CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Bollywood musicals have emerged as a distinct genre on world cinema long ago (Nelmes, 1996: 384). The controversy surrounding the use of the term ‘Bollywood’ notwithstanding, the present study uses the term in its wider connotations as interpreted by Rajadhyaksha (2003) and Vasudevan (2011). Commenting on this scenario, Roy (2012:19) says that as Rajadhyaksha, Kaur and others have pointed out, brand Bollywood is not restricted to Bollywood films but has expanded to refer to the entire cultural industry that includes music and dance (Kaur and Sinha, 2005; Dudrah, 2006). Prasad in his brief note says: This thing called Bollywood, further unpacked the term and viewed it as ‘empty-signifier’ that may be ‘applied to any sets of signifieds within the realm of Indian cinema’ (Roy, 2012: 2). As Rajadhyaksha has commented, ‘Bollywood’ does not simply refer to the Hindi or even film industries. Rather it is a ‘more diffuse cultural conglomeration involving a range of distribution and consumption of activities from websites to music cassettes, from cable to radio’ says Bhattacharya and Mehta (2010:106).

Bollywood musicals have offered a wide range of music scores that transcended all narrow considerations of politics, divergent societies and geographical boundaries. According to Bhattacharya and Mehta (2010:105), the Bollywood sound tracks, in particular, emergent technologies of music have acquired the power to call into question that national form of belonging, without which the Indian state cannot do.

Nelmes (1996) considers song as even more important factor than the emotions that led to melodrama in Indian cinema (384). Nelmes (1996) also pointed out that critical studies of popular Indian cinema tend to concentrate on the structural complexities of film plots and often ignore the extra-narrative texts that are provided by the songs. She also pointed out that the plot of film is deliberately engineered so as to provide openings for a song and dance number at regular intervals. According to Barnouw and Krishnaswamy (1980:69), the Indian sound film, unlike the sound film of any other land, had from its first moment seized exclusively on music-drama forms. In doing so, the film had tapped a powerful current, one that went back some two thousand years.

The success of the first ever talkie Alam Ara (1931) directed by Ardeshir Irani with its uncountable number of songs resulted in shaping the future form of musical drama that was to occupy both the Indian cinema accompanied by a rapid spread over to the world. De de
Khuda ke naam pe pyaar was the first song that had gone on screen sung by Wazir Mohammad Khan (Anantharaman, 2008: 2). Anantharaman further notes that Indrasabha (1932) directed by J.J.Madan reportedly had as many as sixty nine songs while Jawani Ki Hawaa (1935) directed by Franz Osten and Dhoop Chaon (1935) directed by Nitin Bose have had reportedly over a dozen (2008: 2).

According to Mukherjee (2007), Irani has brought 100% sound in the form of music into Indian cinema. She also records that Madan’s second film Shirin Farad (1956) directed by Aspi Irani, starring Jehan Ara Kajja and Nissar, had 42 songs and had a stunning success at box office. Barnouw and Krishnaswamy described Madan’s fascination for music as ‘J.J.Madan caught the fever’ (1980: 65).

Baskaran (1991) writes that film songs acquired the importance of being independent of cinema. He cites the example of a Tamil film Haridas (1944) directed by Sundar Rao Nadkarni, which had a number of songs and ran for 133 weeks that gave the music director of the film a star status. Quoting the survey of Centre for Social Research in Madras, Baskaran writes that about 70% of film goers would go to films primarily to enjoy film songs. In India, according to him, film production ritually commences with the recording of the first film song (1991:756). The songs endow a film with extra-regional appeal, says Ranade (1980).

Explaining the significance of the songs in Southern film industry, Baskaran quotes the successful run of the Telugu film Sankarabharanam (1979) directed by K.Viswanath.

According to Alauddin and Prasad (1987), the film song is a fact of life in contemporary India. Signifying how film songs have intertwined themselves with the lives of Indians, they write:

In its acceptability and popularity, it has transcended all such barriers as obtain between the classes and the masses on the one hand and between the linguistic and cultural region and another. Places of worship and public platform alike patronise the film song at weddings and on festive occasions, the film songs take pride of place, media of mass communication like radio and TV seek popularity through film songs. It has bridged the gulf between classical and folk music. Whereas classical music of the Hindustani and Carnatic schools present itself in two different modes even today, the film song has a common form in the North and in the South of India (Pt. Narendra Sharma, 1980:56).
Bhatia (1961) observed:

More persistently noticeable than the proverbial Indian fly or even poverty is Indian film music. Neither the village nor the seclusion of the urban rich quarter provide any escape...The great surge of this musical wave has penetrated all spheres, sparing no corner of the country. Truly, film music has become more important than films themselves.

