

# Queer Muslim and Bollywood's Indigenous Oriental Landscape

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## Abstract

The construction of the Muslim Other in commercial Hindi cinema (often referred to by its portmanteau Bollywood) reflects India's struggle to reconcile various social and ideological conundrums through time and in relation to the State's shifting strategies towards defining the Indian. Sampling movies from the 1950s through the turn of the century, in this paper, I examine ways in which on-screen sexualities of the Muslim 'Other' highlight Bollywood's manipulation of the Western colonial discourse of the Indian Orient to construct an indigenous Orient which in turn has been informed by the dominant discourses on its religious diversity, gender roles, the selective interpretation of historical experiences under state's changing paternalistic lens for organizing plurality and minority statuses in the face of global politics, and caste and class ideologies in India's urban and diaspora audiences.

**Keywords:** Bollywood, Muslim caricatures, Queerization, Orient