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Religious Hate Speech against Islam in Bollywood Cinema in the Context of Self-Orientalism: The Example of “The Kerala Story”

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Abstract

Hate speech, which refers to any form of expression intended to humiliate, harass, intimidate or incite violence against a person or group because of their religion, language, race, gender, political preference, physical disability or illness, occurs in different societies and in different media. Undoubtedly, one of the most common forms of hate speech is religious hate speech. Religious hate speech, which causes great harm to the individual, group or society, when carried out through cinema, causes victimization to increase and the discourse to spread throughout the world. Religious hate speech, generally produced by the West towards the East in cinema, sometimes comes to life with self-orientalist actions and religious hate speech is reinforced. From this point of view, the aim of this study is to reveal how religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims is realized in the context of self-orientalism in Bollywood cinema. In the study, critical discourse analysis method was used and the 2023 Indian film ‘The Kerala Story’ was analyzed. According to the results obtained in the study, the film, which was designed with a self-orientalist perspective, contains intense religious hate speech against Islam. In the film, Islam and Muslims are associated with terrorism through characters, actions, lines and plot.

Keywords: Religious Hate Speech, Self-orientalism, Bollywood, Cinema

Self Oryantalizm Bağlamında Bollywood Sinemasında İslam’a Yönelik Dini Nefret Söylemi: “The Kerala Story” Örneği

Öz

Bir kişi veya grubu dini, dili, ırkı, cinsiyeti, siyasi tercihi, fiziksel yetersizliği veya hastalığı nedeniyle küçük düşürmek, taciz etmek, yıldırım ve bunlara yönelik şiddeti teşvik etmek amacıyla gerçekleştirilen her türlü ifade biçimine karşılık gelen nefret söylemi, farklı toplumlarda ve farklı mecralarda meydana gelmektedir. Bu nefret söylemleri içerisinde kuşkusuz en fazla gerçekleştirilenlerden birisi dini nefret söylemidir. Bireye, gruba ya da topluma büyük zarar veren dini nefret söyleminin sinema aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilmesi ise söz konusu mağduriyetin artmasına ve söylemin dünya geneline yayılmasına neden olmaktadır. Genellikle sinemada Batı tarafından Doğu’ya yönelik üretilen dini nefret söylemi, kimi zaman da self-oryantalist eylemlerle hayat bulmakta ve dini nefret söylemi pekiştirilmektedir. Bu noktadan hareketle yapılan araştırmanın amacı, Bollywood sinemasında self oryantalizm bağlamında İslam’a ve Müslümanlara yönelik dini nefret söyleminin nasıl gerçekleştiğini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışmada eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemi kullanılmış ve 2023 Hint yapımı ‘The Kerala Story’ filmi incelenmiştir. Araştırmada elde edilen sonuçlara göre, self oryantalist bakış açısıyla tasarlanan film, yoğun şekilde İslam’a yönelik dini nefret söylemi içermektedir. Filmde, karakterler, eylemler, replikler ve olay örgüsü ile İslam dini ve Müslümanlar terörizmle ilişkilendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dini Nefret Söylemi, Self Oryantalizm, Bollywood, Sinema

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Introduction

All countries contain people of different nationalities, different sects and different religions. Whether these countries are governed by monarchy or democracy, they must protect the language, religion, ethnicity, gender and sect of all people in order to ensure unity, solidarity, peace and justice in the country. However, those who are described as minorities can sometimes be pushed into the position of the other by both the majority of the society and the power that governs that country. Moreover, insults, harassment or violence may be committed against minorities due to their characteristics.

Hate speech consists of expressions that are intended to humiliate, harass and prepare the ground for violence against a person, a group or a society as a whole on the grounds of religion, race, gender, disability, etc. Among these types of hate speech, religious hate speech is one of the most dangerous and harmful, considering the number of people it targets. Religious hate speech, which is deliberately created and disseminated, can target hundreds of millions of people and pave the way for the formation of a negative image about them. Moreover, the sustained perpetration of religious hate speech can lead to acts of prejudice against a religion and its adherents, negative discrimination, prejudice-motivated acts of violence and even genocide.

The fact that religious hate speech is generated and disseminated through mass media such as television, newspapers, social media and cinema further increases the severity of the situation. This is because the realization of religious hate speech through mass media/mediums causes the discourse in question to reach very large masses, become permanent and create more impact. Undoubtedly, among these mass media, cinema is one of the most effective tools for the creation and dissemination of religious hate speech. Especially in many films produced by Hollywood and European cinema, hate speech has been directed against many religions, especially Islam, and the members of those religions. However, this religious hate speech, which is practiced by the West in an orientalist way through cinema, is now also practiced in a self-orientalist way. So much so that ‘eastern societies’ and some producers, screenwriters and directors living in these societies make films that contain religious hate speech against their own societies or eastern societies close to them. The Islamophobic films made by Bollywood in recent years against Islam and Muslims constitute one of the most important and recent examples of this. The Bharatiya Janata Party, the ruling political party in India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, openly supports religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims. Islam and Muslim-hostile films are financially funded by the BJP and Modi. In these recent Bollywood films, Muslims are presented as terrorists, criminals, rapists, invaders, foreigners and barbarians (Khatun, 2024).

From this point of view, this study aims to reveal how religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims is realized in Bollywood cinema. Critical discourse analysis method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. 2023 Indian film ‘The Kerala Story’ was analyzed within the scope of the study.

1. Literature Review

Human beings have put socialization in a dominant position in their lives in order to survive and develop from the moment they came into existence. The increase in the number of communities and people in communities has led to the emergence of differences of opinion and life among people. People who lead a social life and develop a sense of belonging have, over time, wanted to act in common with people who think and live like them and have categorized/limit their communities. Likewise, people who do not look like them, think like them or live like them are positioned as the other. Over time, people have sometimes or constantly harbored negative feelings towards the people they see as the other. One of these negative moods or emotions has been ‘hate’.

Hate is the feeling of wanting someone's evil and unhappiness, a feeling of disgust (TDK, 2024). Hate is a state of mind that often arises towards others who are not recognized, unknown, but because they are not like them, because they are different (Karadeniz, 2012, p. 1).

According to the pyramid of hate created by the Anti-Defamation League (2021), hate is a process that starts from prejudiced attitudes and can lead to genocide. The pyramid of hatred is designed as;

Biased Attitudes, Stereotyping, Fear of differences, Justifying biases by seeking out likeminded people, Seeking out information to confirm one's existing beliefs and/or biases, Lack of self-reflection or awareness of privilege. Acts of Bias, Non-inclusive language, Insensitive remarks, Microaggressions, Biased and belittling jokes, Cultural appropriation, Social avoidance and/or exclusion, Name-calling, Ridicule, Bullying, Slurs and epithets, Dehumanization. Systemic Discrimination, Criminal justice disparities, Inequitable school resource distribution, Housing segregation, Inequitable employment opportunities, Wage disparities, Voter restrictions and suppression and Unequal media representation. Bias-Motivated Violence, Threats, Desecration, Vandalism, Arson, Assault, Rape, Murder and Terrorism. Genocide, The act or intent to deliberately and systematically annihilate an entire people.

Although the concepts of hate and hate speech seem to have the same meaning, they actually mean different things. Hate speech is defined as discrimination against an individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, sect, political preference, philosophy, socioeconomic status, physical characteristics, physical disability or disease (Irak, 2022, p. 1). Along with this definition, although there are many definitions of hate speech by academics, writers, lawyers, non-governmental organizations and scientists in different countries, there is no agreed definition for hate speech (Howard, 2019, p. 95). However, in Recommendation 97 (20) on 'hate speech' issued by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the concept of hate speech is broadly defined. According to this decision, hate speech is any form of expression that spreads, incites, encourages or legitimizes racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including religious intolerance, expressed in the form of aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility towards minorities, migrants and people of migrant origin (Weber, 2009, p. 3).

