slum," but rather how certain Indians assimilate this portrayal, particularly through films like this. It's crucial to recognize that, like any other nation, India faces its fair share of difficulties, such as slums, an underworld, poverty, and communal tensions. However, these problems are not exclusive to India, as many other countries contend with their own varieties of social challenges.

Much like the aforementioned, the film received predominantly positive reviews, with USA Today praising it as a captivating and visually engaging adaptation of Vikas Swarup's debut novel *Q & A*, skillfully brought to life by director Danny Boyle and screenwriter Simon Beaufoy. However, there were some unfavorable opinions as well. The San Francisco Chronicle, for instance, noted that the movie only truly found its stride in the final 30 minutes, which, unfortunately, came a bit too late for their liking. Most of the reviews were featured in mainstream tabloid newspapers and magazines, suggesting that the film primarily targeted a demographic of young adults and those aged 16 and older. However, certain film critics expressed their dissatisfaction with the movie, deeming it "very critical of India" and asserting that it perpetuated Western stereotypes. They argued that the film was built on falsehoods at every turn, and they felt embarrassed by its favorable reception in the West.

On the contrary, the overwhelmingly positive reception of *Slumdog Millionaire* accurately mirrors its exceptional quality. Numerous critics and scholars have hailed it as an outstanding movie that, while firmly rooted in an Indian perspective and subtly influenced by Hollywood, remains highly accessible to Western audiences. As noted before, this beloved film continues to uphold traditional cultural values and societal institutions within its moral framework. Many enthusiasts are eager to defend its authenticity and celebrate it as a remarkable cinematic achievement (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004). Another commendation for the movie comes from Ann Hornaday of "The Washington Post", who describes it as a contemporary "rags-to-rajah" story that secured the audience award at the Toronto International Film Festival earlier this year, and it's

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not difficult to see why. Boyle not only openly acknowledges his Western identity but also adopts the perspective of experiencing India from an insider's vantage point (Hornaday, 2008).

Yet, in unifying these observations, the global perspective is sought, aiming for an unmediated representation of reality. However, achieving this can only be accomplished by concealing its external, non-diegetic apparatus from view. Evidently, the film's actors' relative obscurity and its *cinéma vérité* style presented challenges for the film's widespread appeal. A prime illustration of this is the movie's title, "slumdog," a fusion of "slum" and "underdog." Nonetheless, this choice of title failed to resonate positively with numerous Indian viewers, especially those of the Hindu faith, as the term "dog" is profoundly offensive to them. However, apart from the offensive title and the prevalence of the English language, what generated the greatest uproar was the film's depiction of India as being closely associated with severe poverty and inhumane brutality. Nevertheless, it is important to note that even progressive Indian academics, who tend to be wary of nationalistic and elitist rationales for the nation, include their leftist analysis in the overall criticism of this movie. Their perspective, however, sets them apart from others, as they do not think the movie overemphasizes the harsh realities of poverty in the Third World; instead, they contend that it downplays its subject matter.

Strikingly, it has sparked intense debates within both India and the Indian diaspora, evoking a wide array of opinions among critics. While some have lauded the film, others have voiced objections. Criticisms have varied from Jamal's use of British English to the uneven recognition compared to similar Indian-made films. Esteemed figures in the film industry like Aamir Khan, Priyadarshan, and writer-critic Salman Rushdie have offered critical viewpoints. Notably, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, a highly respected Indian filmmaker, has strongly criticized *Slumdog Millionaire*. In an NDTV interview, he expressed his firm disapproval, stating that the film presents an anti-Indian perspective by cleverly merging negative elements of commercial Bombay cinema while perpetuating Western

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stereotypes (Hindu Night Vision ,2009). He vehemently opposes this constructed portrayal.

When one considers how the film was received, it's crucial to note that the movie primarily connected with a Western audience rather than an Indian one. Boyle, in an interview, openly admits, "I didn't want to create a film where Westerners tour India. Yet, being a Westerner myself, I aimed to capture it instinctively and from a subjective perspective, making you feel like you were experiencing it from within. One of the pitfalls in portraying India is succumbing to the 'wow' factor, treating it as a mere spectacle to gawk at. They detest that, and people requested us not to go down that path" (cited in Bhandari, 2021). In this context, Boyle candidly recognizes his Western identity and the potential for objectification associated with being an outsider. Contrary to the widespread excitement, as the film presents a narrative that disempowers the impoverished, potentially contradicting its professed message of social justice. This depiction has left many Indians dismayed as it challenges their perception of their nation as an emerging economic powerhouse and a shining example of democracy in the Third World.

Comparing the responses of various nations to the film which was filmed entirely in India and received funding from both the British and American governments, is a fascinating endeavor. In an interview with Danny Boyle about the creation of *Slumdog Millionaire*, he revealed that sometimes, one must employ deception to achieve financial success. He recalled that during the promotion of the film, they described it as a fusion of *Amélie* and a touch of *Trainspotting*. He emphasized the significance of this approach in the American market, where films like *Slumdog* and *127 Hours* are presented as heartwarming stories of redemption. In the United States, he pointed out that individuals are often treated as mere statistics, lacking the distinctive identities found in other places (Gilbey, 2013, p.4).

