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Transnational Actors: A Study in International Cinema

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**TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS: A STUDY IN
INTERNATIONAL CINEMA**

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In a world that devotes much attention to on-screen entertainment, film actors provide a great deal of cultural significance. There are a number of prominent actors who were born in Spanish-speaking countries that have achieved iconic status in Hollywood, but few native-born American actors who act in other languages. In this study, I examine the reasons behind the success of these transnational Hispanic actors, finding that most of them started their careers in their native countries with highly sexualized roles before acting in the United States. I believe that these eroticized beginnings attracted Hollywood to these actors, so that they could be used as sex icons that satisfyingly embody the exotic “other” for American audiences. In my paper, I look at the actors Diego Luna, Penelope Cruz, Antonio Banderas, Javier Bardem, and Gael Garcia Bernal, analyzing certain films with an eye to how their characters are ethnically and sexually portrayed.