Aydos and Aydos (2019, p. 8) define hate speech as any form of expression that discriminates certain segments of the society for reasons such as religion, belief, language, sect, race, disability, gender, and thus violates their personal rights. In light of these definitions, it is possible to define hate speech as any form of expression that is intended to humiliate, harass, intimidate or encourage violence against a person or group because of their religion, language, race, gender, political preference, physical disability or illness.

Hate speech is also the starting point of the process leading to hate crime. In other words, it is the expression of intolerance and intolerance that paves the way for hate crime. The perpetrator of hate speech characterizes the targeted person, group or community as foreign and says that there is no place for you in society. This erodes the democratic order and violates the most fundamental human right to life and participation. At this point, based on the previous definitions, it is possible to base hate speech on three elements: 1) Hate speech must be directed against a person or group because of certain characteristics; 2) The characteristics of the person or group should be characterized negatively; 3) The presence of a person or group characterized negatively should not be welcomed (Demirbaş, 2017, p. 2695-2697).

Hate speech, which takes place in different countries and societies, is based on the characteristics of people and the values they adopt. Binark and Çomu (2012) categorize these types of hate speech as political hate speech, hate speech against women, hate speech against foreigners

and immigrants, hate speech based on sexual identity, hate speech based on beliefs and sects, and hate speech against the disabled and various diseases.

Considering the number of people it affects, one of the most dangerous types of hate speech is undoubtedly religion and sect-based hate speech. Religious hate speech includes malicious, insulting, hateful and violence-provoking expressions directed against a person, group or community on the basis of religious affiliation and belief-related qualities (Weber, 2009). Religious hate speech includes the acts of belittling, provoking, alienating or categorizing an individual, group or community because of their beliefs.

Although religious hate speech has been widely seen and talked about especially in the 21st century, it is actually as old as the history of religions. During this period, every religious hate speech/action, both individually and collectively, has served to spread this discourse and harm people. However, throughout history, no factor has been as effective as the media in the production and dissemination of religious hate speech.

According Doğan (2022, p. 687), the role of the media in the spread of religious hate speech is decisive. In fact, according to academic research on hate speech in the media, the media not only spreads religious hatred in society, but also legitimizes discrimination against a particular person, group or identity, reinforces prejudices and stereotypes, and mobilizes the attitudes and behaviors of the masses. Islam is undoubtedly the religion most exposed to this religious hate speech.

The media, which plays a leading role in the formation of anti-Islamic sentiments and hate speech, targets Islam and Muslims as a whole and misrepresents Islam. Islamophobic language has reached a threatening dimension in international media framing, categorizing and excluding Islam and Muslims. It has created stereotypes of terrorist, reactionary, barbaric and lecherous Muslims. Concepts related to Islam have been associated with radical events and actions far from the truth and a marginalizing portrayal of the religion has been made (Arslan and Temel, 2023, p. 39; Kutlu, 2024). Islam as a belief that is a source of fear, especially in Europe, is not the real Islam. This is the imaginary Islam, which has been distorted and represented in a completely different way by the orientalist and colonialist perspective. Muslims, who face constant aggression and exploitation almost all over the world, are exaggerated, especially their wrong and bad practices. These are combined with violence and Muslims and Islam are portrayed as the epitome of evil (Bilici, 2022, p. 630; Kutlu, 2023).

Media content produced in the Western media with an orientalist perspective and targeting Islam and Muslims is mostly presented and disseminated through television, newspapers, social media and cinema. Especially in cinema, the stereotype of the Middle Easterner has been created by the US and Europe. Through this, religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims in cinema has been carried out by the US and Europe. However, this religious hate speech, which has been created by the West for many years by reducing it to the orientalist way and realized through cinema, now comes to life in a self-orientalist way.

Orientalism, which originally means the study of the East by the West, can also be defined as a style of discourse, a form of expression, a narrative, an ideology or a worldview. The political discourses of Western states, the church, clergy, researchers, painters and literary figures have been influential in the construction of the Orientalist language. Studies that talk about the East and Orientals, and deal with their lifestyles have constructed a new Eastern/Eastern identity (Arslan and Temel, 2023, p. 40). There are different types of orientalism in societies other than Western societies. One of these is self orientalism, which is the most widely accepted term. Self-orientalism is also called internalized orientalism, auto-orientalism, secret orientalism, reverse orientalism, neo-orientalism, self-orientalism, modern orientalism (Golden, 2009; Lary, 2006; Scherer, 1998).

Self-orientalism is the East's representation and expression of itself through the eyes of the West and in the image that the West constructs for itself (Said, 1979; Henderson, 2001). Self-orientalism is when the East or the Easterner sees the West as the superior civilization. The East organizes its culture, life and state policy according to the West (Yetiş, 2022, p. 177). According to Bezci and Çiftci (2012, p. 141), self-orientalism is a weapon and is aimed by the East against the East and Easterner.

Studies on self-orientalism mostly focus on the positioning and expression of the East or the Easterner with the values produced by the West or the Westerners. However, another dimension of self-orientalism is that an Eastern country presents another Eastern country in an orientalist way (in a self-orientalist way) with malicious and stereotypical judgments. Self-orientalism is also the positioning of an Eastern person, group or community with an orientalist approach and in a negative way by an Easterner.

At this point, it is possible to consider the discourse of religious hatred that is practiced by an Eastern country against its own country, people and religious beliefs through cinema as self-orientalism. Bollywood is one of the places where this religious hate speech is carried out in a self-orientalist manner (especially against Islam and Muslims). India, 20% of which is Muslim, carries out religious hate speech through films against both its own people and other Muslim countries and peoples.

The 1999 Bollywood film 'Sarfaroş' is about terrorists of Pakistani origin who aim to disrupt India. Similarly, in the 2006 film 'Fanaa', the Muslim man she falls in love with is a terrorist who is responsible for the bomb blast in New Delhi. In the 2009 film 'Kurbaan', the Muslim husband and his family, whom the Hindu woman marries, are linked to a terrorist group preparing an attack on America. In the films 'Baby' and 'Sooryavanshi', there are Islamic terrorist organizations planning bomb massacres in India's metropolises. It is constantly emphasized in various ways that these terrorists are Muslims. These terrorists are supported by foreign countries such as Pakistan and can easily shelter in Muslim countries such as Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia (Yıldırım, 2022, p. 458-476).

While Muslims were originally portrayed as rulers, poets and esthetes in previous films in India, they are now often depicted as terrorists, gangsters and despots. In Bollywood, especially since 2016, films based on Indian historical epics such as Bajirao Mastani, Padmaavat, Manikarnika, Panipat and Tanhaji have been produced. In these films, Muslim rulers and Muslims are shown as foreigners, non-Indians, barbarians, criminals, gangsters, terrorists and invaders (Molaei and Hussain Babaei, 2020, p. 383-384; Ramnath, 2021).

At this point, Bollywood portrays India's culture, art and religious elements with positive images, while Muslims are portrayed as patriarchal, angry, conservative and terrorist (Çakıcı and Meriç, 2021, p. 52). The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the political party in power in India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, supports these religious hate speeches against Islam and Muslims. Modi has openly funded these films in recent years.

