

**Films as Sites of National Identity Formation: Exploring the
Portrayal of India- Pakistan in Mainstream Hindi Films**

*Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "Films as sites of national identity formation: exploring the portrayal of India and Pakistan through mainstream Hindi films" submitted by me for the award of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Conventional International Relations scholarship has consigned popular cultural¹ forms and processes to the margins of scholarly debate. However, closer attention to the ways that popular culture generally articulates and portrays dominant statist ‘knowledge²’ can expand scholarly understanding about how these narratives are understood, reflected and become a form of political common sense. The aim of this study is to explore films as constitutive sites of politics and to analyze the inter-textuality between political and popular cultural forms. In understanding the political-filmic imbrication, the focus of the study is on the resonation and mirroring of the dominant and repetitive political narratives, symbols, words et al. through films. In so doing, the study has attempted to understand the significance of the said imbrication in the (re)production, popularization, legitimization and normalization of certain narratives and identities. My research has examined mainstream Hindi films so as to foreground the popular portrayal of Indian and Pakistani identities through the critical junctures of the relations between the two nations. The period following the Partition in 1947 to 2014, the year marking the end of the Congress led United Progressive Alliance government forms the timeline for this project during which period the issues mentioned above have been examined. Theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitisation have been used so as to understand the narratives that are echoed through both political and cinematic texts.

Traditionally, mainstream IR scholarship explains ‘power’ as the ability of a state to make another do what they would otherwise not do. Military and economic strength are considered vital in this process of exercising power which is to be exercised through states and political institutions. However, this limited manner of conceptualizing power largely prevents the

¹ It is also essential to note that the term ‘popular culture’ has been used to escape the “dichotomies and debates as high culture versus low culture; mass culture versus elite culture; and popular or folk versus classical culture” (Appadurai & Breckenridge 1988: 5).

² The study uses the term through the Foucauldian understanding in which it is stated that power of the state can operate through discourse, knowledge and ‘regimes of truth’.

discipline from considering hidden/'silent' forms and methods through which power can also be exercised in world politics. That power operates not just through the state or other political and social institutions but also functions through cultural forms, is the larger premise of this study.

Stuart Hall enables us to theorize culture as constitutive rather than merely epiphenomenal, as a crucial locus of political engagement and as always working in articulation with broader social forces and political processes (1997). That is, cultural forms are not considered isolated entities but instead as processes that articulate, reflect and influence the broader contemporary social and political discourses. A close attention to the ways that popular culture reflects the dominant political and social stances and attitudes of the state can thus expand the scholarly understanding of a state's narrative or identity.

Background

The appealing nature of the audio-visual form of films and their pervasive and widespread consumption by the masses has assisted in the same generating a penetrative impact upon people's imagination. Scholars have pointed out that since the beginning of the twentieth century, different states and regimes have exploited this medium in order to strengthen and disseminate their own ideologies and positions in order to control the masses. One of the most common examples of a regime mobilizing mass opinion through films, also termed 'propaganda films', is that of the *Nazis* during the inter-war years. *Triumph of the Will* (1935) is one such example of a film which included speeches from *Nazi* leaders and propagated the *Nazi* agenda. Susan Sontag considers this film to be the "most successful purely propagandistic film ever made, whose very conception negates the possibility of the filmmaker having an aesthetic or visual conception independent of propaganda" (1975: 75-76). *Why We Fight* (1942-1945) is another example of a series of seven documentary films that were commissioned by the United States government during World War II whose purpose was to show (justify) not just to the US soldiers but also to the citizens, the reasons for the involvement of the U.S. in the war.

Jutta Weldes (1999, 2001), Roland Bleiker (2001), Grayson (2009, 2014) et al. have argued, that Popular culture can act as an important site for 'manufacturing consent' (a term

borrowed from Herman and Chomsky 1988) by the masses through the process of naturalizing or making commonsensical the dominant discourses of the state. In this way popular culture has an important role to play in generating an acceptance of official foreign policy discourses and state actions by making them appear plausible. For instance, Tony Shaw explains how Hollywood spent the first fifteen years of the Cold War targeting Soviet Communism, then in 1960s-70s films began to reflect doubts about the West's Cold War strategy before striking back at the Soviet Union as the 'evil empire' in the 1980's (2010: 246). He further states that the period saw several films that were reflective of the state's changing understandings of the Soviets, thereby manufacturing and engendering popular consent towards the state's policy decisions towards the latter (ibid).

This research borrows the Foucauldian understanding of discourse in order to address and explicate the manner in which power operated through popular culture. According to the French philosopher, Michael Foucault, discourse is a construction of multiple statements, texts, actions and sources that choreographically interact at several sites to produce certain notions as intelligible and commonsensical (Hall 1997). Consequently, Foucault discusses discourses as parts of specific discursive fields that are structured in relation to a range of cultural and other institutions which in turn, "constitute subjectivity through material practices that shape bodies as much as minds and involve relations of power" (ibid: 47). In the Foucauldian world, discourse produces subjects within relations of power and at the same time, discourses also enable resistance (Foucault 1980). While not discounting the resistance ability of discourses, this study primarily focuses upon the former that is, the power-enabling ability of discourses.

This research argues that with its wide spread consumption and pervasive appeal amongst the masses, cinema is one such (significant) site in enabling discourses. This is understood by paying attention to the inter-text and intersection between the political and the popular cultural. In order to discover this imbrication, primary texts including speeches made by the Heads of the state, Lok Sabha debates, annual reports of the Ministry of Home Affairs etc. have been paid attention to so as to foreground the dominant political narratives at particular crucial periods. Further, the regular reverberation of the said narratives through filmic texts has been explored. For instance, scholars including Dwivedi (2012), Mishra (2002) among others, have argued that the widespread rise of Hindu nationalism, particularly with the onset of the *Ramjanmabhoomi*

campaign in the 1990's was accompanied by a change in cinematic language that regularly demonstrated textures of Hindu nationalism.³ This narrative that was implicitly/explicitly visible through films like *Roja* (1992), *Border* (1997), *Mission Kashmir* (2000) and *Maa Tujhe Salaam* (2002) to name a few, articulated Hinduism and India and Islam and Pakistan as overlapping and collapsible categories. Further, a number of films during this period have manifested Orientalist textures in which, the Hindu/Indian has mostly been presented as the righteous, powerful, masculine, pacifist individual, while the Muslim/Pakistani has largely been portrayed as the fundamentalist, religious, aggressive, demonic 'other'. In the films that predominantly revolved around Muslim protagonists, as in *Mission Kashmir* and *Fanaa* (2006), a marked differentiation was visible between the ostensibly 'good' and the 'bad' Muslims. In these films, the (good) Muslim 'subjects' are seen to be affectively adopting practices that overtly established their 'Indianness' through elements of patriotism, Sufism, secularism, liberalism, while, contrarily the (bad) Muslim 'others' are reflected through demonic and monstrous under/overtone through which they are consequently marked as bodies to be feared and eliminated. Sunaina Maira notes that "such distinctions between the good, and the bad, form a core of imperial thinking about 'loyal' citizen-subjects and 'enemy aliens'- a theme with a long history in American politics" (2009: 632).

In understanding the narratives echoing through the political-cinematic imbrication that I examine in this project, the theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitisation have been adopted as focalizing lenses. The concept of Ontological security has been developed by R.D. Laing (1969) and Anthony Giddens (1991) and was later incorporated into International Relations. With respect to statist behaviour, Ontological security Theory (OST) notes that it is not just the physical security that a state seeks to fulfill, but, it also seeks to realize a secure 'sense of self' and a routinized and stable self-identity through which the state seeks to be identified both internally and externally (Steele 2008). In his seminal work, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-identity and the IR State*, Steele explains this concept by referring to Ontological security variables including Biographical narrative, Critical Situation, Ontological insecurity, Shame and the Reflexive discourse. In this study, I will engage with the first three.

³ In the context of this study, Hindu nationalism has been understood as an ideology that blurs the line between Hindutva ideology and nationalism to the extent that Hindu and India and Muslim and Pakistan are seen as overlapping categories. Further, this ideology is also reflective in the suspicion that it shows for the minorities, in particular, the Muslims.

Biographical narrative refers to the narrative that a state maintains about itself so as to explain its routinized foreign policy actions both to itself and others. In this, Steele avers that an understanding of a state's biographical narrative could help in developing a better comprehension of its foreign policy motivations (ibid). 'Instability' or 'insecurity' felt and expressed in cognitive and self-identity narratives is explicated by Steele through the category of Critical situation (ibid). Catarina Kinnevall also employs the term 'existential anxiety' to define the same (2004). In other words, critical situation and existential anxiety are reflective of a disjuncture between a state's biographical narrative and its policy actions. Furthermore as scholars have noted, in the face of Ontological insecurity, states work towards achieving stable self-narratives through a number of ways including: through cognitive stability provided by routines, consistent self-narratives, friendships, securitisation and desecuritisation (Steele 2008, Kinnevall 2002, 04).

Apart from the conceptual deployment of the idea of the biographical narrative, this study also adopts the theoretical perspective of Securitization, wherein I pay attention to New Delhi's securitizing attempts particularly with respect to (Islamic) and cross-border terrorism that has impacted the Indian nation in the post-1989 period (Kashmir imbroglio) and in the post millennium period. At its core, securitization, which emerged out of the Copenhagen School, is conceptualized as the process of turning something into a security issue through the articulation of a 'speech act' by a political elite that, by describing something as an 'existential threat', justifies the use of extra-ordinary, exceptional methods. Taking from Holger Stritzel (2012), TY Solomon (2014), Ido Oren (2014), Michael Williams (2003) etc., who belong to the so-called 'second generation' of Securitization, the aim is to find the repetitive iteration of particular 'securitizing phrases' through political 'speech-acts' as well through popular cultural texts. The explicit and symbolic resonance of securitising phrases and narratives through Hindi films would also be noted to understand the political-filmic inter-text as instrumental in framing what Holger Stritzel (2012) labels the 'background meanings' for audiences that assist in the audiences' appreciation of the securitization act. The purpose here is to understand how, the articulation and resonance of securitization through the political-filmic intertext bears political implications, and contributes to shaping and legitimizing certain identity and policy narratives on India and Pakistan.

Moving on, the following section surveys the literature on cinema and film theory through two broad sections. The first section engages with studies that explore cinema as a significant tool of discursive formation, and that engage with the impact of statist narratives on cinematic articulation. The second section engages with literature that analyzes mainstream Hindi films in particular to find the resonance of the accepted and popular discourses of Indian and Pakistani identity through the important junctures of relations between the two nations. This section is further divided into three sub-categories namely, films dealing with the historical trauma of Partition, films dealing with war narratives, and thirdly, those dealing with Kashmir and terrorism.

Cinema as a tool of discursive formation, and the reflection of statist narratives through films

In the book, *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence, and Horror in World Politics*, Debrix and Barder discuss the Camorra group of organized criminals in Italy and explain how the same use popular music, press, television and radio stations so as to sustain their disciplinary and regulatory control beyond the direct members of the organization (2012: 13). The media they argue, regulates the ‘understanding’ in men and women of power, legitimate behavior, the appropriate forms of masculinity and femininity to name a few. This stance resonates with Foucault’s notion of the discursive construction of the homosexual which links the same with sexual perversity (1980b). In this, Foucault gives the instance of the homosexual in the 19th cent who, he argues, was discursively produced as a subject and an identity within discourses as diverse as psychiatry, jurisprudence and literature, whereas previously, homosexuality was understood only as a mode of sexual behavior (ibid).

Cynthia Enloe argues that while much scholarship on world politics has been obsessed with power, it has simultaneously dramatically “underestimated the amounts and varieties of power that it takes to form and sustain” the contemporary global system (1996: 186). She argues that the dominant discourses of the state are not just reflected in the socio-political institutions within a state but, are also seen through various cultural institutions. Cinema, it will be argued, is

one such cultural institution that can internalize and reflect this state-related narratives. It is in this context that Sharp argues that any political analysis of the operation of dominance must take full account of the role of institutions of popular culture (2000: 31). Taking a cue from this work, I argue that cinema is one such cultural institution that can internalize and reflect these state-related narratives.

In his study of the *Western*, a genre of Hollywood films that is set primarily in the latter half of the XIX century in the American Old West, Will Wright notes that the ‘myths’ (central theme) of the films which emphasized concepts of ‘individualism’ and ‘liberalism’, corresponded with the conceptual needs of the society and the self-understanding required by the dominant social institutions of that period (1975:73). Further, Wright notes that the structure of the myth changes with time, in accordance with the changes in the structure of the dominant institutions (ibid: 21). This thesis also attempts to state that a change in the normative structure of the dominant institutions reflects itself in a change at the narrative or ‘mythic level’ in mainstream films.

Many film scholars in the recent past have explored the concept of ‘national cinema’ and have argued that nation is a conceptual, discursively constructed entity that can be read through media texts such as films. Walsh explains how nations can be read or understood through an analysis of their artworks (1996:6). That is, he explains how artworks (cinema) are infused with ideological leanings and how through politicizing the same, links can be drawn between art forms and the prevailing institutionalized practices of the nation state. This link between the state’s privileged narratives and the cultural construction, articulation or resonance of the same has been further explained as ‘*national imaginary*’ by Ismail Xavier (1997). Likewise in his book, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, Frederic Jameson claims literary texts to be central and not supplementary to the understanding of the political realities of a given point of time. While Jameson looks at cultural texts such as books and films so as to read the hidden manifestations of the economic and the political base that have shaped them, this study asserts that texts like films need to be studied for understanding the dominant features of the state’s identity or its ‘biographical narrative’ that are not just portrayed in films, but are also normalized by their consistent filmic repetition.

According to various critics of the Indian cinema like Valicha (1988) and Kazmi (1998), viewers watch films uncritically, a response that seem at best to ignore and at worst to encourage authoritarian beliefs and circumstances such as xenophobia, hatred between Indian and Pakistan to name a few. With reference to the several mainstream Hindi films portraying the relations between India and Pakistan, Shukla explores some stereotypes that have consistently been repeated including that of the people of Kashmir preferring a just rule by a democratic India rather than a tyrannical rule by Pakistan; or the Indian government and army being compassionate unlike Pakistan; or Indians portrayed as peace loving, secular and tolerant unlike their Pakistani counterparts who are depicted as fundamentalist and terror-promoting (2005:1). Shukla explores these stereotypes by analyzing Hindi films foregrounding Kashmir including *Roja* (1992), *Mission Kashmir* (2000), *LOC-Kargil* (2003) and *Fanaa* (2006) (2005:1). Jutta Weldes argues that ‘national interests’ are constructed and created as meaningful objects out of shared meanings through which the world and the position of the state in it is made intelligible (1996). By understanding films as sites of inter-subjective meaning construction, it could be argued here that a state’s identity and Ontological security needs can be revealed through them. For instance, in her analysis of the post-1990s mainstream Hindi films foregrounding Kashmir, Shukla examines how most films portray one singular and simplistic version of

India’s righteous claim to Kashmir, Pakistan’s meddling in the state’s affairs and young Kashmiris being misguided thereby making the complex issue of Kashmir look simplistic, Kargil war understandable and Indian army’s actions justifiable (2005:1).

The narrative that is visible in these films it could be argued, also reflects the broader biographical narrative of the Indian state with respect to Kashmir.

While films act as sites that reflect the state’s dominant discourse, they can also be examined as forms that assist in resisting or questioning the same discourse of the state. Rebecca Stein and Ted Swedenburg explicate how through cinema it is “not just a proliferation of sites of power, but also an expanded conception of the possible avenues and modalities of resistance” (2004:10). For instance, in his analysis of the treatment and characterization of Muslims in ‘Bollywood’ films, Sanjeev Kumar looks at *Garm Hawa* (1974) and *Parzania* (2007) as two such films that engaged in a ‘heretical’ discourse wherein the struggles and challenges faced by

minority communities are portrayed (2013: 446). Such films (few in number among mainstream films), resist the Hindu nationalist ideology.

Cynthia Weber argues that films should not be analyzed in isolation from actual politics but instead ‘as its constitutive sites’ (2001:9). The inter-text between the political and the cultural has been further examined by Jutta Weldes who analyses Hollywood Science Fiction films made during the Cold War for reflections of contemporary trends and attitudes of world politics in the same (2001). Weldes explores how the Science Fiction films of the 1950s-60s, by using myriad future scenarios to explore the consequences and possible ramifications of nuclear war, mirror the prevailing uncertainties and anxieties regarding nuclear weapons at that time (ibid). Likewise, in her analysis of the very popular *Star Trek* television-series, Weldes notes how the same establishes the idea of the crew members (United States) as fundamentally peace loving people who use weapons only under provocation from ‘hostile’ and ‘dangerous’ aliens (1999: 120). By so doing she notes, the series established the image of the U.S. as “a benign nation that is motivated by defensive needs rather than by malevolence and aggression” (ibid). This could be further related to the biographical narrative prevalent within the state during the Cold War years in which, the U.S. made several militaristic (mis)adventures in some ‘Third-World’ nations under the ostensible rationale of exterminating the evil communist ideology.

In order to analyze the discourse that a particular cultural text is reflecting, Weldes highlights the importance of examining the specific identities and characteristics that are typically attached to the subjects in a text and their positioning with respect to one another (ibid: 119). In other words, Weldes gives emphasis to studying the ‘us’ vs. ‘other’ dichotomies that are produced and reinforced through cinematic means. This resonates with Levi-Strauss’s concept of ‘binary opposition’ wherein he argues that all cultural forms display their myths, stories and beliefs by structuring characters and situations in the form of binary opposites like, good-bad, boy-girl, society-individual to name a few Gras (1981: 478). I will also pay attention to understanding how films employ affective tools in the reproduction of cultures, subjectivity and power relations (Harding and Pribram 2004: 864). While Wright (1975), Weldes (2001, 1999) and Weber (2001) analyze films as constitutive sites of politics, the literature nonetheless suffers from inadequate analysis on the impact of popular culture or cinema on politics. Jutta Weldes

however explores this possible connect by drawing parallels between science fiction and the US state wherein the former she argues, influenced the state (2001: 2).

Mainstream Hindi Films: Portrayal of the Indian and the Pakistani Identity

With reference to the theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitization, this section will focus upon predominant narratives through which the generally overlapping Indian (Hindu) and Pakistani (Muslim) identities have been articulated through differing historical contexts. Stuart Croft argues how in the process of identifying oneself with certain aspects and traits, a state engages in pitting itself against an ‘other’ (2012: 220). That is, “a key element of Ontological Security is ‘insecuritization’”, in that, “‘security’ needs to be understood as a term through which the dominant power can decide who should be protected, and who should be designated as those to be controlled and feared” (ibid: 221). This argument could be related to Hegel and Kant who assume that identity cannot be figured without the simultaneous creation and negative stereotype of the ‘other’ (Lebow 2008: 473). This section endeavours to cull out how the cinematic portrayal of an Indian identity is distinct from that of the portrayal of a Pakistani identity to the extent that a demonic Pakistani ‘other’ has contributed to shaping an ideal Indian self. With respect to India and Pakistan, the articulation of the relations between the two nations has been explored thematically through the following narratives: Partition, Wars, Kashmir and Terrorism.

Partition and Historical Trauma

This section explores films that deal with the historical trauma of Partition, wherein attention is paid to how emotion and affect have been employed so as to establish subjectivity, power and dominant meanings of the event. Harding and Pribram discuss the role of emotions in the reproduction of cultures, subjectivity and power relations (2002). Furthermore, they explore emotions to be culturally constructed and explain how power works through specific articulations of emotions (ibid). *Dharamputra* (1960) was among the first films made by the

Hindi film industry to have dealt with the event of Partition directly and thereby, to have condemned the insanity and senselessness of all the violence, looting, bloodshed that followed as a result. Bhaskar explicates the intense emotionalism of the film by taking the example of the song, *Yeh kiska lahu hai, kaun mara*, by Sudhir Ludhianvi which demands answers for “all the pointless deaths, rapes and bloodshed that took place in the name of god!” (2013: 346). While discussing the crucial features of Indian melodrama, Ira Bhaskar points towards the “privileging and amplification of emotions and at the centrality of music and song as the vehicle of this expression wherein songs are developed as the language of the ineffable” (2012: 166). It could thus be stated that *Dharamputra* employed the soundtrack, images and voice over to generate ‘high emotionalism’ and in so doing, the film propagated the secular narrative by problematizing the role of not just the Muslim League but also of Hindu communalism (ibid). Another Hindi film that dealt with the narrative of Partition directly during this period was M.S. Sathyu’s *Garm Hawa* (1974), wherein the dilemmas faced by the Indian Muslim (minority) citizen were highlighted. With reference to the same historical period, Mira Debs points towards the political discourse in the state that called for national unity in response to the post-independence chaos and the threat of religious fracturing (2013: 647). It could thus be argued here that these films were influenced by secular Nehruvian ideas that dominated the statist discourse of that time.

Nevertheless, it should be noted here that the first three decades following the Partition saw only a negligible number films that were made on the subject. In the initial years after Partition, films revolved around the recurring themes of separated families, feuding families, and the trope of brothers lost in a *mela* (which could be understood as indirect representations of the Partition) as Ira Bhaskar points out (2007). Sarkar has attributed the ‘relative silence’ of the film industry to three key factors: “the exigency of post-independence nation building; the difficulty of reliving on screen an ordeal that was still too fresh and vivid; and trauma’s disjunctive temporal structure, particularly its initial latency leading to problems of referentiality, representation and knowledge” (2009: 7).

It was not until the 1984 anti-Sikh riots that the theme of Partition began being addressed through televised and cinematic narratives. Mani Ratnam’s *Roja* (1992) was one of the first Hindi films in this period that touched upon the trauma of Partition. Debs explains this cultural shift as a by-product of the prevailing socio-political factors including, the communal violence of

1984 that was continuously being described by historians as ‘Partition all over again’; the political rise of the Hindu right accompanied by the erosion of secular values and the outbreaks of Hindu-Muslim violence in Ayodhya (1992), Mumbai (1993) and Gujarat (2002), to name a few (2013: 645). With reference to the trauma of the Partition, Bhaskar relates the continual depiction of the Bombay riots in films like Mani Ratnam’s *Bombay* (1995), Mahesh Bhatt’s *Zakhm* (1998), Khalid Mohammed’s *Fiza* (2000) and Govind Nihalani’s *Dev* (2004) to the Partition by explaining “how the present evokes and folds into itself the memory of past traumas” (2013: 349). This apart, “the story that gets repeated in these films is a repetition in multiple forms of the Partition narrative, a sudden loss, death, murder which tears apart a family” (ibid). Bhaskar further explicates how these films, through “hyperbolic orchestration of cinematic *mise-en-scene* and music, foreground emotional textures and the experience of awesome violence” (ibid).

With respect to the films made on the subject of Kashmir, Nicholas Dirks notes how the persistence of the memory of Partition has been noticed in Mani Ratnam’s *Roja* and Vidhu Vinod Chopra’s *Mission Kashmir* (2001: 171-174). He notes how the trauma of the Partition is evoked through the repeated and vociferous message of these films that ‘Kashmir is an integral part of India’ and that ‘at no cost would India be divided again’ (ibid).

John Mathew Matthan’s *Sarfarosh* (1999), a film made a year after the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan, utilizes memory, flashback and narration so as to make references to the Partition which are very different from those made by films like *Dharamputra* and *Garm Hawa*. The film makes no qualms about directly pointing at Pakistan in stating that even those who pretend to be friends of the Indian nation (with reference to the cultural ties between the two countries), may in fact pose a serious danger. Amit Rai suggests how “the film draws parallels between contemporary terrorism and the Partition and shows the protagonist Ajay blaming the Pakistani antagonist Gulfam for not being able to let go of the past” (2003:7). Here, a drastic contrast is visible between *Dharamputra* and *Sarfarosh* wherein, unlike the former, *Sarfarosh* talks not of the utter senselessness of the Partition, but instead, remembers the event in a very dehistoricized, objective and simplified manner. In direct contrast to the portrayal of Pakistan in *Sarfarosh*, Yash Chopra’s *Veer-Zaara* (2004), adopts a narrative structure, *mise-en-scene* and soundtrack that depicts Pakistan in a positive light. Songs like *Jaisa Desh Hai*

Tera, Vaisa Desh Hai Mera (my nation is so much like yours) intensify emotion to reveal and cultivate the resemblance between the two nations. In this context, Hirji explicates how “maternal and parental figures in the film serve to provide a sense of uniformity and similarity between the two nations” (2008: 66).

Resonance of nationalism through war and terror narratives

This section examines Bombay films that revolve mainly around the theme of war with Pakistan as the enemy ‘other’. The focus is on identifying the (implicit/explicit) traces of Hindu nationalism and xenophobia visible through the films. The film scholarship has noted the surge in the number of ‘war films’ emerging from the Bombay film industry during the 1990s and early 2000s. Films like JP Dutta’s *Border* (1997), Tinu Verma’s *Maa Tujhe Saalam* (2000), JP Dutta’s *LOC Kargil* (2003) are some that have directly dealt with Indian enmity with its arch-rival Pakistan. Sarkar explains this surge as an outcome of the political environment of the nation at that time (2009). He contextualizes the tense political climate by noting the ‘matching nuclear tests’ that were conducted by India and Pakistan in 1998; the outbreak of the Kargil War in 1999, “a battle that was highly localized, but whose animosity was widely disseminated by the new media networks and exacerbated by resurgent religious chauvinisms in the region”; the Parliamentary attack in 2000 and the Operation Parakram that followed in 2001-02 (ibid).

JP Dutta’s *Border* espouses a nationalistic tone which uses narrative structure, background score, and historical trauma to produce cinematic affect which takes religious tones to the extent of normalizing Indian citizenship with Hinduism and dampening the Nehruvian secular vision that was visible in some of the films of the 1950s-60s. For instance, Bhaskar Sarkar narrates a scene from the film in which only a hundred and twenty Indian infantrymen were surrounded by some six hundred Pakistani soldiers and forty tanks (ibid). At this time, he notes, Major Kuldeep Singh (played by the hyper-aggressive Sunny Deol), energized his men by reminding them of the militant Sikh guru who declared that one *Khalsa* fighter amounted to one hundred and twenty five thousand Mughal imperial troops (ibid). In this scene and many other

sequences, Sarkar argues that the film consistently calls upon the historical trauma of the Partition, so as to frame Patriotism in Hindu religious terms (ibid).

In the film *Gadar-Ek Prem Katha* made in 2001, the narrative of the film is shaped by the resurgence of strident religious fundamentalism, exacerbated by the Kargil war. The film is a melodrama about a cross-class inter-ethnic romance between Sakina, an upper class Muslim woman, and Tara Singh, a Sikh truck driver. Sharif Ali, Sakina's father, who rises to political prominence in the post-independence Pakistan, tries his best to break them up. The jingoistic tone of the film also reflects the chauvinistic mood of the nation against the background of the nuclear tests and the Kargil war. The jingoism could be gathered from the exceedingly affective sequence in which Tara Singh gives in to Sharif Ali's demands to convert to Islam and to publicly proclaim Pakistan *Zindabad* (hail Pakistan) but, absolutely refuses to utter Hindustan *Murdabad* (down with India). Through the sequence, not only is the unmatched patriotism and righteousness of the Indian citizen highlighted but, the Pakistani identity is also simultaneously normalised through vicious and evil textures. Further, Kavita Daiya examines and problematizes the normative citizenship that the film espouses "which rests on a version of secularism wherein the Muslim woman (here Sakina) must assimilate into the Hindu/Sikh religion in order to be accepted and not vice-versa" (2011: 591-92). This apart, Daiya explains how the film ultimately produces an ethno-nationalist vision of India and Indian history in which Pakistan functions as the 'nation's other', "threatening its secularism and its inter-ethnic families with dissolution" (ibid). The common thread running through the narratives of these films, as Sarkar points, is the exaggeration of the Hindutva version of religious patriotism, which, for instance, is also underscored in *LOC Kargil* through "the Indian army's loud invocations to various Hindu gods- *Kali, Durga, Ram* and *Krishna* and in the portrayal of the Rajput regiments charging at the enemy perceived to consist of Islamic *Jihadis*" (2009).

In this context, it would be worthwhile to mention the Ontological security concept of a Critical situation, a term coined by Brent Steele wherein it is argued that as individuals/states feel vulnerable and experience existential anxiety (Critical situation), it is not uncommon for them to wish to reaffirm a threatened self- identity (2008). Kinnvall uses this definition to argue that, "in the case of existential anxiety, a state is most likely to hold on to or to reaffirm two aspects of its identity namely, nationalism and 'religionism'" (2004: 742). She further explicates how during

the period of national crisis like a war or ethnic/communal violence that generates anxieties among the masses, the state/society attempt “recreating their lost sense of security or re-affirming their self-identity” (ibid). In the context of the rise of Hindutva ideology that, among other elements, also rests on an ingrained insecurity towards the Pakistani/Muslim ‘other’, and following the Kargil war and the Parliamentary attack in 2001, that potentially marked a Critical situation for the sovereign statist identity, it could be argued that cinematic language revealed both nationalistic and religious tones.

Another genre of films that have evoked nationalistic sentiments during this period is ‘pre-nuclear’ films (a term given by Raminder Kaur 2013). Kaur argues that the ‘nuclear icon’ became more commonplace in the films that were produced after 1998, following the nuclear tests conducted by India (ibid). While analyzing films like *16 December* (2002), *Hero: Love story of a Spy* (2003) and *Fanaa* (2006), Kaur traces how,

“The filmic texts consist of real life events such as the risks posed by nuclear neighbours (where it is always Pakistan that is imagined and not China), consequences of international smuggling of nuclear technology and nuclear terrorism” (ibid).

She further examines how these films, by demonstrating anxieties caused by the danger of nuclear missiles falling into the hands of the terror groups, “appropriates the state as the rightful custodian of the weapons”. Further, by demonizing the terrorist and by not questioning or problematizing the state’s right to the use of nuclear missiles, the films glorify the state and generate a nationalistic discourse.

The imagination of Kashmir and Terrorism

Kashmir remains a critical and crucial aspect of the conflict between India and Pakistan. It is for this reason that it is essential to understand how the mass medium of cinema imagines and portrays the valley, the people of the valley, the ideology of the conflict and the relationship between the Kashmiris and mainland Indians. This section explores the changing Kashmiri narrative in Hindi cinema from the 1960s to the present day. I focus keenly on the shift in the cinematic language deployed for the depiction of Kashmir from a ‘space of landscape escape’,

‘metropolitan fantasy’ and ‘heterosexual romance’ to becoming a paradise lost at the hands of an ideology grounded firmly in militant Islam (Kabir 2005). In analyzing this narrative shift, I focus on the key elements in the depiction of the mainland Indians and the Kashmiris alongside exploring how the films place Pakistan with respect to the Kashmiri conflict. It would be important for the changes in the visual representation of Kashmir to be measured against the shifts in the national and global identity politics, the aggression of Hindutva, Kashmiri demands for *aazadi*, the Kargil war of 1999, the Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan, and finally the shifting Indo-Pak dynamics. Further, this section engages with the visible overlap between the Kashmiri and notions of fundamentalist *Jihad*. Likewise, the study also engages with how the cinematic articulation of terrorism is depicted as a product of a complex web wherein elements of Pakistani abetted terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and the misguided Kashmiri youth intersect.

Philip Lutgendorf explicates films like Raj Kapoor’s *Bobby* (1973), Dev Anand’s *Hare Rama Hare Krishna* (1971) and Raj Kapoor’s *Ram Teri Ganga Maile Ho Gaye* (1985) to name a few, to be reminiscent of a ‘Bollywood obsession’ of “associating Kashmir with romance and eroticism in the 1970s-80s” (2005: 2). Jahanara Kabir points out that the Kashmiri in these films, “signalled particularly through Kashmiri dress, became a signifier of modernity’s other; that both needed to be jettisoned and retained as a mirror to the postcolonial nation’s emergent sense of self” (2010: 376). However, with the changing socio-political dynamics in the valley, the cinematic portrayal of Kashmir in the 1990s began to be associated with the fundamentalist ideology of Islam. Furthermore, scholars including Kabir, Rai, Rajgopal have noted that 1990’s onwards, Hindi films that revolved around the subject of Kashmir, started presenting binaries like normative, peaceful Hinduism and deviant, violent Islam; fundamentalist militant Kashmiri and the strong yet benevolent Indian army to name a few.

Mani Ratnam’s *Roja* (1992) marked this shift in the portrayal of Kashmir from an idyllic location to one infested with fundamental Islamic terrorism. This shift was accompanied by stark binaries between the Kashmiri and the mainland Indian, the Hindu and the Muslim and the terrorist/militant and the Indian army. “The Hindu in the film is represented as the norm and the Muslim as a disruptor of that norm and hence perceived as the other” (Rajgopal 2011: 241). This apart, the film depicts Hindu religion as friendly and light hearted, visible in the way the female

protagonist Roja is shown playfully talking to the Hindu gods. On the contrary, the ideology of Jihad is conflated with the everyday practice of Islam which is visually depicted through significant shots of the militants at *namaaz* and aurally through the sound of the *aazan* that floats across the scenes of military and militant confrontation. Further, Nicholas Dirks explicates how the film portrays Kashmir as “a place of terrorism, inhabited by ruthless, pre-modern Muslims, who need the attention of the so called heroic Indian army to get humanized” (2001:51). While discussing the hegemonic Hindutva agenda manifested in the film, Tejaswini Niranjana locates the release of the Hindi version of *Roja* as strategically after the *Hazratbal* siege, during the parliamentary elections in the northern states, and just before the first anniversary of the Babri *Masjid* demolition (1994:80).

In the films *Roja*, *Mission Kashmir* and *Yahaan*, Kabir discusses that the ‘threat to the romantic, heterosexual couples in the films by the Islamic militants in the valley could be compared to the perceived threat to the unity of the nation state by Pakistan motivated Kashmiri terrorism’ (Kabir 2010: 375-76). Here, “the heterosexual couple becomes an analogy for the ‘collective national body’ or the symbol of the ‘modern secular India’ whose threatened unity draws upon the trauma of the Partition” (ibid). Significantly, as Amit Rai notes, these films show the forces of justice and humanity already blurring into the violence of injustice and inhumanity (2003: 14). For instance, “Inayat Khan, the Muslim inspector in *Mission Kashmir*, is shown resorting to tactics that would otherwise be called terrorist tactics, thereby, normalizing using such methods for the Kashmiri other” (ibid).

This apart, the subject of ‘*Jihad*’ resonates across these films and is portrayed as the prime reason for Kashmiris rejecting the sovereignty of the Indian nation state (Kabir 2010). In this respect, Zutshi notes that “the films are devoid of any dynamics of class or history that have affected the turmoil in the valley, and in consistently focusing on Jihad as the motivation behind the Kashmir conflict, they have oversimplified the complex issue and only propagated the state driven discourse” (2003: 55). Likewise, Ghuman notes that all Kashmir films revolve around targeting Pakistan and the Indian Muslim without making any attempt to delve into the several complex processes that breed and sustain terrorism (2006). Apart from representing the Kashmiri conflict in one dimensional religious terms, they are also oriented towards the reassimilation of the Kashmiri by the benevolent Indian state. Moreover, the films also reinforce certain

stereotypes of the Muslims and the Kashmiris. Khan for instance argues that *Fanaa* (2006) “reaffirms the boundaries of the nation and citizenship and produces meanings situating Muslims within current versions of dominant Indian nationalism” (2009: 129). Khan further notes that the narrative in the film constructs the Muslim anti-hero in a manner consistent with both shades of orientalism: decadence and sexual promiscuity as well as irrationality and violent terrorist activity (ibid).

The literature on these films that I have used addresses the political nature that is embedded in popular cultural forms alongside noting the impact of the same (films) in reinforcing particular meanings and identities. However, a significant gap that is visible is that of a direct link between the political and the cinematic; and, finding a tangible overlap of discourses from the political to the filmic has been limited. While Jutta Weldes (2001, 2015) has attempted to find this overlap particularly with respect to science fiction films in Hollywood, her study only marginally addresses the repetitive political texts and instead, focuses more on the filmic texts. It is this particular gap that this study seeks to fill. In so doing, the study looks at official ‘speech-acts’ using the tools of Ontological security and Securitization to foreground dominant political narratives. Consequently, films have been looked at to find the tangible mirroring and reflection of the political narratives. By so doing, this study attempts to draw a more linear relation between filmic and political texts.

Definitions, Rationale and Scope

In this section, I would like to define the key concepts of this study before moving on to the rationale and scope of the project. The three core concepts that I have used in the study include Discourse, Ontological security and Securitization. Discourse refers to the characteristic way of thinking or the state of ‘knowledge’ at any one time (what Foucault terms the ‘episteme’). Discourse consists mainly of a set of ideas that are visible (implicitly or explicitly) through various levels of society which resonate with each other and enable the making intelligible of a certain way of looking at the world. It should be noted that discursive formations can be understood as a group of ideas, images and practices that provide ways of

comprehending, thinking and talking about certain topics. Similar and interacting patterns of discourse appearing across multiple sites including political, social, cultural, academic etc., have the potential of being understood as accepted truth or what Foucault terms the 'Regimes of Truth'. According to Foucault, Regimes of truth largely denote the 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourses that a society accepts as truth (Foucault 1992). Further, the study finds resonance with the Foucauldian understanding of the 'power-knowledge' nexus, which notes that power is reflective in the regulating, constraining, disciplining abilities of discursive knowledge. According to Foucault, 'discursive practices' and 'discursive formation' refer to the analysis of particular institutions with respect to the method in which they establish particular orders of truth, or what is accepted as 'reality' in a given society. 'Discursive formations' nevertheless display a hierarchical arrangement and are understood as reinforcing certain already established identities or subjectivities. In this study, careful attention has been paid to the consistently repetitive narratives articulated through the intersecting discursive web of political and cinematic texts and their simultaneous impact on the normalizing and legitimizing of certain discourses.

Ontological security is another core concept of this study. It refers to a state's deeply embedded understanding of itself. The import of Ontological security comes from the fact that its fulfillment affirms a state's self-identity that is, how a state sees itself and how it wants to be seen by others. Core elements of the said concept that I have used in this study include Biographical narrative, Critical situation and Ontological insecurity. Biographical narrative refers to the narrative that a state maintains about itself at a particular historical period so as to explain its routinized foreign policy actions both to itself and to the others. According to Brent Steele (2008), the same could help in developing a better comprehension of a state's foreign policy motivations. 'Instability' or 'insecurity' felt towards cognitive self-identity narratives is explicated as a Critical situation. Consequently, when a state/individual experiences existential anxiety, it is not uncommon for them to reaffirm the threatened self-identity by emphasizing certain discursive practices, by securitization and by desecuritization. For Kinnevall, situations of cognitive disjunctures primarily push a state to reaffirm two particular concepts: 'nationalism' and 'religionism'.