In this examination of how a worldwide movie is perceived within a regional framework, what appears to be of particular significance is the inquisitive outlook

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of the local viewpoint. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (2003) aptly underscore the adaptable nature of "media viewership," which provides a dynamic space for engagement and disagreement. One can see this, for instance, in the possibility of unorthodox or resistant interpretations, as the understanding and experiences of a particular local audience create a contrasting influence against the prevailing global portrayals (p. 156). The way the film is received and its somewhat ambiguous status in certain industry circles and dialogues is also worth noting. Detractors have argued that the film, instead of embracing its role as pure entertainment or a love story, potentially commodifies and oversimplifies the harsh realities of India. They claim that it encourages the audience to adopt a superficial, tourist-like perspective of India, one based on the allure of exotic images, essentially reducing the narrative to a form of "poverty tourism" designed for Western viewers. Amitabh Bachchan, the iconic figure in Bollywood, who plays a pivotal role in one of the film's most significant scenes, contemplated in his blog whether the movie would have received similar attention if an Indian director had helmed it (BBC, 2009). Bachchan, in particular, pointed out that while the film's concept originated from an Indian writer, it was developed and produced by a Westerner and gained acclaim on the global stage, while other deserving works might have gone unnoticed (BBC, 2009). Nonetheless, Bachchan did acknowledge the exceptional work of A.R. Rahman, who earned three Oscar nominations for his contributions to the film. He described Rahman's work as "remarkable" and expressed his pride in being Indian (Sinha, 2009). This suggests that the subject matter has grown more significant in India, a nation with a history of being attentive to how its most economically disadvantaged communities are portrayed, both by its own people and by foreigners.

To the Indians, the whole movie seemed like a tired and unoriginal representation, akin to serving a spicy and complex "Masala Mix Dosa" to Westerners who might have preferred something simpler. The theme of youthful romance evolving into mature love, and the way it was portrayed from childhood to adulthood, felt like a formulaic approach often seen in countless Hindi masala films, reminiscent of how Jamal (Dev Patel) expressed his feelings to Latika (Frieda

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Pinto) in a style reminiscent of Mehra's *Mukaddar ka Sikandar*. The subplot involving shoe theft and the deceptive presentation of Taj Mahal's history to foreigners also echoed tactics seen in movies like *Bunty aur Babli*. Despite occasional moments of contrived storytelling, most of the film's heart-wrenching scenes depict a grim yet well-documented reality.

Accordingly, Danny Boyle finds an endless source of action and vibrant scenes in the slums. A standout moment at the movie's outset is when young Jamal, stuck in an outhouse but determined to get Amitabh Bachchan's autograph, gleefully jumps into the outdoor latrine while holding his nose (Boyle, 2008, 12:55). Some have criticized Boyle for romanticizing poverty, but this accusation is burdened with assumptions about how poverty should be portrayed. For some the director's efforts may appear ornamental and opulent when compared to Simon Beaufoy's weak storyline, filled with one-dimensional characters and implausible situations.

Figure N°18. Jamal from the Public Toilet Pit after Having Signed Bachchan's Autograph



Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ_8fsG8Q1A

Actually, *SDM* has consistently been marketed as a heartwarming film, to the extent that it now actively discourages any critical discussion. Its fairy tale nature serves as a convenient shield, deflecting any attempts to engage with it on ethical or political grounds as mere political correctness. It is a rather questionable and self-aware blend that blurs the lines of reality. It presents itself as rooted in a genuine

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social setting before urging viewers to perceive it as a dream. It introduces brutality only to offset it with absurdity.

In a prior interview, Ang Lee, the director of *Life of Pi* (2012), expressed his intention to depict an authentic portrayal of India in his film, potentially in contrast to the criticism faced by Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire*, which was accused of exploiting poverty. During the press tour for his movie, Lee found himself confronted with questions about *Slumdog*. He appeared to downplay the extent to which India was depicted in the movie, suggesting that any extreme portrayal, whether positive or negative, should be avoided. In response to inquiries about "Slumdog," he remarked, "I believe it's unfair either way to focus on India's darker aspects or to celebrate it because the Indians are at the core. When outsiders arrive, they tend to appropriate or emphasize what suits their purposes. My goal was to champion authenticity and represent India as it truly is, striving to make it plausible. People come to India for various reasons and engage in their preferred activities (The Indian Express, 2022). Currently, there seems to be a shortage of emotions in the Western context. European and American influence has predominantly dominated Hollywood, making it high time for Asians to make their creative contributions. The film industry is perpetually seeking fresh and unique concepts that resonate universally. While Indian films are contemporary and recently produced, when it comes to Hollywood cinema, it's essential to move beyond the particular and explore themes that have broad appeal to a global audience.

