



Musical Numbers in Bollywood Cinema's Homeland and Diaspora

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Since the rise of scholarship on Bollywood cinema, most notably from the 2000s, the cinema's relationship to its diaspora has featured regularly as a theme for exploration (e.g. Dwyer 2000; Mishra 2002; Viridi 2003; Desai 2004; Ganti 2004; Kaur and Sinha 2005; Dudrah 2006a; Kavoori and Punathambekar 2008; Rai 2009; Mehta and Pandharipande 2011; Dudrah 2012).¹ Even when Bollywood cinema is predominantly representing its Indian diaspora, due to its large South Asian audiences both in the subcontinent and around the world, it hegemonically has come to represent ideas about the homeland and its diaspora for many South Asian audiences globally. This has primarily to do with South Asian societies and cultures facing similar issues such as culture and globalisation, modernity, the rural and the urban, the role of gender in developing societies and so on. Bollywood cinema has been able to represent these issues through its own particular idioms and been able to disseminate its films

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via highly organised systems of production and global distribution. The scholarship in this area has also pointed out the mostly binary relationship that Bollywood cinema tends to construct between India and the West. Here, India and Indians in the homeland are often positioned as the moral authority and the West and Westerners, including many Indians living in the West, are depicted as its negative counterpart. The West is also presented as a place to travel to for economic investment through NRI [non-resident Indian] remittances and opportunities to better one's life, but the socio-cultural complexities and nuances of life in the diaspora are mostly overlooked or depicted sparingly (Dudrah 2012: 9–10).

While previous studies have dealt at some length with the stories and overall cultural politics about the representation of diaspora more broadly through film plots, characterisations, dialogues, and signs and symbols associated with the homeland and diaspora, very few studies have dealt specifically with musical numbers as expositions of the same. This is an interesting lacuna in the current Bollywood scholarship that deals with homeland and diaspora representations for at least two reasons. First, musical numbers are an important feature of almost all mainstream Bollywood films that are fundamental to their storytelling, as well as an elaboration of key moments of the film through spectacle. Secondly, musical numbers also work in ways that might well promote a film's ostensibly conservative ideology, while also simultaneously, or at other points in the same film, be open to new lines of flight towards exciting and complex possibilities, thereby generating a range of pleasures and even contradictions. Musical numbers, therefore, offer a fruitful area of focus for further exploration of Bollywood's dealing with homeland and diaspora issues.

As part of the rise in Bollywood scholarship over the past two decades, a sub-field has also emerged around song and dance where aspects of musical moments or musical numbers have been elaborated on. Within the scholarship there now exists a developing understanding of the song-dance numbers, film *geet*, song picturisations, or musical numbers as they are often interchangeably referred to (e.g. Gopalan 2002; Garwood 2006; Gopal and Sen 2008; Gopal and Moorti 2008; Ganti 2012; Gehlawat and Dudrah 2019). Studies have shown the ways in which song and dance are particular components of the popular Indian cinema aesthetic while also sharing some similarities and marked differences with other cinemas that feature musical numbers, namely Hollywood cinema. These include: song and dance acting as narrative accelerators, deepening the

emotional texture of the film's narrative; they are not momentary pauses in the action disturbing the narrative flow, rather they function as central components that can contain the film's overriding message; song picturisations code the inexpressible and the transgressive, acting as ways of getting around censorship laws in India (Gopal and Moorti 2008: 5). The song and dance sequences have a pre-cinematic life that circulates outside the exhibition space acting as mini trailers, and songs and music seem to condense and stand in for the films of which they are a part (ibid.: 3). Bollywood film songs can also have a long post-cinematic life functioning as India's pop music, comprising a lingua franca of the Hindi-Urdu languages that cross regional and national boundaries. By extension these songs are one of the main sources of popular music across parts of the South Asian diaspora too, featuring on radio stations, music video channels and on satellite TV. The songs are bought and downloaded just as much as the movies, and in some cases, the sales of songs have been known to outperform a film's unsuccessful income at the box office (ibid.: 6).²

MUSICAL NUMBERS AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

My approach to musical numbers is to draw attention to aspects of their key features as set out in the above literature from the sub-field of Bollywood song and dance numbers (i.e. namely how they function as narrative accelerators, contain important messages that run throughout the film, alongside working in affecting and transgressive ways). I further wish to develop my textual analysis of the chosen musical numbers as drawing inspiration from the literature on musical numbers as applied to other cinemas. Here, I am particularly drawn to the work of Amy Herzog (2009) and Phil Powrie (2017) who, respectively, use musical moments and numbers from Hollywood musicals and French cinema as their primary examples. Both, in related but also very different ways, make reference to the construction and assemblage of representation in musical numbers and the kinds of pleasures that viewing audiences—individually and collectively—may derive from such moments. Where they demonstrate differences of opinion and/or focus in their arguments is that Herzog relies more heavily on a Deleuzian approach to cinema as art and philosophy, and art and philosophy as cinema, which primarily might be made intelligible through a hermeneutic analysis. Powrie, on