Many regional film industries have enriched the music by virtue of adding their own native and folk besides the classical forms like Carnatic and Hindustani. For instance, Alauddin and Prasad (1987) were of the view that Bengali and Maharashtra film industry had offered early leads to film music by way of both classical and folk traditions. They cited the names of music composers like R.C. Boral, Timir Barar, Anupam Ghatak of Bengal and Master Krishna Rao, Keshavarao Bhole, Dada Chandekar, Sudhir Phadke of Maharashtra are associated with the chaste, classical based music which they scored for many a successful films. Similarly singers like K.L.Saigal, Pahari Sanyal, K.C.Dey, Kananbala, Shanta Apte, Shanta Hublikar, Shahmu Modale, Govindrao Tembe, and Vishnupant Pagnis have left an indelible impression on the hearts of Indian audiences in these regional languages.

At the same time, the Southern film industry-Telugu and Tamil-which for long remained combined, had produced master piece music scores based on Carnatic traditions. Music composers like Susarla Dakshina Moorti, Ghantasala, Pendyala, Kodandapani, K.V. Mahadevan aided by Puhalandi, Saloori Rajeswara Rao, Aadi Narayana Rao, Master Venu, T.V.Raju, etc have offered highly rich classical Telugu and Tamil tunes since the first ever talkie film Bhakta Prahlada (1931) produced simultaneously both in Telugu and Tamil by H.M.Reddy. Incidentally one should not ignore that Telugu has been a cross-linking cultural edifice between the Northern film industry and Southern film industry having born on the same sets of first ever talkie film—Alam Ara—directed by Ardeshir Irani in 1931 (Murthy, 2013).

Similarly a number of South Indian film actors have displayed the unique histrionics of giving their own voice to their songs. Most notable and mellifluous singers among them are: Chittoor Nagaiah, S.Vara Lakshmi, G.Vara Lakshmi, Bhanumati Ramakrishna, Shavukar Janaki, etc. This apart eminent classical music singers like M.S.Subba Lakshmi and Managalampalli Balakrishna have offered a number of classical Carnatic music renditions to Telugu and Tamil popular cinema industry which for long time was paired together till 1970 when Telugu industry began to shift to Hyderabad.
One significant feature of Telugu film industry is its ability to rope in poetry which is unique and distinct from all other poetic literatures in India by virtue of having prosody both in its pure verse forms as well as lyrical forms. The sound and rhythm of Telugu language (which is popularly known as Italian of East) and its lyrics are distinctly sweet and ear pleasing from Tamil. Even eminent litterateur of Tamil poetry like Subrahmanya Bharati conceded to this supremacy of rhythm and sound in the verse and prosody of Telugu. The literary compositions with rhyming endings or second syllable stresses in charanas of the songs notwithstanding, the lyrical tunes themselves deeply emboss on the ears of the audiences in such a way, the film goers keep humming them despite not knowing the wordings and meanings of it.

For instance the Hindi film song from Bhabhi (1957) directed by R. Krishnan Raju had a melody- Chal Udja Re Panchi- sung by Mohammad Rafi in two parts. The same song was tuned in Telugu film Kuladaivam (1960) directed by Kabir Das, a remake of Bhabhi (1957), as –Painimche O Chiluka. The song sung by Ghantasala Venkateswara Rao was not only a match in melody but also in meaning, sound and background scoring, besides the gravity of visuals embedded in the Hindi film (See Photos 1).

Most of the authors whose works we reviewed could not make any reference to these virtues of Telugu language contribution to Indian cinema in particular. Above all, Murthy (2013) studied the cross cultural contributions of Telugu film industry by first time identifying the cross-cultural indices that embedded Telugu film industry. He proved that Telugu film industry per se is much more cross-cultural and hybrid than any other film industry in India. As a result, the Telugu film songs have got more enriched due to a greater participation of music composers hailing from Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada music and film industries.

Unaware of the rich traditions of music and dance contributions emanating from South way back the talkie era, Booth (1995) writes about how Parsi theatre and other regional music traditions like Marathi tامasha, Bengali jatra, Gujarathi bhavai, Rajasthani khyal, and manch of Madhya Pradesh have offered socially or politically relevant backgrounds and melodrama based for Indian films.
Comparative Frames of Cross-cultural symbols through Remakes of films between Hindi and Telugu from the sub-themes falling under domestic nature.

Photos 1: Scenes from Hindi film *Bhabhi* (1957) and its Telugu remake *Kuladaivam* (1960) where the distraught woman was carried away in a horse cart with the background scoring of song dealing with the philosophy of life in relation to the narrative, thus constituting an extended narrative.

