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The Tropes of Misogyny: A Selection of Problematic Women Characters in Indian Cinema

Introduction

India has a bustling, booming film industry that has become a well known monolith within the international film industry, being the fifth largest cinematic industry on the globe, consumed by masses of Indian and global audiences. It has not always been as prominent as it is today, however; the industry itself had humble beginnings that date back to 1898, with sound films first being released in 1931, and, since its birth, Indian cinema has undergone a plethora of changes as far as cinematography, music, genres, and the depiction of India as a nation. However, perhaps one of the most notable constants, as unfortunate and detrimental as it has been, is the integration of misogyny, an ingrained prejudice against women or fem-identifying people, within the art's narrative. The effects of the patriarchy are directly tied to material conditions and depictions of women, and have been seen in Indian cinema since the very beginnings of the industry. The power dynamic is explicitly and subtly delivered through misogynistic tropes, and much like the industry itself, these tropes have evolved over the years, creating a wide variety of subtle and obvious misogynistic storylines that have been introduced to audiences, globally. While the misogynistic tropes found in Indian cinema are undoubtedly a reflection of the patriarchy, their changes are also a reflection of the changes in the social and/or political state of India at the times of their portrayal in historical and contemporary media. This article will review both good and bad depictions of female characters in a multitude of

Bollywood films, in the process covering common tropes such as the good woman / bad woman, celebrating a woman's submissiveness to the hero or patriarch, and equating a woman to a prize to be won or obtained. But first, let's take a broader look at the current place of women in the Indian film industry and their general representation throughout film media.

A Brief Statistical Description of Gender and Film

In 2021, Ormax media and entertainment group *Film Companion* released a brief report called *O Womaniya! 2021* which provides a general overview of the portrayal of women in Indian cinema and their presence in the industry. The report took data from 129 films released between 2019 and 2020 in compiling its data, discovering several interesting things. First, across all of the studios analyzed, 92% of all Head of Department positions for the important divisions of editing, production design, direction, writing, and cinematography were filled by men, with the percentage dropping to 84% for Hindi cinema and rising to 99% for South Indian Cinema (*O Womaniya!*). This indicates an incredibly male dominated industry, where the one primarily responsible for the characterization and depiction of female characters (besides the actors themselves) are men.

Another startling statistic found by this report was that 59% of the 129 tested films failed the Bechdel test (*O Womaniya!*). The Bechdel test is a loose measure of the active characterization of women characters within a film. It simply requires two named women characters to hold a dialogue that is not about a man. While passing the Bechdel test does not automatically clear a film of misogynistic ideas or patriarchal tendencies, failing it does suggest very passive representations of women in a film otherwise centered around men. This idea is further supported by another finding of the report, that among trailers for these films, 81% of the

spoken dialogue came from the male characters (*O Womaniya!*), accentuating the dominance of men not only within the industry, but also within the story.

In 2022, a report called *Gender bias, social bias, and representation in Bollywood and Hollywood* used language processing software to perform a statistical review of the dialogue of 700 Bollywood and Hollywood films spanning a period of 70 years (1950-2019). In this review, the report found that there was an implicit association between the word "woman" and the words "weak", "helpless", "innocent", "sin", and "poor", while the word "man" was associated with more general terms such as "fellow", "person", "guy" (Khadilkar, et al). It is important to note that this analysis also finds an upward trend in more positive word associations with the word "woman", and that the analysis itself may contain biases. However, it is still useful to note these implicit distinctions between the representation of women and men within the very dialogue itself of a film.

The figures discussed above tell a story about the relationship between women and cinema that is likely unsurprising for most, except for possibly in the degree to which the industry is dominated by men and the level of stereotyping within film. It is important to keep these statistics in mind when reviewing the women characters and the tropes associated with them in the sections following this one. Hopefully, this will provide context on the significance of these character depictions, where the associated tropes come from and how prevalent they are.