the other hand, while also drawing on aspects of Deleuzian ideas of intensity in the cinematic experience, gives further value to the feeling/s that might be experienced—as a one-off or repeatedly—through the affective moments on hearing a piece of music or song in combination with the images we see on screen. He terms this as ‘imusimagic’—i.e. music and images creating magic on screen for us as spectators and audiences through affect (Powrie 2017:11). These differences aside, both in their idiosyncratic ways, demonstrate usefully for us as to why musical numbers and their analyses matter. For Herzog musical moments erupt within all manner of cinematic and video forms, and we need to explore their philosophical, cultural and political implications (Herzog 2009: 3). Following this line of thought, this allows her to ask for us: What is it that the work of the musical moment does or performs (ibid.: 8)? Furthermore, how might musical moments make us feel, through their affective power (ibid.: 15)? Powrie, taking on and extending some of these concerns, searches for ‘the deliciously different, the quizzical, the thoughtfully provocative, the in-between’ in musical moments (2017: 3), as such is their elusive draw. Locating my film analysis of musical numbers as arising from the intersection of Bollywood studies and film musical analysis more generally, especially of the kind exemplified by Herzog and Powrie, I wish to use musical numbers in some of Bollywood cinema’s diaspora films to explore ideologies, representations and affective possibilities of the homeland and diaspora relationship. In doing so, close analysis will be made to show how the musical numbers elaborate and illuminate aspects of the films’ cultural representations around homeland and diaspora issues. Reference will also be made to how musical moments from these films are used and recreated in the afterlife of the films as popular culture, circulating as musical numbers in queer diasporic South Asian club spaces, which is further illustrative of how homeland and diaspora issues move beyond the films to lived spaces in the South Asian diaspora. I will end by considering how homeland-diaspora representations are being depicted in some contemporary post-2000 films.

PURAB AUR PACHHIM AND DES PARDESH

In considering the first type of diaspora film as presenting tropes that can be considered as its dominant ideology towards representations of the homeland and diaspora, I want to use musical numbers from two films from the post-war era from the 1970s. These two examples taken

together serve to illustrate a now long-standing trope of representation in Bollywood that conservatively celebrates the homeland and diaspora relationship. Examining these films side by side also reveals the 1970s as an understudied period in Bollywood cinema, and that depictions of Indian cultural identity that was undergoing transformation in the overseas space were not always represented in homogeneous ways.

The first film in this section—*Purab Aur Pachhim* (*East and West*, 1970)—is iconic, very popular and well-referenced in Bollywood studies, while the other film—*Des Pardesh* (*Homeland and Abroad*, 1978)—has received very little attention in the existing scholarship in this area. Both are from the same decade with several years apart from each other in terms of their initial production and release.

Purab Aur Pachhim has been a mainstay in terms of its predominantly conservative ideology being recycled in other films about the homeland and diaspora relationship. It enjoyed a huge box office success in India and overseas on its initial release, and is regularly shown on South Asian satellite TV channels confirming its ongoing popularity. It can be characterised as a classic example of upholding Indian values against perceived decadent Western ones. The film's hero Bharat (Manoj Kumar) not only courts the British Indian heroine Preeti (Saira Banu), showing her the fallacies of her Western ways, but also returns with her to India to get married and settle there as their proper place of home. The film's poster plays on the stark contrast between these two main leads, with Bharat dressed in traditional male Indian attire, a Nehru jacket, and Preeti who is visibly seen as Western with her dyed blonde hair and mini dress (see Fig. 7.1). Sequences, music and dialogues from this film have been quoted and re-used explicitly or implicitly in later popular films as a homage, and also picking up the idea of India as a moral and cultural high ground over its Western counterparts. Latter examples include *Dilwale Dulhane Le Jayenge* (*The Braveheart will Take the Bride*, 1995) and *Namastey London* (*Hello London*, 2007).

One of the many iconic musical moments in *Purab Aur Pachhim* takes place between the transition from the colonial to the post-colonial period in India's history, as it moves to a state of full independence. The first 17 minutes of the film are in black and white representing, literally, the dark old days under British colonial rule; that is, until the changing of the flag in the mise en scène and the film stock changing to colour from here on. This moment is accompanied by a musical number, the song 'Om Jai Jagdish Hare', a traditional Hindu prayer praising the creator and seeking



Fig. 7.1 Film poster for *Purab Aur Pachhim* featuring the hero Bharat (Manoj Kumar) dressed in an Indian Nehru jacket and heroine Preeti (Saira Banu) in Western attire, respectively (Courtesy of Vishal International Productions Ltd., India)

blessings for a new day and new beginnings.³ An apt choice of song then for this pivotal moment in the film's narrative as it moves from the old to the new, the colonial to the post-colonial. The musical number, one that also appears throughout the film as a leitmotif, begins in a Radha Krishna temple with a large religious congregation. They have gathered to give thanks for the birth of a young boy and girl, who go on to play the hero and his cousin sister, and as the film moves from colonialism to independence, the song also marks another moment of thanks—freedom. The first 30 seconds of the song play out the musical sounds of being in a gathering for prayer and devotion—tabla, dholak, sitar and bells syncopate with people singing the hymn in front of the idols.