The Hindutva Watch report supports this situation. According to the report, the ruling BJP is linked to the rise of anti-Muslim hate speech in the country (Aljazeera, 2023). The incident that took place in the Indian parliament in 2023 is a case in point. BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri called Kunwar Danish Ali, a Muslim MP from the opposition Bahujan Samaj Party, a 'terrorist' and a 'pimp', among other offensive terms (Faisal, 2023). These and other actions and discourses show that religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims is being carried out in India. These actions are carried out through Bollywood cinema and both Modi and the BJP support this religious hate speech.

2. Methodology

The study aims to reveal how religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims is realized in the context of self-orientalism in Bollywood cinema. In addition, it is also aimed to determine how the discourses, characters, places and plot are created in the context of religious hate speech in the film discussed in the study. Purposive sampling method was used in the study and the 2023 Indian-made film ‘The Kerala Story’ was analyzed. Critical discourse analysis method was used in the study. The film was analyzed using Norman Fairclough’s three-stage critical discourse analysis method consisting of description, interpretation and explanation. Fairclough’s method was chosen because it allows the use of alternative ways to understand what discourse is and how it works. This method prioritizes the inclusion of text, discourse, social practices, the text producer, the broadcasting organization and the political/ideological structure when analyzing the film.

The questions sought to be answered in the study regarding religious hate speech are given below:

Q1: How are Islam and Muslims portrayed in The Kerala Story and which cultural characteristics are emphasized?

Q2: Are there any expressions of religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims in The Kerala Story?

Q3: Does the Muslim profile portrayed in The Kerala Story match with the Muslim profile created by the BJP through its policies/discourses?

3. Critical Discourse Analysis of the Film ‘The Kerala Story’ in the Context of Religious Hate Speech

3.1. Synopsis

Table 1. Characters and Their Roles in the Film

| <i>Name of Characters</i> | <i>Roles of Characters</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Shalini Unnikrishnan (Begam Fatima) | University student in Kerala |
| Gitanjali Menon (Anisha) | University student in Kerala |
| Nima Matthews | University student in Kerala |
| Asifa | Member of ISIS, University student in Kerala |
| Rameez | Member of ISIS |
| Ishak | Member of ISIS |
| Mujeeb | Member of ISIS |
| Bhagyalakshmi | The young woman who fell into the trap of ISIS |
| Aheng Moradi | UN-Afghan army’s detention facility manager |
| Akram Ahmed | Chief of interrogations of the UN army |
| Fayeri Karimi | Afghan border police |
| Peter Rodd | YÖTSG’s vice president for West Asia |

The film takes its name from the state of Kerala, located in the southwest of India. Shalini Unnikrishnan (later named Begam Fatima, code name Fatima Ba) is a young woman who lives a happy life with her family among the natural beauties of Kerala. Shalini gets into the international nursing university in Kerala and settles in the student dormitory there. Shalini, who is Hindu, shares her room with Gitanjali (Hindu - later named Anisha), Nima (Christian) and Asifa (Muslim). There are writings on the walls of Shalini’s school, such as Islam, sharia and war. Shalini’s roommate, Asifa, is

a member of ISIS and is secretly trying to recruit her roommates to join ISIS. Asifa introduces her roommates to Abdul and Rameez, whom she introduces as her cousin. Both these two boys and Asifa often tell the girls about Islam. Nima doesn't want to listen and objects every time. Asifa devises a plan to ensure that her roommates are subjected to harassment and violence by other men and convinces them that they are being attacked because they are not wearing headscarves. The 3 girls are very scared and wear headscarves. Rameez, who is said to be a doctor, gives drugs to the girls, saying it is a drug. Then Gitanjali becomes lovers with Abdul and Shalini with Rameez. The girls pray and watch videos, but they have not yet converted to Islam. Rameez and Abdul, who are ISIS members and try to recruit girls into the organization, present premarital sex as legitimate, even though it is not in Islam. Boys have sex with girls. Asifa denigrates and confuses Shalini and Gitanjali about their religion, but Nima is not impressed. Asifa gives them drugs. Shalini becomes pregnant and Rameez forces her to convert to Islam. Gitanjali distances herself from her family and their relationship deteriorates, but then she finds the right path and distances herself from Abdul. When Abdul posts nude images of Gitanjali on social media, she commits suicide. Nima is drugged and raped by Mujeeb. She is taken captive and raped by others. Nima escapes and enters the police. Shalini is now called Begam Fatima. Rameez leaves Fatima. Fatima is forced to marry Ishak and join ISIS in Syria. Ishak and Fatima set off for Afghanistan and then Syria to join the Caliph's service. Ishak rapes Fatima in Afghanistan and then leaves home to go to the conflict. Fatima gives birth to her baby, realizes from the moment she leaves that things have gone wrong and that she has made a big mistake, but is not allowed to return. Ishak takes Fatima's baby (Ishak is not dead) and Fatima is thrown into a tent among women in burkas and with their hands in chains. The women are raped. Women in Afghanistan are slaves, sold, killed. There are dead bodies, guns and fear everywhere. Fatima tries to escape with a few other enslaved women. ISIS kills the women who try to escape, only Fatima managed to escape. Fatima was found in the desert dying of exhaustion and thirst by UN forces and brought to a UN peacekeeping and Afghan army detention facility. Under interrogation, Fatima tells the whole story. Both Fatima and Nima tell the security forces in detail what happened and the connection between the structure in Kerala and ISIS (Sen and Shah, 2023).

Released on May 5, 2023 in India, "The Kerala Story" is written by Suryapal Singh, Sudipto Sen and Vipul Amrutlal Shah and directed by Sudipto Sen and Vipul Amrutlal Shah. The film is a drama and stars Adah Sharma, Yogita Bihani and Sonia Balani in the lead roles.

3.2. Analysis of the Film

3.2.1. Description

In this stage of the film analysis, Begam Fatima's dialogues with interrogators, Begam Fatima's dialogues with ISIS members, ISIS members' dialogues and other dialogues are included (Mubi, 2024).

Dialogue 1. (05:09-06:24)

Akram Ahmed: *So Fatima, we were not expecting you alive. It is indeed a miracle. that you're alive. Thank our doctors. They really fought for your life. So, are you comfortable to talk now?*

Begam Fatima: *I didn't think I would get out alive myself. Thanks to all of you, for saving my life. Sir. My daughter is taken away from me. And the people who took her. They are very dangerous people. I don't know what they'll do to her. Sir, please, get my child back. Just find her, because I don't know what they will do to her.*

Fayeri Karimi: *We have every reason to believe that you are a dreaded terrorist, Fatima Ba. So if you want to prove otherwise, this is your chance.*

Begam Fatima: Yes, sir. I am Shalini Unnikrishnan. I am from Kerala, India. And sir, I was trapped. I was brainwashed sir (Sen and Shah, 2023, 05:09-06:24).

Dialogue 2. (07:10-22:22)

Begam Fatima: We reached the Spin Baldak district of Kandahar, Afghanistan. We were on our way to Raqqa, to serve the Caliph. To fight the infidels. Ishak was going to become a mujahid and I was going to follow the Sunnah.

Akram Ahmed: You decided to go to Syria on your own. Nobody forced you. This is the situation that emerged.

Peter Rodd: and you've been preparing for this for years. You wanted to wage war against your country and against humanity.

Begam Fatima: I left India of my own accord and I did a lot of preparation before I left. But whatever I thought, whatever I wanted, it was all loaded into my brain, like a program. I had lost control over myself, it was like an invisible remote controlling me. I wasn't alone in this game. There are thousands of girls like me. Girls who left their homes to be buried in this desert.