Shree 420: The Good Woman / Bad Woman Trope

Released near the very origins of sound films in India cinema, *Shree 420* came out in 1952, in an international film festival held in India. While the film is dominantly filled with the influence of Italian Neo-realism, it is very much a tribute to Bombay. Beyond just Bombay, however, it is a tribute to the nation as a whole, as it is a film of the social genre in a way that

was evidently pro-Nation state; *Shree 420* is a Nationalist social film through and through. As said in an article by Indian Express, *Shree 420* "celebrates patriotism in its full glory" (Sharma). It expresses a certain faith in the nation-state's ability and agenda to improve people's lives. Ultimately, the film resonated with the idea of the family and nation-state working in harmony, in tandem. Unfortunately, the concept of nationalist social films such as *Shree 420* also tied into a rather conservative, traditionalist outlook on women and minorities as a whole, largely due to the emphasis on family that came with nationalist social ideals of the time. The wave of nationalist socialism ingrained in Indian society and ideals at the time came together on the big screen to weave together the trope of a traditional, pious housewife. *Shree 420* was not an exception; Nargis Dutt's character Vidya is a picture perfect example of this trope. During the production of *Shree 420,* the filmmakers were influenced by the nationalist socialism political and social ideology in India and cultivated Vidya's character to be an embodiment of a trope that positively reaffirms and reflects the social and political misogynistic, conservative regard of women at the time, which came hand in hand with the surge of nationalist socialist ideals across the country.

Vidya exists in sharp contrast to the other female lead's character Maya, who is anything but a traditional, pious housewife, especially for the time period in which the movie came out. Maya is a sultry temptress who drinks, smokes, and plays cards; she also happens to negatively influence the main character, Raj, throughout the course of the movie. Meanwhile, Vidya is a force of good, a positive influence that strives to make a good, honest man out of Raj. She's essentially his living, moral compass (Sharma). They are the two opposing female presences in the movie, and it is crystal clear who the audience is supposed to be in support of and who the "good guy" in this situation is. Maya is the "bad woman" to Vidya's "good woman"; this combined with the fact that Vidya is a rather fitting embodiment of the traditional housewife

trope, is not a mere coincidence. By making Maya, the antithesis of the ideals for women during this time period in India, a clearly negative influence throughout the course of the movie, while making Vidya an obvious force of good, *Shree 420* further cements the aforementioned misogynistic ideology that came with the surge of national socialism. Though Raj falls into Maya's "trap", at the end of the film, he manages to right his wrongs and return to the right path, wherein Vidya wholeheartedly forgives him for his wrongdoings, as a traditional, pious housewife would be expected to do.

The things Maya stands for and represents throughout the movie — promiscuity, smoking, all in all more carnal pleasures, and cons — hurt the community, which serves as a metaphor for how women who do not not fit in with the outlook of what they were supposed to be like could cause harm to the state. To contrast that, the ideology that Vidya represents is a purehearted, good-natured one, and her overall nature ties neatly into the trope in a way that highlights how more conservative and traditional roles for women were considered a core component of the concept of family within the nation. All in all, in the wake of the aforementioned outlook on women during the popular National socialist ideology of that time period, *Shree 420* forges a positive association with the concept of Vidya's character, helping the trope fully come to life within the industry in Indian cinema.

Sholay: Providing Depth to Classical Stereotypes

The film that is widely regarded as making Amitabh Bhachchan a superstar was *Sholay*. *Sholay* was India's first take on the western film genre, known as a 'curry western' movie. It was extremely popular and became the highest grossing Indian film for many years. Sholay is considered one of the greatest Indian movies of all time and it still holds a massive place in popular culture. The plot follows two criminals Jai, played by Amitabh Bhachchan, and Veeru,

portrayed by Dharmendra, as they are recruited by a retired police officer Thakur, played by Sanjeev Kumar, to help catch the bandit Gabbar Singh, played by Amjad Khan.

Sholay is also known to kickstart the genre of the Angry Young Man. The genre of the Angry Young Man features a young man who is angry at society or aspects of it, usually in the form of an undoubtedly evil rich person, such as a businessman. The genre was born out of a time of immense political turmoil and the economic conditions that followed. There was a rise in the working class, and with it came the demand to see a hero of the working class rising up against the elites. Since the story would mainly be about the hero, his masculinity, and his fight against the villain, it would be hard for Indian films to portray nuanced female characters which it already struggled to do. However, Sholay, with its over 3 hour length has managed to create women with some depth. The important female characters in this movie are love interests. Although this is a cliched role for women in Indian cinema, their characters have some uniqueness. Although they are far from perfect, they are a strong start to represent women in a male dominated genre.