The song and diegetic space in the temple halts abruptly, followed with a black and white caption showing the date of Indian independence as 15 August 1947—it is written in Hindi above and in English below. We cut to a scene of the changing of the British Union Jack. It is being lowered slowly, again filmed in black and white, which is followed by the Indian flag being hoisted and the screen turning to Technicolor as the Indian flag substitutes the British one. The montage sequence cuts to the dawn of a new colourful day with a red and golden yellow sun rising, and a crescendo of bells, conches and percussion instruments play us back to the temple leading to a medium-close-up shot of the idols of Radha and Krishna in their new colourful splendour. The tempo of the song has now increased and become more upbeat as we move to independence, in colour, and also we shift along in years through a series of jump cuts. These cuts first show us the newly born boy and girl, jumping to them as seven or eight year olds praying and singing in the temple, followed by a series of shots of green fields and mustard crops, the industrial manufacturing of coal, molten metal being processed in factories, a crane shot taking us from the top of the outside domes of the temple to inside the open prayer hall, to a side medium-close-up profile of the young Bharat being immersed in Hindu religious culture with a guiding elder's hand placed on his head, followed by several temple wall paintings of revered saints and religious figures illustrating the education and ideals being instilled in him. Another jump cut takes us to the adult Bharat who is now at the head of the congregation and is leading the prayer behind the temple priest via song, dressed in a traditional Indian white *kurta* and grey shawl. This sequence of the montage happens relatively quickly over a duration of approximately thirty seconds. Time has moved on literally,

almost 20 years, the family and its members have aged but their devotion and communal religious practices have remained steadfast, keeping them together, and not least seeing them through their trials from colonialism to more prosperous times in independence. The musical number visually accelerates the narrative for us, tying culture and modern changes together, while the audio track remains constant, conveying tradition as the requirement that is necessary, irrespective of time and generational shifts. Religious and cultural practices and the transmission of culture are performed differently through the role of men and women—men are seen to be leading and are head of a patriarchal culture. The song is play-backed by the male and female voices of Mahendra Kapoor, Brij Bhushan and Shyama Chittar. Using Mahendra Kapoor as the lead singer with his emboldened voice gives gravitas to the ritual and plea in the lyrics, as well as affirming the leading role that men play in this religious ceremony.

This musical number is full of Indian cultural references filmed in a documentary style that gives us insights into hegemonic North Indian Hindu religious practices alongside actual industrial footage of land and machinery being used side by side. The song lyrics and music are well-known daily religious prayers that create a sense of further realism of the ethnographic occurrences being performed on screen. In this sequence, India is ‘the East’ from the film’s title; it is revered and shows off its ability to remain traditional and constant even while undergoing socio-economic development. Through further iconic moments similar to this one in the film—musical and non-musical—India as the homeland is used and pitted against London (‘the West’ in the film’s title) as a source of higher cultural values.

This musical number, then, can be analysed via the use of its sound and images as predominately conservative, tying audiences to ideological notions of ‘Indianness’. However, this is not to deny the pleasures entailed here that might both affirm conformity and static approaches to culture, while also permitting and even encouraging epiphanic moments of release, religious experience and spiritual awakening that are created and can be carried with the force of such a musical number. Such moments can also encourage personal imaginative experiences and pleasure that can take us away from the on-screen conservatism, albeit momentarily. For instance, a moment of religious or spiritual uplift is also possible here due to the way in which the sequence in the temple is crafted through the *darshan*ic gaze approach in popular Hindi cinema. This is a well-studied method of filmmaking and audience reception in

earlier Indian cinema studies where images of frontality and literal surface pleasures are given significance in the first instance in the filmmaking and viewing processes (e.g. Chakravarty 1993; Vasudevan 2000; Lutgendorf 2006). Here, the audience views the seeing of the statues of the Indian gods as if they are actually in front of them, and where the gods, with their visible eyes and reciprocal gaze, are looking back at the devotees and by implication the audience. There is a possibility for a perceived religious or spiritual experience here as the sound and images replicate—and with the use of the crescendo of the musical instruments and increasing of the tempo to exaggerate—the religious dimension, not least in the darkened theatre auditorium or in the personal space of one's home. The viewer can be encouraged to partake in the musical number itself as an act of prayer or contemplation with eyes closed, diverted momentarily away from the images on screen. This analysis ties in with what Powrie (2017: 11) calls 'imusimagic'—an intense experience drawn from the magical workings of cinema as it creates affect through music and images working together. Furthermore, both the problematic and exciting possibilities of imusimagic moments are alluded to here, and imusimagic analyses could also be extended further to consider imaginative and spiritual affects, borne out of a reciprocal or *darshanic* engagement with the on-screen musical number as argued in this instance. Further still, and as Herzog (2009: 15) poses for us as to how might musical moments make us feel through their affective power, not only do such moments in musical numbers make us feel in particular kinds of ways, they can also help transport us to other imagined places via the force of their performance.

If this musical number from *Purab Aur Pachhim* is primarily illustrative of a now dominant trope of representation in Bollywood cinema, that began in the early 1970s and remains with us in film and related popular culture even today, then it is important to revisit this moment of Bollywood cinema history by looking at another representation of diaspora from the same time, one that has been overlooked in the scholarship thus far.

