COSMOPOLITANISM, REMEDIATION, AND THE GHOST WORLD OF BOLLYWOOD

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Over the past two decades, there has been unprecedented interest in Asian popular media in the United States. Regionally identified productions such as Japanese anime, Hong Kong action movies, and Bollywood film have developed substantial nondiasporic fan bases in North America and Europe. This transnational consumption has passed largely under the radar of culturalist interpretations, to be described as an ephemeral by-product of media circulation and its eclectic overproduction of images and signifiers. But culture is produced anew in these "foreign takes" on popular media, in which acts of cultural borrowing channel emergent forms of cosmopolitan subjectivity.

Bollywood's global circulations have been especially complex and surprising in reaching beyond South Asian diasporas to connect with audiences throughout the world. But unlike markets in Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia, the growing North American reception of Bollywood is not necessarily based on the films themselves but on excerpts from classic Bollywood films, especially song-and-dance sequences. The music is redistributed on Western-produced compilations and sampled on DJ remix CDs such as *Bollywood Beats, Bollywood Breaks,* and *Bollywood Funk*; costumes and choreography are parodied on mainstream television programs; "Bollywood dancing" is all over YouTube and classes are offered both in India and the United States.[1]

In this essay, I trace the circulation of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* a song-and-dance sequence from the 1965 Raja Nawathe film *Gumnaam* that has been widely recirculated in an "alternative" nondiasporic reception in the United States. I begin with

the song's appearance in the 2001 U.S. "indie" film *Ghost World* (Terry Zwigoff, dir.), and then describe how Bollywood film provokes a range of creative disidentifications among audiences in India, in diaspora and elsewhere. Next, I return to an earlier performance of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* by a San Francisco band called Heavenly Ten Stems, and to the protests of the group by Asian American activists. By focusing on the circulation of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* this essay complicates our understanding of the way cultural appropriation happens, and constitutes its subjects in relation to media.

In describing these different appearances of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* I am illustrating a process of remediation, of repurposing media for new contexts of use. According to Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, who introduced the term to media studies, remediation describes the representation of one medium in another: plays are remade as films, radio shows are podcast, paintings are photographed, and print media like newspapers are retextualized for the World Wide Web (Bolter and Grusin 2000). In their sense, remediation transfers content from one format to another, thereby making media new, and making new media. But I want to show that remediation also makes contemporary cosmopolitan subjects. My reconsideration of this idea connects with other recent anthropological work in this journal that brings remediation from logics of representation and virtuality to social experiences and globalizing discourses of media (Silvio 2007; Strassler 2009).

Remediation helps us reconsider the role of the subject in studies of circulation and cultural globalization. In the 1990s, "follow the thing" literature demonstrated how media is diversified by the detachment of texts from their original contexts in transnational circulation, and how appropriation creates conflicts around cultural authorship (Ginsburg et al. 2002; Mankekar 1999; Marcus 1995; Marcus and Myers 1995; Spitulnik 1993). The concept of remediation helps us to refocus on the conditions for new subjects created through these practices of appropriation. How do we characterize cosmopolitanism across diverse global conditions of mobility, access, and self-representation? How do people appropriate from "other" media, and toward what ends? How do they position themselves toward "their own" media? What happens to the thing as we follow it, and who's pushing it forward through these changes?

Contemporary subjects live much of their lives through media. They reappropriate received materials for widely divergent personal goals, and construct social relations through an intertextual discourse of mediated references. My account of the circulations of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* then, is a story of culture and identities made through remediation, rather than a story of loss or subversion. It is an argument

that appropriation is a creative act, which feeds circulating media into new expressions and performances. Appropriation forms new subjects within "alternative modernities," whose simultaneous engagement with broad transnational mediascapes is part of how we imagine the possibility of a global society (Gaonkar 2001). The productive miscommunications of circulation, too, may create remedies for self-expression within the misalignments of such a global society. I am not suggesting that remediation creates some sort of social equivalence between nationally constructed cultures, ethnic subcultures, and aesthetic countercultures. Rather, ambivalence, distance, confusion, and the contingencies of globalism are part of what mobilize diverse and separated groups, even as they spiral away from a singular politics of cultural identity.