In fact, if *Slumdog*'s viewers had any familiarity with Q & A, it was likely because they read the book after watching the movie, sometimes even perceiving the adaptation as a result of their prior engagement with the original source material. The inevitable result is what Linda Hutcheon (2012) describes as a "transmedia bridge," where the novel and film unite to create a cohesive and enjoyable whole (p.231). The triumph of such film and the various movies, endeavors, and strive that have followed in its footsteps demonstrate that the underprivileged, malnourished, yet eternally innocent youngster living in informal or impoverished urban areas has made a powerful comeback. It's evident that

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narratives set in slums can either intensify or challenge the inclination to portray slum residents as representations of postcolonial suffering. Efforts to increase awareness about the challenges faced by slum dwellers are juxtaposed with the resurgence of exploitative portrayals of poverty. Some stories center on these awareness campaigns, and though some may succumb to the same trend of oversimplification and exoticization as the commercial representations of slums, others depict these areas in a more conscientious and culturally sensitive manner. They emphasize that slums are distinctive in their socio-historical and cultural contexts, and life within them isn't solely defined by poverty.

Interestingly, there was a considerable debate regarding its classification as a Bollywood film. Some argue that it cannot be considered Bollywood since it had a British director and was primarily shot in India; they believe that setting a movie in India doesn't automatically categorize it as Bollywood. Others take the opposite stance, insisting that it should undoubtedly be labeled as a Bollywood production because it was created in India and featured a significant number of Indian actors and actresses. They maintain that the film's location and the people involved in it, rather than the nationality of the filmmaker, are the key determinants. Despite various factors influencing the categorization of a film as "Bollywood," many believe that the fact that it was filmed in India, starred Indian actors, and drew inspiration from Indian culture is sufficient to classify it as such. There are several compelling reasons to consider Bollywood from a broader and more inclusive perspective. Similar to the way Hollywood incorporates various aspects like film productions, directors, and actors, there has always been a substantial level of integration between different film communities within the Indian context. Furthermore, it's important to recognize that Bollywood, along with its methods of creating, distributing, and being received, plays a notable role in global cultural networks.

The alterations and reorganizations made to tailor the storyline for a global audience appear to reinforce the perception of a symbolic takeover of India by the Western world. This "Westernization" of India might explain the indifferent or even

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hostile reception the film encountered upon its release in India. Oddly, the general impression is that Indians, as a whole, haven't been receptive to the film's positive message, humor, and cleverness. However, it's valuable to explore these critical remarks rooted in the postcolonial context. Either way it was perceived as American in certain markets and as Indian in others. Its widespread viewership and thematic content allow for a justifiable claim as a global narrative.

The film's treatment of local cultural elements generates a complex display that leads to a cultural rift between local and international audiences. The director's decisions in crafting the film's story, visuals, and cinematography reveal a clear preference for Western themes, with the goal of making it more attractive to Western viewers rather than those in the Indian subcontinent. Moreover, the film came under significant academic scrutiny, particularly from Professor Mitu Sengupta (2010), who raised questions about the authenticity of its depiction of urban poverty in India and its potential implications for poverty-related advocacy. Sengupta suggested that the film's oversimplified portrayal of slums might perpetuate unfavorable stereotypes about the people living in these areas (pp.599–616).

Furthermore, critics also pointed out that the movie seemed to glorify individuals and places that aligned with Western culture and development ideals (Sengupta, 2010, pp. 599–616). In response, Boyle and his team expressed their intention to introduce Western audiences to the slums of India, highlighting their vibrancy and strong sense of community. Their aim was to challenge the conventional portrayals of poverty-stricken slum dwellers often depicted in advertisements and documentaries, without intending to disrespect Indian national pride. Rather, they sought to showcase the beauty and authenticity of Mumbai, India's largest metropolis, in a truthful manner. Again, the film seamlessly blends timeless drama with the narrative of a determined orphan who overcomes numerous challenges (Hornaday,2008). With its highly captivating portrayal of Indian life, this fragmented movie delivers an outstanding performance, featuring visually

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stunning sequences that immerse the viewer in the protagonist's journey and the hurdles he faced in pursuit of both his prize and love.

Accusing "*Slumdog*" of exaggerations and caricatures is akin to criticizing Van Gogh for altering his portrayal of sunflowers or questioning M.F. Husain, one of India's prominent contemporary artists, for not accurately depicting the colors of his horses. In "*Slumdog*," Boyle adheres to the conventions of the picaresque genre, which energetically narrates the trials and triumphs of a typically socially disadvantaged hero overcoming a corrupt society using their wit. Perhaps "*Slumdog*" could serve as a catalyst for a similar transformation, one that illuminates more aspects of India's greatness for its people. Such a possibility certainly exists, perhaps even as a predestined outcome.