Some eight years later and with the release of *Des Pardesh*, we also see indicated in the title the preoccupation with homeland and diaspora issues in this film, albeit dealt with quite differently overall. Like *Purab Aur Pachhim* before it, *Des Pardesh* is also set in the immediate post-war period of migration from the Indian subcontinent to Britain. It too holds dear the family unit and Indian cultural values, but depicts a much less moral tone in relation to these issues, as the film is also highly suggestive

of and represents cultural change in the new diasporic space as one to be negotiated, not least around notions of ‘home’ and belonging. The plot of the film interweaves a social drama and murder mystery thriller focusing on migrant South Asian working-class lives in Britain. It also deals with illegal South Asian immigration to the UK and those who profit from this as the film’s villains. The film’s poster suggests a story that is very much routed in and through Britain. In it, the hero Veer Sahni (Dev Anand) stands in front of the Union Jack flag, clearly identified as an Indian and Hindu as he holds a *diya* lamp, traditionally used for prayer in temples, with a red vermilion mark on his forehead. The lead character is not indicated as being at odds with his settings, instead he is placed centre frame amidst the flag of Great Britain (see Fig. 7.2). In these respects, the opening credits of the film, a musical number too, is in stark contrast to the aforementioned musical number of *Purab Aur Pachhim*.

A passenger jumbo jet is seen taking off from a runway in India/the *des*, setting off for *pardesh*/the foreign land.⁴ A crescendo fanfare of wind and string instruments accompanies the moment of taking flight as the film’s production credit titles and names of actors begin to roll. As the plane flies off into the distance, the crescendo slows down and changes

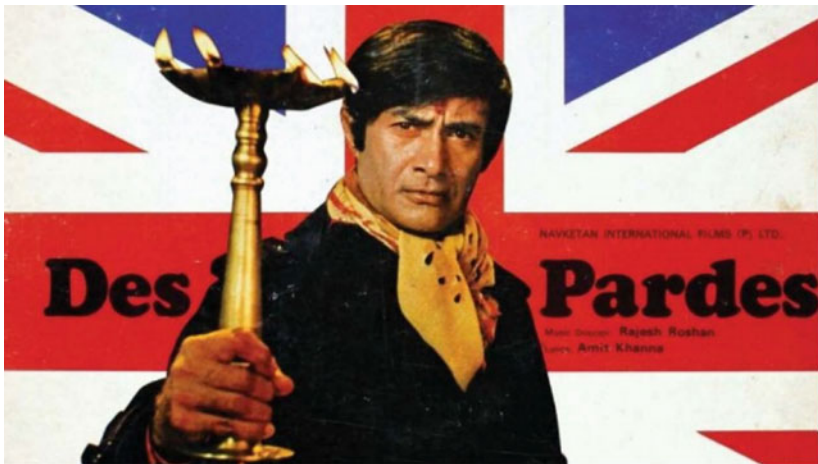


Fig. 7.2 Film poster for *Des Pardes* featuring its male lead Veer Shani (Dev Anand) displaying an Indian cultural tradition with a backdrop of the British Union Jack (Courtesy of Navketan International Films Ltd., India)

pace to become a more melancholic piece of music, conveyed by much slower and sober violin and *sarangi* sounds suggesting the loss of loved ones and moving away from a homeland that is also part of the travails of migration. This music continues as the montage cuts to a busy Indian street scene where everyday people are going about their business amidst the hustle and bustle of daily city life. A chorus of male and female voices sing an elated 'Des' which appears in blood red on the bottom left portion of the screen. A *bansuri*/Indian flute replaces the *sarangi* sound, lifting the mood. This remains for approximately five seconds and the Indian street scenes change to British ones in London, with a change from everyday brown folk being replaced with predominantly everyday white folk going about their business in 1970s England. A shift also takes place in the urban iconography from Indian street signs, bicycles, rickshaws and buses, to British traffic lights, pedestrians crossing a road, to London black cabs. The chorus sings an equally matching elated 'Pardesh' over these images as the word appears through a dissolve on the bottom right-hand side of the screen, joining 'Des' on the left and completing the film's title. The *bansuri* also plays over these images and captions continuing the changing mood of new possibilities and new beginnings, merging the words Des and Pardesh together. In case anyone was in doubt where in Pardesh these images are taking us, the London street scenes change to outside the gates of Buckingham Palace with its tourists and related hustle and bustle. We are in the capital and in the heart of this English city.

A fanfare of violins leads us to the happy voice of the main playback singer, Kishore Kumar, who starts to sing the lyrics and chorus of this opening number over the ensuing montage: 'We will find happiness here. *Apna hai apna yeh des pardes*/This is our home too, this place abroad'. From picture postcard-esque images to an aerial crane shot that pans from left to right surveying across the cityscape of London, with the British Telecom tower seen on the horizon in the distance, the montage includes images of street marches by South Asians for racial equality with men and women holding banners written in English, Urdu and Punjabi—'Smash the National Front'; working-class streets with terraced housing inhabited by South Asian families; shots outside Buckingham Palace; equality speeches being made in Hyde Park; a petition being delivered by a group of South Asian men to 10 Downing Street; window car footage from a drive down West London Southall's Broadway with its South Asian shops; a quick succession of edit cuts that take us across different