THE GHOST WORLD OF BOLLYWOOD IN SUBURBAN AMERICA

The opening moments of the 2001 film *Ghost World* define something crucial about the way the film's characters—and viewers—perceive and participate in a world of distant media. As the opening credits roll, we see a woman in a metallic golden-sequined dress and a Lone Ranger–style eye mask shimmying wildly in front of the band "Ted Lyon and His Cubs," who bang out a swinging beat punctuated by trumpets and the vibrato punch of a twangy surf guitar sound.[2] The dancer gyrates, vibrates, and shudders her way through a series of dance moves cribbed from early 1960s U.S. beach movies. The dance seems familiar, but strangely stiff and absurdly overperformed; she shakes eagerly but awkwardly to the rock-and-roll rhythm, as the guitars and trumpets continue to blare out in contrast to the soft and intimate voice of Mohammad Rafi (see Figure 1).

Immediately following this glamorously odd footage, the next shot reveals a row of suburban houses in a blue–gray evening twilight (see Figure 2). Now the camera begins to move along the roofline from window to window, impassively surveying the grim quotidian evening activities of the American middle class. Parents ignore their hyperactive children, lonely middle-aged men stare and smoke in the blue glow of TV sets, and dowdy women in housedresses cook stovetop dinners under gray fluorescent light. After cutting back and forth a few times between the magical Indian dance club and these colorless domestic scenes, we focus in on one of the suburban windows and we discover Enid, a somewhat somber and intense teenage girl, in a red graduation gown in front of her television. As the camera zooms closer, we see that Enid is watching *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* along with us, but not merely watching; she is dancing.

FIGURE 1. Shots from *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* in *Gumnaam* (Nawathe 1965). A full clip of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* and other audiovisual examples discussed in this essay are available on a supplemental page on the *Cultural Anthropology* Web site at the following address: http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/298.

Back on the screen, we see the fantastic dance song continue to unfold, but the whole performance is sublimely silly, both a tribute to and a mockery of the early rock-and-roll styles that it mirrors. How much, we wonder, do they know about what they are doing? The golden-masked dancer shakes her hips, tosses her shoulders, and bobbles her bouffant hairdo crazily, practically falling over as she giddily throws herself back against a chorus line of finger-snapping male counterparts; the band is Lone Ranger–masked, as is the lead singer of the ersatz rock-and-roll group, who throws the microphone stand forward and catches it, Elvis-style, leaning in to shout "Jaan Pehechaan Ho! Jeena Aasaan Ho!" [If only we knew each other, life would be simple].

Zooming back into Enid's room, the secret treasure of an unknown world of under-the-radar mass culture is revealed to us in all of its baffling glory. Her bedroom is a riot of color and weirdness, littered with kitschy toys, posters, and retro clothes. In the middle of this pop culture detritus, Enid mirrors the mirroring on her TV set. Shaking herself in wild and overwrought gestures to this Bollywood rendition of the swinging '60s, she waves her hands absurdly, grooving to the strange moves, but with an oddly serious expression on her face. At the moment of her graduation into an unpleasant, rationalized, rote adult life, Enid revels in the possibility—however remote, implausible, and fantastic—that there is another world, another way to imagine being a part of all of this stuff, another channel in which to immerse herself. Enid knows the dizzy rhythm so well she can close her eyes and reproduce the dance exactly. But as she dances along, her mimicry speaks
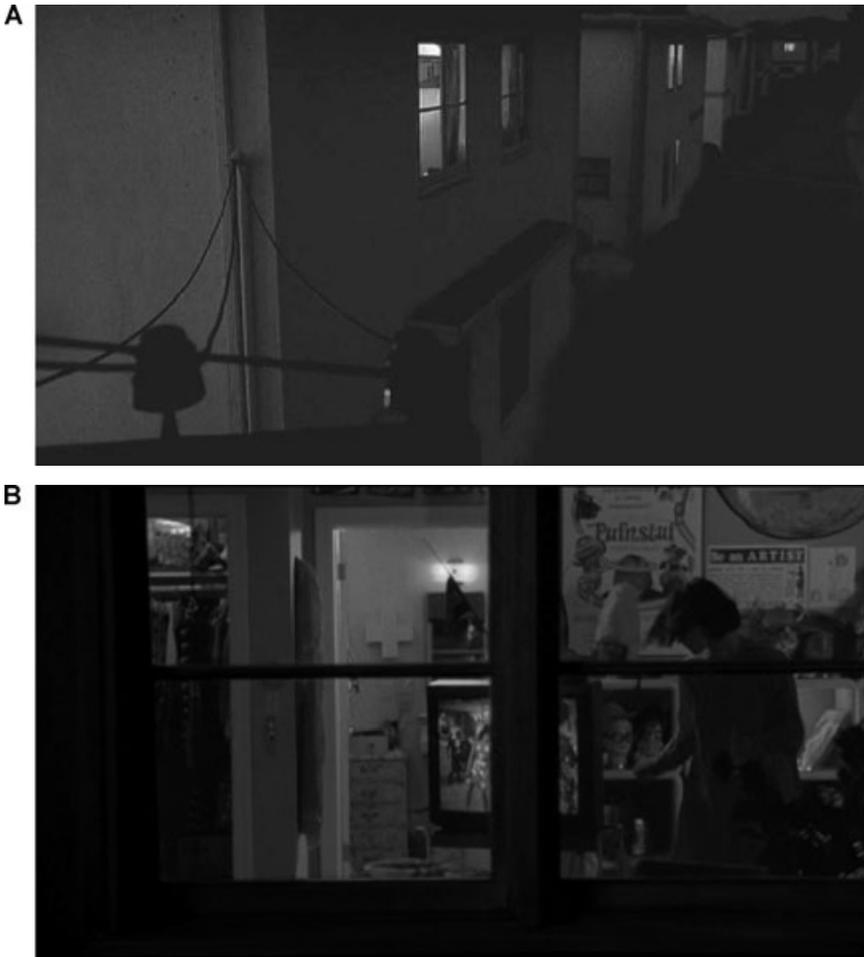
FIGURE 2. Panning along the horizon of reception in *Ghost World*; Enid's room.