Begam Fatima: Sir, my name is Shalini and I don't know how to prove it. This is a very dangerous game sir. This game is about killing my soul, killing Shalini's soul, turning her into a slave. A robotic slave: Fatima. It is very important that you know how they turned a simple nursing student into a suicide bomber. I don't know why no one wants to listen to this part of the story. I don't know why no one is doing anything. Kerala is sitting on a live time bomb, sir. They will destroy God's country. Please save it, please.

Begam Fatima: These narcotic pills are used non-stop. Their only concern is the immediate effect of the drug, not the side effects. They want suicide bombers, not well-trained soldiers (Sen and Shah, 2023, 07:10-22:22).

Dialogue 3. (126:38-127:43)

Begam Fatima: If you take me to India, I'll expose everyone. Everyone here is involved in terrorism. Everybody.

Aheng Moradi: We have all the evidence to prove that you are a terrorist. But there is nothing to prove your innocence. The Indian government has zero tolerance for any terror links.

Fayeri Karimi: You have cooperated with us so far in this investigation. You also gave us a graphical guide to the terror network in India. These confessions have helped us in many ways. Rest assured that we will provide you with a safe place in this facility and you will have access to the best of our legal team.

Aheng Moradi: We'll also try to find your daughter. You can feel comfortable in our facility (Sen and Shah, 2023, 126:38-127:43).

Dialogue 4. (27:14-27:57)

Ishak: According to ISIS, in the Sharia law, women aren't allowed to keep phones.

Begam Fatima: I wasn't told in India that keeping a phone would be against Sharia law. and where were mobile phones when the Sharia law was made?

ISIS's man: *I don't know all that. But it is indeed a crime. And death is the punishment for this crime (Sen and Shah, 2023, 27:14-27:57).*

Dialogue 5. (29:17-29:40)

Ishak: *In Islam, it is a sin not to make the husband happy.*

Begam Fatima: *Ishak, this is rape. Rape is forbidden in Islam.*

Ishak: *Be grateful, a woman cooks and sleeps with her husband. You don't need to take bullets like the mujahideen. Make your choice, you can either endure this pain or burn in hell for eternity (Sen and Shah, 2023, 29:17-29:40).*

Dialogue 6. (37:07-39:50)

Asifa: *It is a sin to eat without praying. If we do not thank Allah, His wrath will take us to hell.*

Begam Fatima: *Asifa, you were talking about hellfire. I want to know what hellfire is.*

Asifa: *I mean, according to the Hadith, the fire of hell is seventy times hotter than the fire on earth. There is also a dark pit where all sinners are bound, chained, hung upside down and burned. Whoever believes in Allah will get paradise and those who do not believe in Islam will be burned in hellfire.*

Begam Fatima: *This is the first time I have heard of praying in fear of wrath. Isn't there a love relationship between God and us? Or shouldn't there be? Like with our parents.*

Gitanjali: *I agree. Why would God be angry? It doesn't feel right. Wait, we're Hindus, why are we burning in hellfire?*

Begam Fatima: *Yes, why should your God punish us Hindus?*

Asifa: *God rules this world, only God. And you are a non-believer. You will definitely go to hell. And the day of judgment is not unique to any religion. Only Allah can save you. No one else can save you (Sen and Shah, 2023, 37:07-39:50).*

Dialogue 7. (95:51-97:07)

ISIS's executive: *Your first sin is to have intercourse before marriage. Your second sin is having children out of wedlock. Your third sin is using intoxicants. Your parents are infidels. How many sins will Allah punish you for?*

Begam Fatima: *So if I marry someone else, will my sins be forgiven?*

ISIS executive: *Not by continuing to live in this country. But if you get married and answer the call of Allah, if you take up the mission of spreading the eternal kingdom, if you dedicate yourself to the service of the caliphate, if you go to Syria with your husband, then Allah will forgive you not one sin but thousands of sins. He will open the gates of paradise wide open for you. His name is Ishak, he is a very kind man. He used to be a Christian, but recently he converted to Islam (Sen and Shah, 2023, 95:51-97:07).*

Dialogue 8. (79:51-80:54)

Bhagyalakshmi: *I'm Bhagyalakshmi. We are 48 girls. 7 of us are Christians and the rest Hindus. We left our homes and came here.*

Begam Fatima: *So why have you been coming here for a month? What happened to you?*

Bhagyalakshmi: *We 48 girls share the same story. Our families do not accept true love. They are so caught up in their caste and religion that they marry us off to random men. Now that we have fallen in love with Muslim men, are we committing a sin? Do you have to ask about someone's caste or religion before you fall in love with them?*

Begam Fatima: *What are you going to do?*

Bhagyalakshmi: *There is no other way but to marry our loved ones and accept Islam. Our families will not accept this. Our love is true. Wouldn't you do anything for true love? We cross all boundaries, don't we? (Sen and Shah, 2023, 79:51-80:54)*

Dialogue 9. (89:19-98:50)

Gitanjali's mom: *He couldn't bear the shock when he found out you had converted to Islam.*

Gitanjali: *This heart attack is the wrath of Allah. A lesson. A lesson for those who don't believe in him. If you care about your health and don't want to go to hell, convert to Islam.*

Gitanjali: *Dad, these people are dangerous. If this isn't terrorism, what is? (Sen and Shah, 2023, 89:19-98:50)*

Dialogue 10. (108:53-118:16)

Nima: *Asifa, Rameez, Abdul, Mujeeb are all involved. Rameez hasn't gone anywhere, he's here with another girl, he's hanging out with her now. Remember you told me to meet Mujeeb? I went to meet him, but I made it clear that he wasn't going to convert. That day he dripped drugs in my glass. He raped me while I was unconscious. Every day 18-20 people used to come, then I stopped counting. Everything became blurry, they abused me. Somehow I managed to escape. I couldn't even file a complaint. Please come back, you're in danger.*

Nima: *Sir, this is not just about conversion! This is a threat to our national security. This is a global case. Sir, these machines are isolated in Europe and America. But it is our misfortune that the political silence is so great here. Even our former prime minister said: Kerala will become an Islamic state in the next 20 years. According to a government report tabled in parliament in June 2012, there are on average 2800 to 3200 conversions. Every year there are conversions to Islam from Hindu and Christian families. More than 30,000 girls are missing, sir. The unofficial figure is 50,000. We all believe that, sir. How many cases have been registered? 703. How many have been rescued? 261, sir. There's a major link between a local organization in Kerala and ISIS. They are raising a ruthless army of suicide bombers through seemingly harmless conversions. That is harmless?*

Indian police: *I can understand your feelings and I respect that. We will start looking into your complaint from today, but I need proof of what you are telling me. This is a legal system.*

Nima: *How long will it take you to get justice? How long? You know Attikad in Kasargod, right? Like in Syria and Yemen, some villages here have Sharia law. You still want proof? All the blasts in Sri Lanka, Singapore, Afghanistan have Kerala girls and boys in them. You still want proof? I'll bring every single proof. I won't stop until I get it (Sen and Shah, 2023, 108:53-118:16).*

Dialogue 11. (118:38-119:27)

Bhagyalakshmi: *I came here for love. I became a slave. A sex slave. They either make women full-time sex slaves or they strap bombs on them and throw them at the infidels shouting “Allah Akbar”!* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 118:38-119:27)

Other dialogues

ISIS’s head: *We have only one goal. And that is for every nation in the world to embrace Islam. The jihad will continue until every single person in the world walks on the path shown by Allah* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 11:31-11:43).

ISIS’s executioner: *Punishment is not a sentence, punishment is an example. So that no one will ever break the law again. Anyone who deviates from this path is sinning against the messenger of Allah. An example is the path shown by the messenger of the Shari’ah. And to deviate from this path is to sin against the messenger of Allah. What this girl did is a sin and her husband turned a blind eye to her wrongdoing. His is the greater sin. And let this example be a lesson for you. Takbir Allah Akbar* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 43:36-44:22).