Further, the study briefly engages with the theoretical concept of Securitization in its expanded way, in which scholars like Michael Williams (2003), Ido Oren (2014), TY Solomon

(2014) etc. have been engaged with. The expanded version of the concept pays attention to the ‘speech-act’ process, or the securitizing process through which a security threat is situated as an existential threat that in turn justifies the adoption of emergency measures. In this, the ‘socio-linguistic resources’ of the speech-acts including ‘emotional appeals’, ‘historical analogies’, ‘forms of symbolic’, often ‘culturally specific language’ (Stritzel 2012) and ‘repetitive chanting of phrases’ by the political elite as well as the audience (Solomon and Oren 2014) are looked at. Further, the scholars belonging to this generation of Securitization are also interested in paying attention to the pervasive circulation of images, narratives through media and popular cultural forms that enable the generation of ‘background meanings’ for audiences, which is a process that further assists in the securitization process.

Among the films, this work is interested in engaging with the dominant meanings that are symbolically and overtly communicated through narrative structures, *mise-en-scene* and affective textures including the emotional, sonic and lyrical forms. It is also essential to note that the term ‘popular culture’ has been used to escape the “dichotomies and debates as high culture versus low culture; mass culture versus elite culture; and popular or folk versus classical culture” (Appadurai & Breckenridge 1988: 5).

With respect to the reasons justifying the special interest in this area of research, three seem to be particularly pertinent. Firstly, the potential that films carry as sites of discursive formation that can reflect the state’s dominant discourses. Secondly, the power of films in making intelligible and legitimate certain foreign policy actions of the states and finally, the marginalization and understudy of this pertinent link between the cultural and the political in the discipline of International Relations. While the discipline of IR has paid much attention to the concept of power, the role played by popular culture in implicitly engendering this power has however not received adequate attention. Further, it is worth noting that while scholarly literature also suggests instances in which popular culture also influences political narratives (Jutta Weldes 1999; 2001), this study however focuses on how dominant state narratives influence films and not the other way around.

At the outset, it is pertinent to note that the major focus of the study is on mainstream, commercial Hindi films of the Bombay film industry. The reason for making this choice is the

pervasive and widespread reach that these films have. It is also noteworthy here that while the Indian subcontinent has several other thriving film industries including Tamil, Malayalam, Telegu, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Punjabi etc., the study has selected the Bombay Hindi film industry because in terms of factors like global presence, box office sales and far reaching influence, Hindi films far exceed their regional counterparts. While the films have been looked at by paying attention to dominant narratives around Indian and Pakistani identities in relation to one another, in so doing, the study is taking for granted the inherent political nature of all films. A lacuna in this research is that the economic nature of filmmaking is being overlooked. This aspect has been emphasized upon by James Monaco who contends all art to be inherently economic products (2000: 33). Further, while this research is focusing on films that mirror and reflect predominant statist narratives and ideologies, it is nonetheless essential to note that Bombay cinema also has a substantial number of films that echo counter-narratives. In the context of this research, *Haider* (2014) is one such film that problematises the embedded popular narratives on the Valley. Further, there are also films like *Veer-Zaara* (2003), *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014) and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) that foreground narratives of harmony, which will however not be falling within the purview of this research.

Research Questions

- How has Bombay Cinema portrayed the Partition and the post-Partition/Independence nation?
- How has the historical trauma of the Partition been cinematically treated over the years, and how has this treatment been impacted by the prevailing socio-political environment in the country?
- Have incidents of communal violence in post-Partition India triggered the traumatic memories associated with the Partition? If so, what has been the cinematic response to the same?
- How has Hindi cinema constructed a national imaginary of the Muslim and Pakistani 'other' and how has this construction been influenced by the changing Hindu-Muslim and India-Pakistan dynamics?
- How do the filmic texts represent the nation-state, and address prevailing questions about national belonging?

- How does filmic language including, camera angles, *mise-en-scene*, spatial, sonic, lyrical textures etc., assist in constructing narrative meanings?
- What are the dominant narratives that have consistently echoed through political ‘speech-acts’ at several critical junctures between India and Pakistan?
- How have mainstream films mirrored and reflected the dominant political narratives with respect to India and Pakistan?
- How is Foucault’s analysis of power and discourse useful in this inter-textual analysis?
- By adopting the theoretical concept of Ontological Security to the inter-textual ‘political-filmic’ combine, what have been the core narratives of the Indian self-identity?
- How has the lens of Securitisation been adopted in this study, particularly with respect to Islamic and cross-border terrorism?

In this research, the following tentative **hypotheses** have been engaged with:

Dominant filmic narratives on Indian and Pakistani identities are influenced by the prevailing communal discourses within the state and by the fluctuating bilateral dynamics between the two countries.

The theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitization help reveal the filmic portrayal and understanding of the state’s dominant narrative.

Films contribute to the reproduction and popularization of official foreign policy discourses and state actions by reflecting the state’s dominant knowledge.

Power operates not just through the state or other political and social institutions, but can also function through different informal cultural forms.

The concluding section of this research revisits these hypotheses to see whether the findings of the study verify, modify or falsify them.

Research Methods

The two primary variables that are adopted in this study include dominant and consistently repetitive political narratives and cinematic texts. The state's dominant, repetitive discourses vis-à-vis India and Pakistan are taken as the independent variables while, the cinematic texts (reflecting the political discourses) are understood as the dependent variables. It is nonetheless essential to emphasize that in the context of this study, cinematic texts adopt the role of dependent variables. However, there can be instances where films develop an agency independent of the statist narratives.

In the inter-textual 'political-filmic' analysis, political texts including speeches by the Prime Ministers and other state elites, Lok Sabha debates, Annual Reports of the Ministry of Home Affairs, that revolved around critical junctures of the relations between India and Pakistan have been largely looked at. Within these texts, privileged, repetitive, symbolic stances have been observed and noted. Further, the implicit/explicit echoing of the said statist narratives through filmic texts have been engaged with. In the analysis of the films, attention has been paid to the external political context, the narrative structure of the films and the consistently emphasized identities and ideologies. This alongside, keen attention has been given to the elements of filmic language including camera angles, lighting, shot composition, landscape/spatial representation, aural, lyrical textures etc. In so doing, this study has attempted to understand how these elements have affectively assisted in pronouncing and amplifying particular meanings.

An Overview of the Chapters

The second chapter of this study lays down the theoretical framework that has been adopted through the course of this dissertation. It this, it engages with the Foucauldian understanding of the concepts of discourse and the 'power-knowledge' nexus. The discussion gradually proceeds to the emerging discipline of Popular Culture and World Politics (PCWP), wherein this study is situated within a strand of this discipline that understands the popular cultural form of films as constitutive sites of politics, that represent and articulate dominant statist identities and thus, carry the potential of shaping subjectivities by normalizing certain

dominant narratives. Further, the chapter engages with the theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitization, wherein links are drawn between the two. The former concept pays attention to the stable and routinized notions of ‘self-identity’ through which a state understands and symbolizes itself. In the discussion on Securitization, the chapter engages with scholars who propose an expansion of the same, with this expansion being both horizontal (in terms of looking at popularly and pervasively circulating images, popular cultural forms that reinstate the narratives of the official ‘speech-acts’) and vertical (which studies the ‘speech-acts’ by paying special attention to the words, the affective and emotional textures within the speeches alongside noting the repetitive ‘chanting’⁴ of phrases and the consequent ‘chanting’ of the same by the audience). It is essential to note that these theoretical concepts are related to this study so as to achieve better clarity.

Chapter III focuses on the themes of the Partition of the sub-continent in 1947, the creation of India and Pakistan in 1947 and the wars that have consequently been fought between the two nations. The aim is to pay attention to the themes of repetitive narrative structures and the established and familiar iconographic articulation of the Indian and the Pakistani identities. The chapter is divided into two broad sections with the first engaging with political and cinematic narratives through the early decades since Partition and the second focusing on intertextual discourses during the 1990s and 2000s. In so doing, the chapter finds a tangible shift from the post-Partition Nehruvian secular and national integrationist discourse to a Hindu nationalist discourse in the 1990s, following the *Ramjanmabhoomi* campaign that polarized the political climate of the nation.

Chapter IV that traces the dominant discourses on Kashmir focuses on the cinematic imagination of the Valley and on how the protracted conflict there has largely been seen through the lens of Pakistan interference and Islamic fundamentalism. This perspective has been found running through films made in the post-1989 period, following the onset of the armed rebellion in the Valley. The chapter is divided into two broad sections, viz: the post-Partition period from 1947 to the 1980s and the post-1989 phase from the outbreak of the armed rebellion in the Valley in 1989 to 2014. In so doing, the chapter seeks to find the mainstream discourses on Kashmir reflected through the political-cinematic intertext, and the consequent implications of

⁴ Term used by TY Solomon and Ido Oren 2015.

the same with respect to popularizing, legitimizing particular identities, policies and actions. Attention is paid to the cinematic language shift in the depiction of Kashmir from being a space of landscape escape, metropolitan fantasy and heterosexual romance in the first few decades after Partition/Independence to a paradise lost at the hands of an ideology firmly rooted in militant Islam through the 1990s-2000s. The chapter also argues that by depicting the Kashmiri conflict in an oversimplified, one-dimensional manner which focuses on the re-assimilation of the Kashmiri into the benevolent Indian state, the films indulge in amplifying the national integrationist statist discourse. Importantly, the changes in the visual representation of Kashmir have been measured against the shifts in national and global identity politics, the aggression of Hindutva, Kashmiri demands for *aazadi*, the Kargil war of 1999, the Confidence Building Measures between the two nations from 2004 till the Mumbai terror attack in 2008 and finally the shifting Indi-Pak dynamics.

The penultimate chapter explores the dominant framing of terrorism, wherein, the focus is particularly on the intermittent episodes of terrorist attacks on mainland India, particularly in the first decade of the 21st century, which New Delhi has mainly attributed to Islamic terrorism emanating from both the Pakistani state and non-state actors. In this, the study looks at the mainstream articulation of the same through dominant political discourses alongside tracing the mirroring and resonance of the same through popular Hindi cinema. The scope is mainly limited to the period beginning from the early 1990s to 2014. This period has been marked by an armed rebellion in Kashmir that has popularly been narrativized as militancy and terrorism, purportedly sponsored, motivated and assisted by the Pakistani state. The period has also been marked by several episodes of sporadic terror strikes through mainland India particularly in the first decade of the 21st century, which again were asserted to have been a product of both the Pakistani state and non-state actors, popularly termed as- ‘cross-border terrorism’. In the final chapter, alongside concluding the arguments of this study, reflection is made on the tentative hypotheses that were stated at the outset of the research. Further, it spells out the scope as well as the limitations of the study.

Chapter II

Conceptualising Discourse, Ontological security and Securitization

Introduction

This study examines the process through which identities and interests that are espoused by states become intelligible through a finely choreographed intersection between texts at the political as well as the popular cultural level. In this research, the focus is on the repetitive and dominant political narratives and their consequent resonance through the popular cultural medium of mainstream Hindi films. In this, the study seeks to understand the political-cinematic imbrication with respect to (re)producing, popularising and consequently, legitimising and normalising of certain narratives and identities.

As the Introduction has already noted, this project explores New Delhi's dominant articulation of India's relations with Pakistan at particular crucial periods starting from the truncation of the sub-continent in 1947 to 2014. Through a focus on consistent, repetitive and privileged statist discourses, the aim is to find the (subtle, symbolic and explicit) mirroring of the same through popular Hindi films. Through an analysis of the inter-text between the political and the cinematic, the study seeks to show that it is through the consistent resonance of dominant political knowledge through popular cultural sites including films, that certain discourses are made both commonsensical and intelligible, a process that further assists in normalising and justifying statist identities, norms, actions and foreign policies.

In this intertextual study, the political and the cinematic overlap is ascertained as a crucial site of discursive formation, with the same engendering popular meanings and understandings. Explicating Michel Foucault's understanding of discourse, Stuart Hall notes the same to be occurring through a combination of texts, at a multitude of sites, articulating similar thoughts (Hall 1980). The same discourse, characteristic of the way of thinking or the state of 'knowledge' at any one time (what Foucault terms the 'episteme'), will appear across a range of texts, articulating similar ideas. Whenever these discursive events "refer to the same object, share the same style and support a strategy...a common institutional, administrative or political drift or

pattern”, they are said by Foucault to belong to the same discursive formation (Cousins and Hussain 1984: 84-85). In other words, a discursive formation could be said to include a set of ideas that, at a particular historical period, are found interacting with each other through different sites, and consequently, echoing similar thoughts. Foucault exemplifies the same by discussing the narrative around homosexuality explicating how, through the carefully orchestrated articulation of the same as ‘unnatural’, ‘deviant’ and ‘abnormal’, through hospitals, medical journals, schools etc., a certain normative association of homosexuality with perversion was both reinstated and normalised (1980b).

The aim of this chapter is to engage with the theoretical processes that assist in the analysis of the inter-textuality between the political and the cinematic wherein, the (political-cinematic) imbrication can be understood as a significant process of discursive formation. For this purpose, the chapter engages with concepts of discourse, Ontological security and Securitization. The chapter also pays attention to the Popular Culture-World Politics (PCWP) paradigm which is an emerging area of study that engages with the intertextuality between popular cultural sites and world politics. The purpose is to place this research within the PCWP paradigm.

This study begins by engaging with the emerging scholarship that explores the intersection between Popular Culture and World Politics. Further, the chapter briefly engages with the Foucauldian understanding of discourse with special attention paid to particularly three of Foucault’s themes, the concept of discourse, power and knowledge and the question of the subject. The chapter then proceeds to concepts of Ontological security and Securitization with an intersection being drawn between the two. These two concepts are employed through this thesis so as to find dominant identities and narratives that have been reinforced with respect to India and Pakistan. In this, the study attempts to draw a link between Ontological Security and Securitization by understanding how Ontological insecurity or existential anxiety assists in securitizing certain narratives. Further, in discussing the Copenhagen School’s Securitization theory, I engage with scholars of the so-called ‘second generation’ of the securitization debate such as Michael Williams, TY Solomon, Ido Oren, Holger Stritzel and Bezen Balamir Coşkun among others.

The Popular Culture and World Politics continuum

The PC-WP scholarship seeks to expand conceptualizations of where and how politics and power can be understood, and consequently looks at cultural artefacts as “productive of discursive formations and (geo) political imaginations that are instrumental in shaping political understandings and identities” (Grayson: 2016). The research paradigm of popular culture and world politics has been emerging since the 1990s with a number of IR scholars engaging in the aesthetic sources and popular cultural sites to address issues relating to the field of IR. In their seminal work on PCWP, Davies, Grayson and Philpott argue that “world politics and popular culture ought not to be regarded as a series of intersecting points but as a continuum” (Grayson et al. 2009: 2); the two spheres they contend, “are inseparable and inhabit the same space” (ibid). Within the emerging body of knowledge that explores the connections and overlaps between popular cultural and political texts, varied interpretations have been conducted by different scholars. At the *European Workshops on International Studies- 2016* (that I had attended), Kyle Grayson presented a paper entitled- “Popular Geopolitics and Popular Culture in World Politics” in which he explored the four key strands of PCWP (Grayson 2016).

The first PCWP strand reads world politics through popular culture by using “cultural artefacts as allegorical devices to understand conceptual, theoretical, methodological and/or historical material” (ibid), thereby conveying what are often assumed to be very complex realities of international relations. For instance, a close look at *Hibakusha cinema* with several science fiction films like *Godzilla*, *Akira*, *Space Battleship Yamato* et al., reveals that they metaphorically represent the nuclear holocaust in Hiroshima and Nagasaki that took place in 1945. The first *Hibakusha* film to have responded to the atomic bombing via the cinematic genre of science fiction was Ishiro Honda’s *Gojira* (1954) which revolved around the destructions of *Gojira* (metaphor for the atomic bomb), a huge dinosaur looking beast that was born out of the effects of the nuclear detonation. Susan Sontag asserts that such science fiction films are more prevalent in societies wherein, “the audiences attempt to distract themselves from real or anticipated terrors with such filmic texts providing a virtual canvas through which anxieties and emotions are worked around” (1965).

While looking at the body of work that explores the pedagogical implications of the allegorical popular cultural –world politics continuum, Grayson notes that the “allegorical method is by far the most common way in which popular culture is mobilized within International Relations teaching” (2015: 164-65). Cynthia Weber is one such scholar to have adopted this approach. Weber’s approach draws attention both to the diverse cultural sites through which the logics of international relations are (re)produced and the means by which we can reveal the politics concealed by allegorical transposition (2001).

The second strand within this continuum looks at cultural artefacts as key elements that participate in the process of ‘knowledge’ (re)production and normalisation. In the words of Roland Bleiker, “this approach analyses international relations aesthetically” (2001: 520). In this configuration, “artefacts of popular culture are deployed to provide alternative readings of world politics by focusing on their representations, affects and embodied practices” (ibid). This approach is primarily interested in how ideas, modes of interpretation, discourses, representations, and affects circulate and resonate across the continuum formed by popular culture and world politics. Grayson notes that the work in this area has sought to explore the “inter-textual linkages between formal (i.e. academic), practical (policy), and popular discourses in the production of common sense understanding of world politics” (2015: 66-67). An objective of such approaches is to determine how popular culture is productive of world politics and how they are mutually constitutive.

Popular culture is thus a means through which subjectivities are produced, identities are constructed, knowledge is shared, threats are identified, norms are established, and discipline is imposed such that particular courses of actions not only become possible, but are also recognized by publics as having political legitimacy. The difference between this approach and the allegorical approach discussed above is that unlike the latter, this strand does not assume that there is an *a priori* world out there to which popular culture holds a mirror. The third strand of PCWP, Grayson notes is one that

Treats artefacts of popular culture as vernacular theorizations of world politics that either promote hegemonic understandings of international relations or produce counter-hegemonic understandings of the status quo (2016).

For example, Nick Robinson (2015) has recently explored the ambiguous role of American exceptionalism in video games.

The fourth approach reverses the line of inquiry wherein, the engagement is with what world politics can say about popular culture. This includes exploring how specific modes of cultural interpretation are distributed globally, and how “world politics provides affective and/or phenomenological dynamics that shape popular culture” (Grayson 2016). The contribution of this work is how it problematises what popular culture itself is, “what might count as popular, how the popular is generated and the material processes through which popular culture is produced, circulated and consumed” (ibid). For instance, the retreat ceremony that takes place between India and Pakistan every morning and evening at the *Wagah* border- a well orchestrated daily border closing ceremony that eulogizes the hyper-masculine dexterity of each side, includes the participation of hundreds of spectators through a distinctively ‘Bollywood’ style. In this, not only is the impassioned crowd on either sides of the *Wagah* border found mouthing lofty slogans like *bharat mata ki jai* (salutations to mother India) and *jeo jeo Pakistan* (long live Pakistan), but, they also competitively (almost aggressively) ‘dance’ to classic patriotic *filmy* songs (on the Indian side) like *mere desh ke dharti* or *Haan yeh lakshya hai apna*. Through this, a blurring of lines between the political and the popular cultural is evident, wherein the affective song and dance performativity of the political reifies a patriotic identity, and in the process, constructs a palpable ‘other’.

Another case where a similar blurring of lines is visible is in the case of the religious and the popular cultural. For instance, during an evening religious ceremony (*aarti*) on the banks of the Ganges in the Hindu spiritual town of Banaras in Uttar Pradesh, there are usually Hindi film songs playing on loudspeakers as worshippers gather for the event. The ritual, “that begins with what seems to look like an aesthetically rehearsed entry of a group of young men, appearing to be walking straight off a film set in their matching satin outfits”, performing the ritual in a synchronized dance-like routine, is greatly appreciated by the community of worshippers, who clearly seem to be very Bollywood-savvy (Menon 2013). This imbrication of the cinematic universe within the world of religion or in other words- the ‘Bollywoodization’ of Hinduism can contribute to understanding the ‘everydayness’ of popular films. Regarding this strand, Kyle

Grayson nonetheless asserts that research in this area remains under-represented in relation to other strands (2016).

This study engages more specifically with the second strand of the PCWP continuum which is particularly resonant through the scholarly works of Jutta Weldes, Kyle Grayson, Roland Bleiker, Christina Rowley, to name a few. That is, the study understands how films play a potent role in the popularisation and normalisation of certain privileged statist narratives, interests and identities. In so doing, the study aims to look at the inter-text between the political and the cinematic, in which, the reverberation of dominant and repetitive political discourses and identities through filmic texts is analysed as a crucial site of manufacturing meaning and popular consent. The intertextuality refers to the interaction and overlap between the cinematic and political texts, which I argue assists in the process of reinstating narratives. With respect to the inter-text between the political and the popular cultural, Jutta Weldes notes that popular cultural texts are closely intertwined specifically with politics, as the plausibility and persuasiveness of official representations of issues depends on the ways in which publics understand them: “intertextual links between political discourse and popular culture create congruence between official representations and people’s everyday experience or popular perceptions of issues” (1999: 119-120). In this intertextual analysis, aesthetics of the films conveyed through filmic elements including camera angles, lighting, aural, spatial, musical textures etc., which impact how meanings are conveyed and expressed, are also be paid attention to.

This approach that recognizes representative practices as bearing political implications is a central contribution of postmodernist thought. Scholars like Michael J Shapiro (1981) and David Campbell (1990) note that the postmodernist worldview recognizes that our understanding of the world is intrinsically linked to the languages that we employ: “languages that express histories of human interactions; languages that have successfully masked a range of arbitrary viewpoints and power relations” (Cited by Bleiker 2012: 15). It should be noted that post positivist approaches accept that representations of the political are interpretations that are influenced by the values of the perceiver. Discussing the representative practices employed by postmodernist approaches that themselves come to constitute and shape political events, Roland Bleiker takes note of the rise in the number of international relations scholars who have come to recognize and consequently employ aesthetic sources, to the extent that one can speak of an

actual 'aesthetic turn' within the discipline (2012). Bleiker explicates 'aesthetics' as "comprising the ability to step back, reflect and see political conflicts and dilemmas in new ways" (ibid: 2-4). In this, he notes aesthetics to refer not only to practices of art, from painting to music, poetry, photography and film, but also, to the "type of insights and understandings that they engender" (ibid). In the last decade, there have been a number of scholarly investigations into understanding world politics that have adopted the aesthetic paradigm. Some of the scholars to have contributed to this new body of research include, Anthony Bruke, David Campbell, James Der Derian, Jutta Weldes, Roland Bleiker, Maja Zehfuss, Cynthia Weber. The aesthetic investigations have engaged with art forms both as texts that have creatively urged counter-narratives by disrupting the dominant-commonsensical state generated 'knowledge,' and have also analyzed cultural artefacts as sites of power by exploring the embedded hegemonic/privileged discourses reflected through them that are instrumental in reinforcing dominant narratives. It is the latter investigation that this study seeks to perform. It should nonetheless be noted that while several leading academic journals, such as the *Review of International Studies*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Millennium*, *Alternatives*, *Third World Quarterly* and the *Peace Review*, have published articles and special issues that deal with aesthetics, mainstream engagements with the same however remain on the borderline.

Discourse, Power, Knowledge

This study perceives aesthetic investigations into politics in a Foucauldian sense, as a domain of power generation where the implicit reverberation of mainstream statist narratives through cultural texts, is understood, to a large extent, to be instrumentalizing the process of normalizing statist 'knowledge', actions and policies. Postmodernist thought is characterised by incredulity towards hegemonic, universalistic ideas and narratives, and instead seeks to deconstruct and problematize the same, particularly by paying attention to the linguistic, symbolic, aesthetic practices through which 'knowledge' is fashioned. Michel Foucault's 'discourse' can be said to exemplify one such practice that assists in looking at the process of (re)production and reinforcement of dominant 'knowledge'. It should nonetheless be noted that not only does Foucault understand discourse as power-enabling, but, he also notes the potential

of the same as a site of resistance through what he broadly terms, 'counter-conducts'. In his lectures at the *Collège de France* on *Security, Territory, Population and the Birth of Biopolitics*, Foucault embraced the notion of governmental 'counter-conducts' and the 'critical attitude' by discussing the 'right to question' governmental regimes of truth (Foucault 1977-78). This research will however focus on discourses as sites that participate in the process of resonance and the normalization of dominant 'knowledge'.

According to Foucault, who developed the notion of discourse in his seminal work, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, discourse constructs a topic and governs the way that it can meaningfully and intelligibly be talked about (1972). Foucault notes that discourses are created through an interconnecting and overlapping relationship of statements and exchange of ideas, rules, and procedures between 'different yet related texts' (ibid: 21-24). The coordinated interaction of similar ideas through different textual sites which consequently reinforce particular ideas is termed 'discursive formation' (ibid). The Foucauldian discursive formation can be understood as a systematic echoing of similar ideas, images, norms that emerge through diverse sites (political, media, academic, cultural, aesthetic) and consequently provide specific (limited) ways of comprehending, thinking and talking about certain topics. In this context, Foucault has explicated how discursive formations assisted in (re)producing and reinforcing 'knowledge' on 'madness', 'sexuality', 'punishment' through a simultaneous circulation of similar ideas and representations that took place at different discursive sites during particular historical periods.

Foucault has outlined a number of methodological imperatives in the study of power. While recognizing that sovereign power does exist, he argues that "it is not the only type of power in circulation" (1980: 93-96). He offers a set of alternative propositions; in the first instance, the analysis of power should not be directed at the "regulated and legitimate forms of power in their central locations but with power at its extremities.... at those points where it becomes a capillary" (ibid). To understand power's day-to-day operations, its participants and its effects, requires attending to 'micropractices or political technologies' (ibid). The characteristic feature of Foucault's theorization on power which is useful for this study is that power's distribution extends all the way across and within the social body: "power is distributed in homogeneous circuits capable of operating anywhere, in a continuous way, down to the finest

grain of the social body” (Hall 2007: 51). That is, power relations require attending to the ‘capillaries’ or peripheries wherein, power arises from the bottom up.

For Foucault, discourse is both an instrument and an object of power. His ‘genealogies’ of power have stimulated a wide interest in how ‘discursive practices’ shape both our subjectivity and our identity as individuals (Derian, J.D. and M.J. Shapiro 1989: xx). “Our subjective sense of ourselves as persons, Foucault argues, is created by recognizable discursive practices that simultaneously implicate us in power relations” (ibid). With respect to this study, careful attention has been paid to the consistently repetitive narratives articulated through the intersecting discursive web of political and cinematic texts. That this intertextual interaction affects popular subjectivity can be gauged from the Foucauldian notion of subjectivity, that unlike western philosophy which conceptualises the self as having an ‘essence’, unsettles notions of an authentic, unitary subject arguing instead for the same to be “a product of historical developments shaped by official knowledge(s) and institutionalised practices” (Gordon 1980-233-234). With respect to this study, overlapping political-cinematic discourses is understood as significant to shaping and normalising subjectivities with respect to ‘knowledge’ on Pakistan, Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, Kashmir and India.

Likewise, the interplay between discourse, power and subjectivity impacts the general understanding of truth or the ‘Regimes of truth’ at a particular point of time. According to Foucault, regimes of truth largely denote the ‘general politics’ of truth, that is, the types of discourses that a society accepts as truth (Foucault 1992: 15). These ‘general politics’ and ‘regimes of truth’ are reinforced and redefined constantly through the education system, the media, and the flux of political and economic ideologies (ibid). In this sense, one can find the currency of the intersecting web of discourse-power-subjectivity in embedded regimes of truth at specific historical periods. The forth chapter of this thesis for instance, engages with the mainstream political-cinematic narratives on Kashmir during the early decades following India’s independence, which largely portray the former as a crucial and organic territorial part that symbolised the religiously tolerant, secular and sovereign tenets of postcolonial Indian identity. Through a carefully orchestrated articulation of this narrative via intertextual discursive sites, this narrative was in turn naturalised and correspondingly accepted as ‘truth’.

Adopting the Foucauldian power-knowledge nexus, this thesis notes that power is reflected in the regulating, disciplining abilities of discursive knowledge. This ‘power-knowledge’ interrelation is also reflected throughout Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978). Said notes the various discursive sites that enabled the reinforcing of the western Orientalist narrative that divided the world into the backward ‘other’ (south) and the progressive ‘us’ (north). In this, he considers how sites such as institutions, administrative procedures, scholarly texts, language, education, tradition, religion became covert sites of power by coming together to create the Orientalist ‘myth’, which not only influenced how the Orient was popularly perceived but also influenced how the Orient imagined her/himself (ibid). By way of a pervasive demonization of the Orient through several discursive sites, “a body of work was produced that exaggerated the threat posed by the east so as to create an environment within which imperial colonization could occur and be seen as both morally sound and socially necessary” (ibid: 72). It is here that one can find the reciprocal intersection between knowledge (through Orientalist discourses at several levels) and power (in terms of the legitimizing effect of imperialism by the west). Likewise, in the book, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: the British in India*, Cohn paid attention to ‘antiquarian collections’, ‘archaeological finds’, and ‘photographic forays’ by the colonizers that were in fact forms of constructing an India that could be ‘better packaged’, ‘inferiorised’, and ‘ruled’ (1996). Cohn’s work explored the discursive ways in which the British discovery, collection, and codification of information about Indian society contributed to British power by helping them better establish colonial cultural hegemony and political control (ibid).

A key element of Orientalism is the creation of imagery that positions the east (Orient) and the west (Occident) as polar opposites, thus establishing an ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ binary through associating positive connotations with the West and negative with the East (Said 1978). That is, a key element of the western Orientalist narrative is the imagination of a threatening, inferiorized ‘other’ that needs to be both defended against and controlled. In the intertextual examination of Indian and Pakistani identities through political and filmic texts, this study also comes upon and confronts a binary opposition between the two. That is, by paying attention to the dominant articulation of the Indian ‘self’ and the Pakistani ‘other’, this study seeks to take note of the orientalist fashion through which identities are conveyed. The study also consequently seeks to find a ‘neo-Orientalist’ narrative that is produced through the means of discursive binaries

between the Indian (Hindus) and the Pakistani (Muslims). In this sense, the representational patterns, and recurring visual and linguistic key themes of 'neo Orientalism' are explored through both political as well as the filmic texts.

Ontological security and insecurity

In examining the political-cinematic imbrication that has been discussed above, I deploy the lens of Ontological Security Theory (OST). As noted in the introductory chapter, the theoretical perspective of Ontological security has been developed by R.D. Laing (1969) and Anthony Giddens (1991) and was later borrowed into the discipline of International Relations. Laing employed the term in his study of the psychology of individuals wherein, "Ontological security refers to the drive that social actors seek to satisfy by carving out continuity for their self-identity through time" (1969: 3). This concept, which is largely defined by the consistent 'sense of self', has been borrowed into the discipline of International Relations through the scholarly works of Brent Steele (2008), Jennifer Mitzen (2006), Catarina Kinnvall (2004), Will K Delehanty (2009) among others.

With respect to statist behaviour, OST notes that it is not just the physical security that a state seeks to fulfill, but, that it also seeks to realize a secure 'sense of self' and a 'routinised' and stable self-identity through which it seeks to be identified both internally and externally (Steele 2008). Brent Steele, who has reproduced some of the key scholarly texts on OST in International Relations, explicates the concept by looking at the elements of biographical narrative, critical situation, ontological insecurity, and reflective discourse. As discussed in the preceding chapter, 'biographical narrative' refers to the narrative that a state maintains about itself so as to explain its routinized foreign policy actions both to itself and to the others. In this, Steele avers that an understanding of a state's biographical narrative could help in developing a better comprehension of a state's foreign policy motivations (ibid). Steele explains this element as the "specific tellings' which link by implication a policy with a description or understanding of a state's 'self'" (ibid: 10-11). In this case, the *Nargis Dutt Award for best feature film on National Integration* that was bestowed on MS Sathyu's *Garm Hawa* in the year 1974, by the Ministry of

Information and Broadcasting India, could be said to be telling of a predominant 'secular' and 'religiously tolerant' self-identity of a post-Partition India. *Garm Hawa* centered on the trauma of Partition and the anti-Muslim hysteria which swept the country in the months following it. Appreciating and awarding the film that sensitively exposed the latent anguish and anxieties that faced the minority community following the Partition, could be said to be reflective of New Delhi's desire to present it 'self' through the prism of secularism.

'Instability' or 'insecurity' felt towards the cognitive self-identity narratives is explicated by Steele through the element of 'critical situation' (2008). Catarina Kinnevall also employs the term 'existential anxiety' to define the same (2004). In other words, critical situation and existential anxiety are reflective of a disjuncture between a state's biographical narrative and its policy actions. Extending from the example that was made above with respect to the national integration award that was presented to Sathyu's *Garm Hawa*, which foregrounded the dilemmas of the Muslim minority community in the post-Partition phase, one could also understand the same against the background of the sporadic instances of communal violence that were taking place through the 1960s-70s. "Hindu-Muslim riots in the industrial town of Jamshedpur in 1964, 1979; Bhiwandi in 1960, 1965, 1970" could be said to have caused palpable disjuncture to post-colonial India's 'secular' biographical narrative, thus amounting to a sense of 'existential anxiety' that may have been felt by the state (Saroor Ahmed: 2013). Against this context, a national integration award to a communally tolerant film could be understood as an ontological security gesture to affirm and reclaim the 'secular' self-identity of the state.

According to Steele, Critical situation portrays "circumstances of a radical disjuncture of an unpredictable kind which affect substantial numbers of individuals, situations that threaten or destroy the certitudes of institutional routines" (2008: 51). Catarina Kinnevall notes that during instances of Ontological insecurity that states experience at the hands of critical situations, it is not uncommon for the same to reclaim the lost sense of self-identity through processes of nationalism and religionism. That is, challenges to a state's biographical narrative can result in the state asserting the same by calling upon variables of nationalism and religionism (2004, 2002). In this, Kinnevall explicates the same by noting how the ontological insecurity caused at the hands of "globalisation of economics, politics and human affairs have turned individuals and communities to call upon their (religious/regional/racial/national) selves, while being more

hostile and paranoid about the ‘outsiders’” (2004: 742-43). Likewise, within the context of this study, Chapter four on Kashmir for instance notes that with the onset of the armed rebellion in Kashmir through the early 1990s that ontologically hurt the ‘secular’, ‘national-integrationist’, ‘sovereign’ characteristics of the Indian self-identity, the dominant political response could be understood largely through the prism of nationalism and religion with the imbroglio being blamed on the twin factors of Pakistani complicity and Islamic fundamentalism. Further, the Ontological security scholarship notes that a state achieves its stable self-narrative through a number of ways including: through cognitive stability provided by routines, consistent self-narratives, friendships, securitization and desecuritization regarding others and positive and negative identification with others. In this study, political and filmic texts are explored to find the biographical narratives, critical situations as well as the discursive responses to existential threats to the said Ontological Security narratives.

Securitization

Originally, the theoretical concept of securitization that belongs to the Copenhagen School had been conceptualised by Ole Waever which was subsequently extended in collaboration with both Barry Buzan (1998) and Jaap de Wilde (1998). At its core, securitization is conceptualised as the process of turning something into a security issue through the articulation of a ‘speech act’ by a political elite that, by describing something as an ‘existential threat’, justifies the use of extra-ordinary, exceptional methods.

The modus of security as existential threat for issues is articulated through the mechanics of a ‘speech-act’: by uttering ‘security’, an actor, usually a state representative, characterises a particular case or development as extraordinarily important, and thereby moves the given case into a special field of security where extraordinary means can be applied (Holger Stritzel 2012: 551-52).

Securitization is successfully achieved when it is accepted by an audience. It is worth noting that Ole Waever’s securitization strictly looks at military/political elite’s ‘speech-acts’. This narrow scope of securitization has nonetheless been critiqued by scholars belonging to the second generation of securitization like Michael Williams (2003), Holger Stritzel (2012), TY Solomon and Ido Oren (2014) among others, who propose a need to expand the same. Holger Stritzel for

instance presses for the expansion of securitization with respect to deriving intelligibility with the audience (2012). He points to the need for

conversational strategies that draw upon socio-linguistic resources available so as to create resonance with audiences' expectations through emotional appeals, historical analogies, forms of symbolic, often culturally specific language (ibid: 552-53).

Consequently, Stritzel points to the need to observe popular cultural forms that can help facilitate the process of securitization by providing "background meanings that help to constitute public images of issues and a constructed reality for elites and publics alike" (ibid). Intertextual links between the political and the popular cultural can thus be studied to find the 'background meanings' that assist in the securitizing process. In similar vein, Michael Williams underlines the import of media images in the success of a securitizing process (2003). Williams argues that

Copenhagen School's narrow focus on speech-act as the key form of communication in securitization falls short of understanding the dynamics of contemporary political communication which are increasingly embedded within tele-visual images (2003: 512).

In this respect, Williams uses 9/11 as an example noting that the 'striking' and 'repeated images' of the episode had a significant impact on 'popular perceptions,' wherein TV and media images played a crucial role in reinforcing the construction of Islamic terror as a threat to the survival of the 'civilised world' (ibid). Similarly, TY Solomon and Ido Oren (2014) also discuss the need for expanding Securitization; however, it can be said that the expansion that they propose is more vertical than horizontal to the extent that, unlike Williams (2003) and Stritzel (2012), who talk about looking at pervasive media and popular cultural sites that participate and assist in reinforcing the securitizing 'speech-acts', Solomon and Oren instead, particularly discuss the political 'speech-acts' with respect to the repletion of certain phrases and words.

In focusing on the 'speech-acts' by the political elites, Solomon and Oren place particular attention to the "repetitive spouting of ambiguous phrases by securitizing actors and the ritualised chanting of the securitizing phrase by the audience" (2014: 313-14). The scholars note that the 'repetitive uttering of phrases' is a condition for their 'performativity', asserting that "the more constantly and frequently that a securitizing phrase is repeated, the more likely it is to acquire an illocutionary force, to construct the security threat that it ostensibly describes" (ibid: 313-16). They illustrate this argument by discussing how the 'ritualised chanting' of the phrase

‘weapons of mass destruction’ during the run-up to the Iraq War ultimately produced the grave Iraqi threat that it purportedly described.

This research pays attention to (the expansive) securitizing attempts with respect to the dominant narratives of (Islamic) terrorism and cross-border terrorism that have impacted the Indian body specifically in the post millennium period. In this, the purpose is to find the entry and sustenance of Islamic and ‘cross-border terrorism’ into the dominant ‘threat discourse’ and their establishment as ‘existential threats’. In so doing, the study attempts to find the iteration and repetition of particular ‘securitizing phrases’ through political ‘speech-acts’ and, the symbolic/explicit resonance of the same through Hindi films that assist in framing ‘background meanings’. The purpose here is to understand how the articulation and resonance of securitization through the political-filmic intertext bears political implications, and contributes to shaping and legitimizing certain identity and policy narratives on India and Pakistan.