There are two completely different women in this film that represent two different ideals. The first is Jai's love interest, Radha, played by Bhachchan's real life wife, Jaya Bhaduri. Radha is the widowed daughter-in-law of Thakur who remains quiet and shy throughout the film. In many Indian films, widows take on more of a traditional woman approach as they are reserved and not as outgoing. Due to their husband's death, a widow was usually showcased as half dead, upholding the traditional belief that a woman's life is almost always tied to a man. However, *Sholay* departs from the traditional and overused representation of a widow. Although the traditionally quiet aspect of a widow is shown, Radha has more depth and is given more room for growth in the film. Firstly, Radha is integral for the progression of the plot as is shown in the

scene where Jai and Veeru attempt to steal from Thakur's house. Radha notices the two men trying to steal and after some words, "Radha sets them on the righteous path toward saving Ramgarh from the tyranny of Gabbar Singh." (). Here, Radha, despite the traditionality in her characteristics, provides valuable insight and is the one that helps the heroes. This is a sharp contrast to the classical depiction of female characters in Indian cinema, who face many struggles until a man comes to save them. Radha is given the opportunity to help the men when the heroine is normally saved by one. Additionally, Radha is given a chance to love again, something extremely stigmatized in Indian cinema and even in society. Jai falls in love with Radha and even "the patriarch of the house – Thakur is supportive of this relationship." () Normally, the patriarch's of the house do not accept any relationships for the women in their family in Indian films, much less a widow. Radha, despite retaining some of the problematic portrayals of widows in Indian Cinema, took some progressive steps and helped pave the way for widows to be treated better in society.

The other prominent woman in the film is a much more outgoing, talkative Basanti, Veeru's love interest, portrayed by Hema Malini. Basanti is not confined to her home like Radha, but is instead roaming throughout Ramgarh and always talking. Instead of being overly annoying with her chattiness, her dialogues giver her character and a sense of control of her body. In the film, she states that if the mare could pull the carriage then she could be the rider, which is an occupation usually reserved for men in India. Additionally, she is outspoken about her love for dance and sings about how she shall always dance. Using her voice, Basanti is able to justify her choices in front of men. Despite her vocal independence, Basanti still retains some of the traditional characterizations of Indian women. For example, Basanti wants to get married and treats it as her end goal, indicating that she sees no future for herself outside of being married to

a man. Also, she is a victim of the classic Indian cinema trope where she is essentially forced into loving the hero, but she is in love deeply afterwards. Although these exist in the film, they do not take away from Basanti's autonomy over her own body. Having a character like her in a popular Indian film helps pave the way for the concept of an independent woman to be mainstream as well as help inspire and give role models to women watching.

Sholay had 2 important female characters with opposing personalities. Despite having some traditional, misogynistic characteristics, Basanti and Radha were still able to have depth and help pave the way for how women should be portrayed in Indian Cinema. Radha contained a lot more characteristics of a traditional Indian woman, but she still is able to help men as opposed to being continuously sad until she meets a man. She also is not vilified for her choice to fall in love despite being a widow and the patriarch in her family supports her decision instead of making her out to be evil and a destroyer of culture. Basanti is always vocal, and is never shut down by being around men and takes jobs that are usually reserved for men.

Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham: Pacification and Trivialization of Female Characters

Returning to the big screen together, Jaya Bachan and Amitabh Bachan essentially reprised their characters in the 2001 film *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham (K3G)*, but this time as the egregiously mourning *mother* and angry strict *father*. The story follows a father disowning his adopted son over the woman he chose to marry due to class differences, and eventually reuniting following a series of tumultuous events. While the plot was quite commonly received from audiences as an attack on patriarchal systems in its characters' rebellion against the patriarch of the family, the film itself does not shy away from using women as props, once again, for the sake of comedic relief, reiterating the motherly divine trope, and inciting much of the women's characterization as one dimensional. Ultimately, the film incites many of the same patriarchal

features it superficially denounces: "Women's oppression starts innocuously: it occurs in private life, within families, with girls being locked up in their own homes. This everyday violence is the product of a culture that bestows all power on men, and that does not even want women to exist" (Narayan), and this film did a phenomenal job adopting the very violent ideologies used against women into its plot, where marriage and familial contexts are often the source of much of the destruction of the women's sense of self.