ISIS member in the video: *This drug is known as “chemical courage”. In the pharmaceutical industry, it is known as Captagon and Amphetamine. It is a substance that will keep your thirst for jihad alive. It will never let you deviate from your one true goal. On the battlefield, with this drug, you can go long periods of time without feeling hunger, thirst or drowsiness. It will kill your cowardly self and give birth to a mujahid within you. He will raise the banner of Islamic rule. He will repent of his sins and pave the way to paradise. He will make the infidel praise the only true Allah. Takbir Allah Akbar* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 47:45-48:32).

ISIS executive: *Understood, my Jihadists? Start the app. Bring them (the girls) closer to you. Separate them from their families. Have physical intercourse. Get them pregnant if necessary. Prepare them for the next mission as soon as possible. All this time has passed and you haven’t delivered three girls to me. On the contrary, 25-30 women from England and Europe go to Syria every month by their own choice* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 48:32-49:20).

Rameez: *If two people decide to commit to a relationship for the rest of their lives, what is wrong with their intimacy? Just like Abdul said, there is nothing wrong with sex between two people once it is accepted* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 59:16-59:28).

Ishak: *Here a lonely woman is either sold or shot* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 67:40-67-44).

ISIS executive: *We are counting on young people like you. ISIS has given us the opportunity to accomplish what Alamgir Aurangzeb failed to do in India. This is not something to forget* (Sen and Shah, 2023, 90:27-90:47).

3.2.2. Interpretation

Table 2. Words used in the Film.

| Word | Number | Word | Number |
|----------------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| Terror and terrorist | 7 | Allah | 43 |
| Rape | 7 | Brainwashing | 4 |
| Drugs | 11 | Jihad | 5 |
| Sin | 8 | ISIS | 8 |
| Hell and hellfire | 19 | Islam | 26 |
| Death | 7 | War | 7 |
| Love | 32 | Punishment | 8 |
| Sharia | 8 | Danger | 6 |
| Mujahid | 5 | Relationship | 5 |

| | | | |
|------|---|-------|----|
| Sex | 6 | Burqa | 10 |
| Trap | 4 | Slave | 6 |

The film is essentially built on dichotomies such as Afghanistan/Syria - India, Islam - Hindu religions, Muslim - Hindu, beautiful - ugly, good - evil, freedom - slavery. In the scenario designed around Islam and Muslims, the words shown in Table 2 are frequently used.

Without exception, all Muslims in the film are presented with bad codes such as reactionary, liar, trapper, terrorist, rapist, murderer, ISIS member, torturer, beater, angry, ignorant. There is not a single good Muslim in the film. On the contrary, all Hindus, without exception, are represented with good codes such as peaceful, beautiful, understanding, emotional, strong family ties, loving their state and country, modern, clean-hearted. There is not a single bad Hindu in the film. In fact, there are no bad actions and discourses of Hindus in the film. However, Muslims are either rapists, instigators or enablers of rape. The most prominent religious hate speech in the film is that Muslims/ISIS members are rapists. In the film, Muslim men/ISIS members raped both the leading woman and many other women. These scenes are shown repeatedly. In one scene, Muslim men even watch Nima as she is raped. In the film, Muslim men see women as slaves and rape as a right.

The other dichotomy in the film is between India and Afghanistan/Syria. India (especially Kerala) is presented as a country of natural beauty, peaceful, peaceful, happy people, singing, dancing, greenery, calm, modern and liberal. There is not a single bad thing about India in the film. There is also not a single good place in Afghanistan or Syria. All the places shown are wastelands. Houses are in ruins, there is death, screaming, fear, oppression, captivity and reaction. All the people are unhappy, especially women who live in fear of death. Women have no place in life, they have no rights. Thus, in the film, Islam and Islamic countries are portrayed in terms of terrorism, backwardness, death, captivity and hate speech.

Another dichotomy that is often compared in the film is Hindu religions and Islam. Hindu religions are never criticized or vilified in the film. These religions are completely innocent, they are the values of India and should be believed in. So much so that Gitanjali realizes that ISIS people are bad people, finds the right path and returns home. Gitanjali says to her father:

I made a huge mistake, but you are also at fault because you didn't tell them about Hindu religion and traditions (Sen and Shah, 2023, 98:18).

However, according to the film, Islam is a religion to be avoided and even destroyed because it is a manifestation of backwardness, terror, death, slavery, drugs, violence, rape. There are dozens of scenes in the film to illustrate this. ISIS leaders give drugs to ISIS members and ISIS members give drugs to new recruits or those they are trying to recruit. The pill is ‘chemical courage’ in the language of ISIS. Its name in the pharmaceutical industry is Captagon and Amphetamine. Islam considers drugs normal and necessary for jihad. Another scene that distorts and brutalizes Islam is the scene of sacrifice. Fatima and Ishak joined ISIS and traveled to Afghanistan. ISIS members host them in their home and sacrifice a goat for Fatima and Ishak. However, this sacrifice is not done according to Islamic rules. The ISIS member brutally cuts the goat’s neck with a machete in one fell swoop. Another scene that equates Islam with death and murder is the scene where Fatima goes to Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Muslims/ISIS members stop a bus and kill or capture Muslim women and children. Seeing this, Fatima can’t stand it and wants to get out of the car and breathe. However, when she sees a man’s mutilated body and a woman’s body half buried in the ground

and smashed with stones nearby, she vomits and is shocked. Ishak reacts calmly and with a slight laugh. This emphasizes that this is the norm in Islam. In another scene, women are sold for 100 riyals on the outskirts of Herat. Fatima wants to escape. A woman who leaves her home without permission is shot in the middle of the road with long-barreled guns. The words 'Allahu Akbar' echo in the neighborhood. In another scene, a woman's arm and a man's throat are cut because he is wearing lipstick. Takbir sounds are raised and guns are fired. At this point, the other religious hate speech that stands out in the film is that Islam and Islamic life include death, murder, slavery and brutality.

Another discriminatory discourse and action against Islam and Muslims is that Muslims are converting Kerala in particular and the whole of India in general. In the film, Muslims/ISIS members force Hindus to convert all over India, especially Hindus in Kerala. Muslims are multiplying in these states and disrupting the structure of the state. The scene when Fatima first arrives at the university is a case in point. Fatima arrives at the international nursing university in Kerala, the 3-wheeled taxi motorcycle that brings her in has the words 'Masha Allah' written on it. There are writings and banners on the walls of the university: Free Kashmir, Osama Bin Laden, Freedom, War, Kashmir will rise from ashes of India, Kill Indian imperialism, Islam is the only solution. Muslims have politicized the university and Kerala, plunging it, in the words of the university official, into chaos.

One of the most emphasized themes in the film is the jihad of love. Malicious Muslim men, who are actually ISIS members, make innocent young Hindu women fall in love with them, get them hooked on drugs and recruit them into the organization. Bhagyalakshmi clearly expresses this situation with the following words:

I came here for love, I turned into a slave. A sex slave. They either make women full-time sex slaves or they strap bombs on them and throw them at infidels shouting 'Allah-u Akbar'! (Sen and Shah, 2023, 119:19)

Nima tells the Indian security forces about the ISIS structure in Kerala and India, about Muslims, the dangers in India, the cases of conversions and missing girls. Nima says:

Even our former prime minister said: Kerala will become an Islamic state in the next 20 years. According to a government report tabled in parliament in June 2012, there are on average 2800 to 3200 conversions. Every year there are conversions to Islam from Hindu and Christian families. More than 30,000 girls are missing, sir. The unofficial figure is 50,000. With this seemingly harmless conversion, they are raising a ruthless army of suicide bombers. That's harmless? How long will it take you to bring justice? You know the Attikad in Kasargod, right? Like in Syria and Yemen, some of the villages there follow Sharia law. You still want proof? All the blasts in Sri Lanka, Singapore, Afghanistan have Kerala children in them (Sen and Shah, 2023, 114:05).