This movie has not only garnered substantial profits but has also capitalized on the stark paradoxes of capitalism in India while directly benefiting from the plight of those caught in these contradictions. The film, instead, fosters the misconception among viewers who lack substantial knowledge of modern Indian history that religious conflicts and local criminal activities are the primary causes of the challenges faced in Mumbai's slums. However, this isn't the reality for the overwhelming majority of impoverished and employed individuals across the globe. For individuals who champion progressive and revolutionary causes worldwide, their comprehension of the ordeals faced by marginalized people in different regions must be informed by a class-conscious investigation, rather than relying on the perspectives of filmmakers primarily driven by financial success at the box office. It's not to suggest that the film doesn't rightfully deserve all the acclaim it's received, but it arrives at a moment when the global audience is uplifted by the triumph of an unlikely hero, mirroring the optimism of American citizens who are being rewarded for embracing the audacious power of hope. Despite the controversies surrounding it, *Slumdog Millionaire* remains a must-watch film and is the most probable and deserving candidate for the Best Picture Oscar.

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4.11. Conclusion

This film aimed to offer an inspiring and thought-provoking depiction of the societal challenges faced by India's impoverished residents living in slums. It accomplished this by skillfully blending elements of fantasy and reality, which captivated the audience while shedding light on the harsh realities of the less fortunate. As a cinematic exploration of urban poverty in India, this socially relevant movie stands out as one of the most highly acclaimed works in recent memory, sparking significant discourse about the actual living conditions in the country.

Scholars employing film and cultural studies viewpoints have examined how Indian films are received by audiences and delved into the cinema's historical context. They have also explored aspects such as the portrayal of gender, communal conflicts, diaspora connections, and the widespread appeal of Indian cinema (Banaji, 2005). Subsequently, the collected data undergo a descriptive analysis. After analyzing the film, the researcher arrives at several key findings. As we conclude this chapter, it becomes evident that various critical issues emerge from these diverse transnational paths in contemporary South Asian cinema, including that of India. The film not only offers compelling entertainment but also serves as a poignant reflection of human existence, providing an authentic portrayal of the struggles faced by India's urban underprivileged.

In general, this movie honors Bollywood by integrating numerous of its traditions, including rapid editing, vibrant hues, a romantic fairy-tale narrative, and a joyful musical dance finale. This caught the eye of Hollywood, which frequently leverages global styles and filmmakers to its benefit, making *Slumdog Millionaire* an internationally crafted film that showcases the collaborative synergy between the Western and Indian cinema industries.

In conclusion, this film can be characterized as a visual work of art, where director Boyle and his team skillfully craft scenes and use colors like an artist applying paint to a canvas. It's a remarkable form of entertainment that not only

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achieves its immediate goals but also reaches greater heights. This captivating movie generates suspense and enjoyment while introducing a fresh perspective to Western viewers and shedding light on the impoverished regions of India, providing insights into life in these areas. Several industry insiders and numerous Indian critics recognized Boyle's cinematic talent. Through his film, the director conveys the message that everyone has equal rights and opportunities to pursue their unique paths toward success and happiness. So, the current worldwide fascination with popular cinema suggests that there's a growing acknowledgment of Indian cinema's unique language. Despite its perceived flaws, it's recognized for its ability to attract vast audiences and generate significant income.

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Film has risen as the most captivating and costly mode of communication in this century. Few other artistic expressions have been distributed as efficiently or seemed to surpass so many national and cultural barriers. This dissertation examines the interplay among conflicting perspectives on the significant historical and theoretical structures of globalization, culture, film, and diaspora. Academics are increasingly recognizing that numerous modern films are addressing significant global and national social issues. Additionally, there is significant discourse on the techniques and approaches employed by various filmmakers in presenting these profound transnational Hindi productions.

The initial chapter delved into definitions and ideas aimed at facilitating our comprehension of the transnational phenomenon, specifically addressing the migration of individuals and cultural elements across international boundaries in the context of globalization, characterized by "human practices and cultural logics." Additionally, it scrutinized the historical narrative of Diaspora, with particular emphasis on the Indian Diaspora and its associated challenges. The chapter elucidated the involvement of the Indian Diaspora residing in the USA in experiences of transnational dislocation and relocation, as well as the struggles and adaptations of identity faced by these individuals as hybrid citizens.

Moreover, the second chapter aimed to explore the international dimensions of cinema concerning diasporic concerns. It examined the various cultural facets associated with transnational cinema, with a specific emphasis on Bollywood's influence in the global arena. The chapter delved into how the interaction between Bollywood and other major film industries has resulted in a fusion, establishing Bollywood as the primary representative of South Asians both domestically and internationally, within the scope of the analyzed films.

Axiomatically, this chapter explores the observable transformations evident in the creations of Indian transnational filmmakers, emphasizing the context of Transnationalism and addressing issues concerning Indian-Americans. Chapter three specifically delves into the film *The Namesake* directly connecting with concepts introduced in chapter one such as culture, diaspora, home versus

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homeland, the self-versus the other, and the complexity of hyphenated identities. It examines the transnational dynamics between India and the USA through characters like Gogol, Ashima, and Moushumi.

Furthermore, Chapter four of the movie *Slumdog Millionaire* explores themes related to Western perspectives, the binary of East versus West, negative portrayals of India, and the reception of cultural stereotypes by both local and diasporic audiences. It delves into the diaspora's response to India's depiction in the film, challenges old viewpoints, and examines the complexities of this international collaboration between Bollywood and Hollywood.