The first woman we are introduced to is Jaya Bachan as the "wife of the patriarch," and "mother of the male protagonist." She has been most notably remarked for her role as a mother with the ability to sense her son's presence without any contact. In fact this is a common theme for her as a large majority of her appearances are accompanied by the male-centric characters and plots. She was seen on her anniversary, her husband's birthday, her son's arrival, and was not granted much screen time beyond that. She was unilaterally characterized as a wife and mother, with no scenes exploring the nuances within or beyond these roles for her, and while the film was able to pass the bechdel test, this character unfortunately did not. "These movies trivialize the female characters, and the only purpose they seem to serve is to further the narrative of the male protagonist. Thus, it sends out a harmful message of women lacking their own, independent identities and gives an impetus to an adverse and damaging conception in society" (Samiti). In 2001, many women's organizations and activist groups centered around the issue of femicide with campaigns such as "Save the Girl Child" (Heuer), and Jaya Bachan's role played in stark opposition to what was considered the "woman protecting the child." Much of her interactions even with the other women were in regards to her sons, and her character played a role in centering the narrative of the film around Amitabh Bachan and Shah Rukh Khan's characters. The writers of the film never provided her with characteristics outside of those seen in traditional

nurturing roles. Unlike *Shree 420's* Vidya, Jaya Bachan's character was not given any roots or ability to expand as a character as we were never able to see her life outside of these men, and her emotions surrounding them were often seen positioned in grief and picturizing her weeping several times throughout the movie, marking her crying as the most significant act of her character. Her role was essentially a culmination of Vidya's nurturing, Madhu's melodrama, and Radha's grief. She was never given an arc that uplifted her character independent of her husband and sons. Jaya Bachan is also not the only motherly figure in the film;

Farida Jalal played a nanny to Hritik Roshan's younger depicted character who stayed with Rahul's family when they relocated to London. "Movies often fail to showcase women as individual beings, with their own thought processes, aspirations, and characteristics, and end up focusing entirely on their role, in their relation to their husband, or their family" (thatsocial.org). They repeatedly emphasized her importance to Rahul and his younger brother–Rohan– but once again separated her arc from her own interests including her daughter and her relationship to Anjali beyond moments of comedic relief. We were deprived of any emotionally grounded relationship between the two women, which would have made a powerful addition to the plot. Around this time, India had federalized a policy of affirmative action to provide women with a more equitable playing field when it came to their careers, academics, etc. The National Policy For the Empowerment of Women was backed by large women's rights movements where there was a call for mainstreaming women's perspectives. Although Jaya Bachan and Farida Jalal's characters were still restricted by the male gaze, Anjali, the lead woman, was able to bypass these sexist tropes to an extent.

The lead woman in this film is Kajol's Anjali, who we meet as a young Punjabi woman who always seems to be a little out of the loop in an endearing way. She has a few quirks and

isn't afraid to speak her mind. While she is incredibly beloved by audiences, it seems that her character was able to pursue a larger range of endeavors and personal growths. Many of her memorable moments are her breaking a vase, standing for the Indian national anthem in London, and getting her father-in-law's blessing for her, all of which are venture accompanied yet independent of the men in her life. She was often seen acting in harmony with her own morals and values, rather than deferring to her–overbearing–husband. Anjali's character was developed in a way that reinforced minimal gender affirmatives, as much of her personality liberated her from the men in her presence rather than forced her to behave in a way considered traditionally masculine in order to earn respect. Her Punjabi heritage was also often addressed as a source of her femininity. The first time she meets her love interest, she is doing Bhangra, a traditional Punjabi Dance, and around this time in India the Punjabi diaspora was integrating itself within all regions of Indian life. The Punjabi influence was seen in food, music, dance, and of course, cinema.