working lives from men and women in the car-making industries, catering and fashion; women, children and families playing in parks, dressed in a mixture of western and South Asian attire; children playing in the streets; outside shots of busy cinemas in London that showed 1970s Bollywood films (the Dominion and Century Cinema); Asian sweets shops selling *paan* (betel leaves) to customers; large industrial furnaces viewed from a moving car; young British Asian mothers smiling with their newly borns; Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother riding in her golden, horse-drawn carriage on a Royal occasion; an inter-racial young Caucasian and Indian couple courting on a university campus; a British Indian female bank clerk counting out notes of cash over the bank counter. After this scene, the montage shifts from actual documentary footage back to the diegesis of the film where we are re-introduced to one of the characters, Samir Sahni (Pran). He is smartly dressed in a western suit and overcoat, going about his daily business. An edit cut occurs here, via a stop frame action followed by a semi-dissolve, taking us to a scene of his family in India tearfully waving goodbye to him at the airport gates as he leaves for London. The next shot, via a jump cut, shows him setting up his business as the landlord of an English pub where the musical number and opening credits sequence ends. This montage blends fact and fiction together to create a more open, liberal, negotiated and inviting picture of the 1970s diaspora space in the UK.

The song, playbaced by Kishore Kumar, includes lyrics written by Amit Khanna and music by Rajesh Roshan, which capture the pleasures and pains of uprooting and settlement to a new place overseas, but one that is anticipated as '*apna*', as ours. The music while identifiably 'Indian' manages to perform a modern music score which simultaneously creates the affect of melancholia, contemplation and excitement of the new, and Kumar's voice is melodic and upbeat. The song's picturisation includes documentary-style shots of British Asians adjusting to the rhythms and routines of post-war 1970s work and settlement, in a post-colonial Britain on the cusp of multi-cultural and multi-racial change. The musical number even includes rare footage, for Bollywood cinema of this period at least, of British Asians amassing together in anti-Nazi and anti-racist demonstrations across London—place, here, is literally being shown as historically struggled over and negotiated in the new space abroad. The relationship between the homeland and diaspora is presented in interesting and nuanced ways. New diasporic formations are seen to be taking

place in the overseas space in the UK, and 'home' is not only the 'des' left behind, but also being made in 'pardesh', the new place of settlement.

Considering these two musical moments from two different films from the same decade, and both pertaining to issues of the homeland and diaspora, we are able to see and hear two different possibilities about the homeland and diaspora. Interestingly, the director and lead actor of *Purab Aur Pachim*, Manoj Kumar, uses his film to continue to direct and cast himself as a patriotic hero, thereby creating a star persona for himself and his film narratives that relied on an ideology of nationalism.⁵ Dev Anand, on the other hand, the director and star of *Des Pardesh*, takes another more modern and open approach to ideas of the nation and Indians overseas in his 1978 film. Herzog's (2009: 8) earlier query for us, as to what is it that the work of the musical number does or performs, is answered two-fold in this instance. Musical numbers here not only help to tell and illuminate the stories of these films, but they also offer us ways to think about how representations of the homeland and diaspora can be embellished with conservatism and complexity, and sometimes simultaneously. These two films are examples of a predominant signifier in popular Hindi cinema in which the homeland and diaspora are cast in relation to each other, and this can certainly be seen in post-war diaspora-themed films up to the 2000s. But what about when the diaspora does not return home to India, or is set firmly in the landscape of the overseas space? And how can musical moments from such films help us to assess what is being represented in these instances?

MUSICAL NUMBERS IN THE 2000S

From the mid-2000s onwards the representation of the diaspora and homeland relationship can be seen to be changing in Bollywood cinema. The previous decade of the 1990s can be characterised as a return to post-war Bollywood cinema going in the overseas space, especially after a period of hiatus due to the arrival of VHS in the 1980s. Viewing Bollywood films at home on video, at a fraction of the cost of going to the cinema, temporarily halted Bollywood cinema-going in the UK (Dudrah 2002). The nineties decade of Bollywood cinema witnessed not only an increased focus on urban India-centred films but also diaspora or NRI-themed ones, aiding in the return to UK Bollywood cinema-going, but most often than not, these films would invariably promote an ideology of the homeland as culturally superior, not too dissimilar to the conservatism

of diaspora-themed films of the 1970s such as *Purab Aur Pachhim*.⁶ During the mid-2000s a shift can be noticed away from such conservatism towards more exploratory ideas about the diaspora as a space of representation in popular Hindi cinema. Reasons for such changes during this period include Bollywood cinema and its related creative industries travelling and interacting with global cultures and ideas outside India, and also depicting stories set within an urban India where conservative Indian cultural values are complicated, if not subverted altogether (Dudrah 2012: 10).