Interestingly, this exuberant embrace of globalization in its latest neo-imperial form intriguingly doesn't appear to clash with Bollywood's overtly nationalist goals. Instead, they are harmonized through a narrative of cultural nationalism that comfortably accommodates rampant consumerism fueled by globalization, conveniently overlooking its neo-colonial undertones. In this case, if 'transnational cinema' is to hold significance, it must extend beyond merely being interchangeable with 'international cinema' or 'world cinema.' It encompasses films and cinemas that surpass national boundaries and incorporate narrative and aesthetic elements from multiple cultural traditions or communities. Therefore, any transnational cinema necessarily engages with and navigates through national spaces and cultures. This ongoing interaction with diverse national cultures, regulations, economic circumstances, and more underscores that transnational cinema differs significantly from the idealized notion of a seamlessly global space often associated with the rhetoric of globalism. Undoubtedly, scholars will continue to interpret and employ the term 'transnational' in various, sometimes conflicting ways.

During the era when the idea of transnational migration was taking shape, the concept of 'diaspora' gained traction in migration studies. Although both terms appear to refer to a similar phenomenon, 'diaspora' serves as a helpful tool for understanding it better. It inherently suggests why migrants establish and sustain transnational connections, particularly due to the familial bonds felt among those

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who identify with an ethnic community abroad. By examining these broader elements of the transnational aspect, we can develop a more intricate comprehension of how individuals manage the intricacies of our interconnected world.

However, we argued that comprehending the influence of transnationalism on the identities and integration of immigrants should extend beyond specific social realms. Hybridity emerges naturally from migrants' experiences of crossing borders, suggesting that examining transnationalism's effect on identity formation and self-identification among immigrants must encompass how the global context shapes local dynamics the everyday transnational dimension.

Basically, the diasporic journey involves an eagerness to leave one's homeland, a determination to preserve one's identity, and a commitment to connect with both local and transnational communities. However, during crises, diasporic individuals often maintain a hopeful outlook toward their homeland. Additionally, it's been suggested that the advanced education and professional status of contemporary immigrants paradoxically enable them to adapt well to the United States while also empowering them to maintain distinct Indian identities, this was the case in *The Namesake* (2006) movie. That's why filmmakers such as Nair often romanticize the concept of diaspora within transnationalism, providing a fresh avenue to recount the overlooked narratives of individuals who traverse borders, inspiring Indian screenwriters to craft tales centered around migrant experiences.

Notably, the challenges faced by both first and second-generation members of the Indian diaspora in America can mirror the experiences depicted in characters from *The Namesake* movie. These individuals grapple with maintaining their cultural traditions from their homeland while navigating the host culture. Like Ashima in the film, they often seek connection with others from a similar cultural background and harbor a strong desire to visit their home country. However, they find themselves caught between their Indian heritage and American upbringing, unable to fully identify as either. They embody a hybrid cultural perspective, as Gogol's character illustrates. Their ties to India remain significant throughout their

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lives, shaping their personal narratives. The concept of globalization further complicates their identity, influencing social, economic, and cultural dynamics in the transnational sphere. Contemporary cinema explores these complexities, reflecting the realities of Indian diasporic individuals and their relationship with globalization, both explicitly and implicitly.

Significantly, the examination of *The Namesake* centered on the utilization of visual and auditory elements, exploiting the unique ability of film to transform written words into dynamic images. This exploration aimed to illustrate the varying perspectives of different generations, particularly the first and second generations, in perceiving India as the foundation of their identity, particularly within the context of Bengali culture which becomes intertwined during their visits to India. Additionally, it highlighted India's significance as the core of Ashima and Gogol's identities.

In what follows, the reimagining of Bollywood's typical themes in *Slumdog Millionaire* is mirrored by a creatively rebellious imitation of its cinematic norms. This is particularly evident in the film's song-and-dance scenes. Although these scenes align the film with Bollywood customs, their presentation blends together Bollywood traditions with elements from Hollywood musicals and modern music videos, creating a unique audio-visual collage. In this film, Boyle, a director with a transnational and Western perspective, aimed to depict a portrayal that mirrors societal culture while also enriching it. The movie encapsulates the values, beliefs, and social dynamics of the society, serving as a conduit for cultural transmission to a wide audience. The infusion of the Bollywoodian touch illustrates how minor adjustments in local regulations and global market access can facilitate the international success of a film, particularly when it embodies a significant cultural narrative like *SDM*.

The movie displays a tendency to conflate criticism of aspects associated with Indian culture as an affront to Indian heritage. In *Slumdog Millionaire*, the political undertone is not primarily conveyed through the portrayal of the nation's narrative via Jamal's interrogation, but rather through the aesthetic presentation,

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particularly evident in the quiz show sequences. Here, comprehending the dynamics, aesthetics, resonance, and symbolic significance of a global/transnational format is crucial, not only for understanding the film itself but also for grasping transnational narratives of identity and the complexities of transnational culture. The film's status as a Western production filmed in India and acclaimed in America underscores the concept of transnationalism. Examining the influence of Indian cinema, it becomes evident that it has left a lasting impact on global fashion trends and the Indian psyche, shaping public opinion on various issues and reflecting societal, cultural, and political contexts. While popular cinema is predominantly seen as mass entertainment, artistic films tend to garner more attention on international platforms.