Photos 2: Scenes from English film *Gandhi* (1982, directed by Richard Attenborough) and Hindi film *Gandhi, My Father* (2007, directed by Feroz Abbas Khan) showing the directors choice of portraying typical Indian marriage traditions, though Gandhi represented Gujarati culture.
Not only Booth, but also most of the authors who had researched on Hindi cinema, thinking it to be sole representative of Indian cinema, had ignored to study the contributions of Telugu and Tamil film industries to Indian musicals which have largely impacted on Hindi cinema and even today a number of remake tunes of Telugu film songs will be found in Hindi film. No serious study has stemmed from any of the post-critical and post-colonial authors like Rajadhyaksha, Prasad or Vasudevan in this regard.

In fact Telugu language is the base of Carnatic music tradition which got initiated during the period of Annamayya (1408-1503) in 15th century and later got expanded to its full fledged classical music form by Tyagaraja (1767-1847), who along with his disciples Muttu Swami Dikshitar (1775-1835) and Valajapeta Venkataramana Bhagavatar (1781-1874) is popularly referred to as one of the holy trinities of music in South India. It is because of such strong classical foundation that both Tamil and Telugu musicals have not only found global markets today but also swept the Hindi film industry.

As a matter of fact, it was Telugu film industry that forayed in to Hindi film industry both in terms of investing money to produce original films in Hindi, besides going in a big way for both remakes of its own from Telugu to Hindi and from Hindi to Telugu, and it was one of its earliest film --Suvarna Sundari (1957) directed by Vedantam Raghavaiah -- that hit the Hindi film industry with a raagamalika that became instantaneously popular as superhit musical. Though Adinarayana Rao is known as a producer, often his music compositions such as raagamalikas had won him laurels both at regional and national level. Further it was a Telugu word from South that became part of the text of Hindi film song in Pallavi in the most popular film Shree 420 (1955) directed by Raj Kapoor ---Ramaiah Vastaavaiah...sung by Mohammad Rafi, Lata Mangeshkar and Mukesh.

Though Booth (1995) tried to situate his research in modernity tradition and attempted to analyse only Hindi films, any study on Hindi film songs/Bollywood musicals, in our opinion, is incomplete and incoherent unless the study gets widened to the immense contributions of Carnatic music from Southern film industry especially –Telugu which runs neck to neck with Hindi film industry and even surpasses it at times in its production, distribution and circulation both nationally and globally.

While the songs in Indian cinema have been recognized as a genre per se, the characteristics of this genre are so wide and are culturally significant that places Indian songs quite distinct
from other Eurocentric film songs or film albums. For instance, Marcus (1993) attempted to identify the role of Indian musicals in relation to the specific cultural artifacts. One of the important observations of his study is that the songs in India apart from their being generally contextual in romantic situations, have specific cultural situations such as wedding ceremonies, ceremonies connected the birth of a child, etc (See Photos 2 from the film Gandhi showing how marriages are solemnised in Indian tradition). He says that in the realm of Indian folk music, individual melodies have often had specific roles and identities. In the Gangetic plain area, for example, there is a special melody associated with singing Ramayana (Ramdhun). There are special women’s melodies for specific life-cycle rituals for example child birth (Sohar). He has also related the songs in situations like rainy season, festive season such as Holi, etc. Marcus has also identified how down the Vedic traditions, the classical music traditions have been by and large oral than written and how these traditions have been interlinked to invoking the rasa and bhava through Nada Brahma Yoga.

Though we noticed that occasionally some western authors like Booth (1995) and Marcus (1993) had taken a modernist and traditional perspective in their analysis of Indian cinema, their attempts suffered from inadequacies of desired knowledge both in Hindi and other regional languages especially that of South—mainly Telugu. Hence, their examples and citations suffered not only from limitations of facts but also from the limitations of interpretations, which sometimes turned out to be erroneous.

Though Anatharaman (2008) has sketched out the important contributions of film songs in Hindi cinema to larger repertoire of Indian music, which Raju Bharatan named as a distinct genre to be called as ‘Hindustani Cine Sangeet’ (2008: 1), we have specific grievance with regard to the term ‘Hindustani’ being associated with it as ‘Hindustani’ is one of the two most popular traditions (Hindustani and Carnatic) in India. Most of these research studies suffered from lack of adequate knowledge of music. In fact, the film music both in Hindi cinema in the Northern India and Telugu cinema in the Southern India had offered several times a hybrid tunes.