Notable films from this period, amongst others, include *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* (*Dance Baby Dance*, 2007), *Dostana* (*Friendship*, 2008), and *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* (*You Only Live Once*, 2011). *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom*, a romantic comedy, is set entirely in London and only through a dream sequence played out through one musical number ('Bol Halke Halke'/'Whisper Softly Softly') does it return to India in the imagination of the romantic protagonists, but not in any way where India is a place for moral respite or conservatism. Its musical numbers are largely loud, drawing predominantly on the genre of *bhangra* music creating an energetic soundtrack that encourages flights of fancy and escape in the film's diegetic world. *Dostana*, a romantic comedy and perhaps Bollywood's first mainstream attempt at tackling the issue of homosexuality, is set in Miami, USA, with no return to India seen or heard anywhere in the diegesis. In fact, its two main places of settlement for diasporic Indians referenced in the film are Miami and London. Given its potentially risky topic, same-sex love and acceptance, during a time when homosexuality was still unlawful in India, the overseas space of Miami and locating the Indian diaspora there act as a safe space where titillations, eroticism and musical numbers that play out same-sex desires can be safely explored.

As we enter the 2010s, *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* marks the depiction of a highly mobile and 'new' diaspora and cosmopolitan audience, building on earlier films such as *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* and *Dostana*, particularly in terms of topicality and testing on-screen boundaries further. *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, a social drama that is set largely in Spain, includes mature themes around friendship and sex, features an explicit and long kiss centre frame, a fused Bollywood-Hollywood-European road trip aesthetic, and in the end it is far from clear that the characters, and by implication the audience, are encouraged to return to India—as was often the norm in NRI or diaspora films that were located overseas in earlier decades. The three male leads are seen literally running

for their lives in a thrilling scene in Pamplona, at a running of the bulls in the San Fermin festival; and there is a wedding song at the end of the film, but again the location is sunny, green and picturesque so it could still be in Spain or in India—but this is not confirmed and left open. The musical moments of *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* are eclectic and varied, including an international rock soundtrack, ambient trance music, a fused Hindi-Spanish bilingual song and dance number professing love, and mellow and transient music that export the characters to places and spaces in-between India and Spain, and then somewhere else; possibly new, as an amalgamation of these two constellations that cannot be easily located or named.

If, as in the discussion of the aforementioned films, we are able to see and hear scripts of possible Indian and diasporic lives as represented on screen in various ways, then through the workings of Bollywood films as popular culture in the diaspora these scripts are further recreated as diasporic South Asians take-up moments from the films in their everyday lives. The musical numbers from the films are particularly pertinent here as these are songs, music and lyrics that are, quite literally, taken up as scripts in the telling of contemporary diasporic stories. From multiple plays of Bollywood songs across the global airwaves of South Asian radio stations, to music videos featuring daily on music channels across satellite television, to online downloads and re-mixing of Bollywood music with other global genres, many South Asians have found a useful resource in popular Hindi cinema and its songs, music and dancing to punctuate and elaborate their everyday lives. One such instance where this occurs as a form of cultural politics to announce presence and celebrate a sense of selfhood is the LGBTQ club spaces in the diaspora. As in the homeland, where such spaces exist, queer *desis*⁷ also draw on the audio-visual cues offered by Bollywood cinema where they are replayed and reworked for the requirements of their gender and sexual identities. Furthermore, these identities are also having to be negotiated in relation to issues of race, belonging, culture and community, alongside other socio-cultural variables (see Dudrah 2006b; Khubchandani 2016).

In the UK context, for instance, musical numbers from *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom* (especially the *bhangra*-infused title track of the same name), *Dostana* (the ‘Maa da Ladla’/‘Mother’s Beloved’ and ‘Desi Girl’ songs), and the ‘Paint it Red’ track from *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* are played as urban anthems for UK South Asian LGBTQ audiences. In club spaces such as Club Kali in North London, where it states on its website

‘[...] where Eastern beats blend with Western classics since 1995’,⁸ in Club Zindagi in Manchester’s gay village which has been running since 2003,⁹ and at the Saathi Night in Birmingham since 2005,¹⁰ such musical numbers can be regularly heard and seen being danced to as queer patrons perform aspects of their identities on the dancefloor via the resources of the Bollywood musical number. An actual movement of the body in joy, pleasure and play occurs where local and global signifiers of the homeland and the diaspora, alongside other music and dance genres, are fused together to sing and dance and enjoy musical moments that transcend heteronormativity and create home anew, via queer gender and sexual identities in the diasporic club space.

CONCLUSION

The late 2000s and onwards is an interesting moment in time to bring this chapter to a close, particularly via the reading of the musical number ‘Dil Gira Dafatan’/‘My Heart Has Fallen Suddenly Somewhere’ from the film *Delhi 6* (2009), which further exemplifies complex cultural representations in the second type of homeland-diaspora film. This film can be seen as part of Bollywood cinema’s treatment of diaspora from earlier post-war years, except it is more in keeping with the latter post-2000s diaspora films that take a more nuanced and cosmopolitan approach to issues of the homeland and diaspora in local–global and inquisitive ways. Sai Bhatawadekar in her article on *Delhi 6* critically reads the film as demonstrating the possibilities of the local, global and transnational being mediated in a specific locality, such as Old Delhi, where one has to come to terms with these shifting, related and sometimes contradictory identities (Bhatawadekar 2011). Sai also offers a reading of the ‘Dil Gira Dafatan’ song to elaborate these points further, but focuses exclusively on the visual aspects of the song’s construction on-screen (ibid.: 254). She pays no attention to the musical features.

