

Hello / Farewell London: Construction of the Dichotomy between East and West in Indian Popular Cinema

Summary

This article is concerned with diasporic representation in a Bollywood film *Namastey London*, directed by Vipul Shah and released in 2007. The article situates *Namastey London* as an example of how Indian popular film industry creates a fictional diasporic environment where numerous ideological discourses of „Indianness“ are performed by re-establishing and re-inventing the dichotomy between East and West – a strategy which was popularly articulated in many Indian films since the 1950s but lost its currency after

the liberalization of Indian economy in 1991. The construction of diasporic identity in *Namastey London* is researched using the theoretical concepts of ‘home’, ‘culture’ and ‘belonging’. The article seeks to investigate how the film ideologically manipulates the construction of diasporic identities through the discourses of gender, religion and sexuality. *Namastey London* presents Britain as glamorous, opportunistic but alien and even threatening environment and offers a quick remedy for its diasporic subjects – an opportunity to return to the homeland.

Key words: *Namastey London*, Bollywood, popular cinema, Indian diaspora, East, West.

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