Apart from their romantic storylines, these movies often tackle universal themes like poverty, gender equality, education, and global cooperation, broadening their relevance beyond just the plot. *SDM* (2008) has sparked a nationwide phenomenon, offering a glimpse into the potential of blending Indian cinema with other influences. Notably, it's a Hinglish film directed by a Western filmmaker. While it doesn't delve deeply into political issues, its sincerity and heartfelt approach make it charming. At its core, this Bollywood-inspired film by Danny Boyle explores themes such as the power of love, the victory of the underdog, and the classic rags-to-riches narrative, which resonate across cultures, hinting at a growing recognition of transnational cinema.

Following the success of the aforementioned films in the commercial realm, other filmmakers have also shown interest in producing movies with social themes. One significant factor propelling the expansion of transnational and diasporic cinema studies is the notable rise of Bollywood, which boasts a substantial audience. However, it's essential to recognize that Indian cinema encompasses a diverse array of films, with major production hubs scattered across different regions of the country. Despite this diversity, the advent of transnational theory within film studies has gained traction, offering a robust conceptual framework for the discipline. Particularly in the realms of transnational production, exhibition, and

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distribution, many Indian film production houses have found it advantageous to promote their movies beyond India's borders. As a matter of fact, this research indicates that transnational Bollywood movies have shaped an emerging cultural landscape in Indian cinema.

Numerous movies depicted settings in Western nations, captivating Indian immigrants residing there due to the familiar surroundings. Simultaneously, they intrigued Indians within India, reflecting a widespread fascination with the West during that era, often associated with aspirations for immigration abroad. Despite focusing on Indians abroad and showcasing Western lifestyles, these films remained rich in Indian cultural elements. This delicate blend of cultures resonated with both Indians in their homeland and the diaspora living abroad. The Hollywood film industry has frequently depicted and perpetuated negative stereotypes about foreign nationals and ethnic minorities within American cinema. The portrayal of racial and ethnic groups in media can either have detrimental effects or be advantageous to these communities. Such ideologies shape how South Asians are represented in the media.

Essentially, the deliberate creation of visuals significantly influences our comprehension of how societal messages regarding race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status are received by contemporary audiences. Western media's depiction of India in movies continues to propagate the orientalist notion of the East as an enigmatic and magical realm. This portrayal extends to how South Asians are represented in media, maintaining similar patterns and tendencies. The depictions still hinge on the notion of "otherness." While it's positive to witness increased South Asian representation in the media, it remains concerning that many of these portrayals perpetuate the same racial and gender stereotypes ingrained in American culture. Consequently, these representations sustain a white normative identity in a society that is becoming more diverse.

Today, it's increasingly common to find South Asian Americans in supporting roles in the media. This shift reflects a prevalent 'us versus them' mindset, perpetuated through media discourse. Despite this, audiences often

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perceive these representations as unbiased. However, by homogenizing Eastern cultures, these portrayals have morphed into stereotypes. Extensive literature and research demonstrate that mainstream Western media typically depicts minorities in a negative light. Western culture has a long history of stereotyping India. That being so, media content holds significant influence over public perceptions. Conversely, Bollywood films also contribute to spreading distrust and suspicion toward Indians from impoverished areas, exemplified by movies like *SDM*. These films, while showcasing Indian sensibilities, often depict the country in crisis, perpetuating stereotypes. Moreover, Bollywood increasingly embraces consumerism and Hindu-centric cultural and religious politics.

In other places as well, there's an increasing mention of how Indian cinema is becoming more globalized. Consequently, these films are being absorbed into local contexts despite being transnational or embodying a distinct national identity. I deduce that as globalization accelerates, transnational elements will not just persist in global cinema but also reshape and challenge traditional cultural norms.

Regardless of their thematic, contextual, or stylistic variations, global Indian audiences now wield significant influence over the success or failure of Bollywood productions. Production companies are continuously devising new strategies to market each cinematic creation to diasporic communities. The rationale behind this lies in the tailored expectations of audiences and the commercial considerations inherent in filmmaking, as evidenced by the contrast between films like *Slumdog Millionaire*, crafted with audience preferences and business viability in mind, and *The Namesake*, which prioritized fidelity to the source material's essence, or what screenwriter Sooni Taraporevala termed as its "spiritual DNA." To accurately assess the merit of each instance of transnational filmmaking in contemporary South Asian cinema, especially within Bollywood, a comprehensive cultural analysis is essential to discern whether it falls under the categories of commendable, problematic, or simply unconventional.