to something else. The tune is something Enid connects to in spite of herself—in spite of, or perhaps because, something doesn't translate. *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* means "if only we knew each other"; but *Gumnaam,* the title of the film from which the song is extracted, translates to English as "Anonymous."

The difference offered by *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* becomes a part of a drive for surreal possibility in *Ghost World*; but unlike the purist form of Orientalism it may seem to evoke, the song does not authorize Enid's escape into the promise of an Other culture. Rather, it is part of her alienation from the very idea of culture, expressed in constant scorn for the popular media with which she is nonetheless constantly engaged, obsessively and voyeuristically. Throughout *Ghost World,* Enid

and her best friend Rebecca don't know what they actually like about these things and seem not to want to know. Instead, they choose things because they are "so-bad-it's-good" (which is, of course, teetering on the brink of what Enid later calls "so-bad-it's-gone-past-good-and-back-to-bad-again"). The film is full of absurdist insoluble problems of cultural conflict and recombination: the redneck taunting the South Asian convenience store manager by using his nunchucks in the parking lot (Enid reacts with a sarcastic-but-delighted inversion—"that guy rules!"); the terrible white and Asian breakdancers who perform a murderously clunky rap song at their high school graduation; Enid's confusedly indifferent response to the underground "Nazi" videocassette trader who mocks her for being Jewish, as if she's not sure whether or not she should bother to defend this identity (as her own, or in general). The sociocultural landscape of *Ghost World* is populated with overconfident but clueless people who sublimate their basic ignorance and racism in complacent consumption ("People still hate each other," says Enid, "but they just know how to hide it better"). Even the "alternative" media scene is bankrupt, as evidenced by the trivia-obsessed creeps at the videostore who mock Enid for her punk look, telling her "you want to fuck up the system? Go to business school." The town itself is socially desolate, symbolized by an old man waiting for a bus that never comes. There are no alternatives.

CONJURING ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES IN ALTERNATIVE COMIX