The uniqueness of Indian genre of music in films is extolled by many scholars (Nelmes, 1996; Mast and Kawin, 1996; Arnold, 1988; Booth, 1992, 2000; Marcus, 1993; Morcom, 2001; Ranade, 1980; Shreshtova, 2004) both in India and the West but none succeeded in getting around a comprehensive view of it for the simple reason they were innocent of the complicating variants embedded in these music forms in different permutations and
combinations. For instance, the ‘hybridity’ character of Indian music has been dealt with by several Western authors from the perspective of application of the Western music instruments (Arnold, 1988; Manuel, 1988, 1991; Booth, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2005; Marcus, 1993; Morcom, 2001;) rather than exploring how these Western instruments sounded both Carnatic and Hindustani tunes some times individually and sometimes together. As most of these scholars were unaware of these distinctions, they tended to make sweeping generalizations as was noticed in naming the genre of Indian music as ‘Hindustani Cine Sangeet’ by Raju Bharatan.

In fact the ‘hybridity’ character of Indian music should be understood from a number of variations found both in traditions and in contextual association of music to culture and human lives. As Arnold (1988:177) was unaware of these variations, she tended to describe them as ‘eclectic’ in nature. We for the sake of brevity would like to offer below a few guiding principles of such broader understanding of what constitutes the ‘hybridity’ character of Indian genre of music-taken together with Carnatic as well as Hindustani besides their respective folk-traditions. Though Arnold could perceive some of the divergent and convergent trends found in Hindi film songs, she could have hardly laid down any guidelines to identify the ‘hybridity’ character which she termed as ‘eclecticism’.

The ‘hybridity’ character of Indian music as observed and laid down by us in the present study of songs belonging to both traditions are as follows:

1. There were musicals with combination of different ‘raagas’ in the same lyric/music composition.

2. There were musicals with the combination of both Carnatic and Hindustani traditions in the same lyric/music.

3. There were musicals with a mix of folk and classical traditions of either Carnatic or Hindustani.

4. There were musicals with combination of both Indian and Western traditions (eg. Carnatic with pop or rock music or Hindustani with pop or rock music).

5. There were musicals with a combination of different contextual expressions such as ‘rasas’ (fear, love, anger, frustration, devotion,
passion, zealously, hatred, pathos, etc) simultaneously fitted into the compositions. E.g. Lullabies to a child can be sung in a film by a mother by virtue of becoming a mother; they can also be sung to lull a child to sleep to make him/her forget the pangs of hunger or a woman might sing a lullaby to her child while brooding over her bad past in pathos (E.g. Matamgi Manipur (1972) directed by Deb Kumar Bose. These contextual variations could be understood only by native language speaker than a western author or an author who studied those languages intensely.

The study of ‘hybridity’ character vis a vis the ‘pure form’ of musical composition of a lyric with all its prescribed components of the tradition constitutes an interesting study but so far no western author or Indian scholar in film studies has ever endeavoured to carry out such studies on Indian film music. This is one of the greatest lacunae that we, after an exhaustive review of literature, noticed about.

While Gehlawat (2010) brings to focus the ‘hybridity’ concept floated to explain the character of Bollywood cinema in comparison with Hollywood by a number of post-colonial authors such as Rajadhyaksha, Vasudevan and Prasad, Roy, etc (Dwyer and Pinto, 2011; Roy, 2012) he clearly dissents with their view of restricting Bollywood as a ‘conventional cinema’ without any relationship to Brechtian school. He recommends applying a variety of tools to make a more comprehensive reading of films (2010: xiv). For that matter we would like to explicate that this study is being carried out in the modernist and traditionist perspectives of film and cultural theory.

Further, the present study aims to interpret the ‘hybridity’ character of these filmic musical compositions as ‘cross-cultural’ in two ways: i. As connections between North and South India, and ii. As intercultural flows between different cultures of India. Whereas Anatharaman (2008) had dealt with four generation Hindi film singers, he did not make any substantial effort to identify the singers who had intercultural or cross-cultural identities. For instance Lata Mangeshkar was the first ever Hindi film singer to sing in Telugu film Santhanam (1955) directed by C.Ranganatha Dasu. Her song—Nidurapo ...Nidurapora Tammuda—in which she utters ‘Nidurapo’ (do sleep) for eight times—is a lullaby sung by the sister in the character to lull her months old younger sister who put her hand innocently in to the fuel wood fire common in poor huts in those days. Likewise, Mohammad Rafi, Jesudas, Sharada, Chitra, Vani Jayaram, Kavita Krishnamoorthi, Hariharan, Udit Narayan,
Shankar Mahadevan, Sonu Nigam, Janaki, etc have been prominent film singers who sang in different languages in India. This information is largely missing in the work of Anantharaman (2008) except for the mention of Udit Narayan’s busy schedule with Telugu and Tamil film industry in general and other Southern industries in particular (p 195). Thus the distinctive character of cross culturalism and interculturalism as defined above in Indian films songs is conspicuously missing in the scholarly works of both Indian authors as well as western authors.