Thus, he emphasizes that the conversions to Islam in India are not innocent. He says that Muslims kidnap Hindu women, that many parts of Kerala are governed by Sharia and that Kerala will turn into an Islamic state. From this point of view, he calls on both the Indian state and the people of India to prevent conversions to Islam. The ISIS leader said:

We trust young people like you. ISIS has given us the opportunity to complete what Alamgir Aurangzeb failed to accomplish in India. This is not something to be forgotten (Sen and Shah, 2023, 90:27).

The statement refers to the Muslim Mughal ruler who came very close to conquering India but failed. In other words, the main goal of Muslims in India and ISIS is to conquer India. Another prominent point in the film is that all Hindu women who join ISIS regret it. The attitude and rhetoric

of the interrogating policemen is that those who join ISIS are terrorists, but if they repent and return, they will be welcomed with compassion by the security forces. At the beginning of the interrogation scene, the interrogators speak to Fatima with dull and harsh expressions, but by the end of the story they are protective, sad, pitying and supportive.

3.2.3. Explanation

The explanation part of the research was prepared by taking into account the dialogues, script, images, actors, analysis and comments made through critical analysis, the sociological structure of India, the Indian government, BJP, Modi and India’s political moves/relationships. While conducting critical discourse analysis, an explanation was made by considering and relating all these elements.

In the analysis of the film, 7 main elements stand out: rape of Hindus by Muslims, love jihad, Muslims' aim to invade India, conversion from Hindu religions to Islam, Islam and terrorism, slavery of women in Islam, and the backwardness/intolerance of Islam. These elements are repeatedly shown in the film. These scenes are reinforced with dialogue, dramatized images and music. These elements in the film clearly include religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims.

In fact, one of the most frequently shown scenes and messages in the film is that Muslims/ISIS members rape both Muslim women, Hindu women and women of other religions. The film emphasizes that Muslims/ISIS enslave women. Through the burqa worn by Muslim women, it is emphasized that they are silent, passive and captive. The concept of ‘love jihad’, which is the discourse of the Indian Prime Minister Modi and the main theme of the film, also explains how women are enslaved. According to the film, women in Islam are either captured at gunpoint and made sex slaves, or ISIS men convert Hindu and Christian women to Islam by making them fall in love with them and then enslave them.

In the film, both the nature and social life of India are presented in perfect beauty. On the other hand, Islamic countries are depicted in terms of wasteland, death, brutality, backwardness, captivity and terrorism. In the film, Syria and Afghanistan are openly marginalized and associated with terrorism, but Pakistan is not mentioned. However, in the messages hidden in the film, Pakistan was also targeted and subjected to hate speech. In fact, the name of the film’s lead character Begam Fatima (ISIS terrorist) was inspired by Fatima Begum, a former Pakistani Muslim politician. However, the Mughal ruler Alamgir Aurangzeb was Muslim and was close to conquering India. The ISIS members in the film also want to realize this goal. The Mughal empire already existed on the borders of what is now Pakistan. India has been at war with Pakistan 4 times in history and these tense relations continue with the Kashmir dispute. In Kashmir, where 3 million of the 4 million inhabitants are Muslim, the conflict has been going on for 77 years. India controls 45 percent of Kashmir, Pakistan 35 percent and China 20 percent. Therefore, the film serves India’s desire to maintain its presence in Kashmir and to continue its political and psychological struggle with Pakistan.

One of the most emphasized issues in the film is the high number of conversions from Christianity and Hindu religions to Islam. In the film, Hindu women are forcibly converted to Islam. Women are impregnated by Muslim/ISIS men and forced to marry and convert to Islam. Hindu and Christian women are drugged, brainwashed and converted by ISIS members. Therefore, one of the objectives of the director, producer and Modi in making the film is to stop the increase in the number of Muslims and thus to prevent exodus from Hindu religions.

Prime Minister Modi and the BJP, with its negative policy against Muslims and the films it produces/supports as a result, cause Muslims in India to be directly exposed to hate speech and crime. In India, the Prophet Muhammad was insulted, mosques were set on fire and a Muslim person was killed. Racist attacks and acts of religious hatred have taken place in Muslim neighborhoods. Religious hate speech has even reached the Indian parliament. BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri called Kunwar Danish Ali, a Muslim MP from the Bahujan Samaj Party, a 'terrorist' and a 'pimp'.

Conclusion

In almost all countries in the world, hate speech/acts occur on a small or large scale against a person, a group or a society as a whole because of their religious beliefs. Hate speech, which is mostly perpetrated by western societies against eastern societies and their religious beliefs from an orientalist perspective, is sometimes perpetrated by eastern societies against eastern societies and their religious beliefs from a self-orientalist perspective. At this point, while eastern societies produce hate speech against the religious beliefs of other eastern societies, they sometimes do so against people in their own society and country.

The fact that these actions, which are carried out on a self-orientalist perspective, are carried out through mass media causes hate speech to spread, become permanent and increase its impact. Especially films produced through cinema, which is one of the mass communication tools, and which contain hate speech have served this purpose for many years. In Bollywood cinema, especially in recent years, films containing hate speech against Islam and Muslims have been produced. These self-orientalist actions and discourses of India, where approximately 20% of the population is Muslim, against its own people and other Muslim peoples are supported by the Indian government and state.

From this point of view, this study aims to determine how hate speech against Islam and Muslims is generated in Bollywood cinema and the film *The Kerala Story* is analyzed through critical discourse analysis. The film was also analyzed with Fairclough's 3D critical discourse analysis. The film analysis was made by taking into account the producer, director, actors, the political structure in the country, the country's rulers, the film's script, dialogues and shots/images.

According to the results obtained from the analysis of *The Kerala Story*, it is possible to say that the entire film contains intense religious hate speech against Islam and Muslims. The characters, script, dialogues, images and music in the film are all selected and constructed to support this hate speech. At this point, in general terms, the most prominent elements in the film are; love jihad, rapes committed by Muslims/ISIS members, the plan of Muslims to take over India, the large number of people converting to Islam and the dangers of this, the backwardness and brutality of Islam, the fact that Islamic countries are very bad both in terms of physical structure and lifestyle (especially for women) and that Islam is a religion of terrorism.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, the political party in power in India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, pursues an anti-Islam and anti-Muslim policy. Modi openly defends this policy with both his rhetoric and actions. Modi supports and financially funds marginalizing, hateful and Islamophobic films in Bollywood against Islam and Muslims. As Yildirim (2022, p. 447) points out, in the Bollywood films 'Baby' and 'Sooryavanshi', Islam and Muslims are constantly associated with terrorism. The Modi government supports films like 'Fanaa', 'Kurbaan', 'Baby', 'Sooryavanshi' and 'Sarfaroosh' and promotes its nationalist policies by using popular actors in these films. 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist' (2012) is also a film made around Muslims, terrorism and cultural

conflicts. The story, told through the Pakistani character Changez Khan, contains Islamophobic elements.