Conclusion

The aim of this study is to adopt the Ontological security tools of biographical narrative, critical situation and ontological insecurity to find dominant and repetitive enunciations of Indian and Pakistani identity through different phases of their relations. In so doing I suggest that the stable and secure narrative that a state has about itself, or the biographical narrative of a state, is visible not just through the policies of a state but also through political speech acts and popular cultural texts. The purpose of this chapter has been to briefly introduce the theoretical concepts which have been adopted in this study. The methodology of discursive analysis, which is fundamentally interested in analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relations of dominance, discrimination, power and control manifested in language and form, has been deployed so as to use the same in the subsequent chapters in analyzing films. This apart, the chapter has also looked at the theoretical concept of Securitization from the lens of the second generation of the said concept that proposes to expand the same to make the securitizing moves more intelligible for the audiences.

Chapter III

National Identity construction through Partition and War narratives

Introduction

This chapter will analyse mainstream Hindi films to examine the changing nature of relations between India and Pakistan from the Partition of the Indian sub-continent in August 1947 until 2014. By exploring the inter-texts between the political and the filmic, the aim is to pay attention to the repetitive narrative structures and the established and familiar iconographic representation of Indian as well as Pakistani identities. Adopting the lens of Ontological Security, the chapter hopes to foreground the visibility of pertinent self identity narratives or biographical narratives, the disjunctures to the stable narratives and the consequent discursive shifts and securitisations that are evident in India-Pakistan relations during this period. The chapter is divided into two broad sections with the first engaging with political and cinematic narratives through the early decades since Partition and the second focusing on intertextual discourses during the 1990s and 2000s.

As has been discussed in the preceding chapter, critical situations are “circumstances of a radical disjuncture of an unpredictable kind which affect substantial numbers of individuals, situations that threaten or destroy certitudes of institutional routines” (Steele 2008: 51). In this context, the tumultuous episode of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent in August 1947 that resulted in communal violence which saw millions raped, killed and dislocated, could be said to mark a critical situation. The dominant political-cinematic discourses that emerged in the early decades after the Partition demonstrate the urgency to create a Nehruvian sovereign, secular, national integrationist imaginary. This can be understood as attempts at reclaiming the same biographical narrative of the state. Further, as will be explored here, the careful obliteration of the event of Partition from the dominant discourse, particularly in the first four decades after the event, could also be understood as a calculative attempt at (re)emphasising an imagination of an organically secular India.

However, an implicit/explicit shift seems to have taken place in the post-colonial secularist narrative with the emergence of a Hindu nationalist discourse and the consequent articulation of the same through dominant political-cinematic narratives. It is averred that similar to the earlier phase, the event of Partition marks a ‘critical situation’ even in this phase, but the response to the same is enunciated through a predominantly Hindu nationalist narrative in which the categories of Pakistan and Islam; India and Hinduism are depicted as collapsible and in which, the Muslim must adopt certain overtly Hindu ideals in order to be assimilated within the Indian body politic.

The gradual shift in the secular statist biographical narrative to a Hindu nationalist one is visible through the rising popularity of Hindutva ideology, particularly following the *Ramjanmabhomi* campaign that polarised the national environment from 1989 to December 1992- the year that marked the demolition of the Babri *Masjid* in Ayodhya. This Hindu nationalist narrative has been consolidated further through several developments in the last two decades: discursive changes and the accompanying provocative rhetoric that emerged following the 50th anniversary of Indian independence/Partition in 1997; the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in 1998; the Kargil war in 1999; and the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. Exploring the political and filmic representation and articulation of these events, it is clear that elements of the Hindu nationalist discourse are constituting these narratives wherein, categories

of Islam and Pakistan and Hinduism, are seen as overlapping entities with the former being implicitly depicted as violent, vile, vicious and the latter being portrayed as peaceful, pluralistic and pacifist. This Hindu nationalist narrative is largely visible in films like *Roja*, *Pinjar*, *Border*, *LoC Kargil*, *Gadar...ek prem katha* to name a few, which explicitly engage with the narratives of Partition, national identity, the wars between the two countries with Indian identity and nationalism being constructed against Pakistani/Islamic threat, monstrosity and religiosity.

By noting the discursive overlaps and continuities between the statist and the filmic texts, the chapter aims to situate the repetitive narratives within the larger context of the Foucauldian discursive formation which argues that it is through the reverberation of similar narrative patterns through different discursive sites, that the process of manufacturing widely accepted 'knowledge' is facilitated.

Section I

Partition and the tableau of national Integration

In August 1947, when the British ceded political interest in India after ruling for nearly two hundred years, they transferred power to two separate states: India and Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten, the last British viceroy, was sent to India to transfer power and consider alternatives to Partition. For the purpose of creating boundaries between the two nations, a British lawyer, Sir Cyril Radcliff was handed the task of drawing a line (the Radcliff line that divides India and Pakistan in the north-west) on the map that would divide Hindu majority lands from Muslim majority ones in as equitable a manner as possible. However, "while Radcliff was a brilliant legal mind, not only did he not have any border-making experience, but he had also no personal knowledge of the workings of the region" whose irreversible history lay in the ink of his pen (Frank Jacobs 2012). Furthermore, while Radcliff had himself expected to have at least two years to complete the task of drawing the border, he had to eventually do the same within a span of six months thus further buttressing the poorly conceived and executed exit strategy by the British Empire (ibid).

The commission- assigned with the task of drawing this line, had terms of references that emphasized the import of contiguous religious majorities, making religion rather than infrastructure, kinship relations or topography, the governing rationale behind the boundary allocation (Menon 2013:30). What followed from this vivisectioning of India and Pakistan in 1947 was a violent and bloody outcome in which roughly one million people died, ten to twelve million were displaced, thousands of women were raped and property suffered a staggering loss. In the weeks leading up to August 15th, communal violence began to break out across India. Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs were uprooted from their homes and ancestral lands as the new border was drawn between India and Pakistan. Upon Partition, the situation worsened with trains full of refugees that were going either way across the border, being attacked and finally arriving at their destinations with bogies full of corpses.

Historian Gyanendra Pandey sees “Partition as a moment of rupture, a historic moment that brought forth a set of antagonistic paradigms that have characterized relations between India's religious and ethnic communities in the seven decades since” (2002:1). In a similar vein, David Gilmartin notes that the questions of Hindu-Muslim relations in India have always remained inflected by the divisions that led to the Partition in 1947 (2015: 25). With respect to the tumultuous inter-ethnic relations between Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus in the period soon before and after the Partition, Peter Gottschalk in his book, *Religion, Science and Empire: Classifying Hinduism and Islam in British India*, explores the ways that modern structures of colonial knowledge (what he terms- scientism), shaped new forms of religious classification, creating visions of self-contained, bounded religions at both the religious and local levels. In so doing, Gottschalk provides a critical framework for the history of the religious polarities that produced the Partition. Gottschalk’s research was in sync with that of some post-colonial historians (including Gyanendra Pandey) who largely saw the roots of Partition in the transformations of the colonial era.

Following the gruesome, bloody and cataclysmic outcomes of the Partition that had played out on both the Indian and the Pakistani sides, the event was directly and metaphorically articulated through cultural texts that included large volumes of short stories, poems and a few novels, as well as a few films that addressed the wounds of the Partition. However, in terms of public discourse, there was a relative silence on the issue. It was only by the late 1980s that the subject of Partition began to be revisited as a key episode of national trauma. Cathy Caruth explains trauma as “a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event, which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, and thoughts but only belatedly in its repetitive possession of the one who experiences it” (1996: 4). The ‘belated public address’ of the episode, both through political ‘speech-acts’ and popular Bombay cinema, could be explained by adopting Armstrong and Cragge’s (2006) model for why some events are commemorated and others are forgotten (Debs 2013: 638-39). Armstrong and Cragge note that the success of narratives depends upon several criteria including- the ease of narrating the event, how it is linked to underlying cultural meanings, and how the event interacts with historical contingencies. It is these reasons I assert, that enabled the manufacturing of a calculative amnesia with respect to the Partition as, not only was it near impossible to articulate a traumatic event of that magnitude in the years and decades after, but, it was also imprudent to discursively engage with the trauma of Partition during the postcolonial phase of nation building.

With respect to mainstream Hindi films, Bhaskar, attributes the latency associated with the cinematic engagement with Partition in the early decades to factors including the “lack of any real consensus regarding the meaning of the Partition or about the adequate modes of representing the scale of losses that the Partition represented” (2013). Bhaskar notes that while in the years/decades following the truncation, the trauma of Partition did get filmically represented through the tropes of ‘abducted women’, and ‘lost and found narratives’, these narratives were however ‘notable exceptions’ to the unsaid rule of ‘cultural amnesia’ (ibid). Moreover, Partition violence or a depiction of intercommunity Hindu Muslim relations was not addressed until much later from the late 1980s onward. It seems therefore, that the memory of the Partition and its immediate aftermath was considered unrepresentable in cultural texts; consequently, all memory of the event seemed to have been relegated to official state institutions, which portrayed 1947 as the country's moment of independence rather than as a collective trauma. Partition scholarship

thus had been for almost four decades limited to official politics, academic and statistical histories, and memoirs of key political and military figures.

That in the years succeeding the Partition, the political elite calculatively orchestrated an institutional erasure of the episode of Partition could be gathered from Pandit Nehru's decision to censor press coverage over a great deal of Partition violence on the ground that the same would incite further communal unrest (Daiya 2008; Wilkinson 2004). "The news media focused on the survivors, abducted women, missing relatives and the plight of refugees and deliberately downplayed the dead" (Debs 2013: 637). Further, the focus of the political elite during this period was not so much on addressing the magnitude of the tragedy, but instead, the emphasis lay on moving in the direction of religious tolerance. As a case in point, in his address to the Annual Convocation of the Muslim University of Aligarh, 24 January, 1948, while noting the 'pain and sorrow' and 'humiliation of the spirit' that had been brought about by the experience of the Partition, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru averred that, "perhaps if the people were wise and strong enough to think and act rightly even at that moment, the country as a whole could succeed in erasing the mark" (Government of India 1949: 42). Notable here is also the Prime Minister's speech at the anniversary of Indian independence, 1948 in which he emoted,

Let us think not so much of what we have done, but of what we have left undone and what we have done wrongly. Let us think of millions of refugees who, deprived of all they possessed, are still homeless wanderers....But above all let us remember the great lessons that Mahatma Gandhi taught and the ideals that he held aloft for us. If we forget those lessons and ideals we betray our cause and country (ibid: 22).

Evidently for the Prime Minister, the Partition was an event that should only be understood as a reminder of that which one should not repeat. Through such an approach, one could state that the focus was on forgetting and not remembering. Further, by emphasising the Gandhian notions of tolerance and religious harmony, the same were framed as organic and integral to the Indian ethos. Against the backdrop of Partition, Nehru also reiterated the Indian attributes of 'religious harmony' in his address to the Annual Convocation of the Muslim University, 1948 wherein he noted,

I am proud of India, not only because of her ancient magnificent heritage, but also because of her remarkable capacity to add to it by keeping the doors and windows of her mind and spirit open to fresh and invigorating winds from distant lands (ibid: 42-43).

The Prime minister also attempted to mitigate the fears and insecurities that were demotivating the minority communities during that period, particularly the Muslims. In this, he further noted,

We shall proceed on secular and national lines in keeping with the powerful trends towards internationalism. Whatever confusion the present may contain, in the future, India will be a land, as in the past, of many faiths equally honoured and respected, but of one national outlook, not, I hope, a narrow nationalism living in its own shell, but rather the tolerant creative nationalism which, believing in itself and the genius of its people, takes full part in the establishment of an international order....if we have had enough of what has been called communalism in this country and we have tasted its bitter and poisonous fruit, it is time that we put an end to it (ibid).

Clearly, the head of the government affectively presented the ideals of pluralism and religious harmony as historical, organic and essential to the postcolonial identity narrative. Through this, one could draw links between the communally rife Partition that had marked the advent of postcolonial India's independence and the emphatic focus on religious pluralism. That is, it could be asserted that despite the Critical situation of the Partition, the state pushed to adopt an ontological identity for the nation by discursively re-framing the Indian 'self-identity' through the prism of inter-religious tolerance and harmony. This discursive framing of the 'self' not only comprised the eulogisation of the historicity of Indian pluralism, but also articulated a strong intolerance towards communal elements within. For instance, in one of his speeches after independence, Pandit Nehru discursively attacked communal elements noting,

So far as the Government of India is concerned, they will deal with any communal outbreak with greatest firmness. They will treat every Indian on an equal basis and try to secure for him all rights which he shares with others....our state is not a communal state but a democratic state in which every citizen has equal rights. The government is determined to protect these rights (Nehru 1958: 66-67).

In yet another instance, while talking about politics and religion, the Prime Minister lamented the 'grave dangers' of including communalism within politics (ibid: 94-95). He further

expressed that the less that the state had of any form of communalism; the better it would be for the constitution and for the workings of the Indian government. In the same speech, Pandit Nehru stressed the fallacy and danger of the 'demotivated spirit' of the Muslim minorities by noting, in any event a minority in an independent state which seeks to isolate and separate itself does some injury to the cause of the country, and most of all, it injures its own interests, because inevitably it puts a barrier between itself and others, a barrier not on the religious plane, but on the political plane- sometimes even on the economic plane (ibid). In the early decades following the Partition, a similar stance was also visible through Bombay cinema which was not only silent towards the representation and depiction of Partition but, was also visibly inclined towards narrating and accentuating the Nehruvian secular post-Partition/ Independence discourse.

Cultural expressions

However, unlike popular cinema, literary artists from either side of the border immediately responded in terms of re-imagining and re-negotiating the memories of the Partition. Some of these artists included, Saadat Hasan Manto, Intezar Hussain, Amrita Pritam and Chaman Nahal. These artists consistently felt compelled to relive their hurt through a recall of their own experiences of the Partition. One such piece that encapsulated the personal experience of the Partition related trauma is Amrita Pritam's Punjabi dirge *Aaj aakhaan Waaris Shah nu* :

Speak up from your grave
From your book of love unfurl
A new and different page
One daughter of Punjab did scream
You covered your walls with your laments
Millions of daughters weep today
And call out to Waris Shah
Arise you chronicler of our inner pain
And look now at your Punjab
The forests are littered with corpses

And blood flows down the Chenab (Translated by Bharat 2008)

The poem appeals to Waris Shah, the legendary Punjabi poet who wrote the most popular version of the Punjabi love tragedy, *Heer Ranjha* entitled *Heer* in 1776. Through this poem, Amrita Pritam uses the imagery of a daughter, *Heer*, metaphoric of all the daughters of Punjab crying out for justice, as she appeals to Shah to arise from his grave, record Punjab's tragedy and take up the pen again. More than fifty years after Pritam penned this dirge on the Partition, Chandra Prakash Dwivedi's film *Pinjar: Beyond borders* (2003) employs a similar narrative structure with the film opening to these words which, in concert with the sonic and visual elements, affectively punctuates the melancholia and lamentation of the metaphoric *Heer* (played by Urmila Matondkar). *Pinjar* imagines the Partition through the agency of the female protagonist focusing particularly on her experience of psychological and physical violence. In exploring the female perspective through Partition films, Claudia Preckel notes that the film *Pinjar* portrays the female protagonist who, after having painfully experienced the violence of abduction and rape and of being separated from her natal family, gathers the strength to psychologically cross the border and, no longer remain a victim of the Partition, but becomes an active subject of her newly defined community (2008: 85). However, it is noteworthy that Dwivedi's film remains among the few Bollywood films to have directly engaged with the trauma of the vivisection.

The early decades following the bifurcation of the Indian sub-continent saw a conspicuous silence on the tumultuous event of 1947 that was collectively disavowed or buried due to the postcolonial nation-building project. Bhaskar Sarkar however notes that "this disavowal repetitively emerged as symptoms of 'national melancholia' through, often inadvertent, allegorical modes" (2009: 110). In the initial years following the Partition, films revolved around the recurring themes of separated, feuding families, the trope of siblings lost in a *mela*, characters with missing limbs – a narrative pattern that indirectly hinted at the underlying pain and torment associated with the rupture and separation of Partition. "Oblique references to the original trauma of Partition emerged through the use of doubles, accidents, natural disasters, amnesiac protagonists (such as migrant workers, refugees and orphans), masquerade and cross-dressing (a strategy adopted by women refugees to protect themselves during Partition riots)" (ibid: 111). Citing popular Hindi films of the 1940s and 50s such as *Awara* (1951), *Amar* (1954),

Nastik (1954), as exemplifying displaced cinematic mediations on the Partition, Sarkar (2008) sees allegory to have been a 'historical necessity' at that time. The films made immediately after the Partition were full of socio-economic despair, and essentially repressed the traumatic experiences of the Partition, focusing on creating and solidifying a new national identity. The trauma of the Partition was still too recent and too horrifying to be addressed on film, thereby explaining the plethora of films that only metaphorically hinted at the traumatic truncation.

The Secular narrative

Following the communally charged Partition experience, the national rhetoric institutionally moved towards the political assertion of a secular 'Indianness' with communalistic tendencies being associated with causing existential anxieties to this self-narrative. This narrative was also reflected through several mainstream Hindi films in which secularism was celebrated as one of the core elements of the Indian national identity. Cinematically, secularism was presented in the form of inter-religious romances and friendships, which led to the questioning of traditional religio-nationalist wisdoms, and the celebration of religious and ethnic harmony. Thus, during the 1950s-60s, the self-consciously secular Hindi cinema performed the paternalistic duty of the avowedly secular Indian state. At a lecture organized at the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Shyam Benegal stated that during the Nehruvian era, many films," especially those written by progressive writers, sought to create the image of a secular Muslim by portraying Muslim characters as sensible, good and devout" (2005). Here, Yash Chopra's *Dhool ka Phool* (1959) could be called upon as a case in point of a film glorifying the secular narrative structure wherein an old Muslim man is seen adopting an abandoned child whose religious antecedents are neither known nor important to him. The secular socialist narrative of that period can be summed through Sahir Ludhianvi's lyrics in the song : '*tu hindu bane ga, na musalman bane ga, insan ki aulad hai, insan bane ga*' (you shall neither be Hindu nor a Muslim, you're the child of a human, and human you shall be). This song that is sung by the Muslim man to his adopted son, succinctly encapsulates the utopian idea of the Nehruvian secularist imaginary wherein the child metaphorically symbolises the progressive and tolerant future of India.

The explicitly secular narrative structure of *Dhool Ka Phool* is also visible in Yash Chopra's *Dharamputra* (1960), one of the first few Hindi films to have directly dealt with the traumatic truncation of 1947 and consequently, to have condemned the insanity and senselessness of all the violence, looting, bloodshed that followed. Bhaskar (2013) explicates the intense emotionalism of the film by paying particular attention to the songs in the melodramatic form as potent expressions of the ineffable emotions related to the apocalyptic event of the Partition. In this, Bhaskar looks at Sahir Ludhianvi's- *Yeh kiska lahu hai, kaun mara*, a song that employs sonic, verbal and visual textures to generate impassioned emotions, as "it affectively demands answers for all the pointless deaths, rapes and bloodshed that took place in the name of 'god!'" (ibid). Soundtrack, images and voice-over in the song generate high emotionalism and in so doing, an overtly secular narrative is reflective as the song bemoans and ridicules the flawed Hindu belief system as much as the Muslim belief system that drove people to carry out actions as disgraceful and monstrous as the carnage that played itself out at the moment of 'independence'. Bhaskar notes the intermeshing images of Partition violence, the mass displacements, the burning and shamed nation, the anguished face of the singer, and the tormented protagonist who holds his exclusivist majoritarian ideology responsible for the insanity of the times, as the lyrics rise to a crescendo questioning what honour and value can possibly lie in the killings and rapes committed in the names of the two Gods – *Rama* and *Allah* (2013: 169-70).

Ira Bhaskar (2012, 2013) also discusses the distinctly significant role that is played by songs in Bombay cinema's melodramatic forms. The melodramatic filmic form foregrounds high emotionalism and expressive performativity. With respect to the crucial features of Indian melodrama, Bhaskar points towards the "privileging and amplification of emotions and the centrality of music and song as the vehicle of this expression wherein songs are developed as the language of the ineffable" (2012). This presence of songs differentiates Bombay cinema's melodramatic forms from western ones. With respect to representing traumatic and apocalyptic events like the Partition, which are mostly too overpowering to be represented, Bhaskar speaks of melodrama as a "formal cinematic mode that effectively and affectively assists in exteriorising the associated subjugated emotions" (2013).

Also visible in this period were films exuding emotions of patriotism and nationalism by narrating the sacrificial struggles of the political makers of modern India like Gandhi, Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri. Similar emphatic iterations of Gandhian ideals of religious tolerance were also visible through Nehruvian speeches of that era that, in a way related Indian identity with such ideals.

The other Hindi film to have dealt with the narrative of Partition directly during this period was M.S. Sathyu's *Garm Hawa* (1974) that portrayed the dilemmas and struggles faced by the Muslim minorities who had decided to stay back in India after 1947. The film thus enables a consideration of the fraught negotiations of those who must choose either to live in their homeland as minority subjects or leave as refugees for a new nation-state. *Garm Hawa* depicts the hardships encountered by a Muslim family in Agra during Partition and its aftermath, their dilemma of whether or not to migrate to Pakistan, and their final decision to stay back in India despite an atmosphere where the 'Muslim' became a figure of suspicion in newly independent India, while portraying (for the first time) the emotional, material, and political dispossession of Muslims who remained in India in the 1950s. In their explorative work that aesthetically traces the genealogy of Bombay cinema's portrayal of Muslim culture and life, Bhaskar and Allen (2009) situate Sathyu's engagement with the banal everydayness that the working class Muslims faced in the post Partition India, within the bracket of 'New Wave films' that engaged "with the concerns of the Muslim Social⁵ but in a manner that is shorn of nostalgia for the past" (ibid: 9). In this sense, the authors situate *Garm Hawa* alongside films like Shyam Benegal's *Mammo* (1994) and Saeed Mirza's *Naseem* (1995), which "address the deracination and devastation wrought by the Partition upon Muslim social life" (ibid).

The film was made soon after the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, an episode that may have been instrumental in bringing to the fore questions dealing with the status of the minorities, dilemmas faced by the Indian Muslim citizens who had chosen to stay back in India after Partition, and the questions of refugees to name a few. This apart, engagement with the

⁵ As noted by Bhaskar and Allen, The Muslim Social is a "film-industrial category that refers to films focusing on the representation of contemporary love, marriage and family life" of the Muslims, and which came into existence during the 1920s (2009: 65). The authors further assert that the thematic focus of this category usually resides in the conflict between inherited, feudal values and forces of social change (ibid).

insecurities of Indian Muslims could also be contextualized against the background of the rising instances of communal violence that were taking place particularly through the 1960s-70s.

In an interview between Tavishi Alagh (2007: 188) and the director of the film, MS Sathyu, the latter pointed that after being held by the censors for almost eight months due to its politically sensitive theme, the film was finally released to great reviews and success at the box office alongside being appreciated by audiences in Pakistan as well. Benegal attributes the realistic handling of the subject of Partition in Sathyu's film to two important developments viz., "the creation of state established film institutions and to the 'second Partition' of the sub-continent in 1971" i.e., the creation of Bangladesh (2005). In this regard, it could be asserted that through its the communally sensitive narrative, the film attempted to reclaim the said ideal of secularism particularly during an uncertain period that was marked by rising episodes of communal violence. As discussed in the preceding chapter, The National Integration Award that the film received in 1974 from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, could be said to be reflective of the state's attempt or desire to eulogise the self-narrative of secularity.

While negligible in number, nonetheless, films like *Chhalia* (1960), *Dharamputra* (1961), *Garm Hawa* (1974) and the teleserial *Tamas* (1988) could be said to comprise creative endeavours that were significant in assisting the 'witnessing' of the traumatic history of the Partition. Here, Ann Kaplan can be called upon with respect to her work on the 'witnessing' of a traumatic event. According to Kaplan, 'witness' is an appropriate term for those instances when an "artwork produces a deliberate ethical consciousness, but with greater distance than emphatic sharing" (2005: 37). The act of witnessing of an artwork creates and fosters a general sense of responsibility for a past injustice, and provides a broader structure for the public recognition of atrocities. Kaplan's theory of witnessing gives due credit to the role of cultural texts in the construction of historical narratives. Furthermore, while discussing the role of cultural texts in registering trauma, Sukeshi Kamra (2006) maintains that cultural texts provide the only critical intervention and interrogation of the institutionally imposed silence on memory at that time (as cited by Master 2009: 31). It is for this reason that the largely secular prism through which such artefacts have conveyed the experience of Partition gathers import in a period that was marked by a selective amnesia on the subject.

Moving on to another moment, it is important to say that the secularist narrative was strategically emphasised particularly during the 1970s as a response to the rising number of episodes of communal violence that were taking place through the Indian body politic and the consequent existential anxiety or 'shame' that the same were causing on the postcolonial secular self. Among other films, this secular discourse was also visible in Manmohan Desai's very successful *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977). The film revolves around the lives of three characters from different religions- Hindu, Muslim and Christian who, after having been separated in their childhoods, eventually reunite after a number of years to realize that they are blood brothers. The main plot of the film which revolves around the way in which the brothers discover their identities and their relationship to each other, and the pattern in which they come together to exact revenge on the villain responsible for breaking apart their family can also be argued as allegorically speaking about the event of the Partition. The themes of collapse, breakage and forced separation that are articulated through the film are also central to the Partition narrative. It is worth noting here that the separation of the family of three brothers occurs on August 15th, 1955 (as revealed in the film), when, the three sons are inadvertently abandoned by the father at the foot of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in a park. By placing the boys in the time and metaphoric space of the Partition, it could be argued that Desai sets them up for the re-positing and transformation of their identities, a key characteristic of Partition trauma.

This apart, the narrative of the three brothers from different religions and their melodramatic reunion in the climax could also be taken as an analogy for the '*unity in diversity*' motto that was, at that time, making itself visible through various sites including school textbooks, speech-acts, state sponsored cultural products, to name a few. Here, Government of India's animated educational film on national integration, *Ek Anek Ekta* (1974) could be called upon as a case in point. The seven and a half minute animated film (also available on youtube) that was aired by state owned television channel- *Doordarshan*, propagated the message of diverse religions, cultures, languages and ethnicities living together in harmony with each other. Conspicuous in the film is the presence of some animated characters donning the Muslim skull cap, while, there are negligible identity markers of the other minority religions including Sikh and Christians. This could point towards a deliberate statist intervention in manufacturing portraying the Muslim citizen as an integral part of the post-Partition India.

The Unsecular 'secular'

The exigencies of the postcolonial nation building project demanded a discourse that, instead of rekindling the difficult memories of the Partition, focused upon the integration of the various diversities and consequently upheld the narrative of religious co-existence. However cinematically, within this *'unity in diversity'* framework it was primarily the Hindu family that served to model the nation. Sethi (2002) asserts that traditionally, mainstream Bollywood has “reserved normalcy for the Hindu hero while encoding minorities with signs of cultural exaggeration- the ‘drunken’ Goan Christian; the ‘god fearing’ Muslim tailor, *qawwaal* or *bawarchi*; the ‘comical’ Sikh driver” and so on. These characters, Sethi (ibid) notes, were essential to complete the cinematic tableau of ‘national integration’. For instance, while the film *Amar Akbar Anthony* explicitly espouses the secular Nehruvian narrative of visible inter-ethnic synthesis and harmony, it nonetheless reflects undertones that allude to a dominant Hindu ideology. In her reading of the film, Rachel Dwyer casts the film as superficial with a distinct Hindu bias, stating how “the Hindu’s romance is sincere and reforming, whereas the Muslim man is an exhibitionist... while the Christian is a drunk and a smalltime crook.” (2006: 144). With respect to films made in the period after the Partition, it has been observed that barring a handful of (secular) films, largely, Bollywood did not engage with the socio-economic conditions of the working class Muslims. Further, this period saw films that portrayed Muslim men as typically wearing *sherwanis* (long closed coats), chewing betel nut and reciting *Iqbal* or *Ghalib's* poetry and women either dressed in *burqas* or wearing heavy *lehengas* or *ghaghras* (long traditional skirts). Also noteworthy here is that during this period, many Muslim actors adopted Hindu names like Dilip Kumar (Muhammad Yusuf Khan), Madhubala (Begum Mumtaz Jehan Dehlavi). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that within the genre of ‘Muslim Socials’, there were engagements with addressing the everyday lives of the Muslims. While explicating the said category, Bhaskar and Allen (2009: 8) note that the same has conventionally focused upon “the feudal aristocratic Muslim households at a moment when it faces the pressures of modernity”. Further, while looking at some of the Muslim Social films of the 1940s, particularly Mehboob

Khan's *Najma* (1943) and *Elaan* (1947), the authors find "a strong reformist message that centers upon the role of education in transforming decadent nawabi lifestyles, in which the education and agency of women especially becomes crucial" (ibid: 73).

In the 1990s, with the rise of Hindutva politics and the consequent surge of Hindu nationalism, the 'Muslim protagonist' almost disappeared from film scripts and now, the 'friendly' and 'honest' Muslim characters of earlier films began being replaced with roles of villains, thugs, terrorists, anti-national characters and foreign (read Pakistani) spies. There were frequent and repetitive instances of the Muslim and Pakistani identity being portrayed as collapsible and blurring categories and simultaneously, the Indian and the Hindu were also depicted as fuzzy categories. There was also a palpable presence of a hyper-masculine self-identity with respect to the Muslim/Pakistani, and through this, a majority of films during this period have perpetuated Hindu-nationalistic narratives. Mishra attributes this hypermasculinity to Hindu fundamentalism, one that forced the redefinition of Indian identity in religious terms, with Muslim identity placed squarely in the realm of the alien outsider (2002: 218). Vijay Mishra also notes that the "foregrounding of conservative politics, the manipulation of stars, and the glorification of the martial race theory in the Indo-Pak context, further led to what he calls the 'Hinduisation of the Indian body politic' particularly starting from the 1990s" (ibid: 40). That the Indian government recognised Bollywood as a legitimate industry in 1998, a policy that made the industry eligible for unprecedented infrastructural and credit support, could also be said to have assisted in this 'Hinduisation' (ibid).

Studying the roles assigned to Muslim characters in Hindi films in the 1990s-2000s, Maidul Islam avers that, from time to time, Hindi films have implicitly questioned the loyalties of Indian Muslims and hinted that they were more committed to International Islamic brotherhood than to their homeland (2007: 406). This cinematic shift in the representation of Muslims could be attributed to several factors: the rise of Hindutva politics on the national political scene accompanied with erosion of secular values and the growing number of communally violent incidents; the pervasive Western discourse that had aggressively begun stereotyping Muslims following the Iranian Revolution in 1979; globalisation and the consequent

out-migration of Indians to Western countries; 9/11 and the aggressive discursive securitisation and stereotyping with respect to Muslims that followed almost globally, to name a few. The following section focuses on repetitive instances wherein Bollywood films have adopted a pro-Hindu stance, by either vilifying Muslims or Pakistanis; or by portraying Hinduism as pacifist, progressive and pluralist. Noting the strong presence of Hindu religious ideals in the films, particularly in patriotic/nationalistic films, I attempt to understand how Indian nationalism is implicitly related to Hindu religious, social and cultural beliefs. Furthermore, by observing cinematic and political intertexts, I foreground an overt shift from the postcolonial Nehruvian pluralist and secular identity biographical narrative, to dominant filmic and political discourses revealing Hindu nationalist undertones.

Revisiting Partition and Hindu nationalism

The 1990s was a significant decade for the Bharatiya Janata Party in terms of establishing its stronghold over the mainstream Indian political scene. As a party, BJP has called for reinventing a pan-Indian identity, which identifies with a Hindu *Rashtra* along three essential principles include: *Pitrabhoomi* (fatherland), *Jati* (bloodline) and *Sanskriti* (culture). Under this logic, Muslims, Christians, Jews and those whose ancestral and sacred religious lands lie outside the territorial boundaries of the *punyabhoomi* (the holy land of India) are by implication excluded from the Hindutva idea of ‘Indianhood’ (Chaudhuri 2012: 101). Through this, the ideology of Hindutva privileges a cultural/religious concept of citizenship in India rather than a territorial one.

This Hindu-centric ideology came to the center of prominence at the beginning of the 1990s through the *Ram Janma Bhoomi* campaign that aggravated Hindu-Muslim tensions. The Hindutva campaign mobilised a large chunk of *Kar Sevaks* to construct the proposed *Ram Temple* at a site where the controversial *Babri Masjid* stood in Ayodhya. During this campaign that was spearheaded by the VHP-BJP-Shiv Sena combine, communal feelings were instigated through inflammatory and provocative speech-acts and sloganeering. The *Rath Yatra* through which the campaign was mobilised, commenced on 25 September 1990 and planned to reach

Ayodhya five weeks later, after traversing over 6,000 miles, through eight cities. Ramachandra Guha has described the progress of the *Rath Yatra* thus:

Militants of the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* flanked the van, flagging it off from one town and welcoming it at the next. At public meetings they were complemented by saffron-robed *sadhus*, whose ‘necklaces of prayer beads, long beards and ash-marked foreheads provided a strong visual counterpoint’ to these young men. The march’s imagery was ‘religious, allusive, militant, masculine, and anti-Muslim’. This was reinforced by the speeches made by Advani, which accused the government of ‘appeasing’ the Muslim minority and of practicing ‘pseudo-secularism’ which denied the legitimate interests and aspirations of the Hindu majority. The building of a Ram temple in Ayodhya was presented as the symbolic fulfillment of these interests and aspirations (2012: 124).

Several communal riots occurred in the wake of this *Rath Yatra* wherever it went including Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Delhi (B Rajeshwari 2004). The demolition of the Babri *Masjid* and the ensuing riots that followed, were one of the worst to happen since the Partition with over 1700 people dead and more than 5500 injured (Lahiri 2010: 57). The multiple incidents of rioting that were instigated by the dominant RSS-BJP articulations which repetitively targeted and blamed the Muslims for their supposed inherent violent bearings and for having orchestrated the bloody truncation in 1947, played a crucial role in popularising a Hindutva leaning grand narrative through the Indian political climate. It is notable that during this period, “the popularity of the BJP grew with the party’s seats jumping from a meager 2 in 1984 Lok Sabha elections to 85 in the 1989 elections and finally to 120 seats in the Central elections that took place in 1991 following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi” (ibid: 62).

Scholars have pointed out that continuing communal violence in India replayed the violence of Partition again and again. Urvashi Butalia identifies common discursive, practical and cognitive codes between the Partition and the subsequent outbreaks of communal violence (2000: 276). Likewise, Ira Bhaskar relates the continual depiction of the Bombay riots in films like Mani Ratnam’s *Bombay* (1995), Mahesh Bhatt’s *Zakhm* (1998), Khalid Mohammed’s *Fiza* (2000) and Govind Nihalani’s *Dev* (2004) to the latent memories of the Partition of 1947 by

explaining how the “present evokes and folds into itself the memory of past traumas” (2013). While explaining the overlap and intersection of narratives of the Partition with those of contemporary events of communal violence, Bhaskar further explores how “the stories of riots get repeated in the films and in the process, invariably depict an explicit repetition in multiple forms of the Partition narratives- rupture, a sudden loss, death, murder which tears apart a family” (ibid). As discussed by others, it is clear that the multiple incidents of inter-ethnic riots during the early 1990s, in particular, the riots in Bombay following the Babri *Masjid* demolition which brought the experience of Hindu-Muslim violence very up-close for the Bombay film industry, motivated the representation of communal violence including those that occurred during the Partition which was until then were considered ‘unrepresentable’ and ‘incomprehensible.’

Cathy Caruth (2001: 10) explains trauma as a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event, which takes the form of intrusive hallucinations, dreams, and thoughts and repeatedly possesses the one who has experienced it. The repeated experiences of communal violence particularly following the anti-Sikh pogrom of 1984 and the several riots that followed as a result of the communally charged *Ram janmabhoomi* campaign through the Indian body politic, which may have evoked traumatic memories of the Partition owing to identical experiences of ontological insecurities, existential anxieties and mass violence; perhaps explains the growing number of films in the 1990s that made direct and indirect associations with Partition violence.

In this section, I focus specifically on the films that reflect a Hindu nationalist stance in which, the Muslim and the Pakistani; and the Hindu and the Indian, ceased to be two separate categories. Here, a statement made by Jaswant Singh, the Foreign and External Affairs Minister of India under NDA- 1998-2004 is resonant wherein, he notes that, “above all else, India is Hindu and Hindus think differently from non-Hindus” (Singh 1998).

The first film to have touched upon the Ayodhya conflict and the consequent Bombay riots was Mani Ratnam’s *Bombay* (1995). The film is about a love-struck Hindu-Muslim couple

Shekhar and Shaila Bano (played by Arvind Swamy and Manisha Koirala respectively) who, despite the disapproval of their families, elope to Bombay where they consummate their married life and start a family. This 'happily ever after' narrative is however rocked by the communally charged environment following the Babri *Masjid* demolition and, the couple, along with their twin boys, are later caught in the midst of the Hindu-Muslim riots that engulfed the city of Bombay. The film climaxes as Shekhar, along with other people including a eunuch and a Muslim woman, facilitate the ending of the riots by urging the people to give up the bloodshed and to stop the violence.

Seemingly, *Bombay* comes across as a thoroughly secular film with an integrationist and religiously tolerant narrative structure. However, as pointed by Angie Mallhi (2006), the film is problematic for not just the subtle glorification of Hindu hegemony but, also for the very biased and lopsided manner in which it (mis)represents the sequences of communal violence. In so doing, the film manufactures an orientalist version of Indian nationalism that is soaked as much in the Hindu supremacist ideology as it is in the ideology that emphasises Muslim inferiority. That *Bombay* received the National Integrationist award by the Indian state only further problematises the version of nationalism that is implicitly being propagated and normalised through the film.

For instance, the inter-religious marriage between Shaila Bano and Shekhar upholds Hindu hegemony by using the position of the secular patriarch, through which, Shekhar assimilates the Muslim body into Hindu society (ibid). This is especially evident in the sequence in which, as the *burqa* clad Shaila Bano runs towards Shekhar in the AR Rahman song- *Tu Hi Re*, her *burqa* is symbolically shown to keep the romantic couple from uniting as it gets entangled in a gate, thus rendering Bano immobile. It is at this moment, by choosing to shrug off the *burqa*, so as to continue running towards her love interest, that Shaila Bano explicitly chooses to merge with Shekhar and implicitly, to release herself from the ideals that her religion had draped her in.