The complex critique of mediation that is carved out in the film version of *Ghost World* bears the trace of its earlier incarnation in yet another medium; as an "alternative" comic series written by Daniel Clowes during the 1980s and 1990s (Clowes 1997; see Figure 3). The comic was a breakout success (selling over 100,000 copies) as part of a revitalized "indie" media scene in the United States that included "zines," college radio, and underground rock music. Because their status as an art form is so heavily undermined by their extensive commodity circulation, comics became a perfect medium for expressing the aesthetic ambivalence of a new media generation. Art-world-identified comics (renamed "comix") exploit a self-ironizing mix of high and low culture.[3] Clowes himself is an art school dropout, motivated by a mix of alienation and desire for both the institution of modern art and the world of classic comic figures (esp. Batman); he narrates a critical self-recognition as a fetishist collector of recordings, video clips, and other kitschy objects.[4]
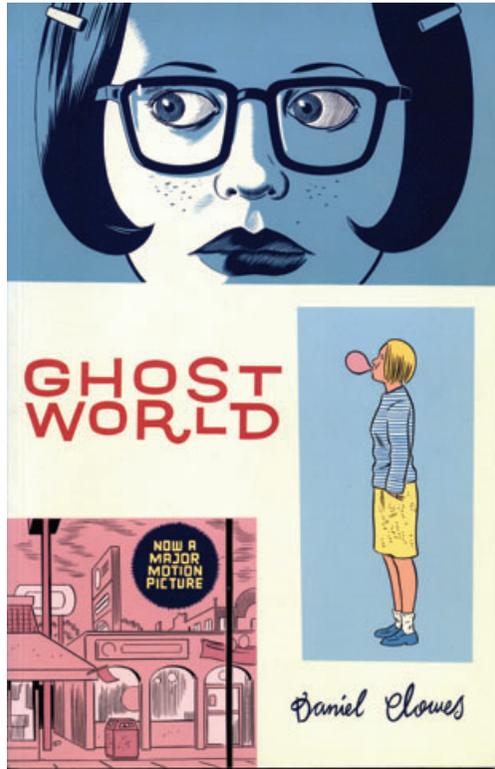
FIGURE 3. Cover of *Ghost World* comic (Clowes 1997).

Much of Clowes's work revolves around broad critiques of contemporary popular aesthetics and consumerism, foregrounding the alienation of everyday life in late capitalism. He parodies record collectors and other "knowledgeable" consumers as overgrown teenagers who cannot break free from their love–hate relationship with the commodity form of media. In *Ghost World,* Enid is first drawn to pop culture nostalgia in a distanced manner, but her ironic treatment morphs into appreciation. Her gleeful disgust for the weird trashy excess of media circulation blends into genuine admiration for some sort of truth offered by these objects of consumer overflow.[5] In Clowes's comix, those who become conscious of the absurdity of their surroundings are pushed into the margins by their own isolated recognition. In this America, everyone—at least everyone paying attention—is a fringe dweller. In creating the film for *Ghost World,* Clowes says,

We [Clowes and director Terry Zwigoff] wanted that stuff to be viewed as oppressive. I mean, that's the kind of world we live in, where we're defined

by the objects we choose to surround ourselves with, and I think that's what the movie is about and what the character Enid's about. She's trapped in this world of very limited consumer choice. She doesn't want to pick Pepsi or Coke; she wants some weird soda that she's never heard of. She has a bigger imagination than what she's offered. [Doane 2001][6]

The label of "alternative" for this new thread of 1990s comix is especially ironic, because one of the major themes of this literature was the impossibility of escape from consumerism through the "alternative" possibilities offered by subcultures of popular music and style. Clowes's *Ghost World* relentlessly exposed the banality of consumer "lifestyle choice" under the order of millennial capitalism. His young protagonists do not so much actively resist as remove themselves from the project of defending their own taste identity. In this, *Ghost World* projects contemporary American culture through the cloistered perspective of a generational niche, as an extension of the "Generation X" distaste for mainstream media. Sherry Ortner has described how the categorization of "Gen X" conflated a broad disaffection from media with a specific set of societal anxieties around the fading status of the American middle class in the 1990s (Ortner 1998). Despite occupying a privileged cultural status, "Gen X" youth were represented as alienated from social norms, but equally disenchanted from the possibility of a genuine alternative. The media-addled, self-satirizing "slacker" was apparently unwilling to commit to a consistent subjectivity in an overflowing world of commodities, and eventually became fatally unsure of the value of his or her own taste.[7] But the remediation of Bollywood in *Ghost World,* despite its resonance with this historical moment of youth subculture in the 1990s, extends far beyond the phantasmic "Generation X."