Delhi 6 tells the story of Roshan from the USA (Abhishek Bachchan) who accompanies his ailing grandmother *Dadi* (Waheeda Rehman) to their ancestral property in Old Delhi/Delhi 6. Upon his arrival, he gets to learn of his family’s troubled past (his mother had an inter-religious marriage and was shunned by her father), he spends time amongst the different religious and caste community of his neighbourhood, and meets and falls in love with the feisty Bittu (Sonam Kapoor). One evening during his stay, he falls asleep on the rooftop terrace of the family house

and awakes in the morning, in a dreamlike state, to deal with his varied feelings of love and belonging and adjusting to his new surroundings. This is where the musical number ‘Dil Gira Dafatan’ begins.¹¹

As Roshan awakens he sees the Statue of Liberty on the Delhi 6 skyline, adjacent to landmarks of Old Delhi, namely the Jama Masjid (a variation of this hybrid image is also illustrated in one of the film’s publicity stills; see Fig. 7.3). This startles him somewhat at first, and as he gets up and goes for his daily walk through the narrow lanes of his neighbourhood, the Statue of Liberty is never far behind; in fact in one scene he looks over his shoulder only to see it again nestled in the frame amidst the crammed Old Delhi houses and overhead telephone wires. He smiles, as an acceptance overcomes him that this is his American identity and ideologies of individualism are perhaps ever present with him as he explores and discovers his Indian cultural roots. All the while, a soft ‘Dil Mera’ (‘My Heart’) repeats over gentle wind and string orchestral instruments, evoking a feeling of awakening of the mind and sensations in the body—a sort of affect of diaspora that moves between the homeland and the overseas space, sometimes simultaneously, in the highly localised experience of Delhi 6.

Roshan walks towards a large arch-shaped wooden double door, and while doing so the music and singing momentarily pause until he moves to push it open with both arms. The riff of the song begins to play on a banjo and as he walks through the door, which acts as a kind of portal to another dimension, we are transported to Times Square in New York, with Bittu standing in the centre of the frame, in the centre of Times Square, dressed in a white *shalwar kameez*, signifying her purity of heart and Roshan’s growing love for her. But it is not the actual Times Square of New York City. It is a place that resembles it almost identically in terms of its street layout, skyscrapers and large hoardings, but it also has an Indian and Old Delhi 6 twist to it. There are not just yellow cabs and tourists filling this Times Square, there are also rickshaws, Indian cab drivers, tuk tuks, Indians on bicycles alongside New York yellow taxi cabs and tourists from around the world. As Roshan tries to move closer to Bittu, possibly to greet her on this new day, he is met instead by his Indian Hindu neighbour who has finished his morning prayers and offers him *parshad*/blessed sweets. Bittu disappears and through a series of swipe edits and fast jump cuts we move across this fantasy and hybrid Times Square seeing different aspects of the local and the cosmopolitanism that are on offer: hot jalebis being fried on the street by a Muslim vendor; sweet and savoury Indian snacks being sold on the sidewalk; a group of different ethnicities and a multi-faith crowd of people (nuns, Hindus,