Bombay produces a conspicuous dichotomy between Shekhar's and Shaila Bano's fathers with the Hindu father- Narayan Mishra being articulated as relatively civilized, clean, calm as opposed to the Muslim Bashir Ahmed who is shown to be more short-tempered, violent, aggressive, overtly religious. This subtle representation of religious differences between Hinduism and Islam could be related to what Rustom Bharucha identifies as "soft-Hindutva values, ones couched, disguised, and dissimilated in secularist terms" (1994: 1390).

Further, the depiction of the riot sequences in the film are contrary to the historical facts according to which, the January 1993 riots were an orchestrated massacre of Bombay's Muslim community that was led by Bal Thackeray, *Shiv Sena*, and assisted by the Maharashtra Police (Khalidi 1996: 63). The fascist underpinnings of the Maharashtra state government during that period are explicit from an interview of Bal Thackeray's in the international edition of the *Time* magazine on 25 January 1993, in which he justified the massacres, stating that "there is nothing wrong, if they (Muslims) are treated as Jews were in Nazi Germany... If they are not going away, kick them out!" (as cited by Khalidi, *ibid*). In this context, it is noteworthy that in its depiction of the first phase of the rioting, multiple newspaper headlines reading the destruction of the Babri *Masjid* are superimposed on the image of the mosque. This is followed by quick successive cuts that depict impassioned roars of a sword wielding Muslim man crying 'Ya Allah' followed by shots of Muslim men collectively rising from their *namaz* as they brazenly take to the streets with weapons. What follows, is a rapid succession of shots of a mad mob killing one another. Strikingly, the images of the violent mob are overwhelmingly composed of Muslim men which is problematic as it was factually a carnage of Muslims (*ibid*).

While the Partition riots were fundamentally different from the several instances of communal riots that followed in the aftermath of the *Ramjanmabhoomi Rath Yatra*, there are nonetheless striking resemblances in the filmic articulation of the riot sequences in *Bombay*, *Pinjar* and *Gadar* wherein, Mani Ratnam's *Bombay* foregrounds the riots that took place in Bombay in the year 1992, 1993 while, *Pinjar* and *Gadar* portray the tumult of the Partition and the consequent riots. Both *Pinjar* and *Gadar* narratively revolve around human stories in the times of Partition which also capture the communally violent riots of that period. In the depiction

of the riot sequences, the films overtly depict Muslims as largely the aggressors, avenged mostly by the Sikhs, with the Hindus mostly visible as the timid victims. In the two prominent riot sequences in *Pinjar* for instance, the stereotypically orientalist image of the turbaned, bearded, sword brandishing Muslim figure, who is largely portrayed as the culprit, is shown to have initiated the killing and torching of helpless and unarmed men, women and children. Further, the backdrop chants of ‘*Allah hu Akbar*’ during the sequences assist in constructing a very problematic link between Islam and violence. The camera captures several close-up shots of the faces of the Hindu victims to further establish affect and a connection with the viewers wherein, the anguished, hapless faces and eyes are able to communicate with the same. In so doing, the camera is able to attain an emphatic encounter with the Hindu victims while, by an almost negligible interaction with the Muslim victims, the camera distances the viewers from the Muslim victims.

Mani Ratnam's *Roja* (1992) is one of the first mainstream Hindi films to have indirectly touched upon the wound of Partition in the 1990s. *Roja* is a Tamil melodrama that won several National Awards including the National Integration Award and was also later translated into several regional languages including Telegu, Malayalam, Hindi, and Marathi. In the film, Rishi Kumar- played by Arvind Swamy, who is a cryptologist working with the R.A.W- elite intelligence agency of India, goes to Kashmir along with his wife Roja (Madhoo) for an official assignment. On arrival, Rishi is abducted by terrorists whose agenda is to separate Kashmir from India and to free their leader, Wasim Khan, from judicial custody. This abduction initiates Roja's journey to rescue her husband which culminates with a melodramatic reunion of the couple after Rishi (very unrealistically) convinces his militant capturer Liaqat Khan (played by Pankaj Kapoor) of the futility and immorality of the latter's violent actions following which, Liaqat lets Rishi off.

An implicit overlap between the Kashmiri Muslim and the Pakistani ‘other’ and between the mainland Hindu and the ideal Indian citizen is palpable through the film. *Roja* marks a shift in the portrayal of Kashmir from the idyllic location of yesteryears to one that is now infested by fundamentalist Islamic terrorism. This shift is narrated through the prism of nationalism wherein, the film metaphorically and verbally employs the memory of the traumatic Partition to punctuate the link between Islamic religion and anti-nationalism. There are conspicuous binaries articulated

through the film including those between the Kashmiris and Indians; the Muslim and the Hindu and the (Kashmiri/Pakistani) terrorist/militant and the Indian army personnel. Consequently, the Hindu is represented as the norm while, the Muslim as a disruptor of that norm and hence perceived as the ‘other’. The binary is spatially articulated through the contrasting landscape-representations of the predominantly Muslim state of Kashmir and those of a visibly South Indian Hindu hamlet. In this respect, Dirks notes the stark landscape contrast created in the opening shots of the film wherein, “while the northern forests of Kashmir are peopled with men carrying lethal weapons and fighting a stark and deadly war, the southern fields are populated by women expressing the rhythms, desires, and laughter of domesticity and agriculture, production and reproduction” (2001: 166).

There is one particularly intense sequence in the film that deserves attention. This is one in which, the *namaz* offering Liaquat Khan evidently remains nonchalant and unperturbed as Rishi yells relentlessly and throws himself on the Indian national flag so as to keep it from being desecrated by the militants. Here, Dirks explains that Liaquat’s faith is shown as transcending reason and humanity, symbolically setting “Islam against the principles of Indian nationalism” (ibid: 161). The affective and jingoistic elements in this sequence are further accentuated by Subramania Bharati’s song playing in the background which builds in tempo to the lyrics,

*Aassam se gujarat tak
Bengal se maharashtra tak Kashmir se madras tak
Keh do sabhi hum ek hain
Aawaaz do hum ek hain*

(From Assam to Gujarat, from Bengal to Maharashtra...from Kashmir to Madras...raise your voice to the refrain that we are all one), thereby implicitly performing the role of a cartographic tool by forging the imagination of the supposedly natural and unquestionable geographical borders of the Indian nation-state. It could be asserted that, against the context of the armed separatist movement that had started to emerge in the Valley from the year 1989, the inviolable sanctity that is attached to the territorial integrity of the nation through this sequence, seemed to echo the anxieties of the Partition. That the upper-middle class Hindu male is willing to sacrifice himself in the cause of the dignity of the nation, that is under threat by an ideology rooted in

fundamentalist Islam, assists in constructing a narrative that depicts Hindu and Indian nationalism and Islam and existential threat as collapsible categories. This change in the idea of nationalism demonstrating existential anxiety and insecurity towards the Muslim ‘other’ who is repetitively blamed for existentially threatening the territorial integrity of the Indian union, supersedes the earlier version of patriotism wherein the national integrationist narrative of ‘unity in diversity’ was largely emphasised in the decades following the Partition to discursively build an Indian national identity that was rooted in Nehruvian secular ideals. The repetitive cinematic visibility of this changed notion of nationalism in the 1990s began to articulate the changing dominant political discourses of that time.

It was much later in 2001 and 2003 that Anil Sharma’s *Gadar* and Dr Chandraprakash Dwivedi’s *Pinjar* directly addressed the festering wound of Partition. In their depiction of the incidents of communal violence that took place during the Partition, both *Gadar* and *Pinjar* employ iconography and tropes that construct stark binary oppositions between the Hindu and the Muslim. In *Pinjar* (2003), a novel written by *Amrita Pritam* in 1950 and consequently adapted by Dr Dwivedi in the format of a film, the opening frame of the film is that of Partition associated violence in Amritsar. It is in 1946, and violence has already begun to destroy the peace of towns and villages. On one such morning, a faction of hyper-aggressive Muslims (recognizable by the Muslim skull caps that they are seen wearing, and their rhythmic chanting of ‘*Allah ho Akbar*’) are seen mercilessly and incessantly slaying visibly Sikh and Hindu human bodies. This gruesome sequence which concludes with an extended camera pan, capturing the blood-spattered dead bodies of visibly Sikh children and adults, shifts to the setting of a buzzing market place and a photograph studio before the camera pans to the protagonist, Puro’s (Urmila matondkar) home where it dwells on the family setting, building up a picture of happy domesticity. Meenakshi Bharat notes that while it is clear that “the division of the nation is the major focus of the film, punctuated as it is with patriotic iterations, political speeches and the strains of ‘*Vande Mataram*’ (salute to the motherland)”, the nationalist cry of independence that is visible in the film, she notes, is nonetheless not as trenchant in the actual novel (2008: 65). Like *Roja* and *Gadar*, there is a sort of deliberate emphasis in Dwivedi’s film too with respect to establishing Muslims as the vicious aggressors, the Hindus as the victims and in case of *Pinjar* and *Gadar*, the Sikhs as the marshal race exhibiting aggression against the Muslims. In addition

to *Pinjar* largely focusing on the struggles of the Hindu-female protagonist- Puro who is abducted by the Muslim 'other'- Rashid (played by Manoj Bajpayee), the Muslim/Pakistani monstrosity in the film is also depicted through repetitive images of wild-eyed, dagger carrying Muslim men shown to be abducting and raping Hindu women with an almost negligible instance of a Sikh or Hindu man doing the same to a Muslim woman. In the few instances in which Muslim women are shown, they are mostly depicted as conniving and shrewd unlike the evidently timid and soft Hindu women.

By solely imagining the pain of the Punjabi Hindu women and by brutally glossing over the tragedy that had also been inflicted upon the Muslim women, the film comes across as a half-baked adaptation of Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*, which laments the suffering of the 'daughters of Punjab'- Muslim, Sikh and Hindu . By means of (strategically) disregarding the similarities between the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Punjab not just in terms of the traumatic and cataclysmic struggles that the people equally suffered, but also in terms of their dress, culture, language or '*Punjabiyaat*', the film comes across as a deliberate attempt to falsely construct Hindus-Muslims and Indians-Pakistanis as two completely distinct categories. Through this, an evident attempt is being made to manufacture a version of Indian nationalism of which, Pakistan and paranoia and suspicion about Muslims remain inseparable pillars.

During the same period in which films like *Bombay*, *Pinjar* and *Gadar* were produced, a number of other Bollywood films were made that also reflected similar emotions and ideas, albeit through the lens of wars fought between India and Pakistan. Among these were JP Dutta's *Border* (1997), Josheph Matthew's *Sarfarosh* (1999), Anil Sharma's *Gadar- Ek Prem Katha* (2001), Tinu Verma's *Maa Tujhe Saalam* (2002), JP Dutta's *LOC Kargil* (2003), Anil Sharma's *Hero: the love story of a spy* (2003). The following section will engage with the 'new orientalist' narratives reflected through these films and their meanings.

The performativity of Hindu Nationalism through war films

Despite the fact that the majority of conventional wars between India and Pakistan were fought in the early decades following the truncation of the sub continent- 1948, 1965, 1971 most

of the 'war films' that were produced by the Hindi film industry surged in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Among other factors, this surge could be attributed to: the rise of rightwing politics within India which assisted in fanning communal tensions sparked over socio-economic disparities; the unresolved issue of Kashmir; the demolition of the Babri *Masjid*; the ultrapatriotic discourse following the fiftieth anniversary since the truncation of India and the linkage of Indian Muslim communities to notions of global Jihad to name a few. This alongside, with the lifting of the long held censorship guideline on the Hindi film industry of not naming the Pakistani enemy nation in the 1990s, consequently resulting in anti-Pakistan naming, blaming and shaming which began to surface through filmic texts, spaces, dialogues and songs which further participated in the anti-Pakistan Hindutva discourse that had already started occupying a significant space in the public sphere.

This sections traces the cinematic journey of the intermeshing category of the Pakistani and the Muslim 'other' in a film industry in which an upper middle class heterosexual male Hindu seems to form the norm of Indian masculinity, and Hindu nationalism a dominant ideology. According to Amit Rai, Hindu nationalism is a hegemonic project that seeks to narrow the field of cultural representations of difference to a battleground where all non-Hindu communities must overtly and repeatedly perform their allegiance to the nation (2003:5). This overt performance, (akin to the carefully choreographed acrobats performed by the BSF *jawans* at the *Wagah* border) to show allegiance towards the Indian nation is visible primarily in the films made in the last half of the 1990s and the early 2000s, when, the Muslim body is looked upon through the lens of suspicion until s/he proves that their love for the Indian nation (*mulk*) supersedes that for their religion (*qaum*). This resonates with the Sachar Committee Report which states that Muslims carry the double burden of being labeled as 'anti-national' and as being 'appeased' at the same time (Government of India 2006:11). Using Levi-Strauss's binary opposition, I will now demonstrate how the purportedly 'superior' Indian national identity is constructed and normalised as opposed to the 'demonic'/'inferior' Pakistani identity/nationality. I will focus on the narrative structures of the films to explore how they reclaim and reshape the meaning of nationalism, at the same time as reifying the concept of the 'other' (1983).

It is significant to note that from 1996 to 2004 when the BJP was the prime coalition partner in the government; many films were made with storylines and attitudes reflecting the

party's conservative stance, largely emphasizing Hindu family values and religious patriotism. In 1998, the Indian government recognized films as a legitimate industry, which made the industry eligible for substantial amount of 'infrastructural and credit support' (Mehta 2005:136). It could be argued that while economically beneficial to the film industry, the financial support and privileges to the same may have been instrumental in engendering a subtle statist control over the industry. During this period, 'family films' were seen as the main articulations of culture, with hours-long, elaborate musicals plotted around a wedding or other such occasions that brought extended families together. Such films were wildly popular and profitable at the box office (ibid: 42). All of them focused on Hindu tradition and ritual, reinforcing Sanskrit-centric notions of duty and morality. Vijay Mishra adds that the foregrounding of conservative politics, the manipulation of stars, and the glorification of a martial race theory in the Indo-Pak context further led to what he calls the Hinduization of the Indian body politic (2001: 43). Likewise, this period saw films ranging from "Sooraj Barjatya's sugarcoated odes to the pure, selfless Hindu way of life, *Maine Pyar Kiya* and *Hum Aapke Hain Koun*, to the all-is-hale-and-hearty-in-good-old-India melodramas produced by the Yash Chopra school of escapist filmmaking to the brazen jingoism of J.P. Dutta's *Border*, Anil Sharma's *Gadar - Ek Prem Katha*, designed to fan neo-nationalistic fervor and to keep the saffron flag flying - overtly and covertly" (Dwyer 2014; 65).

The overlapping of Indian nationalism with Hindu religious under/overtones, has played a powerful role in shaping and reshaping 'knowledge' about the Pakistani (external) 'others' as well as the Indian Muslim 'others'. With respect to the significant Muslim minority within the boundaries of the 'Hindu India', the study (particularly in the seceding chapters) will find a consistent demonstration of two dominant narratives, one that suspects the internal Muslims for harboring anti-India (extending to pro-Pakistan) feelings and the other which shows 'good' Muslims as those who explicitly express their intense love for the Indian nation which visibly exceeds that for their religion. The argument is that while there were visible traces of this suspicion earlier, with the onset of the 'war films', the articulation of this suspicion only got more pronounced.

With regards to the question as to why religion and nationalism intersect, the chapter will use Volkan's (1997) notion of 'chosen traumas' and 'chosen glories'. The Turkish-American Psychoanalyst Vamik Volkan uses the term "chosen trauma" to describe the process of a "group

evoking the memory of a persecutory event and ascribing it an inordinate amount of emotional and historic significance” (ibid: 36). According to Volkan, traumatized groups may evoke two kinds of responses viz: ‘chosen glories’ and ‘chosen traumas’ (ibid). ‘Chosen glories’ are historical events that are reactivated so as to ‘bolster a group’s self-esteem’ (ibid: 81) while ‘chosen traumas’ encapsulate recollections of feelings of loss and humiliation that victimise the self while simultaneously vilifying and dehumanizing the ‘other’. In this respect, chosen glories could be related to a groups sense of ‘self-identity’ or ontological security while chosen traumas could be likened to feelings generated as a result of the felt ontological insecurity during critical situations. While analyzing the connect between religion and nationalism, Kinnvall (2004: 756) avers that chosen traumas and chosen glories could be intimately connected to images of the nation and to religion. Here she points out that “religion is a powerful reservoir as religious revelations are turned into national shrines, religious miracles become national feasts and Holy Scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics” (ibid). Nationalistic and religious ‘chosen’ glories and traumas could be called upon simultaneously to evoke passionate emotions as both are essentialist concepts and thus powerful identity signifiers. That is, “in comparison to other discursive identity constructions, both national and religious identity make claims to a monolithic and abstract identity- being, one stable identity that answers to the need for securitized subjectivity” (Kinnvall: 2002).

Within the loose genre of war films which were mostly made from 1997 to 2005, there was a glaring overlap of religion and nationality that also extended to chosen traumas/glories wherein for instance, a traumatic past faced by Hindus/Sikhs at the hands of Mughals was implicitly/explicitly recollected to invoke nationalistic fervor and to stereotype and castigate the Pakistani enemy. Likewise, there was a repetitive association and performativity of Indian identity with Hinduism and subsequently, an apparent link between the philosophical belief of Islam and the enemy state- Pakistan. For instance, in a sequence in Dutta's *Border* (1997), soldiers of the Indian army- Kuldeep Singh (played by Suny Deol), Bhairav Singh (Sunil Shetty) and a few others discover that some of the villagers residing on the borderlands were actually informants who slyly transferred information to the Pakistani army. To this, the supremacist army personnel casually remarked that the villagers are all related to the people on the other side of the border. In the context of India-Pakistan relations, and their history, the invocation (and

conflation) here of discourses of 'infiltration' and 'relational' loyalties is very clearly marked. After all, it is India's Muslims who have relatives over the border in Pakistan, and whose loyalty has been most often been the object of scrutiny. The people who inhabit the borderlands are shown to be reluctant members of the Indian nation who, if not adequately policed (here an implicit justification of draconian laws like AFSPA in Kashmir could be brought to mind), would prefer to maintain their communal affiliations with villagers on the Pakistani side, rather than demonstrating patriotism for the Indian nation, a stance that the (mostly Hindu) characters of the film are seen to be espousing through their high-octane performative speech-acts'.

In addition to this, *Border* espouses a nationalistic tone which uses narrative structure, background score, and historical (chosen) trauma to produce cinematic affect which takes religious tones to the extent of normalizing Indian citizenship with Hinduism and dampening the Nehruvian secular vision visible in the films of the 1950s-60s. For instance, Bhaskar Sarkar (2009) narrates a sequence from the film in which only a hundred and twenty Indian infantrymen were surrounded by some six hundred Pakistani soldiers and forty tanks. At this time, Major Kuldeep Singh (played by the uber-patriotic Sunny Deol) energizes his men through a melodramatic speech act that is affectively accentuated with a well synchronized background score, wherein Singh reminds his men of the militant Sikh guru who declared that one *Khalsa* fighter amounted to one hundred and twenty five thousand Mughal imperial troops. In this scene and many other sequences, Sarkar (ibid) argues that the film consistently calls upon historical traumas so as to frame patriotism in highly religious terms. Likewise, this sequence also exemplifies the direct link between Volkan's chosen trauma and nationalism in which an unrelated historical trauma is reinvigorated to unfold feelings that demonise the Muslim/Pakistani 'other'.

Another film made during the same period that also indulged in overt Pakistan naming and blaming was John Mathew Matthan's *Sarfarosh* (1999). The film was made during the peak of BJP rule and a year after the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan that led to rhetorical media reporting. The film utilizes memory, flashback and narration so as to make references to the Partition which were starkly opposite to those that were audible through films like *Dharamputra* and *Garm Hawa* that clearly espoused secular beliefs and ideology. *Sarfarosh* makes very direct references to Pakistan and sends home the message that even 'those' who

pretend to be friends of the Indian nation may in fact be posing a serious danger. This remark is particularly directed towards Gulfam (Naseeruddin Shah) who plays a Pakistani singer whose family had to migrate to Pakistan post Partition. While Gulfam visits India to perform *ghazals*, it is the eventual disclosure of his conniving intentions to orchestrate a terrorist operation on Indian soil that twists the plot of the film. Such narrative structures could point towards an insecure nationalist mindset that is highly suspicious of Pakistani attempts even during times of 'peace'.

Amit Rai suggests how *Sarfarosh* (1999) parallels contemporary terrorism and the Partition and subsequently portrays the protagonist Ajay (Aamir Khan), who plays an IPS officer, blaming the Pakistani antagonist Gulfam for not being able to let go of the past (2003:7). Here, a drastic contrast is visible between *Dharamputra* and *Sarfarosh* in that, unlike the former, *Sarfarosh* talks not of the utter senselessness of the Partition, but instead remembers the event in a much dehistoricized, detached and an oversimplified manner. Rakesh Gupta points that *Sarfarosh* was the first to name Pakistan as an enemy involved in cross-border terrorism. It is worth noting that ever since Pakistan has been consistently named as a terrorist in many such films that followed (2004). The naming, blaming and shaming of the external Muslim enemy could also function to indirectly remind India of the internal manifestation of that enemy through the Muslim citizen. It is noteworthy here that the Indian government concurred by awarding the film a three-month entertainment tax-exemption 'in view of the Indian Army and Air Force operations against Pakistan-sponsored infiltrators' in Kargil.

The intersection between the communally charged political environment of that period and the significant number of jingoistic war films can be further asserted by pointing to the "generous production assistance that J.P. Dutta's *Border* received from the Indian Army and by his proximity to politicians who found his sympathies useful to further their goals" (Kishore Budha 2008: 7). Apart from this, the premiere of another jingoistic war film, *LOC Kargil*, made by the same director in 2003, was marked by the presence of key ministers from the BJP government's cabinet, including the Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani (ibid). The release of the film's music was marked by the presence of officers who took part in the Kargil war, fiery speeches and a degree of nationalism that played up the militaristic posturing of the film before its release. This warmongering discourse was also visible at different popular cultural sites. Budha notes that a survey of the news media of the time

demonstrates that the television and film industries had appropriated the Kargil conflict by announcing a slate of films, producing chat shows, inserting war into existing soap plots, and releasing patriotic music compilations (ibid:8).

However, it should also be noted that alternate and counter-narratives also existed, which for instance were audible through films like *Mammo* (1994), *Main Hoon Na* (2004), *Veer Zaara* (2004), *Filmistaan* (2014), *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014) and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015). Most of these films do not fall under the bracket of ‘war films’ that have been discussed above, except for *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* which revolves around the interaction between a Pakistani and an Indian soldier at no man’s land in 1948, against the backdrop of the Partition. These films need to be noted for their narratives that paint pictures of harmony and brotherhood between the two countries through narratives that focus on the senselessness of war and the shared histories and bonds between the two countries share.

Conclusion

By engaging with mainstream Hindi films, this chapter has largely attempted to capture the cognitive journey of the post-Partition Indian self-identity from the period following the Partition to the beginning of the millennium. Examining the cataclysmic and traumatic episode of the Partition that was marked by demonic communalism, rupture, death, fragmentation and anguish as a moment of ‘critical situation’ that severely engendered ontological insecurity, I have argued it is asserted that the post-Partition phase responded to the said ontological disjuncture through an emphatic statist focus on the Nehruvian secularist narrative.

The early decades following the Partition also experienced an engineered erasure of the travails of the traumatic event for reasons including the exigencies of the postcolonial nation building process and due to the Partition’s temporal proximity. The chapter asserts that it for these reasons that there were few direct cinematic engagements with the subject in the first four decades after independence. The chapter discusses *Dharamputra* and *Garm Hawa*, which exemplify the few interventions made by the Bombay cinema that talked about the truncation. Through these films and some others that indirectly touched upon the wound, an explicitly secular and religiously tolerant narrative is visible that paints the core self-identity of the nation

through these strokes. Further, a palpable shift in the self-narrative of the state is visible through the late 1980s - early 1990s, when the secular identity started to get replaced by an ideology that embraced Hindu nationalism.

The Hindu Right wing's xenophobic and jingoistic *Ramjanmabhoomi* campaign that enveloped the Indian political climate in communalistic textures in the early 1990s, is a crucial variable that, alongside factors like the onset of the separatist armed rebellion in Jammu and Kashmir; the separatist Khalistani movement in Punjab; and a pervasive western Islamic orientalist discourse, assisted in shaping an ontological narrative that was dominantly marked by Hindu nationalism. In this chapter, I have argued that the discourses of Hindu nationalism oriented towards propagating India as Hindu, pacifist and a victim, and Pakistan as the aggressive, villainous Muslim 'other' have impacted the films produced in the 1990s like *Roja*, *Bombay*, *Pinjar*, *Gadar* that reflect the Hindu nationalist stance both implicitly and explicitly through their narrative structure and forms. This chapter has also deployed Volkan's discourse of 'chosen trauma' to further find the blatant echo of religion through nationalism. The last section of the chapter discussed 'war films' like *Border*, *LoC Kargil*, *Sarfarosh*, *Maa Tujhe Salaam* to find direct links between patriotism and the Hindu nationalist discourse, thus establishing a correspondence between the texts of popular cinema and the overarching political discourses of the day about the relations between India and Pakistan.

Chapter IV

Kashmir and national identity discourses: 1947-2014

Introduction

Following the discussions made in the previous chapter, this chapter pays attention to the dominant intertextual narratives around Kashmir so as to find the import of the political- popular cultural imbrication in popularising and embedding specific identity narratives on Pakistan, India and Kashmir. The region of Kashmir continues to remain a very complicated sore point between Pakistan and India ever since the former's accession to India in 1947. At the time of Partition, that had considered Muslims and Hindus as two distinct civilizations, the Muslim majority states merged with Pakistan while, the states wherein the majority population practiced the Hindu philosophy remained within the Indian territorial fold. It is in this context, that the Muslim majority region of Jammu and Kashmir's joining India through the Instrument of Accession⁶ became a point of dispute, making the same conditional upon a promise of holding a plebiscite in the future so as to give the people of Jammu and Kashmir a fair chance to decide which side they eventually chose to go to. This promise to hold a plebiscite was however left unfulfilled and thus lies at the heart of the conflict between India-Kashmir-Pakistan. While for New Delhi, Kashmir's joining into the Indian territorial fold under the Instrument of Accession was legal and thus purportedly legitimate; over the years, the accession has nonetheless been vociferously disputed by both Pakistan as well as Kashmir.

⁶ The legal document through which the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, under the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh, acceded to the Dominion of India on 26 October, 1947.

According to Sumit Ganguly, Kashmir is important for both India and Pakistan for different reasons (2001: 1-15). For Pakistan, the reasons are irredentist and strongly relate to cultural identity. “Pakistan’s national identity will not be complete unless it incorporates the whole of Kashmir within its national framework” (ibid). For India, Ganguly asserts, the issue is important as it relates to both security and democracy (ibid). If Kashmir accedes, he notes, “then there could be a domino-effect with other borderland regions potentially breaking away”. In this chapter it is noted that among factors like democracy and security, Kashmir is also important for the implications that it bears upon postcolonial India’s Ontological security need of being understood (domestically and internationally) as a sovereign, secular, united and a national integrationist nation. As has already been discussed in the previous chapters, Ontological security Theory emphasises the state’s need for stable and consistent self-narratives that are as essential as is the same’s need for physical security. Inconsistencies to these stabilized routines consequently cause Ontological insecurity with respect to the state’s cognitive understanding of its self. It could be asserted that the bloody Partition which reflected the religious schisms within, simultaneously bruised the ‘secular’ and ‘pluralistic’ ideologies through which the Indian National Congress had defined the Indian identity. Against this context, the integration of the Muslim majority region of Jammu and Kashmir into a post-Partition India, in which a majority of the population practiced the Hindu religion, could be said to have been significant to reclaiming the said narrative.

Further it is argued that J&K’s link with the Indian state’s secular, sovereign and territorial integrationist narratives has been reinforced through the years, particularly against the context of the several (diplomatic and militaristic) attempts made by the Pakistani state to (re)claim the territorial region. Further, Kashmir’s intricate and problematic relation with the said ontological narratives of the Indian state could also be drawn from the militant and non militant uprisings in the Muslim majority Valley that have demanded *aazadi* (freedom) from the Indian state. The several episodes of conventional confrontations that have taken place between India and Pakistan over Kashmir (1947-48, 1965, 1999), the persistent Pakistani complicity with respect to supporting, training, recruiting militant and Islamic groups in the Valley, and the multiple Pakistani terror attacks through the Indian body politic, allegedly over the disputed question of Kashmir, among other, are some reasons that have shaped the Kashmir imbroglio through the prisms of sovereignty, secularism and territorial integration.

This chapter will highlight the dominant articulations about Kashmir through the years. This will be done through two broad sections that engage with the political-cinematic inter-text, with a focus on the post-Partition period from 1947 to 1980s in the first section, and the post-1989 phase of the armed rebellion in the Valley in 1989 to 2014 in the second. In so doing, the study seeks to find the mainstream nationalistic and Hindu nationalistic discourses through which Kashmir's relation with the Indian nation-state has been articulated and, the implications of the same in popularising, legitimising policies, identities and actions in Kashmir.

Before analysing the discourses that are visible through the political-cinematic intertext, it is essential to first acknowledge the aspects that have facilitated the postcolonial Indian state's intimate connection with Kashmir. It has been argued and accepted that the Muslim majority state of J&K has been essential for the amplification of Indian state's secular, national integrationist, pluralistic, democratic and sovereign characteristics. It has further been argued that the symbolic centrality that Kashmir has received within the popular Indian imagination owes its position primarily to the Nehruvian secular discourse for which, the integration of a Muslim majority Kashmir vindicated the secularist ideology that had strongly discouraged the Partition of 1947. Moreover, the traumatic memory of the bloody Partition between India and Pakistan that reflected the simmering religious schisms with, the persistency with which confrontations (diplomatic and conventional) took place between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and the multiple Pakistani terror attacks made on India allegedly over the disputed region of Kashmir, have contributed to both intimately framing Kashmir as integral and symbolic to the Indian national identity discourse as well as, in framing Pakistan and any irredentist Kashmiri demands as existentially threatening the secular, sovereign and national integrationist characters of the Indian nation. In this sense, a willing and organic assimilation of the region of Kashmir into the territorial fold of the Indian union, if this were to happen, would reinforce the Indian state's professed characteristic of secularism, sovereignty, plurality and democracy. Thus, Kashmir has always been intimately attached to the Indian state's Ontological security narratives of secularism and sovereignty.

Section I- The post-Partition period

Political narratives on Kashmir

Kashmir is symbolic as it illustrates that we are a secular State, that Kashmir, with a large majority of Muslims, has nevertheless, of its own free will, wished to be associated with India... (Nehru 1958: 213).

For India's first Prime Minister, portraying the state of J&K as a willing part of India was pertinent as it symbolised the 'democratic', 'inclusive', and 'secular' characteristics of India's biographical narrative, both in the eyes of domestic as well as international audiences. The truncation of the sub-continent along the lines of the 'Two-Nation theory' (a stance that had been vehemently rejected by the Indian National Congress, which instead insisted upon a secular Indian vision), the bloody Partition that ensued and the exigencies of the post-Partition/colonial nation building project, presented a pressing need for the Congress to represent the Indian national identity narrative through a secular, national integrationist and sovereign lens. It is for this reason, as has been asserted above by Pandit Nehru, that a seemingly (natural) uncontested assimilation of the region of J&K into mainland India acquired a pertinent metaphorical character. This chapter attests that these reasons have been instrumental in manufacturing the discourse about Kashmir's uncontested integration within a 'secular-pluralist' India as an Ontological need for the Indian state's identity.

The independence of India from British rule in 1947 brought with it a violent and traumatic Partition of the subcontinent along religious lines, with the Muslim majority regions merging to form the Islamic state of Pakistan. Regarding the princely kingdoms within British India, it was decided to allow the factors of demography and geography to decide whether they eventually joined India or Pakistan. At that time, the princely region of Jammu and Kashmir was a Muslim majority kingdom that was ruled by a Hindu Dogra Maharaja, Hari Singh, who was anxious about foregoing his powers and thus, vacillated between India and Pakistan, as well as contemplated independence. Following an attack by tribesmen from the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) backed by the Pakistan Army that took place in J&K in October 1947, the Maharaja of Kashmir decided to accede to India by signing an Instrument of Accession at the insistence of the Indian government. Following this, the Indian Army arrived in Kashmir and a full-fledged war between India and Pakistan ensued. It is in this context that Kashmir, a Muslim majority state, joining the dominion of India, became a point of dispute. J&K's accession to

India under the Hindu Maharaja was thus conditional upon a promise of holding a plebiscite so as to give the people of the region a democratic chance to decide which side they would choose to go to. This promise of a plebiscite however suffered from a strategic procrastination and thus, continued to instigate the conflict between India and Pakistan (Puri 1993, Bose 2003).

Further, Mitra notes that, “as far as Jawaharlal Nehru was concerned, the Kashmir ‘doctrine’ was based on his firm conviction that, a ‘lawful’ and ‘legitimate’ Instrument of Accession was enough evidence and reason to internationally justify Kashmir as an integral part of the Union” (1997: 57). Hence, any attempt to see the issue as a dispute between two neighbours over territory rather than an instrument to confirm the position of India was construed by Nehru as necessarily ‘anti-Indian’ and summarily rejected (ibid). However, the international community, including the United Nations as well as the United States and the United Kingdom saw the Kashmir issue as an inter-state dispute (ibid: 10). In this regard, in his letter to Patel from Paris dated, 27 October 1948, Nehru had indicated that his visit to London and Paris brought home the message on how much “India was being critically judged internationally by her conduct in both Kashmir and Hyderabad” (Gopal 1972: 33). Gopal further notes that, “Between the years 1947-49, Britain held a position that sought to ‘solve’ the Kashmir stance by supporting Pakistan’s claim to Kashmir” (ibid). Subsequently, Britain began to favour a status quo division of Kashmir which would secure for Pakistan the strategically important Northern Areas (ibid). The United States on its part held that it would be best to withdraw Kashmir from the jurisdiction of India and Pakistan and place it under UN jurisdiction (Nasenko 1977: 139-141). In this, none of the positions stated above seemed to directly favour New Delhi’s stance of treating the ‘Kashmir problem’ as an internal matter.

Moreover, against the context of Pakistan receiving substantial military and economic aid and support from the United States during the Cold War from the years 1947- 1958 (Ali 2009), Nehru’s anxiety could have been bolstered considering the potential of bias that this partnership could have borne with respect to the issue of Kashmir (Puri 1993: 20). Puri asserts that with this in the background, during the peak of the Cold War, American archrival, USSR (now Russia) got involved in the issue by supporting the Indian stance on Kashmir. In this regard, “USSR had started calling the Kashmir question an ‘internal affair’ of India while at the same time decrying imperialist efforts to turn the Valley into a strategic bridgehead” (ibid: 20-21). Citing Jain

(1979), Balraj Puri stated that in 1955, “the USSR Premier Khrushchev, on a visit to Srinagar noted that the ‘people of Kashmir’ only wished to ‘work for the welfare of their motherland, the Republic of India’, and that ‘the so-called Kashmir question’ was a creation of ‘imperialist forces’” (ibid: 20). Further, in the Security Council, the USSR vetoed all resolutions on Kashmir that suggested a plebiscite. In this regard, Puri avers that the Soviet moral support allowed India to finally give up its commitment to the question of a plebiscite (ibid: 21). Indian government’s intentions regarding the implementation of a plebiscite in J&K could also be gathered from the statement of the then Home Minister Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant who, during his visit to Srinagar in 1957, declared that the state of J&K was an integral part of India and that there could be no question of a plebiscite to determine its status afresh (ibid). New Delhi’s policy of showing Kashmir as integral and intrinsic to the Indian nation was also evident from the Jawaharlal Nehru’s remarks in the Lok Sabha on November 27, 1963 regarding the erosion of Article 370 of the constitution that was designed to grant special autonomous status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He said,

It (Article 370) has been eroded, if I may use the word, and many things have been done in the last few years which have made the relationship of Kashmir with the union of India very close. There is no doubt that Kashmir is fully integrated (Nehru 2007: 27).

Through this, New Delhi’s concerted unwillingness to accommodate any discussion on Kashmir that opposed or problematised India’s undisputed position on the same was reflective. Likewise, several critical interventions on the same were also framed by New Delhi to be ‘imperialistic’ in nature.

As stated by Ganguly, the official stance that pressed towards articulating Kashmir as integral to the Indian nation could also be said to be coming from the fear of possible domino-effects arising from borderland areas, in case Kashmir managed to attain autonomy (2001). In this regard, PM Nehru’s views to M.C. Chagla, High Commissioner in London on 2 August 1962 are relevant wherein he notes that,

Any acceptance of the two-nation theory in regard to Kashmir will have the most disastrous consequences in the whole of India. Not only will our secularism end, but India will tend to break up (Gopal 1972: 216).

In this context, another statement made earlier by Pandit Nehru on 5 March 1948 clearly indicates a consistency in Nehru’s position wherein he stated that India had only two objectives in the state of Jammu and Kashmir: “to ensure the freedom and the progress of the people there

and to prevent anything happening that might endanger the security of India” (Parthasarathi and Gopal 1987: 15). It seems clear then that Kashmir’s integration served the Ontological Security need of the Indian state to appear strong, cohesive, united, democratic, sovereign and secular. Attack on any of these aspects in this regard, caused Ontological insecurity or existential anxiety.

It is evident then that the region of Jammu and Kashmir has been articulated as both organically integral and legitimate to the postcolonial Indian nation. In the following section, I will look at the portrayal of Kashmir in mainstream Hindi films made in the first four decades following Indian Independence. I will attempt to explore how Kashmiri integration within India is conveyed alongside exploring Ontological security elements of secularism, pluralism and sovereignty so as to find the resonance and the consequent popularisation and normalisation of dominant statist positions on Kashmir through popular cultural forms of cinema. In this, an attempt will be made at finding the repetitive and consistent narratives and iconographic tropes through which Kashmir has been articulated.