Clowes originally encountered *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* many years before the clip surfaced in *Ghost World,* in the course of his personal obsession with collecting obscure and rare videotapes. Part of the appeal was to get something that no one else in your circle had seen; to collect the most "you-gotta-see-this" moments, regardless of their origin. *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* was not the only Bollywood clip to circulate among North American videotape collectors, but it was perhaps the most widely distributed.[8] For example, the clip was included in a prominently circulated video collection made by underground filmmaker Mark Rudolph and broadcast several times on the New York City cable access program WFMU-TV, a "freeform variety show of satire, music, and irritainment" run by the eclectic New Jersey radio station WFMU in the late 1980s and early 1990s. *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* was quickly excerpted, copied, and circulated among fans of "strange and interesting"

media.[9] Clowes acquired a copy around this time, and describes his initial encounter with the clip:

> It was one of those tapes that guys like me get from people where you get like, a 20th generation tape: "Hey, you gotta see this, man." A friend of mine who was house-sitting for this guy—Peter Holsapple, who used to be in this band the dBs in the 80s—he has this great collection of video detritus like that, just stuff that he's taped. And so my friend made a bunch of tapes of stuff while he was staying there and said, "Hey, you gotta see this Indian video." It was a really grainy, horrible version of it, but it was the most amazing thing I've seen in my life! "What *is* this?" [Mandich 2002]

As a separately circulating film clip, the Bollywood song-and-dance sequence doesn't call viewers back to the context of authorship. For viewers like Clowes, *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* was distanced from its origins from the outset. What stands out is not cultural difference but the way forms detach from cultural context, often producing an absurd affect that distances the viewer from the original stage of media production. Collectors like Clowes were not deliberately subversive of Indian and diasporic perspectives on popular culture in their remediations of Bollywood. They did, however, seek to preserve and highlight the strange ways things circulate, by juxtaposing different media to make different kinds of sense.

Thus far, I have focused on how *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* has circulated within and helped constitute "alternative" America in the 1990s. But even in its original form, *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* conjured alternatives. Part of the reason that Bollywood is dubbed so well into an "alternative" circulation is because it has always been produced by cosmopolitan subjects, who introduced alternative takes by interrupting the cycles of its global circulation.

INTERRUPTING APPROPRIATIONS

Bollywood film structure deliberately emphasizes the disjuncture of song-and-dance sequences from the overall plot sequence. Song-and-dance sequences are often described as narratives of social fantasy that enable Indian urban communities to reimagine their quotidian life in new cosmopolitan contexts (Dickey 1993; Nandy 1998). Often the actors are transported to an unexplained overseas setting, and perform musical references to foreign artists or genres, clad in spectacular costumes. Although they also serve to poeticize emotional aspects of the plot, song-and-dance sequences are often treated by South Asian audiences as isolable moments that can be appreciated separately from the films in which they are

originally presented. If the standard metaphor for Bollywood films is a *masala,* a blended mix of spices, the song-and-dance sequence is a *masala vada,* a spiced lentil dumpling, which can be eaten alone or added to other dishes at will, but remains a distinct piece.

These sequences are spectacular collages of places, people, movement, and sound; crystallized juxtapositions of formal material that can easily break away from the larger context of the film. Said differently, the techniques of the song-and-dance sequence are circulating technologies of public form, which are increasingly distinct from projects of intercultural translation or the representation of local meaning (Gaonkar and Povinelli 2003). Technical practices of juxtaposition are equally crucial in the production and reception of song-and-dance sequences. Neepa Majumdar has noted the detachability of voice from body in the repetitions of long-term "playback" singers such as Lata Mangeshkar and Mohammed Rafi, whose famous voices have been heard emanating from the mouths of countless different actors for decades. The viewer sees each protagonist singing, and hears a familiar-but-different voice "which puts a strain on the illusion of a self-contained narrative world with its own unique characters" (Majumdar 2001:166). Audiences learn to detect and value this doubled-up star persona, which dubs the famous voice of an invisible singer over the actor's visual presence. They come to recognize the film song as an ever-changing composite that encourages familiarity through the recognition of difference.[10]

The juxtaposition of apparently unrelated people, voices, places, things, and sounds in song-and-dance sequences is crucial to the heightened interpretive aware-ness provoked by Bollywood film, part of what Lalitha Gopalan calls "the cinema of interruptions" (Gopalan 2002). Following from film scholar Tom Gunning's concept "the cinema of attractions" (1990), which describes the spectacular modes of early cinema as a way of transporting modern subjects into new experiences of time and space, Gopalan considers the "constellation of interruptions" in Indian film—song-and-dance sequences, along with flashbacks, subplots, intermissions, and unsutured traces of censorship—as marking out a signature aesthetic of Indian media culture. The experience of interruption, she argues, challenges the rhythms of Hollywood and the hegemony of ideological nationalist readings of Bollywood in film theory. In effect, these interruptions transfigure the overlaps between "local" and "global" to create a special kind of mediated perspective among Indian audiences.[11]

Because song-and-dance sequences aestheticize this fantastic displacement (e.g., suddenly transporting the actors to the Alps), they become easily extractable

for circulation in new media formats. Over time, film songs that persist as popular items are rebroadcast as "evergreens," and are reorganized in collections compiled by actor, singer, music director, and so forth. The detachability of songs from film narratives is especially crucial to the cross-platform development of multimedia distribution in South Asia. The popularity of a song can vastly influence the public reception of a film, and audio-only mixes of film songs circulate widely long after the film in which they were featured have disappeared (Arnold 1988; Manuel 1993).