We must recognize and consider the diversity present, being cautious not to make comparisons between dissimilar things. However, we should not exclusively

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elevate festival art films, or filmmaking within exile and diaspora contexts, as the sole privileged arenas of transnational filmmaking. This connects with my previous remarks advising against hierarchies of value and levels of transnational engagement, as we have shifted away from favoring certain domains as the only valid subjects within transnational film studies.

The filmmakers chosen for this study effectively depict the collective journeys of the Indian diaspora across various global locales, demonstrating the resilience of Indian culture across borders. Their cinematic portrayal of the immigrant or diasporic Indian experience has evolved beyond superficial depictions of exotic dance sequences against picturesque backdrops. Particularly noteworthy are Nair and Boyle, who, as diasporic and transnational filmmakers, delve into themes such as immigration, identity crises, and the enduring presence of racism within contemporary Indian society. Their works, spanning mainstream and independent cinema, place them among a select cadre of directors significantly contributing to both documentary and ethnographic film genres.

It is quite essential to clarify that for white filmmakers, India serves as a figment of their imagination a canvas onto which they can project notions of white virtue. It becomes a reflective surface where they can showcase themselves and their Western values. In *Slumdog Millionaire* the spotlight shines on the nine young actors portraying Jamal and his two companions at different stages of their lives. Directors Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan skillfully navigate their characters through a myriad of poignant and challenging experiences, effectively capturing their individuality amidst a complex narrative.

Accordingly, Transnational films of this nature tend to aim for specific traits to cater to diverse demands across borders and nations. For instance, they often prioritize narratives told by individuals who have firsthand experience or ongoing connections to the events depicted, ensuring authenticity and resonance with audiences worldwide. The exploration of transnational cinematic amalgamation discussed in this thesis has led us to consider how foreign film industries, goods, and audiences are not merely multinational, but also transnational.

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Typically, transnational cinema embraces collaborative efforts such as coproduction and partnerships involving actors, artists, and crew from diverse geographical backgrounds, surpassing conventional boundaries. This approach allows the audience to comprehend and critically analyze the film. There's a common notion that for something to be classified as one thing, it must differentiate itself from another. In this context, it's the striking disparity between transnational and national cinema. The linguistic elements within a film play a significant role in determining whether it aligns more with transnational or national cinema. This distinction was evident in both films examined in this thesis.

Diasporic filmmakers remain mindful of Bollywood's influential presence, paying homage to its significance in their own cinematic creations. Bollywood stands out as a potent force in shaping Indian identity, projecting a trendy, cosmopolitan, and affluent image that resonates globally, often symbolizing modern Indianness in public perception. Accessible to diasporic communities, first-release Bollywood productions engage directly with their experiences, incorporating their narratives. Notably, it's the contemporary films that draw in younger audiences, portraying a cosmopolitan India and a sense of Indianness that aligns more closely with their own identities.

Films like Mira Nair's *The Namesake* exemplify the significant impact of diasporic filmmakers on shaping a contemporary Indian identity, which is characterized by a blend of influences, reactions, and uncertainties. These filmmakers have played a pivotal role in redefining what it means to be Indian in a global context. Beyond merely catering to a nostalgic overseas audience, Bollywood has utilized the diaspora as a platform to project a modern Indian identity worldwide. Through the proliferation of cinematic representations and narratives, Indian culture and its diasporic communities have gained heightened visibility, contributing to discussions about India's soft power influence. Importantly, diasporic identities differ from those constructed within India, as the experience of becoming part of a diaspora fundamentally alters one's sense of self and belonging.

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In all fairness, India deserves to experience a sense of pride, and its citizens should indulge in consumption, considering their journey through a challenging colonial history and a relatively disadvantaged position. However, popular culture that solely focuses on wish fulfillment, disregarding the nuanced realities of hybrid Indian cultures, less glamorous demographics, or the existence of an underprivileged class that enables most Indians to enjoy their privileges, displays significant shortcomings.

As Indian identity extends well beyond the confines of its borders and with the diaspora playing a significant role in shaping this narrative, Bollywood and India can anticipate increased influence and engagement from both fronts.

In this light, the emergence of cinema marked the pioneering instance of a mass media platform achieving significant societal influence nationwide. It is widely acknowledged that films possess the ability to mirror societal norms due to their commercial imperative to appeal to the broadest audience. Consequently, mainstream Hindi cinema has progressively evolved, integrating elements of a more innovative cinematic movement. To comprehend the diverse effects of globalization on Hindi cinema, it does not lead to a transformation of Hindi film culture, but rather fosters a new dynamic of coexisting hybridity.

Apparently, both films are internationally influenced productions infused with elements of Bollywood, portraying aspects of diaspora and Western viewpoints on countries like India. It's evident that both films showcase a collaborative effort between two major film industries facilitated by global production houses like Fox Searchlight. Positioned amidst two cultures and worlds, these movies effectively portray the dynamics of self and other through their cast, directors, and settings. So, this project has shown that the connection between film and culture becomes intricate due to their interactions with society. This study has affirmed that cinema, as a form of portrayal, is inherently transnational, traversing boundaries, thereby challenging national ideologies aiming to confine culture and identities within specific borders.