Cinematic articulation of Kashmir: In praise of a sovereign and secular India

At a public rally held in Calcutta on 1 January, 1952, Pandit Nehru made a statement that has ever since been widely quoted by political scientists working on Kashmir, “there can be no greater vindication than this of our secular politics, our constitution, than that we have drawn the people of Kashmir towards us” (quoted by Noorani 2006). Noting this emphatic celebration of the ostensibly secular and inclusive characteristics of the postcolonial India through which Kashmir is implicitly articulated as a space of Indianness, this section explores the mainstream Hindi films made in the decades following 1947 to examine their articulation of Kashmir as a space of organic belongingness with respect to the rest of India. The consistent filmic foregrounding of paradisiacal Kashmiri landscapes and spaces, and the conspicuous absence of the Kashmiri native’s subjectivity, including their authentic culture, religious leanings, language clearly indicates an asymmetrical representation of the Valley. It seems that this lopsided portrayal of the Vale engenders a myth about Kashmir that, in subtle ways, produces the same as a natural extension of the ‘sovereign, supreme, secular, inclusive’ Indian body.

Scholars like Philip Lutgendoref, Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Meenu Gaur among others find Bollywood's portrayal of Kashmir in the first four decades from 1947 a metropolitan fantasy and a site for heterosexual romance to flourish. Lutgendoref refers to the "association of high mountains with romance and eroticism" noting how the mountainside in Hindi films is usually portrayed as the venue for a love song (2005). This Bollywood fantasy of mountains as a site of eros has been visible through films like *Jab Jab Phool Khile* (1965), *Jungle* (1961), *Aarzo* (1965), *Barsaat* (1949), *Kabhi Kabhi* (1976) among others. *Aarzo* (1965) for instance articulates the romance between the couple through several song sequences that are shot in the green plateaus of *Pahalgam* and the *Chasme Shahi* gardens at Srinagar where, the exterior spaces of flower laden meadows complement the internal emotions of romance blossoming between the couple. Many such films are found "romantically pairing plains-dwelling characters with Kashmiri natives, a theme that comes across as appealing to the postcolonial national integrationist project" (Kabir: 2005).

However, it is notable that the romantic pairings reflect Bollywood's neo-orientalist leanings by constructing stark binaries between the mainland Indian and the Kashmiri. In this, while analysing Shammi Kapoor's 1964 hit- *Kashmir Ki Kali*, Philip Lutgendorf points to the binary visible through the film, noting that

Rich urban boy goes to the countryside and falls in love with a poor local girl who embodies the simplicity and sensuality of nature, as well as the coded ethnicity of the peripheral and minority dominated provinces (2005: 30).

The romantic couple not only alludes to the post-colonial national integrationist project but, also hints at the relative marginalization of the Kashmiri native with the same being portrayed as modernity's 'other'. For instance, in order to get away from the (complicated) city-life, Rita Khanna, the modern, metropolitan female protagonist of *Jab Jab Phool Khilen*, decides to visit Kashmir where, she stays on a houseboat that is owned and looked after by a rustic, uneducated Kashmiri simpleton Raja, played by Shammi Kapoor. In what follows, the metropolitan Rita starts to teach the naïve, unassuming yet curious Raja to read and write and gradually, gets romantically involved with him. The narrative exemplifies a stark binary between the seemingly 'advanced, literate, intelligent' mainland Indian and the 'backward, docile, naïve' Kashmiri, with there being a conspicuous effort of assimilating the latter. Such binaries also mirror through other films including *Kashmir Ki Kali*, *Jungle*, *Janwaar* etc., which by so doing, invariably

convey an underlying message of Indian superiority and magnanimity. Also, the low-land metropolis Indians are central to the cinematic imagination of Kashmir with the Vale mostly being articulated through the point of view of the non-Kashmiri protagonists (Kabir: 2005). *Janwaar*, *Jab Jab Phool Khilein* and *Aarzo* (among others) can be seen to be exemplifying this point wherein, the Kashmiri natives are found entering and exiting the frames in a manner that assists in generating the metropolitan Indian's visual/romantic/luxurious/touristic/spiritual experience of Kashmir (Gaur 2010). In *Janwaar* (1965) for instance, the mesmerizing specters of the Valley are consumed by the plains-dwelling protagonists while the Kashmir natives are the unnamed bodies that enable in generating the romantic couple's experience of the Valley.

In the visualization of the spectacular spaces of the Valley, films made during the 1960s-70s-80s generally articulated Kashmir through long camera pans, panoramic shots of expansive green meadows, *chinar* trees, Mughal gardens with lofty snow capped mountains in the backdrop such that, the paradisiacal spaces and landscapes of the Valley formed the backdrop for most films set in Kashmir. Ananya Kabir says that the beauty of the Valley was further accentuated with the coming in of colour, and that with the birth of Eastmancolor in Hindi films, Kashmir became a very popular location for outdoor shoots (2005, 2006). Kabir notes how "colour accentuated the beauty of the Valley and the visualisation of the lead pair's 'touristy' activities including- water sports, rock and roll et al" (2006: 86). Interestingly, with the advent of colour, films like *Aarzo*, *Kashmir Ki Kali*, *Junglee*, *Jab Jab Phool Khilen*, *Jaanwar* started to capture the Valley through the spaces of the Shankaracharya Temple, the Shalimar and Nishat gardens, the shikaras on Dal Lake, the lake itself as well as Pahalgam and Gulmarg with their skiing slopes and activities. In these films, Kashmir is portrayed through its beautiful landscapes as a 'paradise on earth', essential for the visual, spiritual and psychological consumption of the spectator. While romantic love between the central pair remained a key ingredient of the films, the same was in a sense overshadowed by the scenic beauty of the Valley. A glimpse of this is visible through the song sequence '*ek tha gul aur ek thi bulbul*' from the film, *Jab Jab Phool Khilen* in which Raja takes his love interest and her metropolitan friends around the Valley on a horse back. Through this song sequence in which Raja metaphorically hums about the romance and fondness that he feels towards his love interest Rita, the two are seen through lengthy *aerial* and panoramic shots, merging with the green landscapes and the lush meadows shot against the snow peaked mountains in the backdrop- evoking a postcard image of Kashmir. This picturesque

frame of the mountains and the greenery that was commonly found in not just films, but was also visible as wall hangings and calendar pictures in public places all over North India, particularly through the 1970s-90s, was reflective of the popular imaginary of Kashmir as a site of untouched beauty. It is worth noting here that for Nehru in *The Discovery of India*, Kashmir was one of his “favoured spots... where loveliness dwells and an enchantment steals all senses” (2008: 570). In the context of such romantic refrains through which Nehru presented the Valley, Stephen Morton argues for the same to have been instrumental in cultivating the “Nehruvian myth that used the genre of the picturesque to frame Kashmir as a synecdoche for the nation” (2014: 20). Coming back to the song sequence, it is worth noting that filmic language, through the means of camera angles, camera positions and movements, lighting and editing assisted in amplifying the beauty metaphor of the Valley. Teresa Castro explicates camera pans, *aerial and panoramic* shots as ‘cartographic shapes’ that participate in the process of showing, unveiling and also creating powerful sensations for the audiences (2009). Castro notes the implicit ‘mapping impulse’ in such shots which is less about the presence of maps in a certain visual landscape and more about the processes that underlie the understanding of space. It could be said that through the means of consistent use of *aerial* and panoramic shots in the cinematic articulation of Kashmir, the Vale is produced as a desirable and mesmerizing territorial space of India.

A Consistent focus on the beauty and opulence of the Valley with comforts of exotic houseboats, and adventure sports like skiing, water sports only enabled a consumerist desirability towards Kashmir and consequently generated what Gaur terms the ‘tourist’s gaze’ (Gaur 2010: 72). Gaur cites Urry (2002), who explains tourism as a “collection of signs, which, when visually captured through postcards, photographs and films, enable the ‘tourist’s gaze’ to be endlessly reproduced” (2010: 72). Thus through elements like star-power, narrative structure, camera angles Kashmir was filmically established as a beautiful, desirous landscape, essential for the ‘consumption’ of bourgeois Indians. In this filmic consumption of the Valley, the figuration of the Kashmiris is nonetheless bereft of subjectivity, as an object of fascination, ‘fetishised through their ethnic dress’, language, simplicity, bordering naiveté (Kabir 2005, Gaur 2010). Jisha Menon notes that the Kashmiris were mostly kept outside the frame, entering only through the image of the beautiful Kashmiri woman- a synecdoche for the Valley itself (2013: 155). In this sense, Menon makes the pertinent argument that the “aestheticisation of Kashmir had been

cultivated and crafted in a way that it implicitly assisted in setting the imaginative gaze of the spectator away from the political turmoil brewing within the Valley and its people” (ibid).

Furthermore, what is also conspicuous by its absence in these films is a striking lack of focus on Islam as a form of religion particularly for a region where a large majority of the people are practicing Muslims. This is also evident through the ‘unislamic’ names of most of most of the Kashmiri characters like Raja, Rajkumari, Champa (Gaur: 2010).

Thus, the films in this period portrayed the spaces of Kashmir and the Kashmiris as desirable and fascinating wherein, both were seen to provide for the visual, romantic, consumerist, indulgent or spiritual aspirations of the plains dwelling Indians. The Kashmiris were also seen as bereft of much agency and were mainly presented through orientalist stereotypes while conversely, the mainland Indians were shown to be progressive, supreme, large-hearted. Through such narratives and imagery, it is evident that the cinematic asymmetrical representation of Kashmir seen as essentially an integral part of India, requiring the presence of the benevolent, superior (sovereign) mainland Indian for its progress reproduced the statist narratives of the Indian government. While the political narratives emphasised the ‘undisputed’ legitimacy behind Jammu and Kashmir’s accession to India, the films visually presented this by focusing on Kashmiri spaces and landscapes particularly from the perspective of the nation state, implicitly claiming Kashmir as an integral part of Indian territory. Further, by repetitively focusing on the spectacular Kashmiri spaces of snow capped mountains set against flower laden Mughal gardens through long panoramic shots, the films participated in the process of engendering and (re)producing the Indianness of Kashmir and vice-versa.

While during the 1950s-70s, the number of films foregrounding Kashmir peaked, the 1980s saw a relative lull in the same and it was not until 1992, with the nationwide release of Mani Ratnam’s very successful *Roja* (A national award winning Tamil film that was also dubbed in Hindi, Malayalam, Telegu), that Kashmir found its way back into (Hindi) cinematic prominence. However, the films that revolved around Kashmir following *Roja* significantly departed from those made in the earlier phase- both visually and narratively. Unlike the earlier period, Kashmir films in this 1990s-2000s phase, no longer focused on the Valley as a ‘peaceful land of wonders’ instead, the Valley was now visually articulated largely through gray-foggy hues, as a site of Islamic militant infestation, army omnipresence; and aurally through sounds of

gunshots and *aazaan* thus marking the ‘Muslimness’ of the territory. Unlike the earlier films in which the Kashmiri native’s presence in the films was mainly limited to song and dance sequences with them mostly seen flirting with the desire of the plains dwelling protagonists, the films following *Roja* contrarily depicted Kashmiri natives through Islamic undertones in which, the ‘good Kashmiri’ was clearly placed against the ‘bad Kashmiri’. In this, the ‘good Kashmiris’ were identified as both dramatically expressing their disdain towards Kashmiri militants, and as religiously tolerant- mainly practicing the Sufi version of Islam, a philosophy that is in turn depicted as the reason for their affinity and admiration towards (the religiously tolerant and secular) India. On the other hand, the ‘bad Kashmiris’ were portrayed as fundamentalist Islamists, violent, naïve and ungrateful. While, similar to the earlier films, the Bombay films in the post-1989 phase also depicted romance blossoming between the heterosexual couple; however, this romance was now depicted as threatened by the anti-India terrorism brewing within the Valley.

The following section will articulate the narrative shift with respect to Kashmir through the 1990s to the post millennium phase, and the consequent reflection and resonation of the same through Bollywood cinematic forms. For this analysis, the frame of Ontological Security will be adopted to explicate the dominant discourse and the impact of the same on Indian, Kashmiri and Pakistani identities.

The Dominant Political narratives: 1990s-2014

The onset of the armed rebellion in the Valley in the late 1980s resulted in significant modifications to the political narrative that had, until then been attached to the Valley. While earlier, the Nehruvian secular and national-integrationist narrative had underscored the undisputed integrality of Kashmir, the separatist armed rebellion that emerged in the Valley, in concert with the jingoistic Right-wing Hindutva politics that had begun to surface in both the Jammu region as well as through the larger Indian political scene⁷ assisted in constructing a discourse that, while aggressively pressing upon a national integrationist stance, also framed the

⁷ following the ultra-right BJP-RSS *Ramjanmabhoomi* campaign and the consequent Babri *Masjid* demolition in 1992

region of Kashmir through explicit nationalistic and religious frames. Herein, the imbroglio in the Valley was reductively characterised as a product of fundamentalist Islamic ideology and Pakistani complicity. In so doing, these twin factors were framed as causing existential anxiety to the secular, sovereign, territorial integrity biographical narratives of the Indian nation. The twin factors of Islamic fundamentalism and Pakistani interference were thus articulated as sources of Ontological Insecurity and ‘existential threat’. While in the four decades following the Partition, the religious leanings of the Muslim majority region of J&K were emphasised to vindicate the purported secularist character of the postcolonial Indian national identity, by the late 1980s--early 1990s, the region was increasingly framed through the prism of Islamism. In this, orientalist binaries between the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ Muslim and those between the Kashmiri Muslim and the Hindu Indian, have been evident.

The dichotomous relation between the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ Muslim it is asserted, were in sync with the emerging Orientalist Western discourse that engaged in ‘othering’ Islam as a form of religious philosophy. Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran, Edward Said (2003) notes that “there began an onslaught of demonizing and ‘orientalising’ Islam particularly by the Western media and academia, by focusing on the allegedly ‘wicked’ and an ‘essentially primordial and unchanging character’ of the religion”. Further, the orientalist lens vis-à-vis Kashmir could also be likened to Samuel Huntington’s thesis on the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ wherein, Huntington argues that the future wars would be fought between ‘Islamists’ and the rest of the world (ibid). In this thesis, Huntington employs binaries to describe the allegedly ‘violent’, ‘pre-modern’, ‘fundamentalist’, ‘regressive’ traits of Islam as against the characteristics of ‘modernity’, ‘democracy’, ‘liberalism’ and ‘freedom’, that were attached to the Western thought. This Western Orientalist ‘othering’ of Islam that was reflective at multiple discursive sites including the Western news media, popular culture, political narratives etc. I argue, has been instrumental in influencing Indian political ideas and policies with respect to Islam in general.

As has been discussed in the section above, an undisputed and willing assimilation of the Muslim majority region of J&K into mainstream India was not just important from the perspective of the post-colonial nation’s traditional national interests, but, was also essential to India’s Ontological Security need of being acknowledged as an inclusive, secular-pluralistic, sovereign democracy. However, 1988 onwards, there was a rising popular discontent and a

militant-separatist movement emerged in the Valley that was directed against the Indian state which, by implicitly questioning the ‘secular, sovereign, democratic’ characteristics of New Delhi’s ontological biographical narrative, caused tremendous existential anxiety regarding the said narratives.

Before paying attention to the statist responses to the Kashmir imbroglio, I would like to look at the Kashmiri perspective and the grievances of the people. As stated by Puri (1993), Behera (2000) and Bose (2003), the armed rebellion that emerged in the Valley in the late 1980s, alongside being a product of orchestrated Pakistani interference and Islamic fundamentalism, was also a consequence of multiple factors and unaddressed grievances that the Kashmiri natives had felt ever since the princely state acceded to the Indian union in 1947. Among other factors, these included the unfulfilled promise of holding a plebiscite which was to democratically decide which side the natives of Jammu and Kashmir chose to go to; the grievances felt with respect to the improper implementation of Article 370; the socio-economic problems that were being faced by the natives; the multitude instances of human-rights violations; the undemocratic spirit of elections that have been held since 1953, to name a few.

Kashmiri grievances

It should be noted that in accordance with the Article 370 of the Indian constitution, the Instrument of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir provided for the Indian state’s intervention as provisionally limited to three subjects: defence, foreign affairs and communications. In 1952, under the Delhi Agreement, the special status of Kashmir was included under Article 370 of the Indian constitution. The *raison d’être* behind this was to guarantee a provisional autonomy within the state until a plebiscite was conducted. However, the provisions of this article have suffered from a lack of sincerity as the Indian state has over the years, attempted to aggressively integrate the state within its union. It is this lack of sincerity regarding the proper implementation of the article that has contributed to the insecurity that the natives have felt with respect to New Delhi’s integrationist intentions. Significantly, one of the mainstream political parties- Bharatiya Janata Party, has been ideologically against Article 370 and has repetitively pressed for its termination. In this regard, a statement made by BJP’s MP Khurana at the Lok Sabha is pertinent: “Article

370 has not served any purpose during these 40 years...why not accept our proposal of abrogating it for a couple of years..” Khurana (1991).

The Kashmiri discontent towards New Delhi has also been assisted by the fact that a substantial number of elections in the Valley have been rigged and manipulated. As has been noted above, it was universally recognised that the elections in the state were usually manipulated, although the degree and technique of manipulation varied from election to election. According to Sumantra Bose, “only two of Indian Kashmir’s ‘eight democratic elections’, up till then (1997), in 1977 and 1983, had approximated conventional democratic norms” (1997:43).

In this context, Puri has stated that following the partly-rigged assembly elections of March 1987, Kashmiris felt more alienated and disillusioned with the Indian state (1993: 57). Quoting an eyewitness account from an article in *The India Today*, Bose drew attention to the election scene of 1987 in J&K that included, “rigging and strong-arm tactics all over the Valley; ballot-boxes being pre-stamped for NC (National Conference); massive booth-capturing by (NC) gangs; and the presence of government nominated supervisors ‘stopping the counting as soon as they saw opposition candidates taking a lead’” (1997: 45). This blatant disregard towards the basic democratic rights of the citizens of Jammu & Kashmiri could be said to be reflective of the Centre’s unsaid policy of democracy being unfit and incompatible with New Delhi’s ‘national interests’ in Kashmir. In this context, Bose mentions that such was Nehru’s aversion to democracy in Kashmir that when,

the NC Chief Minister, Bakshi prevented the Praja Socialist Party- PSP, a left-of-centre all-India organisation from setting up a branch in Kashmir in 1954, instead of condemning the actions of the NC, Nehru instead accused PSP of joining hands with the enemies of the country (ibid: 39).

Further, Kashmiri grievances were also born out of several instances of the curtailment of basic democratic (constitutional) rights particularly in the late 1980s. For instance, on 10 June 1988, demonstrations were held in Srinagar, apparently spontaneously, to protest against a sudden and steep rise in power tariffs at a time when the power supply in the region had mostly been erratic. Not only were three persons killed in the police firing at this protest demonstration, but the government also rejected the demand for an enquiry into the incident and instead, condemned the ‘anti-national’ hand behind the agitation (Puri 1993: 60). It is worth noting that New Delhi had resorted to an ‘oppressive’ response in this case, both in terms of a policy decision (police

firing), as well as discursively by framing such incidents of clashes and dissent as ‘anti-national’. In this sense, there was a ‘discursive continuation’ with the earlier phase, in terms of suppressing any dissent by terming it ‘anti-national’. That is, by labeling criticisms to the state through sharp binaries of patriotic versus unpatriotic, the state strategically discouraged healthy public-sphere debates in the Valley. It is noteworthy “that the first incident of a ‘terrorist’ kind followed this protest in July 1988 with two powerful bomb blasts in Srinagar barely missing their targets- the Central Telegraph Office and the TV station” (ibid).

The emergence of Kashmiri discontent and the separatist-militant sentiment

The blasts on 31 July, 1988 by the previously non-violent Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), marked the beginning of armed rebellion in the state. Soon after, the Union Home Ministry had claimed that over 100 armed infiltrators had entered the state during the preceding months to create disturbance (ibid: 60-61). Later, the Director General (DG) of the state police identified camps across the border where the Pakistan army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) were allegedly imparting training to the Kashmiri youth in the age group of 18 to 30 (ibid: 61). While Pakistan had denied any open involvement in arming young men in 1989, Steve Coll reported in the *New Yorker*, that there was evidence that the Pakistani ISI, “which had used Islamic militias during the anti-Soviet campaigns in Afghanistan, reacted opportunistically by arming those Islamic factions of the rebellion which sought to join Kashmir to Pakistan”.

By this time the discontent that the natives felt towards New Delhi had also periodically begun to erupt through ‘anti-India’ demonstrations. For instance, the year 1988 saw Kashmiris celebrating Pakistan’s Independence Day while *bandhs* were organized with black flags being raised on India’s Independence Day; the same year also saw condolence demonstrations being held for the then Pakistan president (Dhume 2000).

Pandit Irsa (2012: 121) and Puri (1993: 61-62) note that Indian state’s response to the rising armed rebellion that Kashmir experienced from 1989 onwards could be summarized as both ‘heavy-handed’ and ‘un-democratic’. Simultaneously, Puri avers that in responding to the rebellion, a distinction could have been drawn between the violent and the peaceful, as well as between the terrorist and non-terrorist forms of protest (ibid). It is asserted that this institutional

ignorance and consequent statist oppression largely shaped New Delhi's responses to the tensions in the Valley in the years to come.

Further, several laws in existence in Jammu and Kashmir since 1990 have granted absolute impunity to the Indian armed and paramilitary forces, with a lot of the laws being continued from the era of the British colonial rule. In this respect, Morton (2014: 24) notes that the Armed Forces Special Power's Act of 1990 could be traced to the British colonial government's Armed Forces (Special Powers) Ordinance (1942) - an Act that provided the British army with extraordinary powers in order to suppress the Quit India movement. In an uncanny way it could be noted that the purportedly democratic, secular postcolonial Indian state was resorting to military means that were similar to the ones that had once been employed by the British colonial state to contain the anti-colonial freedom movement in the sub-continent.

Some of the coercive powers that have been legally enforced by the Army in J&K have been the National Security Act under which a person can be detained without any reason for a year for 'antinational' activity; the Armed Forces Special Powers Act which grants the Indian forces licenses to search houses, arrest civilians without warrant, destroy property and shoot unarmed civilians, all with absolute impunity from prosecution; The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, which treats every Kashmiri as a combatant and a terrorist; and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, which allows the state to arrest anyone for expressing their (opposing) views on Kashmir's disputed nature or publishing any such documents. Morton avers that by designating Jammu and Kashmir as a 'disturbed area', the acts have enabled defining J&K as a space of exception in which the civilian population in Kashmir can be raped, tortured, kidnapped, and murdered in custody with impunity (ibid). A report of the International People's Tribunal for Human Rights and Justice in Indian administrated Kashmir describes the violation of human rights in Kashmir:

since 1989 Kashmir's militarization has resulted in crimes against humanity and the fabrication of a culture of grief through extrajudicial or 'fake encounter' executions, custodial brutality and deaths, enforced disappearances, unknown, unmarked, and mass graves, landmines used as weapons, and bodily disablement by the military with tortured, orphaned and a very high rate of people with suicidal behavior (2012).

Further, Joseph has noted that “international human rights organisations, as well as several Indian civil rights groups have documented in detail the atrocities committed on the people of Kashmir by both Indian security forces and militant groups” (2000: 41-55).

The intersecting web of the vocal Kashmiri discontent towards New Delhi, the separatist-militancy in the Valley as well as the explicit Pakistani complicity in the conflict, has triggered statist existential anxiety particularly with respect to Indian state’s crucial self-narratives of sovereignty, territorial integrity and secularism. Until then, as has been stated in the section above, Kashmir’s accession to India had largely been framed as a legally-culturally-historically sound and compatible act. However, the events that transpired in the Valley in the late 1980s-early 1990s, existentially attacked this biographical narrative. This disruption of New Delhi’s ‘Kashmir narrative’ that was being performatively acted out in the Valley, was also instrumental in engendering the securitisation of the conflict.

New Delhi’s existential anxiety succeeded in reducing the discourse on Kashmir to mainly nationalistic and religious tones and textures. In this sense, there was a visible institutional structuring of the conflict as a product of the intersecting web of Pakistani complicity, misled Kashmiri youth, fundamentalist Islam and ‘anti-national’ elements. This approach led not just to a reductive and limited understanding of the conflict, but also implicitly shifted the focus away from the socio-political exigencies of the conflict- a strategy that only proved ineffective in terms of long-term conflict resolution. Further, this statist framing through solely nationalistic and religious perspectives, assisted in not just silencing opposing narratives, but also enabled elevating the urgency of the conflict to a level that helped justify the need for emergency and extraordinary mechanisms to deal with the same, thus, securitising it.

Bezen Balamir Coşkun considers Securitisation as the process through which particular discourses transform certain entities into a threat (2012). “It is defined by the Copenhagen School as a kind of threat construction through ‘speech-acts’ that requires the use and perpetual repetition of the rhetoric of existential threat mostly by political elite” (ibid: 38). Michael Williams underlines the increasing import of media images in political communication and calls upon securitisation theory to develop a broad understanding of the mediums and structures of political communication (2003). In similar vein, TY Solomon and Ido Oren talk about the almost ‘chant-like’ repetition of ‘phrases’ by the political elites and the consequent ‘recitation’ of the

same by the audiences as crucial to the securitising process (2014). As discussed in the second chapter of this study, these authors belong to what is also informally addressed the second generation of securitisation that talks about the expansion of the said concept. The study attempts to engage with this expansive understanding by paying attention to the ‘perpetual repetition’ of certain phrases through political ‘speech-acts’ and by noting the mirroring of the same through popular cultural sites which in turn assist in constructing ‘background meanings’ for the audiences (Stritzel 2012). The section below will be examining the repetition of terms and narratives that implicitly/explicitly inject urgency into the Kashmir imbroglio, thereby assisting in the securitisation of the same. Further, in the contemporary globalised age that sees a pervasive reach and impact of images that circulate through popular cultural sites including television, news, popular films, advertorials, internet and social media etc., Michael Williams notes that “political communication is increasingly embedded within tele-visual images” (2003: 512). In this regard, he asserts that

As political communication becomes increasingly entwined with the production and transmission of visual images, the processes of securitization take on forms, dynamics, and institutional linkages that cannot be fully assessed by focusing on the speech-act alone (ibid).

Expanding William’s understanding that, alongside looking at the political speech-acts, equally emphasises on being attentive to the pervasively transmitted imagery through tele-visuals, this study will be paying attention to the repetitive resonance of certain statist discourses and terms through filmic texts to understand this intertextual process as assisting in the engendering of securitization.

I argue here that the ‘political-popular-cultural’ imbrication that has consistently framed the conflict in Kashmir through a particular religious-nationalistic prism wherein, Pakistani interference and Islamic fundamentalism have been largely blamed for having threatened the self-identity narratives of territorial integrity, sovereignty, have caused a sense of restless urgency that has consequently framed the conflict through a securitised perspective. In this, exceptional measures have been justified through political speech-acts, the chant-like repetition of certain phrases and through the consequent resonance of these narratives through cinematic texts. Here, nationalistic and religious narratives of Kashmiriyat, Islamic fundamentalism, cross-border terrorism, anti-national elements have been deployed by New Delhi to explicate the threats faced with regards to the Ontological Security needs of the Indian state. The following

section will look at these dominant political responses and in so doing, will affirm that by largely framing the conflict in Kashmir through the above lenses, the Kashmir imbroglio has been both reductively framed as well as securitised

Dominant institutional narratives

Kashmiriyat

The term has gained varied meanings depending on the politics of the person employing it. For instance, Pakistan, New Delhi, Kashmiri separatist groups, Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits, each, adopt a differing version of the term depending on their individual context and political end goal. Broadly speaking, *Kashmiriyat* is the ‘ethos’ of the region- the ethno-national and social consciousness of the cultural values of the people of Kashmir. Several scholars have popularly explained the term as the harmonious relation amongst differing religious groups in the Valley. Likewise, Lalla Ded, a mystic of the fourteenth century, born in a Kashmiri Pandit household and reputed to be the spiritual mentor of the founder of the largest Kashmiri Sufi order, is, “through her poetry, said to represent the spirit of *Kashmiriyat* as a cultural space within which Vedic Hinduism and Sufi Islam formed an in-between space” (Zutshi 2003: 52). New Delhi has consistently highlighted this purported ‘religious fluidity’ and ‘harmony’ that has been shared between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims since centuries. For instance, in a convocation address at the Kashmir institute of Medical Sciences, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh emphasised that the culture and value system of Kashmir had always been a source of its strength...exclaiming, “I know that this land of Sheikh Nurudin Nurani and Lal Ded can never succumb to extremism and fanaticism”...further emoting, “through all these years, Kashmiris despite many onslaughts, have kept alive their culture of tolerance and pluralism” (Singh 2004). In this sense, the Prime Minister attempted to paint an image in which pluralistic and tolerant characteristics defined an authentic *Kashmiriyat*, thereby implicitly defining fundamentalism and violent protests as alien or contrary to the same.

While this religiously harmonious narrative on *Kashmiriyat* has been visible since the accession of Kashmir to India, a more emphatic articulation of the same has been evident since the 1990s. Growing Kashmiri discontent and the militant-separatist aspirations, that was

prominently featured in international news media, coupled with widespread international criticism of the growing religious polarisation evident in the Indian political climate following the *Ram Janmabhoomi Rath Yatra* in the 1990s may have significantly facilitated New Delhi's emphatic pronouncement of the *Kashmiriyat* narrative. Clearly this narrative that emphasises the organic 'religious harmony' of the Valley draws parallels between the Kashmiri Sufism and the narrative of the secular Indian ethos that is ideologically very important for the Indian state.

Through the 1990s, continuing to the post-millennium period, there have been several instances of the political glorification of *Kashmiriyat*, particularly during moments of existential anxiety. For instance, during his Independence Day speech of 2008, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh pointed towards the '*Shri Amarnath Shrine*' as, "a shining example of our secular traditions, where Hindu pilgrims have been looked after for years by their Muslim brothers" (Singh 2008). Also noteworthy here is Dr Singh's convocation address at the Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences wherein he exclaimed,

I am happy to be here just days after we have celebrated *Id* and *Deepavali*.... If *Deepavali* is the festival of light and celebration of prosperity, *Ramzan* is the month of peace, prayer and brotherhood.... Jammu and Kashmir needs all this in full measure—light, prosperity, peace, prayer and brotherhood (Singh 2004).

It is noteworthy that Dr. Singh's Independence Day address was made shortly after Jammu and Kashmir was hit by violent protests in June 2008, and the subsequent oppressive security responses to the same. The protests had been sparked off by a decision made by the Government of India and the State Government of J&K to transfer a portion of forest land to the *Shri Amarnath Shrine Board* (SASB) in the main Kashmir Valley. What followed were mostly protests and agitations between Muslims and Hindus in J&K that lasted a few months. Against this context, Dr Singh's Independence Day address of 2008 could be understood as an orchestrated attempt to accentuate aspects of religious bonhomie so as to shift the focus away from the festering communal insecurities within the Valley that in a way problematises the relation that Kashmir has with the purportedly pluralistic Indian union.

This narrative was also vociferously evoked in 2001 by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in his Independence Day Speech at the Red Fort which was set against the background of the Kargil war in 1999, the failed attempt at resolving the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan at the Agra Summit that had taken place from 14-16 July 2001, and the spurt in terrorist activities in

Amarnath, Kishtwar, Doda, Jammu, that had followed the Summit. In his speech, the PM emotively addressed all the Pakistani terrorist activities in J&K as *napak* (Urdu word for ‘unholy’), noting the same to be against the tenets of Islam and humanism (Vajpayee 2001). Recalling the couplets of ‘the great *Shayar-e-Kashmir, Mehjoor*’, the Prime Minister poetically expressed, “the caste and land of you Kashmiris is the same.... do not unnecessarily let anything create a distance between you. If Muslim is milk, Hindu is sugar. Mix this milk with this sugar” (ibid). He further iterated that ‘this Sufi ideology’ was the convergence point of Kashmir with the spiritual tradition of India. *Kashmiriyat*, he further noted, was a “fine example of *Sarva Dharma Samabhava* (secularism)... it completely negates the Two-Nation theory... we indeed are proud of this *Kashmiriyat*” (ibid). Clearly, *Kashmiriyat* has been evoked time and again by political elites, especially during critical situations, to reiterate both the purportedly organic connection between the Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus as well as that between Kashmir and India.

In *Languages of Belonging*, Chitralakha Zutshi has problematised New Delhi’s version of *Kashmiriyat* wherein she asserts it to be the product/construct of both Kashmiri and Indian majoritarian nationalisms (2003). While interrogating the notion, she examines how “‘Sufi’ *Kashmiriyat* has worked to repress crucial internal differences and contradictions of religion, sect, caste, class, ethnicity, language” (ibid: 157). She considers, for instance, the ways in which the ostensibly secular and nationalist National Conference “deployed to paper the homogenising discourse of *Kashmiriyat* over the widespread discontent within Kashmiri society particularly among the Muslims of the Valley” (ibid). In this regard, Zutshi emphasises the need to be aware of the way in which the discourse may be employed to propagate the idea of a peaceful coexistence of religious communities while, “obscuring the question of economic, material and social differences among them”(ibid) .

The religious harmony of *Kashmiriyat*, a version that has been eulogised by the Indian state, has also been problematised by Karan Arakotaram (2009) who takes note of the political circumstances that had instigated Kashmiri Muslim and Pandit cooperation in the early 20th century. In this context, Arakotaram explores the genealogy of Kashmiri nationalism that had begun in the early 20th century as a response to excessive abuse from Dogra rulers, who were largely viewed as both ‘foreign’ and ‘illegitimate’. The popular discontent towards the Dogra rulers, was exasperated by the “extra perks given to the pandits” and the “vast social divisions in

education and employment between the Hindus and Muslims...”, “leading to the mushrooming of Muslim organisations by 1907 that demanded the state to redress discrepancies between Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims” (6-7). By 1931-1939, Kashmiri nationalism was not just a ‘nationalist movement’, but rather a ‘Muslim political movement’ that was designed to correct perceived inequalities faced mostly by the Muslims in the Dogra government (ibid). However, this religious collective was soon expanded to include all religions, resulting in the expansion of the ‘Muslim Conference’ into ‘All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference’. This expansion, Arakotaram notes, was necessitated by Jawaharlal Nehru’s insistence wherein he had urged “Sheikh Abdullah to turn the Muslim National Conference into a secular, nationalistic movement so as to strengthen the campaign to dislodge the Dogra ruler” (8). It is in this context of overthrowing the repressive Dogra rule, that Sheikh Abdullah had pushed forward the idea of *Kashmiriyat* emphasising, “the unique history of Kashmir’s people, the syncretism of various religious beliefs in the Vale, and the historical peace between different religions and ethnicities in the Vale” (9).

This constructed syncretism and bonhomie between the various religious groups residing in the Valley, the hallmark of *Kashmiriyat*, was hitherto adopted and glorified in political and popular cultural narratives. I argue that by narratively likening the ostensibly ‘Sufi’, ‘inclusive’ characteristics of *Kashmiriyat* with the ‘secular’ and ‘accommodative’ spirit of the Indian Union, the narrative on *Kashmiriyat*, has assisted in equating Kashmiri ethos with that of India and in simultaneously shifting the focus away from the socio-political, historical grievances that the Kashmiri natives have felt towards New Delhi.

Cross-border terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and the ‘Misguided youth’

Alongside the narrative of Islamic fundamentalism and Pakistani complicity, the conflict in Kashmir has also been framed as a product of misguided Kashmiri youth who have been misled into taking to violence mostly through Pakistani motivations. In this section, I argue that not only did the dominant framing of the conflict as mainly a product of the intersecting web of cross-border terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, ‘anti-nationals’ and the ‘Misguided youth’ assist in securitising the same, but, the repetitive and consistent articulation of these narratives also

strategically enabled the silencing of Kashmiri assertions for self-determination, their historical-social-political-economic grievances towards New Delhi et al.

Beginning with the 1990s, there seemed to be a visible institutional emphasis on vociferously blaming Pakistan for the ongoing violent turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir. While discussing Kashmir in his Independence Day speech to the nation, Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao for instance, said that the ‘unfinished task of Partition’ was to get the ‘Pakistan-occupied territory of Kashmir back’ and asserted that Kashmir would always remain an “integral part of India with, without or in spite of Pakistan” (Bose 1997: 55). In the same speech, the PM drew attention to the central role that Pakistan had played in instigating the conflict in Kashmir stating, “I must concede that normalcy has not been restored in Kashmir. This is because of the support given to elements of the Valley by Pakistan” (ibid). Likewise, in another instance Home Minister Sayeed recognised that the situation in Kashmir was the result of “inadequate political and administrative response to a series of developments in the Valley which spurred public disenchantment” however, at the same time he iterated that the latter “provided a fertile ground to the fundamentalist, subversive and anti-national forces to re-group themselves with the aid and assistance of forces operating from across the border” (ibid). Simultaneously, the Annual report of the Home Ministry for 1989-1990 also mentioned that the ‘subversive and fundamentalist elements’ in the Valley acted with “active aid and support from across the border” (Government of India 1989-90). This stance was reiterated in the Home Ministry’s Annual Report for 1990-91 where, the ‘secessionist and fundamentalist’ elements were once again mentioned in relation to their abetment through Pakistan (Government of India 1990-91).

Largely, the political (elite) ‘speech-acts’ that emerged during the onset of the conflict in the early 1990s, framed the same to be threatening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Indian nation by terming it ‘secessionist and fundamentalist’. That the threat to these national security and Ontological security elements of sovereignty and territorial integrity stemmed through an external force—Pakistan, assisted in furthering the urgency that was attached to the conflict. This apart, by vociferously pinning the blame to Pakistan, as the key instigator behind the Kashmiri violence, New Delhi took the attention away from the role that the Indian state played in pushing some Kashmiris to the gun. A case in point is visible through the statements made by S B Chavan wherein he noted that,

People were disillusioned by the disinformation campaign spread by Pakistan, they say...in the name of *Jihad* forcible extortion from the people has taken place. They have forcibly entered the houses and forced the people to give them food. Now people have understood the game that it is Pakistan which is instigating these people, sending them here so that they can be used as mercenaries who will be creating a problem in this area (Chavan 1995).

Evidently, New Delhi largely framed the Kashmiri turmoil as mainly a product of Pakistani interference, religious extremism and misguided Kashmiri youth. Also resonant through these assertions is the differentiation constructed between the Kashmiri Muslims and the Pakistani ones, with the former being framed as naïve, susceptible and the latter as fundamentalist, violent and vicious. Further, the narrative of Pakistan existentially threatening the ‘sacrosanct’ sovereignty of the Indian state only helped in implicitly legitimising coercive security measures for restoring ‘normalcy’ in the Valley. In this context, discursive justification for employing coercive and high-handed security responses can be found echoing through the statement made by Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in the Lok Sabha, wherein he stated that the situation in Kashmir called for “firm and resolute measures for reasserting the authority of the state and restoring normalcy” (Sayeed 1990). A similar statement was made by the Congress Minister of Parliament Sawant noting that India would use “whatever force there is at its disposal to prevent any state from seceding from the union” (Sawant 1995).