Despite relatively a small number of critics, film songs have become a ubiquitous part of Indian society. They have become the music of public space in India, being heard from open windows in peoples’ homes, on buses, and in bazaars (Morcom, 2007). They are sung and danced to by millions of people in a range of formal and informal contexts, and have been appropriated in many folk genres (Manuel, 1988, 1991; Marcus, 1993; Booth, 1992, 2000).

The present study therefore looks at Bollywood musicals from the point of cross-cultural flows and on the basis of cross-cultural indices laid down by Murthy (2013). The study seeks to move forward with the fundamental observation that the Bollywood musicals can be categorized in to several ways and that one classification which offers an immense promise and value is the division of the Bollywood musicals broadly into native music and cross cultural music.

Whereas native music in its pure form as defined earlier is initially drawn from mythological and folk traditions based on Hindustani and Carnatic traditions that inspired the then audience towards consolidating their struggle against the colonial rule, the cross cultural music drawn from light music to western beats in post independent era had tended to reinforce it. We further refined this approach to cross-cultural music from the point of looking at as i. Connecting the North with the South and ii. Connecting all cultures across India.

Both the native music and cross cultural music in Indian film songs gradually evolved to a genre that enabled the Indians to overcome the caste and religious barriers by spreading across different states of India. Thus the first ever emergence of cross cultural migration of music/cross cultural flows happened more forcefully through Bollywood musicals than any other media. The study further deepens by connecting cross cultural communication and its indelible influence on national integration by categorizing singers from the North singing in the Southern films and vice-versa. The study gets accentuated with further classification of music directors from the North/South doing music for the other side of India. The operational
definition of a musical/song in the present study is inclusive of dance form-traditional or folk-
extending the scope of the critical study of songs and dances in relation to their influence of

cross-cultural communication and national integration. The study draws its theoretical

underpinning from visual assonance which flows from moving image analysis of the films
critically examined by us film wise in terms of song sequences, themes/plots and sequences
of songs reflecting core cultural and cross-cultural symbols and signs. These have been
highlighted by way of inserting those comparative images (photos) in each chapter (See p

xv).

Signifying the association of song and dance from the times of Alam Ara (1931), Shreshtova
writes: It was, however, the introduction of sound to cinema, heralded by Alam Ara in 1931,
and the emergent importance of songs that introduced dance as a means of expression
through song visualization (Manuel 1993, 40) and established song-dance sequences as
integral elements of Hindi film narrative structures.

Though a good number of authors like Bhattacharya and Mehta (2010) had taken a stock of
the Bollywood musicals in terms of marketing in music industry, not many authors, either
from India or abroad, had done any focussed study on the influence of cross cultural flows on
national integration through Bollywood musicals. Indeed Nelmes pointed out this great area

The relationship of film songs and cinema in terms of cross cultural influences they have on
otherwise mutually exclusive cultural audiences of divergent society in India constitutes very
interesting area of study and there are no large numbers of studies on the cross cultural
influences of these musicals on national integration. With the above introduction, we would
like to briefly sum up the aims of the study as below:

**Aims of the study**

1. To study Bollywood (not limited to Hindi film songs) musicals as a distinct genre of
songs with messages transcending all narrow considerations of politics, divergent
societies and geographical boundaries.

2. To study how Bollywood (not limited to Hindi songs) musicals have acquired the
power to call for a national form of belongingness.
3. To examine the scope to classify the Indian film songs in the context of the melodrama in India cinema and establish its relationship with larger Indian audience as cross cultural flows.

4. To study the extra-narrative character of songs as texts and their cross cultural influences on national integration.

We seek to present our study clearly divided into seven important chapters. The division of chapters is based on the established format of chapterization followed in this University. There will be six chapters in total besides the above Introduction which includes the Aims of the Study. A chapter is dedicated exclusively for Review of Literature. The next chapter explains the Methodology being followed in the study. Finally, we intend to analyse and discuss each Chapter which deals with each of the themes of the awards that formed part of the sample of the study. At the end of analysing each theme and its consequent categories/sub-themes an effort is made to deal with both hermeneutic components of the study as well as interpretations emerging from questionnaires/interviews coupled with our observation of the moving images of filmic compositions of films/songs drawn from various samples of films of universe. In the last Chapter – Summary we have summed up all important findings.

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