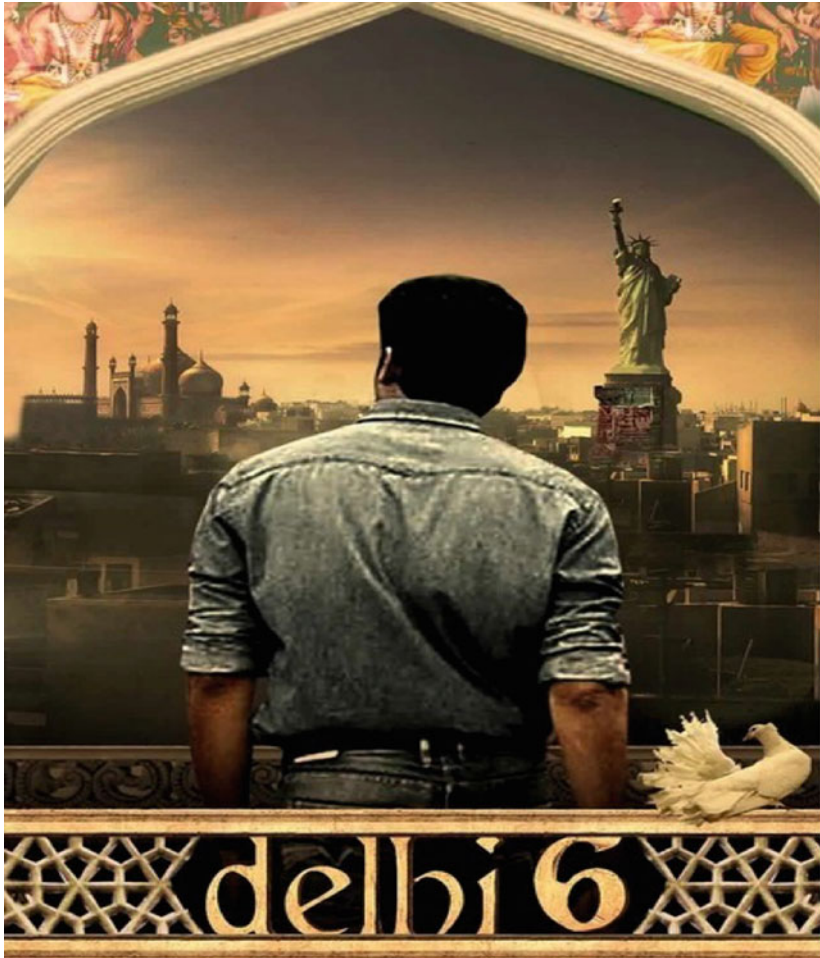


Fig. 7.3 A film publicity poster for *Delhi 6*. It features its main lead Roshan (Abhishek Bachchan) looking over and mediating an imagined Old Delhi skyline where the Jama Masjid can be seen alongside the Statue of Liberty in the same space (Courtesy of Showman Pictures, India)

Christians, Hare Krishnas, a Jewish man) who gather around a cow and offer prayers; the Hindu monkey god Hanuman flying through the air; an assembly of street performers break dancing on the street; a white dove that flies above the skyscrapers towards the top of the Empire State Building where a King Kong gorilla can be seen, etc. This highly eclectic and bricolage filled montage is given meaning through the transcending lyrics of love and longing, and a search for someone or someplace, or both:

Pearls are spilling from the lips of shells
 In the company of *ghazals*/poems, songs are becoming intoxicated
 The sea is sleeping under the sheet of waves
 But I am awake
 An intoxication is taking over me
 But you are unaware of it
 The weather is wrapped in fragrance
 My heart has suddenly fallen somewhere

These lyrics are accompanied by an international music score that is as much Indian as it is cosmopolitan, with western instruments playing alongside Indian ones, and even includes an Irish folkdance style of music played through violins to syncopate some of the varied moving images that are placed side by side, and even over and ahead of each other through dissolves and jump cuts. The music to this number was composed by Oscar Award winner Allah Rakha Rahman, known for his global sounds in his Bollywood film music compositions, and the lyrics were written by Prasoon Joshi in an Islamic Sufi style, with the song sung by the playback singers Ash King and Chinmayee Sripaada. Together, and under the film's direction by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, the musical number takes the lead protagonist and us, its viewers, on a reflexive journey through the homeland and diaspora spaces in a meditative and transient mode. Poetic Hindi-Urdu lyrics, with a Sufi feel to them, set us off on a quest about the divine (be that a higher truth as in religious terms, or finding a sense of divinity through earthly love) through the story of our on-screen lovers, or via the love for a place (whether it is Old Delhi or NYC, or both). This musical number is composed of and represents disjunctive shifts and connections between different actual and imagined socio-cultural sites in two cities across the diaspora-homeland space in dialogue with each other. Its musical moments have been visually crafted using CGI with actual location shooting, using a sizeable portion of the film's production budget that follows in a tradition of

song and dance production in Bollywood cinema where big budgets are often reserved for these sequences. Furthermore, the affect of desire, the multiple and complex lives of diaspora in motion through place, time and histories can be seen and heard here, and there are various scripts in play of new identities, of romance, of secret love, of memories of kith and kin, religion and mythology, local and global popular cultures, and an imagination that is able to take us to places across the homeland and the diaspora, and possibly in between and even beyond. These are scripts that are inspired by and taken up in spaces of the diaspora where South Asians, as well as others, use such musical numbers and their afterlives as part of their socio-cultural formations. In these ways, the homeland and diaspora relationship is not simply depicted as a linear one (i.e. from the homeland to the diaspora or vice versa), but perhaps it is one that is more complex and disjunctured. In effect, studies of Bollywood's musical numbers, and by extension other cinematic musical cultures, might do well to explore such relationships further.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a keynote paper at 'When the Music Takes Over. Musical Numbers in Film and Television' Conference, University of Salzburg, 8–10 March 2018.
2. More recent scholarship developing debates in the sub-field of Bollywood film song and dance numbers have argued for and drawn attention to the moving and dancing body in song and dance or musical numbers as a just as important, if overlooked feature as songs, music and accompanying visuals (Iyer 2019). Dance musicality for Iyer becomes a useful way to explore related issues of stardom, gender and genre in the films through a focus on dance and music.
3. This musical number can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nsPuUXwBI8>, date accessed 7 25 May 2021.
4. This musical number as part of the opening credits can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4IvXGs2_yQ, date accessed 25 May 2021.
5. Prior to *Purab Aur Pachhim*, Manoj Kumar's two very popular films were *Shabed/Martyr* (1965) and *Upkar/Debt* (1967), the latter being written by Kumar and becoming his directorial debut film.
6. Two examples of very popular and successful films at the box office as cases in point include *Pardes (Foreign Land, 1997)* and *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham (Sometimes Happiness Sometimes Sadness, 2001)*.

7. Desis is a term used to refer to people of South Asian descent living abroad and having a sense of attachment to the homeland.
8. See the club's website at: www.clubkali.com, date accessed 25 May 2021.
9. See the club's website at: www.clubzindagi.com, date accessed 25 May 2021.
10. See the club's website at: www.saathinight.com, date accessed 25 May 2021.
11. This musical number can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zU4zZpycTo>, date accessed 25 May 2021.

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