It is pertinent to note here that through the early 1990s, New Delhi had received considerable international criticism for the multiple instances of human rights violations by the security forces in J&K. From the perspective of the Ontological security narrative for which, a stable self-identity narrative of postcolonial India as a liberal, secular and democratic state was crucial, such international criticisms could be noted as instances of ‘existential anxiety’, thereby instigating ‘nationalistic’/‘religious’ responses from the state so as to reclaim the routinised sense of self. It is in this context that the statist open offensive against Pakistan wherein, the ‘enemy’ state was repetitively blamed for having largely instigated the conflict in Kashmir, could be comprehended as an attempt made by the Indian political elites to secure the threatened ‘self narrative’. Further, there are signs of securitisation visible through the political narratives and consequently, through the ‘legal regimes and practices of counter-insurgency’⁸ that have consistently been practiced in the region since 1990.

⁸ Stephen Morton (2014)

As has been discussed with respect to securitisation, the statements above resonates a well choreographed repetition in terms of claiming Pakistani interference as the key to engendering the conflict in the Valley. Further, the persistent iteration of a demand to employ whatever force possible ‘to prevent any state from seceding from the union’, can be understood as an overt gesture at calling for emergency measures to preserve both the national and the Ontological security of the nation.

The government iterated time and again during this phase that the people were irked of the insurgency and pointed to the involvement of foreign groups as proof that the conflict was not based on genuine local grievances. Regarding the aspirations of the natives, the Home Minister SB Chavan noted,

The people are totally disillusioned by the disinformation campaign spread by Pakistan. They say: We are neither interested in merging with Pakistan nor do we ask for any Azadi.; we would like to be with the mainstream...For the last ten years we have experienced what is being called *jihad*. In the name of *jihad*, forcible extortion from the people has taken place. They have misbehaved with women. They have forcibly entered the houses and forced the people to give them food...there is not even an iota of doubt in the minds of the people that these are people who are not interested in any kind of religious activity. Now the people have understood the game that it is Pakistan which is instigating these people, sending them here so that they can be used as mercenaries who will be creating a problem in this area (Chavan 1995).

Herein, by pointing towards the Pakistani aggression in the name of *jihad* and by punctuating the supposed epiphany of the ‘naïve’ Kashmiri natives with respect to understanding the vicious Pakistani intentions in the Valley, the categories of *Jihad*, violence, Islam, Pakistan, misled Kashmiri youth are seen to be bleeding into one another. Such an intersecting narrative framing could be said to be instrumental in injecting a sense of urgency with respect to the conflict, thus instrumentalising the demand for legitimate exceptional and emergency measures.

This narrative of passive, naïve Kashmiri youth who is susceptible to being lured by the evil intentions of the ‘Pakistani enemy’ is also reflected through Prime Minister IK Gujral’s words that he addressed to the Lok Sabha on July 28, 1997:

It is not that the insurgency has ended but by and large I think both the governments-the state and the Centre, have been able to get the better of the insurgency...our policy has a further dimension also but previously also we have been trying to get back those estranged youth who I believe have been led astray by the false propaganda against India...the main point is that we are always willing to talk to those young men who are our own children and who are our own boys who have been led astray. Naturally it is implied and understood that they must give up arms and they must come back home...if in the family the sons go astray or get alienated, it is my duty as the head of family to invite them back, try to remove their doubts and suspicions... there is no compromise on

two issues-secular unity of India and also the integrity of India. Jammu and Kashmir is a part of India. The whole state of Jammu and Kashmir is a part of India and shall continue to be so (Talwar 2015).

These words overtly emphasise not just the allegedly ‘false’ and ‘baseless’ nature of protests and disarray in the Valley, but also the ostensibly accommodative and forgiving nature of the (father-like) Indian state. By presenting New Delhi as a patriarch who is ‘duty-bound’ to ‘remove the doubts and suspicions of his sons gone astray’, PM Gujral strategically articulated the ‘misguided youth’ narrative alongside emphasising the ‘larger than life’ and ‘selfless’ persona of the Indian state, notably around the same time as the *Gujral Doctrine*⁹. PM Gujral’s emotive assertion is also reflective of the ongoing ‘patriotic mood’ in the nation at a time when India had completed fifty years since Independence/ Partition. It is in this context that the emphasis on India’s ‘larger than life’ image and Kashmir’s undisputable integrity within the secular state of India becomes significant.

It is averred that following the jingoistic political environment that was created by events like the fiftieth anniversary (1997) since the Independence/Partition of India, the Nuclear tests conducted by both India and Pakistan in 1998, the Kargil war between the two countries in 1999, the terrorist attacks on the Jammu and Kashmir legislature building and those on the Indian Parliament in the year 2001 etc., an increasingly aggressive statist and media stance with respect to Pakistan was reflective. Further, with the attacks on the World Trade Center (WTC) in 2001, New Delhi’s historic position on Pakistani-generated terrorism in the Valley got vindicated, particularly with the Western countries vocally recognizing India’s neighbouring state as the breeding ground of terrorism. The attacks on the WTC and the consequent actions by Washington against the Taliban in Afghanistan, were time and again reiterated by New Delhi, particularly as examples that needed to be emulated by New Delhi with respect to terrorism in Kashmir.

Against the political context of the War on Terrorism (WoT), and the Pakistani complicit terrorism in J&K, PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s verbal attack against Pakistan in the aftermath of

⁹ The Gujral Doctrine, at its core is a non-reciprocity approach that was initiated by IK Gujral as it aimed to end India’s endless contestations with neighbours- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka and offered to walk the extra mile in resolving longstanding problems.

the Agra Summit could be better comprehended wherein, Pakistan was identified as the ‘single most important factor in the Kashmir conflict’:

We cannot ignore the cross-border terrorism and insurgent activities prevailing in the state. The activities carried out in Jammu and Kashmir with the help of foreign mercenaries and foreign funding is nothing but terrorism. Killing of innocent men women and children cannot be termed as *jihad* or a political movement...therefore; Pakistan’s refusal to stop cross-border terrorism is the biggest hindrance in creating a positive atmosphere for a mutually agreeable solution to the problem (Vajpayee 2001).

It should nonetheless be noted that along with the change of the global climate post 9/11, the widespread criticism that the state of Pakistan received and its visible cooperation with the United States in fighting terrorism in the Global WoT, there was also a narrative shift notable in New Delhi’s position which, alongside noting Pakistan as the main culprit behind the festering situation in J&K, also strategically pressed for a more co-operative environment with Pakistan with respect to fighting off terrorism in Kashmir. This narrative shift was palpable through PM Vajpayee’s speech that took place on 18 April 2003, in which, while referring to the turmoil between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, the PM noted, “all problems are settled through talks. We are ready to solve the problems within and the problems outside” (Bukhari 2003). In this, he glorified the shared historicity between the two nations iterating, “we have everything, we share thousand years old civilization...we need to co-exist...” (ibid). This ‘hand of friendship’ towards Pakistan was also notable in the Prime Minister’s Independence Day speech delivered in the same year wherein, the PM stated that it was New Delhi’s policy to establish friendly and cooperative relations with all its neighbours (Vajpayee 2003). He iterated, “our frequent initiatives to normalise relations with Pakistan are not a sign of our weakness rather, they are an indication of our commitment to peace” (ibid). In the same speech, the Prime Minister lyrically expressed India’s commitment to peace by stating, “let us expand bilateral cultural relations...let us open some new doors...new windows...and new light-holes in the walls that divide is” (ibid).

While, this period sensed a change of stance with respect to the Prime Minister’s articulation of Pakistan, the focus on the issue of terrorism was nevertheless as emphatic as before, the difference being that now New Delhi had ‘extended its hand’ to fight terrorism together with Pakistan’s support. Consequently, his Independence Day speech delivered in the same year, Vajpayee noted that “the test of our neighbour’s sincerity lies in whether he is prepared to stop cross-border terrorism...the two of us need to fight against poverty,

unemployment and backwardness” (ibid). Among other factors, it is asserted that the Composite Dialogue¹⁰ between India and Pakistan from 2004 to 2008 was set against this backdrop.

The following section will engage with the dominant narratives on India and Pakistan’s conflictual relation over Kashmir as reflected and articulated through mainstream Hindi cinema from the beginning of the 1990s to 2014. While analysing the films, the section will seek to relate the repetitive and privileged filmic narratives and iconographic tropes with the dominant political narratives that have been discussed above so as to find the imbrication between the popular cultural and the political texts. The study will be paying attention to the echoing of principal political narratives including, Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, Kashmiriyat, Pakistani complicity, misguided Kashmiri youth. The purpose is also to understand the import of this intertextuality in making certain dominant discourses commonsensical and in legitimising them.

1990s

Bollywood’s aggressive imagination of Kashmir

The portrayal of snow peaked mountains, placid lakes, *shikaras*, *chinar* trees (some of the most prominent and common landscapes in the cinematic imagination of Kashmir), have been visible in the Hindi films made in the early decades following independence as well as in the ones that were made in the post-1989 phase. However, the filmic treatment and articulation of these iconographic tropes has been visibly different in those made in both the phases. While in the earlier films, made through the 1950s-80s, the landscapes of *shikaras*, *chinar* trees, green meadows, snow-capped mountains etc. were portrayed as colourful, vibrant, cheerful and usually as sites of romance between the romantic couples; 1990s onwards these very sites were increasingly communicated through dark and grey tones and textures, as dangerous sites of battle and chase sequences between the army *jawans* and the militants and terrorists.

¹⁰ Composite Dialogue between India and Pakistan from 2004 to 2008 addressed all outstanding issues. It had completed four rounds and the fifth round was in progress when it was paused in the wake of the Mumbai terrorist attack in November 2008. Amongst its achievements can be cited a number of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) related to peace and security including confidence-building measures (CBMs); Jammu and Kashmir; Siachen Glacier; enhanced people to people contacts through bus and train services; terrorism and drug trafficking; revival of the Bilateral Joint Commission after 16 years; setting up of the Judicial Committee to look into the humanitarian issue of civilian prisoners/fishermen held in each other’s jails to name a few.

Mani Ratnam's *Roja* (1992) marks the dawn of films that portrayed Kashmir as an unsafe/war zone, which, by capturing the Valley through shots of deserted market spaces, military checkpoints, the stalking militants, launched an imaginary of the Valley as a Giorgio Agamben(esque)- 'state of exception'¹¹. "The film opens to the sound of warfare- regimental marching, armored vehicles and a dark and tense chase sequence between the army soldiers and the militants" which, is followed by a contrasting song and dance sequence in which, the female protagonist Roja is found romancing the natural beauty of a quaint South Indian hamlet, which is further visually beautified through sonic, lyrical and visual textures (Nicholas Dirks 2001: 166). While noting the stark spatial contrast visible through this sequence that articulates the Valley as a dangerous zone and conversely, presents the South Indian village through vibrant and colourful textures, *Roja* visibly creates a landscape binary wherein,

While the northern forests of Kashmir are peopled with men carrying lethal weapons and fighting a stark and deadly war, the southern fields are populated by women expressing the rhythms, desires and laughter of domesticity and agriculture, production and reproduction (ibid).

Likewise, Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* opens with a serene shot of boats floating down a lake in Kashmir, followed by grey-wintery shots of the landscape. Through these shots, the Valley is evidently marked by a quiet emptiness which is encapsulated mostly by the leafless trees and the use of a cold grayish-blue tonality. This in turn, stands in direct contrast with the 1958 film *Madhumati* (Bimal Roy), which portrays the same landscape, albeit through bright, cheerful textures, accentuated through the song '*suhana safar aur yeh mausum haseen*' (the ride is lovely and the weather is wonderful). Ananya Jahanara Kabir notes that while most of the song sequences in the 'New Kashmir films'¹², also articulate the Valley as a 'site for romantic love to develop', the stark difference between the films in the two phases nevertheless remains that the

¹¹ Agamben notes the 'state of exception' to exemplify a state of affairs that temporarily suspends law and consequently, strips the inhabitants off every ounce of their political status, thus reducing them to 'bare life'. Those who are banned from the domain of political beings are reduced by the sovereign to life that is recognised by the sovereign only as biological beings, worthy of extra-legal actions.

¹² Kabir (2010) places *Roja* (1992) *Mission Kashmir* (2000) and *Yahaan* (2005) within this category. According to Kabir, the 'New Kashmir films' depict "the escalation of the longstanding Kashmir issue into an armed insurgency that then provoked massive militarisation of the region by the Indian state; and the radicalisation of the Indian public sphere by Hindutva ideologies following the demolition of the Babri Mosque in December 1992 (ibid).

romantic couple (metaphor for the nation) is now portrayed as threatened by an intersecting web of fundamentalist Islamists, Pakistan and terrorism (2010: 379-80).

In the earlier films, the prime signifier of the Kashmiri identity was the ethnic dress, simplicity and in some instances, the Kashmiri accent, while the religion of the natives largely remained conspicuous by its absence (Kabir 2005, 2010). This trend however saw a palpable shift in the Kashmir films that were made following *Roja* wherein, religion became the prime signifier of Kashmiri identity (Kabir 2010, Gaur 2010). Also, the Kashmiri Islamic religious beliefs are conveyed as overlapping with fundamentalism and militancy. Films like *Roja*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Hero: Love story of a spy*, *Yahaan*, *Haider*, *Lamhaa* (and to an extent *Fanaa*), exemplify this fuzzy depiction of Islam and fundamentalist militancy through repetitive shots of militants at *namaaz*, through the sound of the *azaan* floating across scenes of army and militant confrontation, thereby depicting terrorists and practicing Muslims as collapsible and overlapping categories. This apart, the word and subject of '*Jihad*' has been visibly resonating across the films and is largely shown as the motivation behind Kashmiri rejection of the Indian nation state and its machinery (ibid). In this respect, Zutshi notes that the films are devoid of any dynamics of class or history that have affected the turmoil in the valley and, in consistently focusing on *jihad* as the motivation behind the Kashmiri conflict, have oversimplified the complex issue and only propagated state driven discourse (2003). Likewise, one could call upon Connolly (1991) who notes how images assist in framing the 'conditions of possibility', and thus shaping both that which can be seen and that which cannot be seen and in so doing, affecting both that which can and cannot be thought of. Here, I argue that through repetitive filmic tropes that relate the turmoil in the Valley primarily to Islamic fundamentalism and Pakistani abetment, the films conspicuously shift the gaze away from socio-historical grievances that also assisted in instigating the imbroglio.

Another repetitive pattern that is notable through many of the Hindi films that revolve around Kashmir is one that explicitly depicts the Valley as an undisputed, integral part of the Indian union. *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan* for instance, portray Kashmir as an integral part of India by romantically calling upon the notion of *Kashmiriyat*. As this study has already noted in the preceding section, the Indian state defines *Kashmiriyat* as the culture of 'religious fluidity' and 'harmony' that has been shared between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims since antiquity. Time and again, New Delhi has called upon this stance to enunciate the purported

organic fluidity between the ostensibly 'secular and pluralistic' India and the 'religiously harmonious' Kashmiri ethos. Films like *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan* echo this position by emphasising the connection between the two. By so doing, the films present Kashmir as a naturally integral part of India. Further, the films also depict this (authentic) religious co-existence and fluidity in the Valley as being besieged by the fundamentalist version of Islam which is attributed to Pakistani complicity (Gaur 2010). Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *Mission Kashmir* is one such film to pronounce this narrative, with the film opening to a statement wherein a dedication is made to '*Kashmiriyat- the centuries old tradition of religious tolerance and harmony*'. Through the film, this expression is explicitly/implicitly called upon to establish Kashmir's primordial link with India.

In Chopra's film, Altaaf- played by the hazel eyed Hritik Roshan, is left orphaned after the police officer Inayat Khan- played by Sanjay Dutt, indiscriminately opens fire on the former's family houseboat, in which some militants were also taking refuge. The reason behind Khan's brutal action was the death of his child, who lost his life as a result of the orders of the militants that forbade practicing doctors in the Valley from tending to the family members of the security forces. In what followed, Altaaf was adopted by Khan and his Hindu wife Neelima. The 'happily ever-after' family however gets disrupted when Altaaf discovers the truth regarding his foster father being the murderer of his blood family, which eventually pushes the boy to take to the gun, only to appear years later as a militant. On the reappearance of the adult Altaaf, it is learnt that he had been trained by foreign Muslim fundamentalists who appear to have Pakistani connections, to participate in a top-secret operation code-named- '*Mission Kashmir*', that intends to destroy the spirit of *Kashmiriyat* by targeting both the *Hazratbal Shrine* as well as the *Shankracharaya Temple*. Altaaf has however not been made aware about the real motive of the mission which he finds out about in the climax. Altaaf then chooses to assist his foster father- Inayat Khan and other security personnel in preventing the attack. The lad's participation with the Indian security forces follows after a highly emotive sequence in which Khan pleads to his son to save the real spirit of both Kashmir and *Kashmiriyat*.

By understanding the spiritual spaces of both Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims (*Shankracharya Temple* and *Hazratbal Shrine*) as representative of the spirit of *Kashmiriyat*, the film seeks to depict Islamic fundamentalism as a source of existential threat to the same. In this, the climax suggests that while a paternal State (symbolic through the character of the foster

father-Inayat Khan) may have made mistakes in the past, which may have instigated the young Kashmiri men to take to the arms, nonetheless, Kashmiris must choose India and save the valley from the violent destruction of *Kashmiriyat*. This could be said to be hinting towards the limits of understanding *Kashmiriyat* in which, the same is imagined to be rescued only by the youth's explicit rejection of violence. While this in itself is not a problematic thought, it should nonetheless be noted that it is not the Kashmiri youth alone who need to rethink the use of violent force instead, several other state actors who have been involved in the Valley since 1989 also need to participate in the process of rethinking the same. Likewise, it is also equally essential to note that it is problematic to put the onus solely on the (misguided) Kashmiri youth in the struggle of saving *Kashmiriyat*.

A similar climactic ending is also reminiscent through Vishal Bhardwaj's *Haider* in which, the Kashmiri protagonist by the same name, Haider (played by Shahid Kapoor) who is systemically forced to take to violence to avenge the murder of his father, grudgingly chooses not to be on the side of violence. Haider's choice is prompted by the last lines that his mother says to him before she sets off the human-bomb that she wears and simultaneously blows herself up. The lines are: *Inteqam se sirf inteqam paida hota hai, jab tak hum inteqam se aazaad nahin honge, koi aazaadi humein aazaad nahin karegi* (revenge breeds revenge, we will not attain any freedom till the time that we don't free ourselves from the idea of revenge).

Chopra's *Mission Kashmir* seeks to convey religious brotherhood/harmony or *Kashmiriyat* through the symbols of *Shakracharya* Temple and the *Hazratbal* Shrine. While *Mission Kashmir* is one of the few Bollywood films to have repeatedly iterated the word *Kashmiriyat*, both these religious sites have been notable through other films made in the same period including *Roja* and *Fanaa*, with both the film's opening with shots of *Shakracharya* Temple and the *Hazratbal* Shrine, among other common landscapes as well. Mani Ratnam's *Roja* for instance opens with shots of the *Dal lake*, mountains, *Hazratbal* mosque and *Shankaracharya* temple, which is followed by a war-like sequence that implicitly articulates the destruction of the spirit of *Kashmiriyat* at the hands of militancy. It could be asserted that through such shots, implicit references are being made towards the Valley's secular ideals that have been lost to militancy.

The hegemonic articulations of *Kashmiriyat* (through both filmic and political narratives), which allow for only those aspects of regional belonging to be articulated which acknowledge the supremacy of national patriotism, has led to many people in Kashmir rejecting the term altogether (Kabir 2008). In this respect, Meenu Gaur notes that *Kashmiriyat* for Kashmiris is about “putting the Kashmiri back into the landscape and redefining that relationship on their own terms” (2010: 282), completely in negation to the form of *Kashmiriyat* that has been eulogised through both political and the filmic discourses which, punctuate secularism to draw an organic link between Kashmir and mainland India.

It is pertinent to state here that the recent past has also experienced a novel shift with respect to the filmic portrayal of *Kashmiriyat*, in which the authentic Kashmiri history, culture, beliefs, aspirations are also being paid attention to. *Lamhaa* (2010) and *Haider* (2014) are two such films that, it could be said, redefine *Kashmiriyat* by foregrounding the agency of the Kashmiri native. Both these films essentially problematise the hitherto normalised filmic portrayal of Agamben(esque) ‘state of exception’ within the Valley. In explicating the ‘state of exception’, Agamben notes the same as a state of affairs that ‘temporarily suspends law’ and consequently, strips the inhabitants off every ounce of their political status, thus reducing them to ‘bare life’ (2005). In this, those who are banned from the domain of political beings are “reduced by the sovereign to life that is recognised by the sovereign only as biological beings”, worthy of extra-legal actions (ibid: 13). Under the modern liberal democracy, Agamben notes, “the once temporary suspension of law in the ‘state of exception’ has generally been replaced by an unprecedented generalization of the paradigm of security as the normal technique of government” (ibid: 14). This narrative resonates with the state of affairs in Kashmir wherein, a cross-pollination of factors like militancy and terrorism has engendered the persistent adoption of coercive and extra-legal mechanisms on the natives of the Valley.

In a sense, films like *Roja* and *Mission Kashmir* unproblematically reflect such a state. *Lamhaa* and *Haider* however depart from such films in terms of punctuating and problematising the generalized ‘state of exception’ in the Valley from the perspective of the native. For instance, both the films focus on the issue of missing persons in Kashmir both through the story line as well as spatially, by capturing several shots of graveyards; of Kashmiris assembled in rallies

holding placards of their missing relatives; market walls laden with pictures of missing people, to name a few. Such spaces and narratives were mostly missing from films up till then.

Likewise, unlike films like *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan* that implicitly and explicitly assert Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian union, *Haider* and *Lamhaa* conversely portray the protagonists of the films as passionately expressing their wish to see Kashmir's *aazadi* (freedom) from both India and Pakistan. This emotion is not only verbally articulated but is also felt through several shots that articulate the valley as a security state including shots of barricades and curfews at Lal *chownk*; army crackdown in front of a local schools; militants on residential roof tops; dilapidated and burnt out buildings and houses; graffiti in market places inscribed with words like 'freedom' to name a few. Such shots capture the emotional discontent that the natives feel towards the perpetual state of violence in the Valley. It is also worth noting that a more authentic interaction with Kashmiri culture and traditions was also resonant through the films by portraying typically Kashmiri forms like *bhand pather*, *wanvun*, *Kaiva* drinking culture to name a few. It is thus asserted that by means of giving more focus to the Kashmiri's agency and culture, these films, unlike the films that were made earlier, exemplify a novel representation of *Kashmiriyat*. Here, Maureen Whitebrook's (1992: 5-7) arguments with respect to the link between literature and politics could be called upon wherein she speaks of the "ability of art to make us see a different reality from the one that we are used to and the one that we internalise". By presenting the counter-narratives, it could be said that the both these films perform politics through such inventive disruptions from the commonsensical discourses.

Another repetitive trope resonant through films like *Roja*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan* is that of the 'good' Kashmiri/Muslim vs. the 'bad' Kashmiri/Muslim which draws binaries within Kashmiri natives. Among other factors, this binary could be said to be imported from the post 9/11 political-media tropes that have consistently articulated a stark dichotomy between the 'good' Muslim and the 'bad' Muslim.

The 'Good', 'Bad' and the 'Ugly' Kashmiri

The cinematic trope of the 'good Muslim-bad Muslim' dichotomy that has been visible through Hollywood films particularly following the twin-attacks on the World Trade Centre, in-turn has reflected and resonated through Bombay films. This dichotomous trope largely performs

the role of sifting the ‘safe’ and ‘legitimate’ Muslim citizens from those who need to be feared and thus, delegitimised. That is, by explicitly establishing the characteristics of the ‘good’ Muslim who is largely framed as patriotic/nationalistic, tolerant, secular, intelligent, righteous citizen as against a ‘bad’ Muslim who is portrayed as religious, fundamentalist, bigoted, regressive, vicious, such films have performatively set the ‘ideal’ Muslim citizen apart from the ones who need to be exterminated.

This narrative dichotomy has not only assisted in enabling a securitised logic of dealing with the ‘bad’ Muslims wherein the use of extralegal, muscular mechanisms is both normalised and legitimized but it has also assisted in disciplining the (good) Muslim ‘subjects’ into adopting practices that overtly establish their ‘Indianness’ through elements of patriotism, Sufism, secularism, liberalism. Sunaina Maira (2009: 632) notes that such distinctions between the good, and the bad, form a core of imperial thinking about ‘loyal’ citizen-subjects and ‘enemy aliens’ - a theme with a long history in American politics.

Similarly, Mahmood Mamdani discusses statements by President George W. Bush in the aftermath of 9/11, which categorically culled the ‘good Muslims’ from the ‘bad Muslims’ by assuring the Americans that, “good Muslims were anxious to clear their names and consciousness of this horrible crime and would undoubtedly support ‘us’ in a war against ‘them’” (2004). Intrinsic in his speech was the unsaid logic that unless loudly declared ‘good’, every Muslim was presumed to be ‘bad’.

9/11 perceptibly transformed the ways in which Hollywood films represented the fluid category of Muslims and terrorism which in turn had an evident impact on Bollywood’s treatment of the same. In this respect, representational changes in Bombay cinema were aided by the changing business models in the industry, the increasing corporate links with media houses in the US in particular, significantly influenced the cinematic treatment of terrorism (Gabriel and Vijayan 2012: 301).

It should also be noted here that the growing out-migration of Indian professionals to the countries of the global-north particularly the US further assisted in shaping such post 9/11 representational changes. Like the American mainstream cinema, there has been an evident portrayal of stereotypical images of Muslims in Bollywood which shows them more aligned to a foreign territory, and more loyal to religion rather than to patriotism and national unity (Islam 2007)

Such a dichotomy has been visible in both the Kashmir films that have been discussed through this section (except for *Lamhaa* and *Haider* that are being looked at as counter-

narratives), as well as in the terrorism films- that will be engaged with in the following chapter. In the new Kashmir films, there is largely a distinction between the good (peaceful, secular, tolerant, India loving) Kashmiri, the bad (misguided, susceptible, manipulated) Kashmiri and the ugly (knifing, manipulative, fundamentalist, vicious) Islamic fundamentalists/Pakistanis. For instance, in Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *Mission Kashmir*, Altaaf is clearly the 'bad' Kashmiri who has been manipulated by the fundamentalist and manipulative games of the 'ugly' Pakistani/Afghan Islamists. Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* places the ultra patriotic, pacifist and idealistic Zooni (good Muslim) against the mechanical, sharp Kashmiri (Muslim) terrorist Rehan- the anti-hero who is being controlled by the vicious plans of his (the ugly) grandfather to 'nuclear-bomb' mainland India. The film opens to Zooni (Kajol) saluting to the Indian national flag as she passionately sings *Saare Jahan Se Accha* (a patriotic anthem of opposition during the British rule in India written by poet Mohammed Iqbal, published in a weekly journal *Ittehad* on 16 August 1904). Through exaggerated and animated gestures and dialogues, Zooni is shown to be affectively expressing her supreme love for the Indian nation which, could also be interpreted as a concerted effort made by the 'good' Muslims to justify and prove their loyalty towards India.

Conclusion

While engaging with the relationship between cinema and cartography, William Cartwright (2013) talks about the 'theatre metaphor' which captures the idea that the understanding of places through maps requires a better integration of non-conventional dimensions such as emotion, perception and sense of place. He notes that rich media artefacts can provide users with experiences related to the emotional and experiential background information that 'hides' behind the map representation of geography. These theatre-guided artefacts can provide powerful insights into places when cinema is applied to telling 'stories' about geography, through personal and collective stories. While the cartographic-cinematic interrelation does not fall within the purview of this study, it should nonetheless be noted that with respect to the conflictual territorial region of Kashmir that has consistently been conveyed as an intrinsically integral part of India through political, cultural, symbolic, media and popular cultural texts; films, by means of presenting Kashmiri people, spaces and culture have lent to conveying the territorial space through the prism of verisimilitude.

The chapter argues that in the Bollywood films that were made during the first four decades after the Partition, the Valley is largely articulated through romantic, scenic, spiritual and paradisiacal spaces and textures in which, the same have been imagined from the point of view of the plains-dwelling Indians, meant for the same's consumption. It is asserted that through such an asymmetrical focus of the Vale, the same has been articulated as integral and synecdochic to the (sovereign, secular) Indian nation. Further, the Kashmiris are portrayed through orientalist stereotypes as naïve, shy, conventional while conversely, the mainland Indians are shown to be progressive, modern and large-hearted. Through such tropes, the Valley is presented asymmetrically as an integral part of India that has unproblematically been assimilated within the sovereign India. An Implicit overlap is resonant through the dominant political and cinematic narratives to the extent that both articulate the region of Jammu and Kashmir to be highlighting post-colonial India's Ontological Security narratives of secularism, sovereignty and national integration.

Conversely, the chapter finds that in the mainstream Hindi films that were made in the period following the onset of the armed rebellion in the Valley in 1989, the territory of Kashmir is predominantly imagined through gloomy-grey tones and textures, as a site of danger and violence that is infested by militants and security forces. Apart from (re)presenting the region as a danger-zone, the same was also loudly presented as an integral part of the Indian union. For instance, the opening sequence of *Fanaa* establishes a non-conventional map of India that shows Kashmir as its integral part through shots of common Kashmiri spaces including the Hazratbal shrine, shikara, dal lake, snow peaked mountains with the music of the song, '*sare jahan se accha, hindostaan hamara*' (an ode to hindostaan) playing in the backdrop.

Further this chapter also finds that the films in the post-1989 period have largely focused upon the factors of foreign (Pakistani) interference, Islamic fundamentalism and the 'misguided youths' as the prime reasons behind the Kashmiri imbroglio. In the instances where mistakes of the Indian state are subtly accepted (as in the case of *Mission Kashmir*, *Yahaan*, *Haider*), the onus is left on the 'misguided' Kashmiri youth to give up violence and to move on from the past. This apart, the films (implicitly/explicitly) , are seen calling upon the notion of *Kashmiriyat* to define J&K as a historically and culturally pluralistic region and in so doing, claim the region as an intrinsic part of the purportedly tolerate and secular India.

Chapter V

Terrorism and Counter-terrorism: Dominant Discourses

Introduction

The previous chapter engaged briefly with the theme of terrorism in Kashmir by examining the core narratives of Islamic fundamentalism, Pakistani complicity and misguided Kashmiri youth, through which, terrorism has largely been articulated as an intersecting product of the same. The chapter also noted the attacks on the World Trade center in 2001 and the consequent Global War on Terror as a significant intervening variable that assisted in shaping the

intertextual imagination of terrorism. This chapter seeks to both continue this exploration and to simultaneously extend it to the increasing episodes of cross-border terrorism that have been suffered by the Indian body-politic particularly in the post-millennium period.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the dominant framing of terrorism wherein, the focus is particularly on the intermittent episodes of terrorist attacks on mainland India, particularly in the first decade of the 21st century which, New Delhi has mainly attributed to Islamic terrorism emanating from both the Pakistani state and non-state actors. The study looks at the mainstream articulation of the same through dominant political discourses alongside, tracing the mirroring and resonance of the same through popular Hindi cinema. The scope is mainly limited to the period beginning from the early 1990s to 2014. This period has been marked by an armed rebellion in Kashmir that has popularly been narrativised as militancy and terrorism, purportedly sponsored, motivated and assisted by the Pakistani state. The period has also been marked by several episodes of sporadic terror strikes through mainland India particularly in the first decade of the 21st century, which again, were asserted to have been a product of both Pakistani state and non-state actors, popularly termed- 'cross-border terrorism'. Thus, the intent is to engage with the dominant and hegemonic articulation of terrorism during this period as reflected through statist and cinematic texts, so as to find the subtle imbrication between the political and the popular. Through this, my attention would be on how the same contribute to the popularization, legitimization and re-enforcement of narratives and policies on both terrorism and counter-terrorism.

I argue that the dominant understanding of 'cross-border terrorism' in Kashmir and through urban Indian spaces, has also been impacted by the intervening variables of the rising popularity of Hindutva politics within the Indian public sphere and the Global War on Terror (WoT) following the attack on the Twin Towers in the United States on 11 September, 2001. Right-wing Hindu politics and the WoT have prompted xenophobic understandings of Islam which has further assisted in engendering a popular (political and cinematic) construction of terrorism as an intersecting product of Pakistani complicity and Pan-Islamism. Furthermore, I argue that by challenging the core self-narratives of sovereignty, security and secularity of the Indian nation, the twin factors of Pakistan generated terrorism and pan Islamism have generated Ontological insecurity to the said narrative, which has in turn assisted an Ontological security

response of securitising terrorism. The securitisation of terrorism has only furthered the normalising and legitimising of muscular, high-handed, torturous and extra-legal counter-terror mechanisms.

Through intertextual analysis, the chapter will note the explicit coalescing of Islam with terrorism, which has assisted in blurring the distinction between internal and external Muslims, thus ‘othering’ internal Muslims further and making them more vulnerable. Furthermore, the fuzzy category of Pakistan/Terrorism/Islam has been articulated through an Orientalist lens with the Indian state (and largely the Hindu culture), being presented as the purportedly- righteous, law-abiding, innocent, peaceful harbinger of democracy and secularism, that is being victimised by the demonic, violent, religious, fundamentalist- Islamic/Pakistani terrorism. By depicting both the Indian self-identity and the Indian state as being victimized by the monstrous terrorist, the threat from terrorism is imagined as exceptional and existential wherein, the only logical response to the same is understood as a particular form of militarized and repressive counter-terrorism policy. Simultaneously, the high-handed counter-terrorism methods also enable the presentation of the Indian identity through a hyper-muscular prism and the terrorist’s/Pakistani identity through that of monstrosity.

The chapter below is divided into two main sections. Both the sections engage with the themes of terrorism, Islam, anti-nationalism, nationalism, counter-terrorism albeit, through different mediums. While the first section looks at the mainstream statist framing of terrorism, the second section analyzes the mirroring and resonance of dominant statist narratives through mainstream Hindi films. The first section explores the dominant statist discourses on terrorism starting with the onset of the armed rebellion in Kashmir in 1989, tracing briefly the statist articulation of the same through the 1990s, before progressing to the political articulation of the multiple terror attacks that took place through urban India particularly in the post-millennium period. The reason for including the narratives on terrorism in J&K is to understand the mainstream comprehension of cross-border terrorism in 21st century urban India as an extension of the understanding of terrorism in the Valley. The second part of this chapter explores the resonance of the statist narratives on terrorism through Bombay cinema. Among other factors, the intent is to find the implications of an intertextual understanding on both Indian and Pakistani identity narratives.

While in the previous chapter, an engagement has already been made with the overlapping themes of militancy, terrorism, Kashmir, Pakistan and Islamic fundamentalism, the purpose of revisiting the same through this chapter is to seek to trace the genealogy of the dominantly fuzzy category of militancy/Islamic fundamentalism/cross-border terrorism. In doing so, an attempt will be made to find parallels, shifts and continuations in the dominant conception of terrorism from Kashmir to mainland India in the 21st century.

It is significant to note that to this day, Kashmir remains the symbolic root cause of the conflict between India and Pakistan and in this regard, the multiple episodes of terror strikes on mainland India (orchestrated by both Pakistani state and non state actors) could be directly/indirectly traced to the unresolved dispute in the region. These reasons make it pertinent to look at J&K terrorism and the multiple episodes of terror strikes on mainland India in the post 21st century period, within a continuum.

It should also be noted here that the chapter is also interested in tracing New Delhi's symbolic and linguistic posturing of terrorism particularly against the background of the provocative (anti-Islamic) rhetoric that had globally emerged during the WoT. In this, the study will find instances of New Delhi vociferously exuding both sympathy and empathy with respect to the provocatively aggressive actions that emerged from the western nations during the Global WoT. In this, the Indian state had repetitively attempted to frame itself as a victim by articulating the terrorism in J&K as synecdochic of the 'global menace of terrorism'.

Pakistani instigated terrorism (by both state and non-state actors) on the Indian soil has widely been termed 'cross-border terrorism'. However, there remains a lack of clarity with respect to the same's definition. "It appears that the term is used to refer to all instances of violence, terror, destruction of Indian life and property intended to destabilize the unity and security of the Indian state" (Commuri 2010: 158). While from time to time, the Indian state has been affected by terrorist and extremist violence emanating from diverse intra-state groups including left-wing extremism (*naxalism*), Right-wing extremism, *Khalistani* terrorism in Punjab, Tamil terrorism etc., these are however distinguished from 'cross border terrorism' and are thus not within the purview of this study. While New Delhi has urged that Pakistan had

technically and financially contributed to several intra-state conflicts including the *Khalistani* movement in Punjab in the 1980s, these episodes are however beyond the scope of this study.

Defining terrorism in the modern age is not within the scope of this chapter. The term is a highly debatable and contested one with scholars citing multiple and varied definitions of the same. In defining terrorism, Colin Wight (2009:100-04) purports four conditions that should be met so as to term an event an act of terrorism:

- It is a form of violent political communication
- It involves the deliberate targeting of non-state actors and institutions
- It is always illegitimate violence
- The victims are not the intended recipients of the political message

However, over and above these four, a further condition specified by Wight is the need for the target of such acts to be a sovereign state, one that holds hegemonic dominance over the perpetrators. In this case, Wight limits the scope of the definition by ignoring similar instances of illegitimate violence that are carried out by the sovereign state on sections of its population.

In another definition, Richard Jackson, following Robert Goodin (2006), proposes that “the essence of terrorism lies in its intention to spread terror for political advantage through the threat or infliction of violence” and that, “the intention to cause fear is what makes terrorism something more than ‘just’ murder, kidnapping, assassination and the like” (Jackson 2009, 174). This understanding of ‘terrorism’ essentially rests on the instilling of ‘fear’ within the public (and the state) so as to fulfill certain political end goals. In this sense, terrorism is not taken to be functioning in political or historical isolation but instead, is said to have arisen as a response to certain external variables. The import of understanding terrorism as a product of political exigencies instead of seeing the same solely through the lens of ideological motivations is relevant particularly because it may be instrumental in shaping the approach through which the same may be dealt with by the state.