The youngest woman featured in the film was Kareena Kapoor's Pooja. She was introduced as a young girl and reintroduced when she was older. In the second introduction, it is clear that she is an unapologetically confident woman having been raised by multicultural influences in London. She is often portrayed as self-centered and immodest, however those critiques are often in comparison to the more modestly behaving female characters like Anjali, Jaya Bachan, and Farida Jalal. In actuality, it allows for Pooja to have her own arc where she is not stereotyped in the same "desirable to men" manner that the other women are. Although this character had a lot of potential as far as liberating herself from the male gaze, by the end of the film she is seen as reinforcing misogynistic tropes. Pooja begins "behaving" and dressing to fit the traditional blueprint, and is only then considered capable of making emotional connections

with empathy by all of the other characters in the film. The misogyny is clearly visible through her relations towards the other characters and the points in the films where she is seen as more incompetent–having a more dominant personality–to being worthy of attention and genuine praise when she had to suppress much of her personality. It can be argued that this was just another dimension of her character, however her shift of modesty only occurred after meeting her love interest in the film and was maintained through his desirability.

Women's roles were further altered with the advent of the Non Resident Indian as a protagonist. First introduced in films such as Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, the Non Resident Indian refers to an outsider of Indian origin, with different speech and behavioral characteristics. Women in these films are often more liberal than their previous depictions. The Non Resident Indian was often depicted as one of the best examples of a true Indian - as "guardians of tradition and honor" (Mehta 164). Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge introduced the fact that someone of Indian origin could reside in - and thrive - in a place other than India. All the while keeping their core Indian values.

The film revolves around two Non Resident Indians and families living in England. The main female protagonist in this film is Simran, once again played by Kajol, as a young woman trying to break free of her arranged marriage to be with her love interest Raj, played by Shah Rukh Khan. Raj's family is the opposite of Simran's, as his father is much more liberal and believes values considered more "Western". This may be related to Raj coming from a background of extreme wealth. Simran's father, Baldev, is a very conservative Indian man who believes in traditional values. These traditional sentiments and values are expressed early in the film, when Raj pulls a prank on Baldev as he closes his convenience store. Raj comes into the

store asking to buy medicine, saying that as an Indian, Baldev is compelled to help out his fellow Indian. However, Raj instead grabs a pack of beer and runs out of the store. Baldev is furious with Raj, exclaiming to his family when he gets home that while men such as Raj call themselves Indian, they have been corrupted by Western values, and have no respect for their elders. Owing to these values, Baldev promised Simran's hand in marriage to his best friend's son Kuljeet 20 years ago. Baldev, playing the traditional Indian father, reinforces certain stereotypes and roles of Indian women, where they are not even allowed to choose who they marry. Instead, everything is prearranged from a young age, often to men the woman in question never meets before their wedding. Additionally, the film features the stereotype of women being subservient to men, with Simran's mother Lajjo dissuading Simran from pursuing love, rather telling her that she cannot do anything to get out of her prearranged marriage. Lajjo believes that the "dream partner" rarely comes into one's life.

However, Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge also challenges some conservative Indian stereotypes. To begin with, the usual roles of villain and protagonist are reversed. Raj, the main protagonist, is a foreign Non Resident Indian, while the "villain" Kuljeet is a local Indian. Here, Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge tries to show that an Indian does not necessarily need to be in India to be the hero. Foreigners can be the protagonist of a story as well.

Additionally, Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge challenges the traditional film stereotype of a couple eloping if their parents disapprove of their relationship. Instead, in the film Raj is seen unwilling to elope or marry Simran unless he gains her father's consent. The Indian values of consent are given preference over Raj's love for Simran. However, here again traditional female stereotypes rear their ugly head, as Simran is wholly reliant on Raj asking her father for approval. She cannot challenge him or try to convince him to elope with her.

In a feminist twist, however, when Simran begins the Karva Chauth, a daylong fast in which the woman declines food and drink for her future husband's prosperity, Raj joins her, fasting alongside and sneaking her food when she is hungry. The traditionally female ritual in this case is undertaken by a male as well, challenging the standard gender norms (Sharpe 66).

These traditional Indian values toward women come up again in the film when Raj and Simran spend the night together. Simran does not remember much from their night together, and questions Raj if anything happened. Raj responds that he would never take away Simran's honor in that way and assures her they did not have sex. Here, Simran's honor is tied to whether or not she and Raj, two consenting adults, have sex without being married. Simran's worth and purity are tied to her sexual encounters. This reinforces the traditional Indian female stereotype that their "purity" and lack of sexual encounters are vital to them being accepted by society. With the advent of the Non Resident Indian protagonist, women's roles in films became more traditional, more patriotic as they tried to act as examples of perfect Indians. In DDLJ, for example, "Simran is hot spirited and independent, but also chaste and morally upright" (Sharpe 65). The films as a whole led to a rise of patriotism and tried to showcase the pride of being Indian even when living overseas. While female roles gained some freedom and flexibility by being set in Western countries with Western values, as a whole, misogynistic tropes once again took control as the film industry tried to depict Non Resident Indians as perfect, traditional Indian couples with traditional Indian values.