In fact, Modi’s popular discourse of ‘love jihad’ is the main theme of *The Kerala Story*. Another important element in the film is the frequent portrayal of Muslims/ISIS members as rapists. Without exception, all Muslims/ISIS members in the film are either rapists or enablers of rape. Another striking point here is that Muslims and ISIS members are not separated. The message in the film is that if a person is a Muslim, he/she is an ISIS member, and if he/she is an ISIS member, he/she is a Muslim. Khatun’s work (2024, p. 26-55) also supports this. In fact, in Indian cinema, especially before the 2000s, Muslims were seen as a value of India and a part of its cultural diversity. However, in Indian films made after 2000, Muslims were presented as enemies, the other, the excluded, the other, and terrorists. These Muslims, on the other hand, convert Hindus, especially women, to Islam by deceiving them (getting them addicted to drugs). At this point, the film clearly denigrates Islam and asks Hindus and Christians not to convert to Islam.

The main purpose of making this film and other Islamophobic Bollywood films is for Modi and the BJP to create an other (Islam and Muslims) to maintain their power. Another aim is to stop the increase in the number of Muslims and thus prevent exits from Hindu religions. Another purpose is that India wants to maintain its presence in Kashmir and continue the political and psychological struggle with Pakistan.

In fact, India is called an ‘Eastern’ country by ‘Western’ countries and their discourses about India are realized in orientalist correction. Thereupon, it is seen that India should reject the discourse of Western countries but on the contrary it internalizes this discourse and applies this behavior to its own people. So much so that, India, through both its country’s politics and movies, marginalizes Muslims (enemies, terrorists, foreigners) just like Western countries and Western cinema do. India’s action therefore represents a form of selforientalism and supports the narratives of the West.

At this point, in order to effectively combat hate speech against Islam in Indian cinema and thus Islamophobia, it is necessary to conduct an extensive research on hate speech against Islam in India. The reasons for Islamophobia in India, its reflections in society, and how it affects which areas of life should be determined by experts in the field. For this purpose, this issue should be kept on the political and scientific agenda both in India and around the world. In addition, more academic studies should be conducted on Islamophobic movies in Bollywood and awareness should be raised.

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Self Oryantalizm Bağlamında Bollywood Sinemasında İslam'a Yönelik Dini Nefret Söylemi: "The Kerala Story" Örneği

Sefer KALAMAN*

Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş

Din, dil, ırk, cinsiyet, engellilik durumu, siyasi tercih, hastalık gibi nedenlerle bir kişiyi, bir grubu ya da topyekun bir toplumu aşağılamak, taciz etmek ve şiddet uygulanmasına zemin hazırlamak amacıyla gerçekleştirilen ifadeler, nefret söylemini oluşturmaktadır. Bu nefret söylemi türleri içerisinde ise, hedef aldığı insan sayısı dikkate alındığında en tehlikelilerinden ve en zararlı olanlarından birisi dini nefret söylemidir. Öyle ki, bilinçli şekilde oluşturulup yayılan dini nefret söylemi, yüz milyonlarca insanı hedef alabilmekte ve onlar hakkında olumsuz bir imajın oluşmasına zemin hazırlayabilmektedir. Dahası bu dini nefret söyleminin sürekli gerçekleştirilmesi, o dine ve o dinin mensuplarına karşı önyargı eylemlerinin yapılmasına, negatif bir ayrımcı tutum sergilenmesine, önyargı motivasyonlu şiddet eylemlerinin gerçekleştirilmesine ve hatta devamında soykırım yapılmasına hizmet edebilmektedir.

Dini nefret söyleminin televizyon, gazete, sosyal medya, sinema gibi kitle iletişim araçlarıyla oluşturulup yayılması ise söylemin çok geniş kitlelere ulaşmasına, kalıcı olmasına ve daha fazla etki yaratmasına neden olmaktadır. Kuşkusuz sinema, bu kitle iletişim araçları içerisinde dini nefret söyleminin oluşturulup yayılmasına yol açan en etkili araçlardan birisidir. Özellikle Hollywood ve Avrupa sineması tarafından yapılan birçok filmde, İslamiyet başta olmak üzere birçok dine ve o dinin mensuplarına yönelik nefret söylemi gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Batı tarafından oryantalist bakış açısıyla oluşturulan ve sinema aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilen bu dini nefret söylemi artık self oryantalist şekilde de hayat bulmaktadır. Öyle ki, 'doğu toplumları' ve bu toplumlarda yaşayan bazı yapımcı, senarist ve yönetmenler, kendi toplumlarına ya da kendilerine yakın olan doğulu toplumlara karşı dini nefret söylemi içeren filmler yapmaktadır. Bollywood tarafından son yıllarda İslam dinine ve Müslümanlara karşı yapılan İslamofobik filmler bunun en önemli ve en güncel örneklerinden birini teşkil etmektedir. Başbakan Narendra Modi yönetiminde Hindistan'da iktidarda olan siyasi parti Bharatiya Janata Party, İslam'a ve Müslümanlara yönelik gerçekleştirilen dini nefret söylemlerini açık şekilde desteklemektedir. Yakın dönem bu Bollywood filmlerinde Müslümanlar, terörist, suçlu, tecavüzcü, işgalci, yabancı ve barbar olarak sunulmaktadır.

1. Literatür Taraması

Nefret söylemi, bir kişiyi, grubu veya topluluğu dini, dili, ırkı, mezhebi, cinsiyeti, siyasi tercihi, fiziksel yetersizliği veya hastalığı nedeniyle küçük düşürmek, taciz etmek, yıldırma ve bunlara yönelik şiddeti teşvik etmek amacıyla gerçekleştirilen her türlü ifade biçimidir. Binark ve Çomu (2012) bu nefret söylemi türlerini, siyasal nefret söylemi, kadınlara yönelik nefret söylemi,

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yabancılara ve göçmenlere yönelik nefret söylemi, cinsel kimlik temelli nefret söylemi, inanç ve mezhep temelli nefret söylemi ve engellilere/çeşitli hastalıklara yönelik nefret söylemi şeklinde sınıflandırmıştır.

Etkilediği kişi sayısı dikkate alındığında bu nefret söylemi türleri içerisinde en tehlikelilerinden birisi kuşkusuz din ve mezhep temelli nefret söylemidir. Dini nefret söylemi, dini aidiyet ve inançla ilgili nitelikler üzerinden bir kişi, grup veya topluluğa yönelik kötü niyetli, aşağılayıcı, nefreti ve şiddeti kışkırtıcı ifadeleri içermektedir (Weber, 2009).

Batı medyasında oryantalist bakış açısıyla üretilen ve çoğunlukla İslam’ı ve Müslümanları hedef alan medya içerikleri, en fazla televizyon, gazete, sosyal medya ve sinema aracılığıyla sunulmakta ve yayılmaktadır. Özellikle sinema, ABD ve Avrupa tarafından orta doğulu stereotipi üzerinden İslam ve Müslümanlara yönelik dini nefret söyleminin yapıldığı mecra olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Ancak uzun yıllar Batı tarafından oryantalist düzleme indirgenerek oluşturulan ve sinema aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilen bu dini nefret söylemi, artık self oryantalist şekilde de hayat bulmaktadır.

Self oryantalizm üzerine yapılan çalışmalarda çoğunlukla, Doğu’nun ya da doğulunun Batı ya da batılı tarafından üretilen değerlerle kendisini konumlandırması ve ifade etmesi üzerinde durulmaktadır. Ancak self oryantalizmin bir boyutu da, doğulu bir ülkenin yine başka bir doğulu ülkeyi oryantalist düzlemde (self oryantalist şekilde) kötücül ve kalıp yargılarla bezenmiş şekilde sunması/ifade etmesidir. Self oryantalizmin daha derin boyutunda ise, Doğu ya da doğulunun bizzat kendi ülkesindeki insanı, grubu ya da topluluğu dolayısıyla kendi ülkesini oryantalist yaklaşımla ve olumsuz şekilde konumlandırması ve ifade etmesidir. Bu doğrultuda, Doğulu bir ülke tarafından kendi ülkesine, halkına ve dini inancına yönelik sinema aracılığıyla gerçekleştirdiği dini nefret söylemini self oryantalizm düzlemde ele almak mümkündür. Söz konusu dini nefret söyleminin self oryantalist şekilde (Özellikle İslam’a ve Müslümanlara yönelik) gerçekleştiği yerlerden birisi Bollywood olmaktadır. %20’si Müslüman olan Hindistan, hem kendi halkına hem de diğer Müslüman ülkelere ve halklara yönelik sinema filmleri üzerinden dini nefret söylemi gerçekleştirmektedir.