North American remediations of Bollywood, of course, do not reproduce the context of interruptions that Gopalan describes among Indian film audiences. But the openness to dubbing and juxtaposition in Bollywood allows these songs to slip readily into an alternate reception overseas. They reappear in films like *Ghost World*; are blurbed in urbane references to "Bollywood dancing"; are remixed on DJ compilations of film songs like *The Bombay Connection* (2007) and *Bombay the Hard Way* ([1999]; see Figures 4 and 5);[12] and show up as samples in high-profile hip-hop tracks.[13] Already preextracted items, Bollywood song-and-dance segments are perfect objects for new modes of transmission like filesharing networks, blogs, YouTube, and Google Video. They originate as "mash-ups" of cultural references; of different global voices and bodies, places and times. In other words, they are already remediations, always simultaneously familiar and strange. And recognizing oneself as a part of this process—whether one is invested in nostalgia or newness—requires de-emphasizing the authority of an original media context in favor of its remediations.

The ironies run thick in this flow, with its time lags and stuttered reiterations. Although Bollywood is acknowledged worldwide as one of the only non-Western productions to parallel the hegemony of U.S. cultural exports, its very name announces its mimetic status. Plotlines, characters, and even dialogue of Bollywood are often borrowed wholesale from Hollywood movies, Western novels and television shows, and older Indian films. Although up to 60 percent of Bollywood films are explicit remakes, formal charges of plagiarism are rare, in part because of the difficulty of pursuing international copyright litigation.[14] Still, many viewers are conscious that Bollywood films borrow plot outlines from popular Hollywood movies; *Gumnaam,* for example, drew from Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* (aka *Ten Little Indians*).[15] But Indian appropriators more often stress the transformation of circulating material in different sites of popular reception. Many producers reject the one-to-one relationship of copying proposed by legal definitions of copyright,

FIGURE 4.   A. *The Bombay Connection* (2007); and B. *Bombay the Hard Way* (1999) CD covers.

often in favor of culturalist arguments. Tejaswini Ganti has described the belief held by many Bollywood directors that Hollywood plots must necessarily be changed substantially—actively "Indianized"—to succeed among Indian audiences (Ganti 2002, 2004). Filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt argues further that these remediations are not just pragmatic, but ontological: "when you take an idea and route it through the Indian heart, it changes entirely. You cannot pin a person down on an idea" (Associated Press 2003).

DUBS AND DISIDENTIFICATIONS

Bollywood is the unfaithful copy that is not a copy. In Michael Taussig's words, its self-conscious mimesis is a "sudden laugh from nowhere," which resonates with the "(not so) simple fact that observing mimesis is pleasurable" (Taussig 1993:226). "Surely," Taussig continues, "there is an element of colonialist mastery in this laughter . . . but there is also the possibility that this sudden laugh from nowhere registers a tremor in cultural identity" (1993:226).

Although it is clearly an important site of cultural nationalism, Bollywood has also become a crucial discourse of disidentification for an Indian middle-class subjectivity, which complicates the role of media consumption in modern self-making. Both in India and the diaspora, older films like *Gumnaam* are known as "evergreens" in reference to their ongoing circulation, through which songs like *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* become part of a "classic" pantheon. But the "classic" status of "evergreens" is not the "classical" of traditional cultural arts.[16] They are "classic" in the sense that they evoke crucial-but-evanescent mediations of social history through popular culture. Like "classic rock" in the United States, "evergreen" film songs represent the collapse of transitory artifacts of popular media into nostalgic repositories of style, of "vintage" India.[17] Bollywood "evergreens" become ideal objects of global culture because they admit both the closeness of nostalgia and the distance of irony.[18] This does not mean that the films themselves are not valued, debated, and passionately felt, but that this cosmopolitan relationship with media fulfills the demand for cultural memory and identification within a recognition of its own ambivalence, eclecticism, juxtaposition and ironic humor.