Kabir Singh: A Prize To Be Won

The concept of the "obsessive lover", a man who stalks, molests, and sometimes brutalizes the main female character is an old and popular character in Indian Cinema (), with examples being *Darr: A Violent Love Story* and *Kabir Singh*, the topic of this section. In these

films, the pacification of women characters is extended even beyond subordination within the patriarchy: women become objects, prizes to be won, to be owned, to be possessed. This is particularly emphasized in *Kabir Singh*, where the controlling and violent behavior of the titular hero against the heroine is normalized and even celebrated.

The film centers on Kabir Singh, a medical student in Delhi who falls in love with the first-year student Preeti. After her father opposes their relationship, Singh goes on to bury himself in sex, alcohol, and other drugs, even resorting to self-harm in climatic moments. Only at the end of the film does Singh clean up his act and is rewarded with a renewed relationship with Preeti, who ran away from her marriage and reveals herself to be pregnant with Singh's child. While Preeti is the primary female character within the film, the interesting aspect of the character is how little of an actual presence she has outside of simply being the driving force of Singh's conflict. She is depicted as a modest, traditional woman (Viswamohan, and ChaudhurI), but outside of that, has very few defining qualities. The majority of her actions are in fact governed by Singh, who is incredibly controlling throughout the film. Singh determines who Preeti is friends with, when she attends class and when she spends time with him, and often engages in sexual (or implied sexual) behavior without her consent, explicit or otherwise (Pasha). Throughout the entire film, Preeti is increasingly dehumanized by Singh's behavior, but instead of condemning or speaking out against this behavior, the film romanticizes it. This is further exhibited in Singh's interactions with other female characters in the film. In the first scene, when a woman does not want to engage in sex with Singh, he holds her at knife-point and coerces her into doing what he wishes, all why impishly joyful music plays in the background, creating the impression that the events are comedic rather than dark and criminal, as they actually are ().

While *Kabir Singh* has received criticism for its celebratory depiction of toxically masculine behavior (Viswamohan, and ChaudhurI), it was quite popular with audiences upon its release, grossing RS 379 crore (Pasha). Because of how it reduces the roles of women to mere objects in the hero's romantic fantasies, the film promotes dangerous, regressive ideas about women in modern society. This objectification of female characters is not limited to *Kabir Singh* and is an especially toxic trope within the Indian film industry.

Conclusion

The history of women in Indian cinema is one that is ripe with misogyny and patriarchal power grabs. Female characters have been represented in films in a multitude of ways, only a small subset of which has been explored here. *Shree 420* illustrated how the good women / bad women trope idealized and celebrated the traditional and modest Vidya while simultaneously demonizing the more sultry behavior of Maya. This cemented the stereotype of the pious housewife in Indian cinema for decades to come. In contrast, Radha and Basanti provide a more positive portrayal of female characters in *Sholay*. While they are shunted into the classical roles of the heroes' love interests, they also demonstrate positive behaviors that help deepen their characters beyond the typical stereotypes. The female characters we meet in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, however, are all deeply steeped within layers of patriarchal subjugation and misogyny. Very often, they are more often used as props of the patriarch and the hero than taking any real action on their own. With the advent of the Non Resident Indian, female characters toop a step back, as more traditional roles and stereotypes were favored to showcase the perfect Indian values that Non Resident Indians seemingly possessed. Finally, in *Kabir Singh*, the character of Preeti is practically removed from the film altogether, reduced to a treasure to be owned and loved by the titular hero of the story. Whereas the previous films mostly normalized patriarchy

and misogyny, *Kabir Singh* normalized violence and romanticized obsessiveness and possessiveness with regards to its female characters. Each of these representations of women in Indian cinema is somewhat problematic, and they are not unique; they are present throughout many films throughout the globe. It is important that we take the time to reflect on these representations, both to recognize the mistakes and problematic behaviors of the past and to avoid making these same mistakes in future films.

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