Clini notes that such a definition is relevant to the analysis of terrorism first and foremost because “it frees the concept from its moral attribute” (terrorism as evil) and interprets terrorism as a political strategy of fear which does not lie in a political vacuum (2015: 340). If we understand terrorism as a “tactic” and not as an “ideology” (Blakeley 2007, 234), then we can analyze also the context within which the same emerges, and its political goals. Furthermore, understanding terrorism as a political tactic that aims at causing fear allows us to also critically engage in an analysis of the instances of state violence as a form of terrorism:

When government agents, for example, attempt to cause fear and intimidation to sectors of their own population in order to undermine support for an opposition movement through a violent campaign that involves random kidnapping and torture, assassination and bombs planted in public places (the same acts that non-state terrorists commit), there is no doubt that this constitutes terrorism (Jackson 2009, 174).

This understanding does not imagine the state as an ultimate institution that is above law, but instead expands the purview of the term terrorism and frees it from the largely fluid ‘orientalist and monstrous’ lens through which state institutions have mostly understood and consequently, ‘tackled’ the same. Historically, ‘terrorism’ has been associated with anarchists, revolutionaries, fundamentalists wherein, the terrorist has mostly been framed as the dehumanised, demonised ‘other’ who existentially threatens the state. In this sense, states have mostly engaged with terrorism through Edward Said’s Orientalist frame that institutionalises and normalises an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ binary wherein, the docile, unsuspecting, innocent state and its civilians are imagined to be threatened by the terrifying, demonic terrorist ‘others’. State institutions including New Delhi (as will be discussed below), have defined and understood terrorism through this narrow Orientalist prism.

Orientalism, as Said described, “is a discourse used by Europe not only to define (and dominate over) Europe’s ‘others’, but above all, to describe itself: Europe as a place of order and rationality in opposition to a disordered and irrational East, Europe as the active agent and the Orient as the passive agent” (1978). Likewise, this study will understand how through defining and orientalising the (Pakistani/Islamic) terrorist ‘other’, New Delhi has also consequently attempted to define its ‘self’ oppositionally as a righteous, humane, Hindu, tolerant, strong nation-state.

Further, the terrorizing orient is also ‘monsterized’ by connecting the imagination of the same with a radicalized, sexualized, demonic ‘other’ (mostly through popular cultural narratives), who needs to be corrected or exterminated. In this regard, while analyzing the terrorism discourse that was popularly disseminated through the Western media and state following the attacks on 9/11, Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai note the presence of the ‘terrorist-monster’ narrative that constructed the Islamic terrorist through the prism of sexual perversity, brutality, inhumanity (2002). In this, they assert that this dominant narrative (reflected both through the media and the political speech-acts), assisted in normalizing aggressive, masculine counter-terror mechanisms. With respect to this chapter, the political-filmic orientalist and monsterized framing of terrorism will be examined to find the impact of the same on the larger narrative of counter-terrorism.

Statist articulations of Terrorism

The view that Pakistan seeks to damage the unity and integrity of the Indian union, remains a consistent refrain within the Indian state. Since the bloody truncation of the two states in 1947, the Indian political elite has repetitively accused the purportedly theocratic, undemocratic, religiously extremist- Pakistani state of harboring anxiety and insecurity towards India’s ‘federal, multi-ethnic/religious, secular’ characteristics. This stance reasserted itself with a vengeance particularly following the armed rebellion that engulfed the Valley of Kashmir around 1988-1989, which New Delhi largely blamed to vicious Pakistani complicity. At the same time, this argument has not been without merit as there has been a visible Pakistani hand in the turmoil in Kashmir particularly with respect to financing, training and supporting the insurgency. For instance, during Benazir Bhutto’s term itself, several pro-Pakistan outfits were raised so as to act as rivals to the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front- JKLF, (a pro-*aazadi* group that emerged out of the discontent in J&K around 1989) and to draw Kashmir towards Pakistan. As Navnita Behera points out,

The most important player was *Hizbul Mujahideen*- a militant organization and its parent party- *Jamaat-i-Islami*, that sought to redefine the problem in Kashmir in terms of the

Muslim Valley waging an Islamic movement against the Hindu Indian state in order to accede to Islamic Pakistan (2000: 628-29).

This Pakistani complicity was also evidenced through Home Minister Sayeed's statement that there was "concrete evidence and information regarding large number of training camps being run on the other side of the border to train the militants" (Sayeed 1990). Saba Imtiaz too notes that in the 1990s, "the Pakistani military supported militant networks in the recruiting and training of young men to attack Indian security personnel in Kashmir" (2016). It is in this context that Imtiaz explains Pakistan's record of inaction against terror groups like *LeT* or *JeM*.

Pakistan complicity in the Kashmir imbroglio is also evident through the several instances of provocative statements emanating from the Pakistani state in support of the violence in J&K. For instance, the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had once promised 'a thousand years war' with India, a stance that his daughter, Benazir Bhutto reiterated in the year 1990, alongside a fund of \$4 million to support 'freedom fighters' across the LOC (Cummori 2010: 162). Nonetheless, as asserted in the previous chapter, through repetitive invocations of Pakistani complicity in J&K, New Delhi largely glossed over the internal (historical-socio-political) grievances that had also assisted in triggering the popular armed rebellion in the Valley.

In the instances when political mistakes were admitted by New Delhi with regards to the mismanagement of the Kashmiri imbroglio, they were done so in relation to how Pakistan took advantage of the (mismanaged) situation to foster the unrest. In this context, in the period soon after the armed rebellion had begun in the Valley, Sayeed (1990) recognized that while the situation in Kashmir was the result of "inadequate political and administrative response to a series of developments in the Valley which spurred public disenchantment", he nonetheless iterated that the same "provided a fertile ground to the fundamentalist, subversive and anti-national forces to re-group themselves with the aid and assistance of forces operating from across the border" (Cummori 2010: 162). It is worth noting that linguistically, the armed rebellion in the Valley was already labeled 'fundamentalist', 'anti-national' and 'subversive' from its very outset, indicative of the state's reductive framing of the unrest in the Valley as a direct product of dangerous-external variables. The linguistic framing also indicated the state's disinclination to publicly recognize the role of internal factors in fomenting the trouble. Similar statist arguments have also been visible much later in the conflict for instance, through New Delhi's response to

the Amarnath Land controversy¹³ that emerged in June 2008 and snowballed into a 2 month long agitation in the Kashmir Valley and the Jammu regions, while also creating serious polarization between the two regions of the state. In response to the same, the government (similarly) noted that while certain decisions taken by New Delhi led to major controversies in Kashmir, the same were nonetheless “sought to be exploited by the separatist elements through large scale propaganda” (Government of India 2008-09).

Likewise, a similar stance was also visible in 2010 following the Machil encounter that took place in Kashmir on 29 April of the same year, in which three local Kashmiri youths were killed by soldiers of 4 Rajputana Rifles in a fake encounter through which they were falsely accused of being ‘Pakistani militants’. What followed was a wide-scale unrest in which around 123 people lost their lives. In respect to this, the Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Government of India 2010-11) noted that “J&K had been subjugated to severe terrorist and secessionist violence, sponsored and supported from across the border for the past two years”. Similarly, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah blamed the unrest on the *LeT* and anti-national elements (Jacob: 2010). Such articulations are reflective of New Delhi’s persistent trend of blaming Pakistani actors in terrorizing the Valley. In so doing, not only is there a purposeful erasure of Kashmiri grievances against New Delhi, but, also a justification for the adoption of overt militarized and muscular security responses against the unrest in the Valley.

This narrative position that blames Pakistan for largely fomenting the tense situation in the Valley and for spreading terror has been strategically persistent through the years. In one such instance, V.P Singh, who was leading the National Front government in the year 1990, issued the following statement with respect to the rising levels of violence in the Valley, “the gravity of the present situation lies in the fact that threats from anti-national and hostile forces operating from outside the country have re-emerged with greater severity and virulence” (Commuri 2010: 112). Similar sentiments were also found echoing through P.V. Narasimha Rao’s statements while he was heading the country between 1991-1996 viz. that a, “virtual proxy

¹³On 26 May 2008, the [government of India](#) and [state government](#) of [Jammu and Kashmir](#) had agreed to transfer 99 acres of forest land to the [ShriAmarnathji Shrine Board](#) (SASB) in the main [Kashmir valley](#) to set up temporary shelters and facilities for [Hindu](#) pilgrims. This caused a controversy, with demonstrations and a consequent security situation that lasted for a few months after, thus disturbing normal life in the Valley and the CBMs that had been initiated between India and Pakistan since 2003.

war has been unleashed from across the border in complete disregard of international law, good neighbourly relations, and all canons of decency and human behaviour” (ibid). While through the 1990s, the label ‘terrorism’ was used more sparingly than the term ‘militancy’, violence in the Valley was nonetheless linked to Pakistan instigated terrorism. For instance, in his Lok Sabha speech in 1993, the Minister of Home Affairs in the Congress government- S.B.Chavan stated that, “the security situation in the state continues to be serious and challenging mainly because of Pak’s direct role in aiding and propping up militancy in the Valley and in extending the arc of terrorist violence even to the Jammu division” (Chavan 1993).

Simultaneously, with respect to the conflict in the Valley, the one narrative that was unanimously accepted by all parties during the early 1990s, including the Janata Dal, Congress and the BJP was that Pakistan played the prime role in instigating terrorism in the Valley. In this respect, the then External Affairs Minister I.K Gujral, in his speech to the Lok Sabha on- 11 January, 1991, cautioned against blaming one another and urged instead that the focus be on Pakistan’s foreign policies in Kashmir and Punjab and on its intent to interfere in the two conflicts (Talwar 2015: 121). In the same period, a BJP Minister of Parliament, ML Khurana, remarked that Pakistan be declared a ‘terrorist country’ and thus be treated accordingly (Khurana 1992). Likewise, in the Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs- 1989-90, it was noted that there were “disturbing developments in the form of increased support by Pakistan to terrorism against India in Jammu and Kashmir” (Government of India 1989-90). This apart, there also seemed to be a gradual acceptance of the narrative that Pakistan was orchestrating the conflict in Kashmir through the card of ‘religious extremism’ (ibid) (as demonstrated in the previous chapter).

Furthermore, that the Kashmiri native was acting against the Indian state less out of genuine grievances and more out of manipulation by the Pakistani enemy was another argument that has been popularly iterated since the beginning of the 1990s. In this respect, in his address to the Lok Sabha on 26 August, 1991, Home Minister SB Chavan noted,

At gun point, a large number of people are dragged from the state, taken across the border, given training, given weapons and at gunpoint they are asked to go and hit a particular point. We could get this information that Pakistan is fully involved from some people who have been caught (Chavan 1991).

By the mid 1990s however, it was being understood that the role played by Pakistan had also lost much currency among the locals. In this, SB Chavan voiced that, “people have lost faith in the terrorist activities, merger with Pakistan or independence of Kashmir...the necessity is to create conditions where they should be allowed to carry on with their professions” (ibid). Such arguments have strategically echoed through the years, and in turn reinstated a narrative that depicts the Kashmiri native’s disillusionment with cross-border terrorism, alongside implicitly conveying the former’s (unproblematic) willingness to integrate with the Indian union.

For instance, the Annual Report of the MHA- 2003-04, while ascertaining the number of elections that had regularly been held in the Valley following 1996 noted that, “since the initiation of terrorism in J&K in 1989-90, the people of J&K have voted in parliamentary elections in 1996, 1998 and 2004, despite terrorist’s threats and calls for boycott of elections” (Government of India 2003-04). Likewise, while discussing India’s stance on terrorism in the post 9/11 era at the 58th UNGA session at New York, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee emphatically called upon a similar argument noting that the people of J&K had “defied the most ferocious campaign of violence and intimidation sponsored from across the borders of India by participating in an election which has been universally hailed as free and fair” (Vajpayee 2003b).

Through such rhythmic, ritualised, chant-like repetitions, New Delhi has largely presented terrorism as foreign (a product of strategic Pakistani engineering) to J&K, emphasizing not just the suffering and the simultaneous disdain that the Kashmiri natives have felt towards the terrorists, but also foregrounding the native’s (supposed) wish for establishing peaceful and normal relations with the Indian union. The suffering of the local Kashmiris was also accentuated in the Annual Report of the MHA which noted:

Terrorism in J&K has been the cause for the loss of about 33,000 lives over the last one decade or so, the terrorist outfits sponsored by Pakistan have caused enormous suffering and damage to Kashmiri people, their culture, and economy of the state (Government of India 2003-04).

Thus, it is evident that by highlighting the ‘enormous suffering’ that the Kashmiris felt at the hands of terrorism, not only did New Delhi seek to portray the Kashmiri natives as sharing similar fears and anxieties as the mainland Indians, but, through the well choreographed articulation of terrorism as primarily a product of Pakistani complicity, the political elite also

sought to implicitly legitimize the adoption of high-handed security measures so as to urgently eliminate the security threat.

Clearly, the Indian political elite have largely framed the imbroglio in the Valley as terrorist violence instigated mostly by *Jihadis* operating with Pakistani connivance. In this, the Kashmiri natives are mainly framed as forced/misguided/seduced/trained/funded by the interfering Pakistani state into fomenting violence in the region. Through this, all these categories have been imagined to be bleeding into one another rather than being considered as independent entities. Further, the repetitive (almost ritualised) chanting of terrorism- as a consequence of Pakistani motivations and complicity, has assisted in popularly framing the same as being born out of external variables, instead of understanding the same as equally a product of internal problems. This popular understanding of cross-border terrorism and anti-national activities has in turn hurt the core biographical narratives of a territorially integrated, secular and sovereign nation. I argue that New Delhi has largely responded to this Ontological anxiety by securitizing the conflict in J&K wherein, emergency mechanisms are implicitly/explicitly legitimized to eliminate the cross-border terrorism that existentially threatens the physical and Ontological security of the Indian union. This securitizing response has been visible through the well-choreographed iteration of repetitive narratives through political speech-acts. In this respect, a statement made by Home Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed during the onset of militant insurgency in the Valley in the 1990s is resonant wherein he asserts that the situation in Kashmir called for “firm and resolute measures for reasserting the authority of the State and restoring normalcy” (Sayeed 1990).

Simultaneously, the early 1990s witnessed militarized emergency powers that were legally allotted to the security forces in fighting terrorism in the Valley. In this, the Indian government has increasingly resorted to the use of “armed and paramilitary forces to curb the insurgency, which have been deputed in the state in huge numbers accompanied with state-of-the-art technology, surveillance systems such as ground sensors, battlefield surveillance radars and thermal imagers” (Commari 2010: 114). Further, according to Commari, the official estimate of paramilitary, army and police personnel deputed in the region in the early 1990s was around 1,00,000, “which crossed half a million mark by the late 1990s” (ibid: 116). While the idea behind deploying the armed and paramilitary forces was to check cross border terrorism and

infiltration, the significantly high number of these forces nonetheless assisted in converting Kashmir into a security state.

As discussed in the previous chapter, extraordinary powers have been granted to the forces through several legislative acts such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, which, by stripping the Kashmiri citizens off political and legal rights have invariably converted the region into an Agamben-esque 'state of exception'. These acts have legitimized indiscriminate use of force including arbitrary killings, arrests, unlawful searches, unprovoked assaults on peaceful demonstrations etc., all supposedly justified in the name of the national security of the state.

At the time when one such act- the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) act (TADA) was renewed in 1991, Mani Shankar Aiyar argued that the exceptional situation in Kashmir demanded exceptional action asserting that:

It is essential for us to understand that the integrity of the Indian Union is under challenge, the unity of our country is under challenge, our secular values are under challenge...(as is the) peace of the nation. So long as these exceptional circumstances prevail, it will be necessary for us to resort to exceptional powers (ibid: 118).

This speech seems to be echoing a securitization process wherein, by explicitly noting the threatening challenge to the Ontological security needs of 'integrity', 'peace' and 'secular values' of the Indian union, the circumstances were emphasized as 'exceptional', that required the use of 'exceptional powers' (militarized, muscular, extra-legal). Likewise, a similar 'securitizing move' was also notable through BJP's Law Minister, Arun Jaitley's remarks in 2002 during the discussion of the POTA ordinance wherein Jaitley noted that terrorism struck at the "root of our sovereignty, unity, integrity and feelings of nationalism" and that "extraordinary situations demand extraordinary remedies", while making the case for the passage of the bill (ibid: 120).

From the discussion so far it can be said that a combination of threats to Indian national security at the hands of Pakistani complicit terrorism in the Valley as well as to the Ontological security narrative of a 'territorially integral', 'sovereign', 'secular', 'united', 'peaceful' nation-state, assisted in framing the Kashmir imbroglio and the terrorism in the Valley through

securitized prisms. I argue then that New Delhi's securitized response, as evident through some of the 'speech-acts' mentioned above, that pressed for urgent emergency, 'exceptional' measures to eliminate terrorism, enabled in legitimizing the adoption of high-handed, coercive and muscular mechanisms to exterminate the terrorist threat posed by Pakistan in Kashmir and in India.

Terrorism and Pan-Islamism

By the 21st century, with the twin tower attacks on the World Trade Centre in the backdrop and the globally rife narrative on Islamic terrorism that followed, New Delhi strongly voiced its empathy towards the United States in the WoT and in so doing, framed itself as the 'greater' victim of Islamic terrorism particularly with respect to Pakistan induced terrorism in J&K. This section looks at instances in which New Delhi displayed this 'strategic empathy' with the United States in the WoT. Herein, New Delhi's linguistic framing of the same would be understood from three particular perspectives: so as to legitimise a counter-terrorism approach similar to the muscular approach that was adopted by the United States in the aftermath of 9/11 (particularly in Afghanistan); to globally get acknowledged as being the greater victim of Pan-Islamic terrorism particularly in Kashmir; and lastly, so as to reinforce the 'us' versus 'other' dichotomy by depicting the Pakistani terrorist-as the demonic, fundamentalist, violent 'other' who existentially threatens the purportedly freedom-loving, democratic, tolerant, modern Indian 'self'.

In the dominant narrative emerging out of New Delhi in the post 9/11 climate, terrorism, Kashmir, pan Islamism, Pakistani state and the non-state actor were imagined to be coalescing into one another. Further, against the background of the rising levels of terror-strikes through mainland Indian in the post-millennium period that were traced to the Pakistani state and non-state actors, a more visible connect was being set up between the state's fight against the same and the Global WoT.

Following the 9/11 Twin Tower attacks by the Islamist terror group *Al Qaeda* and the Global 'War on Terrorism' that followed, the 'Islamic terrorist' has been cast in the role of the

new global terrorist ‘other’ through which the threat to American nationality and security has largely been framed. In this WoT discourse, Western concepts of ‘democracy’, ‘liberalism’, ‘freedom’ have been popularly eulogized while the Islamic religion, culture and way of life has increasingly been questioned, suspected and demonized. Further, by framing the Islamic terrorist through a securitized lens wherein he is believed to pose an existential threat to the American (noble and righteous) nation, the Global WoT has manufactured and naturalized new ‘forms of knowledge’ that have impacted the popular understanding of the overlapping terrorist/Islamic identity and counter-terrorism (Jackson 2007).

Such Orientalist fears have been incorporated into a vast body of literature on terrorism, which has introduced the notion of a “new terrorism”, along with “terms such as ‘religious terrorism’ and ‘Islamic’ or ‘Islamist terrorism’ that imply ‘an unambiguous and linear causal relationship between forms of Islam and terrorism’” (ibid: 5). This understanding in turn has been reproduced not just through the dominant statist discourses and the news media, but also through American popular cultural forms including Hollywood films and television series which by engaging with orientalist stereotypes and by repetitively conflating Islam, terrorism and fundamentalism, have further normalized both the orientalist articulation of the WoT as well as the understandings of the ‘appropriate’ counter-terrorist responses to deal with the same. Such a polarised post 9/11 atmosphere resounds with Edward Said’s argument on how images of Muslims in Western popular culture have reduced the understanding of Islam, “by not considering the variety and complexity of the Muslim world”, the word “‘Islam’ has come to mean one simple thing but in fact is part fiction, part ideological label, part minimal designation of a religion called Islam” (Said 1981).

The dominant narratives that have emerged out of the United States through the WoT have also impacted New Delhi wherein, certain discourses have invariably been mirrored including the orientalising of the Islamic terrorist; coalescing of terrorism with Islam and fundamentalism; counter-terrorism mechanisms and the deriving of a sense of nationalism both through terrorism and through counter-terror responses. Furthermore, the post-millennium period has been witness to a multitude of serial terror attacks on major Indian cities and institutions- including on the Indian parliament in 2001; serial attacks on Mumbai in 2003, 2006, 2008, 2011; New Delhi 2008; Varanasi 2006, 2010; Jaipur 2008; Ahmadabad 2008 to name a few. These

instances of terrorism on the Indian body-politic, coupled with the ubiquity of Western xenophobic textures in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, it is argued, have been instrumental in New Delhi's positioning of terrorism as the most important security concern wherein, the same has attained unparalleled urgency and ubiquity not just within political elitist narratives, but also within mainstream media and popular cultural sites, thus resulting in a proliferation of films depicting the same.

It is noteworthy that through the late 1990s- early 2000s, the 'political-popular cultural' space in India has been dictated by provocative (anti-Pakistan) rhetoric particularly following the fiftieth anniversary since Partition/Independence in 1997, the Nuclear weapons tests by both India and Pakistan in 1998, the Kargil war between the two in 1999 (discussed in chapter III), and the failed attempts at reconciliation that followed at Sharm el Sheikh and Agra (as discussed in the preceding chapter). Against this context, following the two major terrorist attacks that took place in the year 2001, one each on the J&K Legislative Assembly and on the Parliament of India, the label of 'cross-border terrorism' started to attain repetitive urgency.

The first attack was on the JK Legislative Assembly on 1 October, 2001, which killed around 36 people was claimed by two Pakistan based terror outfits- *Lashkar-e-Toiba* (LeT) and *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (JeM). It provoked Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of JK, to declare, "we have to go across and destroy the terrorist training camps in Pakistan whether Advaniji (the Deputy Prime Minister of India) agrees or not" (Commuri 2010: 128). In this context, in a series of interviews conducted by the magazine- *India Today*, politicians from different parties and erstwhile bureaucrats seriously debated punitive strikes against Pakistan.

The international context of the Global WoT, I argue, was an essential intervening variable that dictated the Indian establishment's response to this attack. American muscular actions in Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks were glorified as the yardstick that needed to be emulated. J.N. Dixit (erstwhile Foreign Secretary and the National Security Adviser-NSA to the Congress-led government that came to power in 2004) observed that "if America can travel 10,000 km to take out terrorists and the Taliban government, India at least can take action in the interests of its national security", an observation that was shared by many (ibid: 173). A similar sentiment was also visible following the attack on the Parliament in New

Delhi that took place two months later, wherein Yashwant Sinha, the Foreign Minister in the BJP-led government also overtly called upon Dixit's argument by contending that if the possession of weapons of mass destruction, the absence of democracy and the export of terrorism were reasons enough for one country to attack another, then, he asserted, that Pakistan was a fitter case than Afghanistan (ibid).

The second attack that was on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi on 13 December, 2001, claimed the lives of six policemen guarding the prestigious institution. The attack was again traced to the Pakistan based terror groups *LeT* and *JeM*. While none of the members of the Parliament were killed, the sheer audacity of the attack however left New Delhi both astounded and humiliated.

Following this, much rhetoric flowed between the two countries as LK Advani- the Deputy Prime Minister, described the attack "as the most audacious and most alarming act of terrorism in the history of two decades of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in India" (Lakshmi 2001: 2). Most of the national political parties called for hard-line policies against Pakistan and offered complete support to the government. In this, the BJP urged the Prime Minister to follow the lead of the post 9/11 US in tackling Pakistani terrorism (Cohn 2002). According to opinions ranging through the political spectrum including members of the Congress, BJP, CPI(M), *Shiv Sena* etc., 'revenge' was considered 'the only compensation' for the attack (Outlook 2001). Noting the responses that emerged from the leaders of different political parties in the aftermath of the Parliament attack, including the one expressed by *Shiv Sena's* Bal Thakeray, who forcefully stated, "does the government have ability to take revenge?" and further that, "they should'nt have the guts to attack us again", Amit Rai observed that the Indian political response mainly circled around framing "India geo-politically with the West and the ongoing War on Terrorism." Furthermore, Rai pointed out that these responses attempted to "strengthen India by isolating internal enemies (Muslim youth allegedly supported by external enemies)," that they "re-situated tactical knowledge or 'intelligence' as key intellectual capital that must be accumulated" and called for a "chilling" military response (Rai 2003: 9).

During this phase, there was enough evidence of inflammatory rhetoric echoing from among the members of the BJP party, which also formed the main coalition partner of the ruling

NDA government. Hindutva organisations such as the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), dramatically offered to take on the responsibility of internal security so that the troops and police could be concentrated on the border and argued that India should abandon its no first use policy with reference to nuclear weapons (Swami 2015). Further, in slamming Pakistan, Uma Bharati, one of the extremely vocal and aggressive pro-Hindu members of the BJP, exclaimed that “if you dream of reading the *namaz* in *Jamaa Masjid*, we will unfurl the tricolor in all of Pakistan,” and in the same impassioned speech, Bharati asserted that Pakistan “better want peace with India or we were ready to get back our borders” (Commuri 2010: 178). Not only did such rhetorical statements promote a muscular war posture, but, they clearly released underlying religious schisms, such that Indian nationalism and national security were enunciated through Hindu religious connotations.

After the terrorist attack on the Parliament, what followed was a belligerent 10-month long troop mobilization, with about half a million Indian soldiers amassed along India’s western front in what was called Operation Parakram. The state also vocally attacked Pakistan through global platforms, urging the international community to collectively act against Pakistan, ‘the sponsor of terrorism’. During this period, in a speech by Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2002, the PM took Pakistan’s name five times while blaming the state and its intelligence agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), for unleashing terror against India. In blaming Pakistan for terrorism, AB Vajpayee noted:

If Pakistan claims to be a crucial partner in the international coalition against terrorism, how can it continue to use terrorism as an instrument of state policy against India? How can the international coalition condone Pakistan-directed killings of thousands of innocent civilians, women and children to promote a bizarre version of self-determination (Vajpayee 2002).

Further, with respect to Jammu and Kashmir, the PM noted in the same speech:

It requires an effort of logical acrobatics to believe that the carnage of innocents is an instrument for freedom and elections are a symbol of deception and repression! If the elections are a mere fraud, why are terrorists being trained and infiltrated into India at the command of the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency of Pakistan to kill election candidates and to intimidate voters (ibid).

Through this it is evident that the Prime Minister used global platforms such as the UNGA to draw the attention of the international community towards Pakistan sponsored/originating

terrorism such that it was presented to be threatening the efforts of both the Global WoT and India's war against terrorism in J&K. In so doing, AB Vajpayee symbolically placed India in the same bracket as America with respect to both of them fighting a common enemy. Simultaneously, in a sense, the PM also urged the global community to adopt high-handed mechanisms against Pakistan by reiterating the US actions against the Taliban in Afghanistan through congratulatory tones. Also audible through the speech was an implicit understanding that the disputed region of J&K was largely integrated within mainland India, a stance that was communicated through Mr. Vajpayee's emphasis on the participation of the Kashmiri natives in elections, despite the allegedly vicious efforts of the Pakistani terrorists to avert the same. In their book- *Operation Parakram: the war Unfinished*, VK Sood and Prawin Sawhney note that following the attack on the Parliament, Home Minister Advani had said on December 25, 2001 that, "the situation has developed in a manner as to make it possible for India, with the support of the world opinion to force Pakistan to abandon terrorism as an instrument of policy" (2003).

Further, in its open rejection of Islamic terrorism, New Delhi consistently emphasized the ostensibly liberal values of the victim states and in so doing, terrorism was framed as the essential 'other' that was threatening India's modernity. For instance, in his address at the 56th session of the UNGA on November 10, 2001, the Indian PM, AB Vajpayee expressed that, "9/11 reminded us that neither distance nor power insulates a state from terrorism. They (the terrorists) represent an arrogant rejection of the values of freedom and tolerance, which democratic and pluralistic societies cherish" (Vajpayee 2001b).

However, it should nonetheless be noted that Washington's priorities did not match New Delhi's. In this context, Rajesh Basrur lays down two specific reasons explicating Washington's lack of action in response to New Delhi's calls for anti-Pakistan actions (2016: 8). First, Basrur notes that the "predominant American objective was to destroy Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan; the India-oriented terrorist groups supported by Pakistan were less important" (ibid). Second, he asserted that the "US needed Pakistan's assistance to carry out its counter-terrorist campaigns in Afghanistan and did not want to alienate Islamabad by targeting its India-oriented assets" (ibid).

Attacks on Mumbai- 26/11

Another key event that significantly shaped the mainstream narrative around terrorism was the 2008 Mumbai attack. On 26 November, 2008, a team of ten terrorists launched a commando style attack in Mumbai wherein, a series of 12 coordinated shootings and bombings left the city incapacitated for two and a half harrowing days. The attacks which drew widespread global condemnation lasted until 29 November, killing around 172 people, wounding at least 310, causing immediate property damage of around \$18 million.

For the sheer shock, scale and magnitude of this episode, the attack has been popularly termed India's 9/11. Amitav Ghosh has remarked how the metaphor has functioned as an exhortation to the Indian government to match the Bush administration's military and judiciary response to the attack on twin towers (Misri:2013 citing Ghosh). In this respect, Misri notes that

the meme 'India's 9/11' could also be seen to have functioned as an Indian colonial strategy, one that seeks a geo-political alliance between India and US, an alliance that has been repeatedly consolidated against a common Muslim terrorist threat within the national borders in both countries (ibid).

This apart, it is suggested here that not only did the '9/11' meme assist in drawing New Delhi geopolitically closer to Washington, and consequently justifying (CIA-style) emergency and extraordinary actions in wiping out terrorism, but that, the meme also enabled the popularizing of a polarized view of terrorism as absolutely evil and in that, it generally ignored the systemic forces that drove terrorist acts in the first place (Chouliaraki 2004; Simmons & Lowry 1990).

With respect to India's immediate response to the Mumbai attack, New Delhi served Pakistan with a diplomatic demarche and broke off a slew of negotiations that were in progress on defense, trade, water, and culture. Further, New Delhi also asked Islamabad to hand over 20 persons wanted on terrorism charges, a demand that the latter promptly rejected (Basrur 2016: 7-9). This apart, Indian diplomats tried to get the United States to put pressure on Pakistan to curb cross-border terrorism. Basrur points out that

The US complied initially, but subsequently reduced the pressure, with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stating that she 'fully believed' that China would investigate the attacks and 'does not want, in any way, to be associated with terrorists' (ibid: 9).

Discursively, the political elite framed the Mumbai attack as symbolic of the existential threat that was posed on the ‘civilised’/developed world at the hands of (Pakistan instigated) terrorism. In this, the urgency of a collective-coercive action against the terrorists was repeatedly amplified. For instance, in his first public address following the attacks, the Indian PM, Dr Manmohan Singh, while addressing the *Economic Times* awards ceremony in January 2009 iterated that through Mumbai, which also reflected “the founding ideals of India and its secular, pluralistic and vibrant democracy”, “the terrorists had attacked all of the ‘civilised nations’” (Singh 2009). Singh’s stance was reflected in the words of other political elites too; the External Affairs Minister, SM Krishna, for one, noted in a statement to the Parliament on 13 February, 2009 that the Mumbai attacks underlined the grave threat that (Pakistani) terrorism posed to ‘peace and stability in general’ and therefore, iterated the need to see the same in the larger context of the Global WoT (Krishna 2009). Further in the same address, the minister averred that the ‘international community’ was working with the Indian government so as to ensure that the “terrorist infrastructure and the support provided to such elements was put to an end” since, “terrorism emanating out of Pakistan was a threat not only to us, but to the world” (ibid). In the same breath, the Minister also exclaimed that “the threat of terrorism from Pakistan had emerged as a global menace and cancer” (ibid). Through these assertions, it is noteworthy that while addressing the ‘menace and cancer’ of terrorism, New Delhi simultaneously placed India as the oppositionally ‘civilized’, ‘developed’, ‘democratic’, ‘secular’ (Western) nation that was fighting a noble war against the monstrous terrorists. Moreover, it is worth noting that the ‘speech-acts’ discussed above, echoed the securitization discourse with terrorism seen as emerging out of Pakistan and being repetitively claimed as a ‘dangerous’, ‘global menace and cancer’ that posed a/n (existential) ‘grave’ threat to the ‘peace and stability’ of the so-called ‘civilized world.’ In this a well choreographed assertion was visible that pressed the international community to collectively work with India in the said challenge. It is also to be noted that by implicitly aligning India with the West, a public demand for Indian policies and actions matching the Western style counter-terror actions, seemed apparent.

Likewise, in his address at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2009, SM Krishna noted that:

The barbaric terrorist attack on the innocent people of Mumbai on November 26, 2008 reminds us of the daily and malignant menace that terrorism poses to all countries. There cannot be any justification whatsoever for such mindless terrorist acts. It is our collective responsibility and duty to work together to ensure that terrorists, organizers, perpetrators and supporters of such crimes are brought to justice (2009b).

From such remarks it can be averred that through the almost ‘chant-like’ repetitive nature of such ‘speech-acts’ (Solomon and Oren 2014), New Delhi securitized terrorism as the evil ‘other’ that urgently needed to be eliminated, and consequently, through this process, the political elite simultaneously framed the Indian state through the biographical narratives of a ‘democratic’, ‘civilized’, ‘modern’ self that stood at par with the rest of the Western world. Evidently, New Delhi drew discursive parallels between India and the West in terms of both being common victims of the pre-modern, demonic and barbaric Islamic terrorist ‘others’ as it pressed for ‘collective’ emergency actions by the ‘modern’ and ‘free’ world to eliminate the existential threat from demonic terrorism. Through such an ‘orientalised securitization’ process, the ‘barbaric terrorist other’ became essential for reasserting India’s cognitive narrative of modernity and liberalism. Further, it is also essential to see the remarks made by Dr Manmohan Singh and SM Krishna alongside those made by Sonia Gandhi at the Congress Working Committee (CWC)¹⁴ which was held following the Mumbai attacks on 29 November 2008. Ms. Gandhi noted:

We can no longer sit back and let these attacks overwhelm us. Our response has to be effective and it has to be decisive... As the party that leads this coalition, our first task is to restore faith among the people. They must feel that they have a government that is taking all possible measures to give succor to those who need it and, more important, to ensure that there is no recurrence of such traumatic acts of terror... The time for intent is over. The nation is looking to us for decisive action and determined leadership (ibid).

Through these remarks it is clear that following 26/11, not only did New Delhi discursively align itself with the global community with respect to the shared sense of victimhood from a common (Pakistani/Islamic) threat, but, it was also evident that New Delhi was also pressing for coercive and muscular counter-terrorism mechanisms, like the ones that were adopted by the United States in the wake of 9/11.

¹⁴ Full speech at: <http://aicc.org.in/web.php/president/speech/78#.WWNe2BWGPIU>

Cinematic text: reflection of dominant statist narratives through Bombay films

Having examined the mainstream statist narratives with respect to terrorism, the aim of this section is to seek to find a resonance and reflection of the same through Bombay cinema. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to point out at the outset that in the post-millennium period, Bombay cinema also produced several films that have articulated alternate narratives which have focused more on the similarities between the people of Pakistan and India and less on caricaturing the 'other'. *Filmistaan* (Nitin Kakkar 2014), *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (Vijay Raaz, 2014) and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (Kabir Khan 2015) exemplify such films that were made in very close succession of each other. These films focus on similitude, by tracing resemblance primarily between the cultures and ideologies on either sides of the border. Through this, they accentuate an Indian nationalism that is naturally accommodative, pacifist, secular and sacrificing.

Contrarily, this section will look at films that identify Indian and Pakistani identities through binary oppositions. An attempt will be made to find the reflection of mainstream statist discourses on the overlapping categories of terrorism/Pakistan/Islamic fundamentalism/Kashmiri dispute through Hindi films. The purpose of this intertextual analysis is to understand the discursive process that assists in manufacturing meaning and consent with respect to New Delhi's policies on terrorism and counter-terrorism and, to understand how the same contributed to (re)producing certain narratives around the Indian and Pakistani identities.

As has been observed in the previous chapter on Kashmir, the manner in which terrorism was cinematically presented during the 1990s and the early 21st century, was particularly through the repetition of certain dominant tropes including that of cross-border terrorism, Hindu-nationalism, neo-orientalism, and that of 'the good Kashmiri/Muslim versus the bad Kashmiri/Muslim' prism. The Kashmir imbroglio was thus dominantly imagined through tropes of Pakistan complicit terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, misguided Kashmir youth, while the Indian identity was largely imagined as tolerant, secular, peace loving, righteous, patriotic wherein, patriotism included an exaggerated expression of love for the nation that was simultaneously ignorant towards the context that had instrumentalized terrorism and militancy in the Valley in the first place. The chapter also found that Bollywood films on Kashmir, echoed a

dichotomous relation between the ‘good Kashmiri’ and the ‘bad Kashmiri’. In this it was observed that the ‘good Kashmiri’ was a metaphor for the ideal Kashmiri/Muslim citizen who was vociferous in both her/his allegiance to the Indian state as well as in their disdain and disapproval towards the terroristic violence that was visible in the Valley. Contrarily, the ‘bad Kashmiri/Muslim’ was largely portrayed through orientalist stereotypes as irrational, fundamentalist, aggressive, naïve and consequently as someone who was detrimental to the security of the Indian nation.

In this section, the aim is to engage with the filmic portrayal of terrorism through the 1990s till 2014. In this, the dominant narratives discussed so far will be extended from the Kashmir films made in the post-1989 phase that have been discussed in the previous chapter. As noted above, 2001 marked a watershed year of sorts with respect to the popular understanding of terrorism. This was the year that witnessed both the Twin Tower attacks in the United States and the Parliament attack in New Delhi, both of which existentially threatened not just the physical, but also the Ontological security of Washington and New Delhi by a network of (Islamic) terrorists. Following 2001, as has been asserted in the section above, 9/11 has been a crucial intervening variable in defining and constructing New Delhi’s policies and actions towards terrorism and counter-terrorism. This apart, the increasing intermittent episodes of terrorist strikes on the Indian body-politic in the post-millennium phase, particularly the Mumbai attacks on 26/11, have resulted in the emergence of a mainstream statist narrative that has discursively aligned India with the United States and the rest of the Western world with respect to both sharing a similar sense of victimhood from an Islamic terrorist ‘other’ as well as with respect to implicitly justifying the adoption of a CIA-kind coercive counter-terror methods. Also evident through this statist posturing is the narrative that presses for emergency measures in order to eliminate the existential threat emanating from terrorism.