Among the Indian middle class, alienation from Bollywood film expresses the structural distance of cosmopolitan taste. Jerry Pinto's wonderful biographical ramble through the life of Helen (a famous Bollywood vamp, dancer, and icon of nostalgic kitsch who plays the role of "Miss Kitty" in *Gumnaam*) argues that Bollywood film has only very recently become a comfortable object of consumption

for middle-class Indians, through a combination of economic validation and overseas response:

> Thanks to our newfound confidence (we are the second-largest consumer market, are we not?) or to western appreciation and critical discourse on Hindi cinema, we're allowed to like it . . . many of these songs are ludicrous. But that, in an odd way, helps maintain the legend. Now that we are all comfortable with kitsch, we can celebrate the worst excesses of Hindi cinema. [Pinto 2006:201–202]

Pinto's ambivalence is typical of middle-class disidentifications with Bollywood, which articulate a love–hate relationship with its gaudy emotional excesses and inadmissible aesthetic flaws.[19] When NPR reporter Sandip Roy was growing up, for example, "My parents thought Bollywood films were just 3-plus hours of mindless rubbish . . . for us Bollywood was a garish world of glycerine tears and ketchup blood." Roy continues, "I didn't really understand Bollywood until I came to America and I was homesick and lonely on a Midwestern campus . . . [but] now as Bollywood enters American culture, with all its kitsch and camp, I am suddenly the protective parent" (Roy 2005). Blogger Jai Arjun Singh describes this as part of a broader negotiation with hard-to-justify affections for mass media: "We get defensive about things that are difficult to defend, we don't find it convenient to accept that while growing up we took these movies quite seriously—that we didn't merely give them our approval on the grounds that they were kitschy (which is now the preferred approach to Hindi movies of the 1970s and 1980s)" (Singh 2006).

The representation of Bollywood as a global object of Indian culture, as Singh suggests, is highly reflexive and full of mixed feelings. But in the 1990s, Bollywood became an unstoppable symbol of India as a fully modernized cosmopolitan nation. The term has become a catch-all for any circulating object of New Global India and its growing middle-class consumer base, a nostalgic feel-good referent for "our culture" among diasporic Indians, and a hallmark of its *swadeshi* project to capitalize on neoliberal reinvestments in cultural identity (Mazzarella 2003a; Rajadhyaksha 2007).[20] An extensive recent literature strongly connects Bollywood to representations of globalizing India, both at home and abroad (Bose 2006; Desai 2004; Dudrah 2006; Gopal and Moorti 2008; Jolly et al. 2007; Kaarsholm 2007; Kaur and Sinha 2005; Kavoori and Punathambekar 2008; Mazumdar 2007; Mishra 2002; Rai 2009). Its impact on diasporic identity formation is especially well established, especially for an emerging Indian *desi* youth culture in North America and England, in which Bollywood rhythms are remixed with *bhangra,* hip-hop and other forms of

popular music as a soundtrack to second-generation immigrant subjectivity (Maira 2002; Shankar 2008; Sharma et al. 1996; Shukla 2003).

But my point here is that it is not just Indians who make Bollywood their own. As the second-most widely distributed cinema in the world, Bollywood's reach is extensive in populations with less immediate connections to Indian cultural identity. For example, Hindi film has been imported into Nigeria for decades, and the borrowing of Indian cinematic techniques by Hausa videomakers shows that appropriation can motivate different circulations at the same time (Larkin 1997, 2008).[21] For Nigerians, Bollywood film becomes a way of imagining modernity without becoming Western; a mix of similarity and difference that offers a "third space" for contemporary subjectivity.

Tom Boellstorff provides another example in his important study of Indonesian gay and lesbian consumptions of Western media. In the "dubbing culture" of global media circulation, a new subjectivity "is constituted not through suture but through collage." The dub allows the

> holding together of two ostensibly incompatible cultural logics without con-
> flating them [so that] a space for subjectivity appears . . . the power of the "dub"
> comes not by erasing authenticity but by inaugurating new authenticities not
> dependent on tradition or translation. It disrupts the apparent seamlessness of
> the predubbed "original," showing that it too is a dub, that its "traditions" are
> the product of social contexts with their own assumptions and inequalities.
> [Boellstorff 2003:237]

To dub is not simply to copy, but to grasp the thing you behold; to name it as your own. The dub juxtaposes subjectivities in a context of "familiar-but-strange"—the "hey, that's me" moment of recognition, mixed with the awareness that it's not quite so. In *Ghost World,* we see the dub in Enid's acknowledgment of the unexpected wink flashing from the corner of the dancer's eye, as she (almost) reauthenticates *Jaan Pehechaan Ho*'s mass culture mockery for an (almost) separate context.