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For forthcoming studies and additional recommendations within the realm of Transnational cinema analysis, we can delve into various aspects of this phenomenon. This may involve investigating the evolving facets of global cinephilia or adopting transnational critical perspectives.

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الملخص :

تعمل الأفلام كوسيلة فعالة لاستكشاف التاريخ والهويات الأصلية وجذور الأجداد والروابط الثقافية. يؤثر المفهوم الواسع للسينما بشكل كبير على جوانب مختلفة من مجتمعنا العالمي. يقدم الشتات الهندي، الذي تم عرضه بشكل خاص في بوليوود، قيمًا جديدة تولد أحيانًا انقسامات من وجهات النظر الغربية بسبب أبعاد الشتات العابرة للحدود الوطنية. تركز الدراسة على كيفية تصوير الأمريكيين الهنود في أفلام بوليوود الشهيرة ضمن سياق عالمي. ولذلك، فإن تمثيلهم على الشاشة يلعب دورًا مهمًا في إدامة أو تحدي الصور النمطية الموجودة في وطنهم الأم وفي البلدان التي يهاجرون إليها. يمكن النظر إلى الأفلام التي تمت مناقشتها من خلال منهج وصفي نوعي كأمثلة للسينما العابرة ، الذي يشمل وجهات نظر الشتات والعابرة *The Namesake* (2006) للحدود الوطنية، مثل فيلم *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) للحدود الوطنية. وفي الوقت نفسه، يمكن النظر إلى أفلام مثل التي تستكشف الدور الذي تلعبه أفلام بوليوود في تمثيل الثقافة الهندية، على أنها إنتاجات عابرة للحدود الوطنية ذات موضوعات محلية، ومع ذلك يتم استقبالها غالبًا من خلال عدسة غربية في مجتمعات الشتات. عادة، سوف يتعمق هذا البحث في كيفية تأثير العولمة والنزعة العابرة للحدود الوطنية على تصور الهوية الثقافية والصور النمطية، لا سيما أنها تتأثر بالتعاون الدولي بين أكبر صناعيتين سينمائيتين.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الهوية الثقافية، الصور النمطية الثقافية، بوليوود/هوليوود، السينما العابرة للحدود الوطنية، الشتات، الهند، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.

Summary :

Movies serve as a potent medium for exploring history, authentic identities, ancestral roots, and cultural connections. The broad concept of cinema significantly influences various aspects of our global society. The Indian diaspora, notably showcased in Bollywood, introduces new values that sometimes generate divisions from Western perspectives due to the diaspora's transnational dimensions. The study focuses on how Indian Americans are depicted in popular Bollywood films within a global context. Therefore, their on-screen representation plays a significant role in perpetuating or challenging existing stereotypes in both their home country and the countries they migrate to. The films discussed through a qualitative descriptive approach can be seen as examples of transnational cinema, such as *The Namesake* (2006), which straddles both diasporic and transnational perspectives. Meanwhile, films like *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) exploring the role played by Bollywood films in representing Indian culture can be viewed as transnational productions with local themes, yet they are often received through a Western lens in diasporic communities. Typically, this research will delve into how globalization and transnationalism influence the conceptualization of cultural identity and stereotypes, particularly as influenced by international collaborations between the two biggest film industries.

Keywords: Cultural identity, Cultural stereotypes, Bollywood /Hollywood, Transnational cinema, Diaspora, India ,USA.

Resumé : Les films constituent un moyen puissant d'explorer l'histoire, les identités authentiques, les racines ancestrales et les liens culturels. Le concept large de cinéma influence considérablement divers aspects de notre société mondiale. La diaspora indienne, notamment mise en avant à Bollywood, introduit de nouvelles valeurs qui génèrent parfois des divisions dans les perspectives occidentales en raison des dimensions transnationales de la diaspora. L'étude se concentre sur la manière dont les Indiens d'Amérique sont représentés dans les films populaires de Bollywood dans un contexte mondial. Par conséquent, leur représentation à l'écran joue un rôle important dans la perpétuation ou la remise en cause des stéréotypes existants tant dans leur pays d'origine que dans les pays vers lesquels ils ont émigré. Les films discutés à travers une approche descriptive qualitative peuvent être considérés comme des exemples de cinéma transnational, comme *The Namesake* (2006), qui chevauche à la fois les perspectives diasporiques et transnationales. Pendant ce temps, des films comme *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), explorant le rôle joué par les films de Bollywood dans la représentation de la culture indienne, peuvent être considérés comme des productions transnationales avec des thèmes locaux, mais ils sont souvent reçus à travers une lentille occidentale dans les communautés de la diaspora. Généralement, cette recherche examinera la manière dont la mondialisation et le transnationalisme influencent la conceptualisation de l'identité culturelle et des stéréotypes, en particulier sous l'influence des collaborations internationales entre les deux plus grandes industries cinématographiques.

Mots clés :

Identité culturelle, Stéréotypes culturels, Bollywood /Hollywood, Cinéma transnational, Diaspora, Inde, USA.