This section will discuss the cinematic reflection of mainstream statist articulations on terrorism in 21st century India. It will attempt to explore the discursive construction of terrorism and the narratives around Indian and Pakistani identities. For this purpose, the following section will be divided into three sub-sections i.e.: ‘good’ Muslim versus ‘bad’ Muslim; apocalyptic threats: and counter terrorism.

The 'good' Muslim versus the 'bad' Muslim

As explained above, films falling under the loose genre of terrorism are also rife with binaries of the 'good Muslim' and the 'bad Muslim'. Through this study it has been noted that the 'good Muslim' is mostly associated with overt allegiance towards the Indian nation wherein, love for the nation (*mulk*) is found to overpower that which is felt for the religion (*qaum*). Also, by showing the 'good Muslim' as a practitioner of the *Sufi* form of Islam, the films also draw organic links between the spiritual and religiously harmonious Sufi form and the purportedly secular and religiously tolerant character of the Indian nation. Likewise, it has also been established that the 'bad Muslim' is overtly depicted as aggressive, unreasonable, devious, fundamentalist, religious with, the categories of Islam, Pakistan, Kashmir and terrorism bleeding into one another.

Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* for instance, places the Kashmiri militant Rehan- the anti-hero (bad Muslim), against the ultra patriotic, pacifist and idealistic Zooni (good Muslim). The film opens to Zooni (Kajol) passionately saluting the Indian national flag as she sings Mohammed Iqbal's patriotic anthem- *Saare Jahan Se Accha Hindustan hamara*. Through the film, the Kashmiri Zooni is unrealistically shown to be expressing her utmost love for the Indian nation through overtly melodramatic gestures and dialogues, which in a sense could also be interpreted as the concerted effort made by the 'good' Muslim to justify and prove her loyalty towards the Indian nation-state. Here, one can relate the 'good' Muslim's 'concerted efforts' in *Fanaa* with the findings of the *Sachar Committee Report* that pointed out that Muslims have to carry the burden of being labeled 'anti-national' (Chishti 2006). Likewise, in Shoojit Sircar's *Yahaan* (2005), the Kashmiri female protagonist Adaa (played by Minissha Lamba) is portrayed as the ideal Indian citizen who is not only against violent militancy in Kashmir, but also openly demonstrates fascination towards the purportedly modern and progressive way of life that is practiced in the rest of mainland India. Her 'good Muslim' credentials are further reinstated through her love relation with a (visibly Hindu) Indian army officer Captain Aman (played by Jimmy Shergill) who is deputed in Kashmir. This heterosexual couple also becomes a metaphor for the national integrationist project with respect to the disputed status of Kashmir.

This good versus bad dichotomy has become more prominent in the films made post 9/11, which, “through the increasing corporate links” between Bombay cinema and the media houses in the US, “perceptibly transformed the ways in which Bombay cinema began to deal with and represent terrorism” (Gabriel and Vijayan 2012: 301). It should also be noted here that the growing out-migration of Indian professionals to the countries of the global-north particularly the US, further assisted in shaping the post 9/11 representational changes. In this regard, Amit Rai asserts that “much like the post-9/11 counter terrorism discourses in the US, Hindi cinema's cinepatriotic genre sorts good Muslims from bad Muslims via the figure of the Muslim terrorist, while using the heterosexual family as a template for citizenship” (2003:17). This is visible in films like *Fanaa*, *Aamir*, *New York*, *My Name is Khan*, *Baby*, *Phantom* to name a few. While Muslim characters are more visible in the films made during this period, even if it's just to counterbalance the cinematic image of the bad Muslim, Bombay cinema nevertheless continues to focus on the urban Hindu family when it comes to emphasizing what is under actual threat from Islamist terrorism. For instance in *Aamir*, Misri points out,

as the suit-wearing, educated 'good Muslim' protagonist considers whether or not to follow the terrorist's orders of bombing down a bus, the camera focuses repeatedly on a face of a *bindii*-wearing mother and her son (2013: 158)

The iconic image of what is at stake. Likewise, Neeraj Pandey's *Baby* (2015) differentiates the image of the demonic, vicious Pakistani terrorist from that of the ideal heterosexual Indian citizen, Akshay Kumar who alongside being an extreme patriot, is also a family man with a typical family of four metaphorically signifying that which needs to be protected and conserved by the patriotic patriarch.

The post-millennium terrorism films construct the imaginary of a technologically advanced, frightening and dehumanized conception of the (Pakistani) Muslim terrorist. I argue that the fear and fright that is attached to the terrorist in this phase, is emphasized through the ability of the same to thrive on near-apocalyptic intentions. In this, the terrorists have a demeanor that is both vicious and nonchalant.

Apocalyptic threats

Apocalyptic or ‘end of the world’ scenarios have been visible in Bombay cinema through diverse tropes including those of natural disasters, communal riots, Partition and the threats of nuclear attacks or massive blasts to name a few. While filmic narratives of natural disasters were visible in the films made in the early decades following the truncation of the Indian subcontinent, it was only in the 1990s (as discussed in Chapter III), that Hindi films started portraying apocalyptic scenarios of pogroms between Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Both these narratives could be directly/indirectly related to the episode of Partition between India and Pakistan and the associated trauma of death, loss, rupture and fragmentation.

In post-millennium Bollywood, within the context of India and Pakistan’s nuclear power status (that was officially achieved in 1998) and the consequent aggressive posturing that followed, particularly through popular news media; 9/11 attacks; multiple episodes of terror-bomb blasts in urban India and the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai, cinematic apocalyptic scenarios have mostly come to be associated with the existential threats of both colossal bomb blasts and nuclear weapon attacks by Islamic terrorists (mostly operating out of Pakistan). As a case in point, one can note the storylines of films like *Hero: the love story of a spy* (2003), *Fanaa..Destroyed in love* (2006) *Agent Vinod* (2012), *Baby* (2015) to name a few. In these films as will be discussed, there is an urgent and ubiquitous threat of a nuclear attack or a massive blast over metropolitan, urban India which is eventually averted through the actions of the uber-patriotic, physically fit, mentally sharp and technologically adept heterosexual security forces or agents.

In my analysis of the films in this section, I engage with the apocalyptic narratives of pre-nuclear and massive bomb blast scenarios so as to understand how the filmic reconstruction of anxieties related to a possible ‘end-of-the-world-as-we-know-it’ scenario has been instrumental in normalizing the dual process of both securitizing Pakistani terrorism and portraying the Indian citizen as the righteous/sincere patriot. In examining Bollywood films that portray apocalyptic nuclear weapons scenarios, Raminder Kaur (2013) notes that the films display ‘pre-nuclear’ anxieties in which nuclear missiles appear in the “hands of separatists and villains with designs against the nation, who are ultimately vanquished by the patriot hero(ine)” (ibid: 543). I argue that through such ‘thrilling’ settings in which, the (terrorist) villain carries the capability to detonate a nuclear bomb at any minute, the films have justified the employment of torturous,

extra-legal, coercive methods as the only option so as to eliminate the threat emanating from the demonic (Pakistani) terrorist.

With respect to the theme of ‘nuclear cinema’ it should be noted that the cinematic portrayal of nuclear weapons in both Japanese and American films has revolved around feelings of anxiety, unease, panic or fear towards the destructive apocalyptic effects of the same. These films have mostly engaged with post-nuclear scenarios, i.e., with the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust and the consequent tumult that would erupt. For instance, Japanese *Hibakusha*¹⁵ films like *Gojira*, *Rhapsody in August*, *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *Black Rain*, *Barefoot Gen*, *Bells of Nagasaki* (to name a few) both realistically and metaphorically engage with the anxieties faced by the Japanese society following the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The popular cultural imagination of nuclear weapons in the United States has also been synonymous with apocalypse. American popular novels such as *Alas, Babylon* and *On the Beach* can be recalled as popular cultural texts that portrayed the apocalyptic aftermath of nuclear war. However, unlike such examples that engage with the destruction and the associated trauma that is suffered in the aftermath of a nuclear war, mainstream Hindi films contrarily portray pre-nuclear-scenarios wherein, the anxiety is caused not by the destructively harmful effects of nuclear weapons in general, but instead, by the smuggling of nuclear material and technology through the hands of foreign and Pakistani terrorists and non-state actors. Likewise, unlike *Hibakusha* and Hollywood films, such Hindi films visualize the role of the state as the rightful custodian of these weapons of mass destruction. By demonizing the terrorist and by not questioning or problematizing the state’s possession of and actions with respect to the use of nuclear missiles, the films glorify and eulogize the postcolonial state’s vision on development and modernity.

It could be argued here that nuclear weapons are dealt with or responded to and portrayed differently by different film cultures. With respect to the understanding of the Indian popular cultural imagination of nuclear weapons, Raminder Kaur (2013: 540) states that “Indian cinematic culture owes largely to the particular relationship that the post-colonial development-oriented nation of India has with the master narrative of modernity”. While in the West, ‘science and technology’ are seen both as the means to progress and as its uncanny ‘other’- namely

¹⁵*Hibakusha* films is a genre of Japanese films that were motivated from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear holocausts of August 1945 and consequently, revolve around the destructive aftermath of atomic bombings.

catastrophe; in India, “the tendency is to embrace ‘technoscience’ in a more utopian fashion, so as to throw off the legacies of colonial oppression and perceptions of 'backwardness' attached therewith” (ibid: 540).

After India detonated five nuclear bombs on 11 May and 13 May, 1998, under the BJP-led coalition government, the act received wide-spread fervor and mileage within the public sphere, with the same being symbolic of postcolonial India’s arrival on the global stage. In this regard, while talking about India’s nuclear power status, the former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy, Dr. R. Chidambaram noted: “the most important thing is that India must become strong. The greatest advantage of recognized strength is that you don’t have to use it” (Subramanian 1998). On 28 May in the same year, India’s arch-enemy, Pakistan also officially ‘went nuclear’ after conducting five nuclear tests. The close succession within which both the nations conducted these tests, assisted in heightening the aggressive posture that was already attached to these weapons. As Raminder Kaur points out,

These tests also signaled a new orientation towards political showmanship, possessive pride, and a heightened jingoism at times of increasing liberalization attended by a media that was vociferously hungry for such spectacles (2013: 541).

In this sense, nuclear weapons donned the role of a symbolic spectacle that could be glorified by the state for enabling the recognition of India as a greater global power. It can thus be argued that due to the reasons of pride and strength that the weapons bring to the postcolonial Indian nation, there have been negligible films that have critiqued the Indian state’s possession of the same. In the films that this section engages with including *Hero: the love story of a spy* (2003), *Fanaa*, *Destroyed in love* (2006), *Agent Vinod* (2012) that portray risky scenarios of threat of a possible nuclear weapons attack on the Indian body politic by a network of terrorist-monsters, the techno-scientific acumen and power of the Indian state is visible not only through the latter’s possession of these weapons, but also through the technologically, scientifically and militarily advanced methods through which the Indian security officers and agents retrieve the weapons from the terrorists.

Films including *16 December*, *Hero: Love story of a spy*, *Fanaa*.....*Destroyed in love* and *Agent Vinod* portray a ‘pre-nuclear’ anxiety which is caused by the threat of an impending

nuclear attack on metropolitan India through the acquisition of nuclear technology and material by a network of Islamic/Pakistani/Jihadi Kashmiri terrorists. The narrative structure of these films revolves around the journey of a patriotic Indian (security agent) in averting the nuclear attack and in the process, reinforcing the imagination of a demonic, sub-human, fundamentalist terrorist against a heterosexual, humane, modern, intelligent, patriotic Indian soldier/citizen. Such a binary is glaringly visible in Anil Sharma's *Hero*. The film is a spy-thriller based on a separatist organization's efforts to develop a nuclear bomb in order to free Kashmir from India. The film portrays the Pakistani army and the Kashmiri *Jihadis* through stereotypes of *pathani* suits, skull caps, mechanically reading the rosary while viciously plotting a possible nuclear strike against India through what they call the 'Islamic bomb', that is meant to destroy the '*Kafir*' India. Through the multiple evocations and significant of words like 'Islamic bomb' and '*jihadi*', a problematically overt link is drawn between Islam and terrorism. Likewise, in Neeraj Pandey's *Baby* (2015), which revolves around a few 'spectacular'¹⁶ sequences of covert-militaristic operations by super-hero-like Indian security agents to avert a series of 'very big aerial attacks' over metropolitan India cities; the Islamic religious leanings of the terrorists are primarily foregrounded. In the film, the terrorists are typically portrayed fashioning the Islamic beard, pathani suits, skull cap, *keffiyeh* with sequences of them plotting the apocalyptic attacks being aurally marked by Middle-Eastern sounding music and by an oft repetition of terms like *jihadi*, *inshallah*, *allah-hu-akbar* that are articulated by the terrorists. Not only does the film explicitly establish Islam and terrorism as collapsible categories, but it also establishes the monstrosity and sub-human tendencies of the Islamic terrorists which, oppositionally assists in placing the Indian security officers as righteous/ideal citizens, who are legitimately found going to any extent to eliminate the demonic terrorists.

Neeraj Pandey underlines and emphasizes the demonic and sub-human traits of the terrorists through the film. For instance, in the opening sequence of the film, one finds a battered Indian agent being physically assaulted and tortured by a team of foreign Islamic terrorists donning a checkered Keffiyeh on their shoulders. Through this sequence that takes place in what seems like a large vacant floor of a deserted building situated somewhere in Turkey, the terrorists

¹⁶ The term has been popularised by James Der Derian (2001) through the 'MIME-NET'-the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network in which, Derian talks about military conflict being packaged and sold as 'spectacular' entertainment.

are visibly shown to be deriving sadistic pleasure out of battering their victim. Through several close-up shots in this sequence with the camera focusing on the bloody and smashed face of the Indian-victim, a connect is established between the victim and the audiences which further assists in accentuating the sub-human and beast-like traits of the visibly cold-blooded terrorists.

In yet another sequence wherein the most wanted Pakistani terrorist *Maulana Rahman* (who seems like the filmic version of Hafiz Saeed) is shown delivering a jingoistic hate-speech to an impassioned crowd of visibly Islamic (Pakistani) men, the sequence closes with the camera zooming into the upper face of the Maulana – nose and above, with the camera sitting on it for a few seconds. In this, by showing fire coming out of the iris of the Maulana’s eyes, a palpable monstrosity of the character is established. The monstrosity is further exaggerated through his vicious facial expressions and the resounding sloganeering of *allah-ho-akbar* that is being eerily chanted in the background.

In such films that revolve around apocalyptic themes, the devilish nature of the (Pakistani) terrorists is also underlined by virtue of the fact that they remain visibly unperturbed and nonchalant in both the plotting and execution of attacks that have the potential of killing lakhs of innocent people in the flash of a few seconds. Matthew Hannah points out that

The willingness of terrorists to engage in super-terrorism involving WMDs means that terrorists cease being ‘normal biopolitical bodies’ that can be deterred by conventional means, becoming instead an exceptional threat (2006: 629).

In the same vein, Elspeth Van Veeran relates the terrorists of this kind to Carl Schmitt’s conception of the Partisan- the ‘real’ or ‘absolute’ enemy who is willing to go to all lengths to defend his interests and therefore requires a response in kind (2009: 376). As terrorists, “they show no qualms about the ‘real possibility of killing’ and cannot be opposed by legal, moral or economic devices” (ibid).

Furthermore, the almost ticking-clock scenario in these films, as visible in films like *Fanaa*, *Agent Vinod*, *Hero: the story of a spy* and *Baby* in particular, where it is believed that the terrorists would be executing the apocalyptic attack in the span of a few days, hours or minutes, a sense of existential immediacy, intensity and urgency is injected into the narrative, thus elevating the threat to a point that it is invariably securitized. In this, the panic that is instilled by the

nearness of the doomsday setting, constructs terrorism as exceptional, ubiquitous and invariably, justifies and normalizes extra-legal counter-terror means that seem to be the only logical mechanisms to eliminate the threat.

Through such story-lines in which films legitimately employ superior kinds of muscular, military and technological counter-terror mechanisms, there is an evidently seductive ‘spectacularisation’ of violence. James Der Derian (2001) notes that through the commonly consistent employment of technologically superior and advanced techniques of violence in both films and video games, the resultant blood and gore is no longer mourned, but instead is consumed as a spectacle. Noting the sophisticated weapons and torture that the superhero kind of protagonists are seen flashing against the terrorist-other in post-millennium Hollywood films Derian notes that the same are narratively justified to the extent that such sequences are consumed with a sense of vindication, catharsis, fascination and spectacularization. Borrowing this logic, it is asserted here, that films like *Agent Vinod*, *Phantom*, *Baby*, *D-Day* are examples of this logic. The crisp action sequences in these films in which, the protagonist almost always succeeds in eliminating the sub-human terrorists, coupled with the excitement that is generated by a ticking-clock scenario with respect to the proximity towards a possible apocalyptic attack, assists in reducing the on-screen violence to adrenaline thumping entertainment. This ‘Derianian’ spectacularization of violence that is notable through several filmic sequences in this genre of films is problematic as alongside legitimizing and glamorizing weapons, torture, blood and gore, it also has the potential of numbing the spectators towards techniques of torture in general and in normalizing Islamic and Pakistani terrorists as sub-human objects deserving of nothing but torture and elimination.

James Der Derian also discusses the interconnectedness of the military and the producers of popular culture to the extent that he argues that a military-industrial-media-entertainment network (MIME-NET) has been constituted: a feedback loop that “merges the production, representation and execution of war” such that the distinction between military and civilian, state and public, real and simulation, original and new, produced and reproduced becomes hard to make (Derian 2000: 787). This feedback loop he notes bears crucial implications on a state’s identity by affecting how wars (and counter-terror mechanisms) are popularly conceptualized and understood.

While Derian explicates the Military-Media network with respect to the connection between Hollywood and the Pentagon, a similar connect can also be drawn closer home. I argue that intertextual links are notable between the military and popular cultural forms through both deliberate connections between the policy elites and film producers, as well as through narrative overlaps between the security operations of the military and those portrayed in films.

For instance, in its opening credits, Neeraj Pandey's *Baby* pays a 'special thanks' to the 'Government of India, Indian Air Force and to an IPS officer- Brajesh Mishra'. In a telephonic conversation that I had with a production team member of the film, it was established that the pre-production stage of the film comprised of closely working and coordinating with a few officers of the Indian security services so as to achieve as much verisimilitude in the narrative of the film as possible. This attempt to realistically convey the story is visible in the opening frames of the film wherein, through the voice over of a senior security officer in the film- namely Feroz Ali Khan (played by Danny Denzongpa), it is established that the said name of the film 'Baby' was the code-name given to a confidential security operation that was supposed to run for a span of 5 years. The voice-over also establishes that the operation was born out the Mumbai attacks of 2008 (termed 26/11). Through this opening sequence in which Feroz Khan introduces the audiences to the story line of the film, each frame comprises of several real newspaper cuttings superimposed over one another carrying varied headlines on the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.

Films like *Baby*, *Phantom*, *D-Day* explicitly attempt to convey the realistic depiction of terrorism by revolving around real-life terrorists like Dawood Ibrahim, Hafiz Saeed, David Hedley; real-life threats of possible nuclear attacks or other major terrorist attacks over the urban Indian body politic and a believable portrayal of covert security operations carrying nomenclatures of actual intelligence agencies like RAW, IB, ATU.

Kabir Khan's *Phantom* (2015), which revolves around 'bringing to justice' all the masterminds behind the 26/11 attacks for instance, realistically portrays the actual perpetrators behind the attacks including David Hedley, Hafiz Saeed wherein, verisimilitude is achieved through narrative, names, facial and bodily resemblances. Through such fluid and overlapping filmic narratives, there is a palpable fuzziness that blurs the boundary between fact and fiction. In short, 'fiction' and 'reality' are mutually constitutive, where the 'real' influences 'fiction', and

the ‘fiction’ influences the ‘real’ working iteratively to produce new meanings. Van Veeran (2009: 369) notes that “the result of this interconnectedness –the intertexts- is the production of a hyper-reality of terrorism and counterterrorism, which works to normalize current practices and render them more plausible and commonsensical”. Likewise, this blurring between military and media can enable the reinforcing of dominant filmic binaries, identities and the spectacularization of violence.

Counter-terrorism

In this section, I attempt to analyze the filmic portrayal of counter-terrorism and the consequent hyper-reality conveyed through the depiction to discover certain key notions around both Indian and Pakistani identities. As asserted above, post 9/11, Bollywood shared significant narrative overlaps with Hollywood particularly with respect to the themes of Islamic terrorism. This overlap also extended to the areas of counter-terrorism with extra-legal mechanisms like torture, detention without warrant, vigilante justice being (hyper-realistically) portrayed as both necessary and indispensable in the fight against terrorism. In this, while discussing an American crime thriller television series- *24*, Elspeth Van Veeran notes how through the television series, high-handed, extra-legal methods adopted by the CIA and the FBI in fighting terrorism are both glorified and legitimised. In her critical reading of *24*, Veeran suggests that the series

(re)produces key elements of the Bush administration’s discourse on the ‘global war on terrorism’, working with official discourses to constitute a new ‘reality’ of terrorism and counter-terrorism, and therefore facilitating practices such as rendition, detention without charge, and torture (2009: 374-75).

Such trends have also become common in mainstream Hindi films that largely revolve around the theme of terrorism, particularly in those that have been made 2007-08 onwards, a period that has been marked by an increasingly high number of terrorist attacks on the urban Indian body-politic at the hands of Pakistani and Islamic terrorists. Films like *Aamir* (2008), *A Wednesday* (2008), *EkTha Tiger* (2012), *Baby*, *Agent Vinod* (2012), *D-Day* (2013), *Attacks on 26/11* (2013), *Phantom* (2015) to name a few, fall under this category. Blatantly visible in these films is a palpable urgency to thwart the virulent network of Pakistani/Islamic terrorism by the use of exceptional methods espousing extra-legal, torturous and vigilante mechanisms. The use of such methods is cinematically propagated through both the narrative and speech-acts.

The protagonists of these films come across as visibly frustrated with both terrorism and the associated governmental inaction, wherein the oft repeated question in these films revolves around the puzzle-as to 'why we always end up being so helpless'. A sense of dishonor is evident from the way that this felt helplessness is affectively articulated to the extent that extra legal and torturous actions are not only justified but also glorified. Neeraj Pandey's *A Wednesday* exemplifies a film that was one of the first of this kind to have engaged with the exhibitionism of vigilantism in 2008, a theme that was hitherto repeated through films like *Agent Vinod*, *Baby* and *Phantom*. Subhash Kapila points out that India-at-Large was abhorrent of its political leadership especially after Mumbai 26/11 for "shirking and not being audacious enough in retaliating sharply against the Pakistan Army trained commando-mode attacks on India's financial capital" (2013). The psychological need to teach 'them' a lesson and redeem the 'honor' of the nation that was discursively dominating political, media and popular cultural narratives, was also visible in many Hindi films that were made around this time and on this subject.

This can be better understood from the perspective of Ontological Security and its element of Critical Situation (Steele 2008). Critical situation or as Catarina Kinnvall (2002, 2004) terms 'existential anxiety', marks a situation which leaves the state feeling anxious or threatened due to a sense of disjuncture that may be felt with respect to its sense of self, or stable self-identity, and can consequently result in the same adopting certain narratives and actions so as to redeem the lost sense of self. The rise in terrorist attacks through the Indian body-politic in the post millennium period, in particular the Mumbai attack of 2008, bruised both physical security and the cognitive self-image that the Indian nation had sought for itself as a secure, powerful, sovereign nation state. Against this background, narratives that focused on a hyperbolic orchestration of nationalism through extra-legal, torturous, vigilante counter-terror actions could be better comprehended.

The vigilante and interventionist actions of the United States in the post 9/11 period have for instance been romantically called upon through these films, wherein the emulation of the same has been eulogized with respect to the urgency of New Delhi performing similar actions against Pakistan. This fascination towards American vigilantism has been visible through Neeraj Pandey's *Baby* in which the protagonist, Ajay Singh (played by Akshay Kumar) laments New Delhi's inaction following 26/11 even when "America had the audacity to enter Pakistan and kill

Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad in 2011". This trend of placing American coercive and interventionist actions as the yardstick deserving of emulation has had narrative consistency through both statist and filmic texts. In a similar stance, the Indian protagonist Daniyel Khan (played by Saif Ali Khan) in *Phantom*, speaks of the muscular covert operations of Israel's national intelligence agency, Mossad, in congratulatory and praiseworthy tones. The explicit celebration of aggression, the spectacularization of violence/torture, and the celebration of vigilante justice are being done connecting these with both nationalism and citizenship.

Films like *Agent Vinod* (2012), *D-Day* (2013), *Baby* (2015) and *Phantom* (2015) which were made in close succession of one another, portray covert operations (mostly without the direct assistance by the state) performed by agencies like the RAW or the IB wherein, the secret agents are shown going to any limits so as to achieve three interrelated goals: attaining physical security, regaining lost self respect (Ontological Security) and lastly, achieve a sense of catharsis.

A case in point here is *Phantom*, in which, despite the disapproval of the seemingly 'soft/weak' Indian state, the RAW agents are shown entering the territory of Pakistan with the objective of killing one of the masterminds behind 26/11- Haaris Saeed (a character who bears a stark resemblance to Hafiz Saeed, a Lashkar terrorist who has been identified by the Indian state as being the key mastermind behind the Mumbai attack). What follows is an undercover operation through which the protagonists manage to swiftly do away with their targets. Through this act, the theme of vigilante justice is visibly eulogized. The cathartic impact of such acts on the self-image narrative is affectively emphasized in the closing sequence of the film, wherein one of the surviving agents (Katrina Kaif) is shown to be peacefully sipping a cup of tea that she is treated to by a tea vendor who celebrates his moment of deliverance following the news of the eventual killing of the masterminds behind the 26/11 attacks that had claimed the life of his son. The camera pans out as the credits roll to a shot that shows life on the streets of Mumbai going on at its normal and secure pace in front of the all encompassing (and symbolic) structure of the Taj Hotel.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the influence of political discourses on cinematic narratives which portray terrorism as an offshoot of Pakistani state's complicity and Islamic religious fundamentalism. The chapter has found that the intertextuality I have examined here demonstrates an exceptional and ubiquitous threat posed by terrorism, which in turn, corresponds to the need for a militarized and repressive form of counter-terrorism. Further, I have found that by focusing on the monstrosity of the terrorist, the Indian citizen has been contrarily situated as an ostensibly righteous, superior and modern (Hindu) citizen.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

This study has argued that significant links exist between political discourses and popular cultural texts. In paying attention to these links, I have argued that mainstream films should not merely be understood as epiphenomenal texts, but, rather as pertinent sites that interact with and participate in the consistently iterated statist narratives and discourses, and simultaneously echoing the same. I have noted that through several instances of filmic resonance of mainstream political narratives, a certain 'everydayness' and normalisation with respect to particular narratives and identities has been engendered with regard to Kashmir, Islam, Pakistan and terrorism.

In this project, the Foucauldian understanding of discourse has been adopted that looks at discourse as a synchronised articulation of similar ideas reflecting through diverse sites, which consequently assist in making intelligible a certain way of thinking and talking about a topic during a particular historical period. Herein, the discourse produced through the political and

cinematic inter-text has been understood as one such essential site of discursive formation. Further, in this exploration, the study gets situated within one of the strands of the emerging scholarly discipline of 'Popular Culture and World Politics' (PCWP) which borrows from Jutta Welders (1999, 1999b, 2001), Roland Bleiker (2001, 2012), Kyle Grayson (2009, 2014, 15) etc., to comprehend popular cultural artefacts as representative and constitutive of politics. Within the PCWP paradigm, popular cultural forms are understood to have the potential of rendering 'commonsensical', particular political 'knowledge'. Further, the theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitisation have also been adopted through this study to find the articulation of the deeply embedded self-narratives of the Indian state at particular periods through both political and filmic texts. Further, disjunctures and inconsistencies of these self-narratives and the statist response to the same have also been noted.

This thesis has studied mainstream Hindi films starting from the years after the Partition/Independence in 1947 to 2014. Within this period, the particular thematic areas that have been crucial to India's relations with Pakistan have been looked at. The three main themes that have been adopted are Partition and War narratives; Kashmir and dominant discourses; and Terrorism and counter-terrorism narratives. Each of these themes has been discussed within a chapterised form. Further, within each of these chapters, both political discourses and filmic narratives have been studied to find explicit and implicit overlaps from the political texts to the filmic ones.

With respect to studying the political narratives, Prime Minister's speeches, Lok Sabha debates, Annual reports of the Ministry of Home Affairs etc., have been discussed to find the consistently and 'ritualistically' repeating narratives. Possible overlaps have been drawn from the political to the cinematic by finding traces of dominant political discourses reflecting through the films. In performing filmic analyses, attention has been paid to the consistently repetitive stories, narrative structures, iconographic tropes etc., as well as to the *mise en scène*, camera angles, spatial representations, lyrical, sonic, affective textures and performativity, that have contributed to shaping the overall narrative of the films.

The chapter that looks at the Partition and War narratives finds the presence of a Nehruvian stance prevailing through post-Partition India that both foregrounded the country

through secularist and pluralistic tones as well as condemned communal elements within. The chapter also notes that the focus of the institutional discourses was directed more towards moving on in the secularist direction and less about addressing the traumas of the tumultuous experience. Likewise, hints of this stance reflecting through Bombay cinema have also been looked at. It discusses the scholarship on the subject (Bhaskar, 2005, 2013; and Sarkar 2009) to underline the palpable ‘cinematic amnesia’ with respect to directly engaging with the ‘awful’ experience of the Partition. Likewise, within the few films that directly touched upon the Partition, like *Dharamputra* and *Garm Hawa*, a secular ideology engaging with the traumas and anxieties of the Muslim minorities and with religious harmony within India was reflected.

Further, as asserted by film scholars, the chapter finds a shift in this self-narrative in the early 1990s, wherein a surge in Hindu nationalist ideology is evident within the political and filmic climate. To an extent, this narrative shift is understood as a product of the Hindutva discourse that was prevailing through the political climate of the nation, particularly with the onset of the *Ramjannmabhoomi* campaign that led to the destruction of the Babri *Masjid* in 1992 and to a spate of Hindu-Muslim riots that followed. It is further stated that the popular armed rebellion that engulfed the Muslim majority region of Kashmir in 1989, the provocative rhetoric following the fiftieth anniversary since Partition/Independence in 1997, the Nuclear weapon tests that were conducted by both India and Pakistan in very close succession of one another in 1998, the Kargil war in 1999, in concert with the burgeoning Western Orientalist discourse that was articulated through several discursive sites following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, assisted in the growth of Hindu nationalist ideology through the nation.

The Hindu nationalist ideology that has been engaged with through this study is one that coalesces ‘Indianness’ with ‘Hinduness’ and, which is marked by an anxiety and mistrust towards the blurred and overlapping category of the Muslim/Pakistani ‘other’. As argued by Dwivedi (2012), Sarkar (2009) etc, the growing popularity of the Hindu nationalist ideology through the national political climate during the 1990s, is also visible through several filmic texts through the same period. The filmic resonance of this anxiety towards the Pakistani/Muslim ‘other’ has been found to be both subtle and overt. The films that looked at Partition directly during this period, including *Pinjar* and *Gadar*, as well as those that implicitly expressed anxieties about the same by (anxiously) calling upon the inviolability of the territorial integrity of

the Indian union, like *Border*, *LoC Kargil*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Maa Tujhe Salaam* etc., narrated Indian nationalism and Hindu nationalism as collapsible categories. This problematic overlap has been reflective through storyline, performativity, affect, iconography etc. Likewise, these films also portrayed Muslims, Pakistan and terrorism as coalescing categories. Further, this research has also found films reflecting underlying themes of Orientalism with the Hindu Indians mostly being portrayed as pacifist, righteous, macho, heterosexual, while the Pakistani Muslims have been largely depicted as fundamentalist, violent, vicious ‘others’. This orientalist binary between Hindu Indians and Muslim Pakistanis is particularly reasserted during the Partition riot sequences in *Pinjar* and *Gadar*, in which the monstrosity of the Muslim/Pakistani identity is established by focusing upon the sword-brandishing, skull cap donning Muslim figures as the instigators and perpetrators of the inhumane killing, torching, raping that took place through the Partition. Consequently, through the riot sequences, the turbaned Sikhs are primarily depicted as the strong, militant fighters and protectors of the Hindus, while the latter are largely found to be articulated as the mild, timid victims of the apocalyptic event.

This Orientalist lens is also evident in films that revolve around the territory of Kashmir, in which stark binaries are found between the portrayal of the Kashmiri (Muslim) and the Indian (Hindu) citizen. In the films that were made in the first four decades after Partition/Independence that presented Kashmir as a paradisiacal site, destined for the visual, romantic, spiritual, luxurious consumption of the plains-dwelling Indians, the Kashmiris were mostly portrayed through their ethnic dresses and through their naïve innocence as opposed to the mainland Indians, who were largely depicted as modern, elite, cosmopolitan, English-speaking citizens (Kabir 2005, 2006). Consequently, through the films that focused on Kashmiri spaces in the post-1989 period, including *Roja*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan*, binaries are visible not only between Kashmiris (Islamic fundamentalist, aggressive, irrational) and Indians (rational, modern, strong, Hindu), but are also visible within the Kashmiris, wherein the focus is on the dichotomous relation between the ‘good’ Kashmiris and the ‘bad’ Kashmiris. This trope has also been palpable in the films that revolved around the theme of terrorism and counter-terrorism. In these films, I have argued that by reinforcing the monstrosity of the Pakistani/Islamic terrorist ‘other’ who carried apocalyptic intentions (against harmless, docile Indian citizens), the

heterosexual/Indian figure who practiced extra-legal muscular methods to eliminate the demonic terrorists was simultaneously imagined as the ideal citizen.

Moving ahead, in the chapter that engages with the dominant discourses on Kashmir following the armed rebellion that started in 1989, and that threatened both the national security of the Indian union as well as the Ontological security of a sovereign, secular, united, territorially-integrated nation, certain repetitive statist responses were evident. In this regard, I found that the state largely framed the felt Ontological insecurity through a stance that understood the Kashmiri imbroglio as primarily a product of intersecting elements of cross-border terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, anti-national elements and the misguided youth. Further, the repetitive political narratives that were mainly expressed through ‘speech-acts’, demonstrated these elements as intersecting and overlapping ones. Further, the stance of *Kashmiriyat* also saw a notable political emphasis, with the same particularly being iterated during critical junctures of the conflict to draw organic and linear connections between the purportedly Sufi and religious harmony in J&K and the secular and religiously tolerant tenets of the Indian identity. Filmically, there was a marked visibility of these narratives that framed the conflict in the Valley through the intersecting framework of Islamic fundamentalism, Pakistan complicity and misguided youths. Further, a clear presence of the *Kashmiriyat* narrative that drew links between the Kashmiri and the Indian ethos was also found to have been palpably reflected through films like *Mission Kashmir*, *Fanaa* and *Yahaan*. By focusing upon the narrative of *Kashmiriyat*, these films have portrayed the Valley as an integral part of India (Kabir 2010), Gaur (2010), Menon (2013).

The other theoretical concept that this study has engaged with has been that of Securitization. Securitization is the process of turning something into a security issue through the articulation of a ‘speech act’ by a political elite that, by describing something as an ‘existential threat’, justifies the use of emergency methods. Adopting Michael Williams (2003), Holger Stritzel (2012), TY Solomon and Ido Oren (2014, 15), the study has attempted to understand the concept in an expansive way, wherein attention is paid to the elements of the ‘speech-act’ including the emotional appeals, historical analogies, repetitive iteration of particular phrases or symbols etc.. Further, the expansive version is also attentive to the ubiquitous (re)presentation and reverberation of dominant ‘speech-act’ narratives through popular cultural forms. Thus, I

have argued that ‘background meanings’ are constituted through films which assist in making commonsensical certain narratives, and enable the success of the securitising process with respect to the audiences. With respect to this study, I have found that the political-cinematic imbrication assisted in performing securitisation of Pakistani/Islamic terrorism. Furthermore, I point out that by so doing, the extra-legal, muscular, high-handed military responses by the state have been legitimised. In this sense, the official discourses ‘working together’ with the filmic narratives have constituted an overlap that enabled the production of general understandings of security.

It should be noted that while there are political and filmic instances in which Pakistani identity has been directly articulated, there are also several instances wherein linear (re)presentations of the same is missing. That is, there are instances in which Pakistani identity implicitly radiates through narratives of Islamic fundamentalism, communalism, Kashmir imbroglio, misguided Kashmiri youth, anti-national elements, terrorism etc.

At the outset of this study, four tentative hypotheses were proposed. The first stated: ‘Dominant filmic narratives on Indian and Pakistani identities are influenced by the prevailing communal discourses within the state and by the fluctuating bilateral dynamics between the two countries’. In the course of this study, it has been found that the dynamics within the disputed state of J&K as well as the repeated episodes of terror-strikes through the Indian state have implications for the dominant filmic narratives. Thus, in the light of these findings, the hypothesis is modified as follows: ‘Dominant filmic narratives on the Indian and Pakistani identities are influenced by the prevailing communal discourses within India, and the dynamics within the disputed territory of J&K, the episodes of terrorist-strikes within India as well as by the fluctuating bilateral dynamics between the two countries’. The second hypothesis stated: ‘The theoretical concepts of Ontological security and Securitization help reveal the filmic portrayal and understanding of the state’s dominant narratives’. With respect to the observations made through this study, this hypothesis stands verified. The third hypothesis proposed: ‘Films contribute to the reproduction and popularization of official foreign policy discourses and state actions by reflecting the state’s dominant knowledge’. With respect to this hypothesis the study has found that notwithstanding some notable exceptions, ‘films generally contribute to the reproduction and popularization of official foreign policy discourses and state actions by

reflecting the state's dominant knowledge'. Thus, this hypothesis stands verified with mild modifications. Finally with respect to the final hypothesis: 'Power operates not just through the state or other political and social institutions, but can also function through different informal cultural forms'. The study has found this hypothesis to stand verified.

While generally, we unreflectively watch films and other popular cultural artefacts that are mass produced and circulate at multiple levels, it is nonetheless essential for us as the audience to be alert to the meaning producing and embedding abilities of these forms. Being attentive to the filmic texts and to the simultaneous resonance of dominant narratives through them can help in facilitating an understanding about the politics embedded within (everyday) forms which need to be interrogated. In this manner not only can an understanding of the political-filmic imbrication help achieve a better perspective about meaning formation and internalization but the same can also be studied as a significant pedagogical tool within the discipline of International Relations.

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