2. Metodoloji

Çalışmada, Bollywood sinemasında self oryantalizm bağlamında İslam’a ve Müslümanlara yönelik dini nefret söyleminin nasıl gerçekleştiğini ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Bununla birlikte çalışmada ele alınan filmde, dini nefret söylemi bağlamında söylemlerin, karakterlerin, mekanların ve olay örgüsünün nasıl oluşturulduğunu tespit etmek de amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmış ve 2023 Hint yapımı ‘The Kerala Story’ filmi incelenmiştir. Çalışmada eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Film, Norman Fairclough’un tanımlama, yorumlama ve açıklama bölümlerinden oluşan üç aşamalı eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemiyle çözümlenmiştir. Fairclough’un yönteminin seçilmesinin nedeni, söylemin ne olduğunu ve nasıl çalıştığını anlamak için alternatif yolların kullanılmasına izin vermesidir. Bu yöntem, filmi analiz ederken metni, söylemi, sosyal pratikleri, metin üreticisini, yayın organını ve siyasal/ideolojik yapıyı da işe dahil etmeyi önelemektedir.

3. ‘The Kerala Story’ Filminin Dini Nefret Söylemi Bağlamında Eleştirel Söylem Analizi

Filmde en fazla gösterilen sahnelerden ve verilen mesajlardan birisi Müslümanların/İŞİD’lilerin, hem Müslüman kadınlara hem Hindu kadınlara hem de diğer dinlere mensup kadınlara tecavüz etmesidir. Film’de Müslümanların/İŞİD’in, kadınları köleleştirdiği vurgusu yapılmaktadır. Müslüman kadınların giydiği burka üzerinden onların silik, sessiz, pasif ve esir konumda oldukları vurgulanmaktadır. Hindistan başbakanı Modi’nin söylemi olan ve filmin ana temasını oluşturan ‘aşk cihadi’ kavramı da kadının nasıl köleleştirildiğini açıklamaktadır. Filme göre, İslam’da kadın ya silah zoruyla esir alınıp seks kölesi yapılmaktadır ya da İŞİD’li erkekler, Hindu ve Hristiyan kadınları kendilerine âşik ederek Müslümanlaştırmakta ardından da köleleştirmektedir.

Filmde Hindistan'ın gerek doğası gerekse de sosyal hayatı kusursuz güzellikte sunulmuştur. Ancak İslam ülkeleri ise çorak arazi, ölüm, vahşet, gericilik, esaret, terör gibi unsurlarla ifade edilmiştir. Filmde, Suriye ve Afganistan'a açıktan bir ötekileştirme ve terörle ilişkilendirme söylemleri gerçekleştirilmiş ancak Pakistan'ın adı geçirilmemiştir. Fakat filmde gizlenen mesajlarda Pakistan da hedef alınmış ve nefret söylemine maruz bırakılmıştır. Öyle ki, Filmin başrolü Begam Fatima'nın adı (İŞİD'li terörist), Pakistanlı Müslüman eski bir politikacı olan Fatima Begum'dan esinlenerek oluşturulmuştur. Bununla birlikte, Babür hükümdarı Alamgir Aurangzeb Müslümandır ve Hindistan'ı fethetmeye çok yaklaşmıştır. Filmde, İŞİD'lilerin de bu amacı gerçekleştirmek istedikleri vurgulanmıştır. Film, Hindistan'ın Keşmir konusunda varlığını sürdürmek ve Pakistan ile süren siyasi ve psikolojik mücadeleyi devam ettirmek istemesine de hizmet etmektedir.

Filmde üzerinde en çok durulan konulardan birisi de, Hristiyanlıktan ve Hindu dinlerinden İslam'a geçişlerin çok olmasıdır. Filmde, Hindu kadınlar zorla İslam'a geçirilmektedir. Kadınlar, Müslüman/İŞİD'li erkekler tarafından hamile bırakılıp evlenmek ve İslam'a geçmek zorunda bırakılmaktadır. Hindu ve Hristiyan kadınlar, İŞİD'liler tarafından uyuşturucuya alıştırmakta, beyinleri yıkanmakta ve bu sayede din değiştirmeleri sağlanmaktadır. Bu nedenle Filmin yönetmeninin, yapımcısının ve Modi'nin filmi yapma amaçlarından birisi de, Müslüman sayısındaki artışı durdurmak dolayısıyla Hindu dinlerinden çıkışları engellemektir. Halihazırda filmin sonunda Nima karakteri, bu amacı açık şekilde destekleyen bir tirat sergilemiştir. Nima, Hindistan'da İslam'a geçişlerin masum olmadığını üstüne basarak belirtmiş ve İslam-terör ilişkisini vurgulamıştır.

Sonuç

Araştırmada elde edilen sonuçlara göre, filmde temel olarak 7 unsur öne çıkmıştır; Müslümanların Hindu'lara ve Hristiyanlara tecavüzü, aşk cihadı, Müslümanların Hindistan'ı işgal etme amacı, Hindu dinlerinden İslam'a geçiş, İslam ve terör, İslam'da kadının köleliği ve İslam'ın gericiliği/hoşgörüsüzlüğü. Filmde söz konusu bu unsurlar defalarca gösterilmiştir. Bu sahneler hem diyalog hem dramatize görüntüler hem de müzikle pekiştirilmiştir. Filmdeki bu unsurlar, açık şekilde İslam'a ve Müslümanlara yönelik dini nefret söylemini içermektedir.

Bu nefret söylemleri, Hindistan'da nefret eylemlerini de beraberinde getirmiştir. Öyle ki, Hindistan'da Hz. Muhammed'e hakaret edilmiş, camiler kundaklanmış ve Müslümanlar öldürülmüştür. Müslüman mahallelerinde ırkçı saldırılar ve dini nefret eylemleri gerçekleştirilmektedir. Hatta dini nefret söylemi, Hindistan meclisine kadar uzanmıştır. BJP Milletvekili Ramesh Bidhuri, Bahujan Samaj Partisi'ndeki Müslüman milletvekili Kunwar Danimarkalı Ali'ye 'terörist' ve 'pezevenk' demiştir.

Söz konusu filmin ve diğer İslamofobik Bollywood filmlerinin yapılmasının temel amacı, Modi'nin ve BJP'nin iktidarını sürdürmek için bir öteki (İslam ve Müslümanlar) yaratmasıdır. Diğer amaç, Müslüman sayısındaki artışı durdurmak dolayısıyla Hindu dinlerinden çıkışları engellemektir. Başka bir amaç da, Hindistan'ın Keşmir konusunda varlığını sürdürmek ve Pakistan ile süren siyasi ve psikolojik mücadeleyi devam ettirmek istemesidir.

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Arařtırma tek bir yazar tarafından yürütölmüřtür.

The research was conducted by a single author.

Çıkar Çatıřması Beyanı / Conflict of Interest

Çalıřma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kiři ile çıkar çatıřması bulunmamaktadır.

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

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