But fragile collages of different cultural logics do not always hold together. Dubs, too, are readily contested by other versions, even when different subjects engage in the same media context. If we naturalize remediation as a new form of global cultural identity, we run the risk of compressing the specific conditions of particular subjects into a transcendent context of cosmopolitan subjectivity.

I conclude here by turning to an earlier moment in the cycle of appro-priations of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* several years before the release of *Ghost World,*

which forecasts some of the sociocultural ambivalences in that film and in the broader context of North American "alternative" media. I describe a performance of the song by a short-lived Bay Area rock band called Heavenly Ten Stems, whose brief life in the early 1990s crystallized the debates around cultural appropriation for a nascent underground reception of Bollywood in North America. The group's performances conjured a world of shared liberal cosmopolitanism, in which globally mixed music could remediate specific local projects of cultural identity and disidentification. In closing with my anachronistic ethnography of the Heavenly Ten Stems performance, I do not claim this moment, replete with the transcendent desires and conflicts of Californian multiculturalist projects, as some kind of definitive version of Bollywood reception. On the contrary, in the unfolding of this performance and its protest, we see the global cosmopolitan dub come apart in a clash of very specific local investments in media circulation.

THE SHORT LIFE AND LONG TAIL OF HEAVENLY TEN STEMS

Daniel Clowes was not the only North American to encounter *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* in the early 1990s. In fact, a wide range of underground music fans had come to appreciate the quirky productions of "evergreen" music directors such as Shankar Jaikishan, R. D. Burman, Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Kalyanji-Anandji, and Bappi Lahiri. One early adopter of Hindi film music was Brandan Kearney, a San Francisco–based guitarist and member of several absurdist psychedelic rock bands: Caroliner Rainbow, Steeple Snakes, Archipelago Brewing Company, Job's Daughters, and Faxed Head, among others. In 1993, Kearney started a new band called Heavenly Ten Stems, which was devoted to the performance of Asian popular music, including Cantonese pop tunes, Bollywood film songs, and Japanese garage rock. The band was known for its rendition of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* which was eventually released on a 7-inch single by Amarillo Records in 1994 (the A-side is *China Town,* an M. Sultanpuri/Ravi track taken from the 1962 Bollywood thriller of the same name [Samanta 1962]; see Figure 5).

Heavenly Ten Stems played only three times, but their performances became the subject of local legend. They are particularly remembered for the disruption of their last performance by activists whose challenge to the band's use of Asian cultural material precipitated their eventual dissolution. A videotape of the incident, shot in the bygone club the Chameleon, has survived among insiders of the Bay area underground music scene (see Figure 6).[22] The blurry handheld framing reveals a small audience, largely in their twenties and thirties, mostly white, visibly

FIGURE 5. Heavenly Ten Stems' only record; Amarillo Records AM-597.

subcultural and artistic (perhaps a bit like Enid might turn out a few years down the road). Onstage, the band sings a series of film songs in Hindi and pop ballads in Cantonese. The singers are dressed in a mix of costumes and are making their best attempts at pronunciation, as the instrumentalists bash out the first few tunes in relatively close approximation of the original 1960s tracks, including their rendition of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho*. About 15 minutes into the concert, a stream of paint is thrown from off screen, most of which hits the female singer Laura Allen, who is outfitted in a Korean *hanbok* dress. A glass smashes on the stage; she stops singing, and a few seconds later, a young Asian American woman (Protester #1)[23] jumps on to the stage and grabs the microphone from Allen, turning to the audience to yell:

Protester #1: STOP it!
Protester #2 (off camera): This is racist *bullshit!*
Laura Allen: Did you just throw *paint* in my *eye?*
Protester #2: (to Khan) What do you think you're *doing?!*
Roshani Khan: We're celebrating *music* . . .
Protester #3: You're not celebrating music!
Khan: Yes we *are!*

FIGURE 6. Still images from video recording of Heavenly Ten Stems protest.
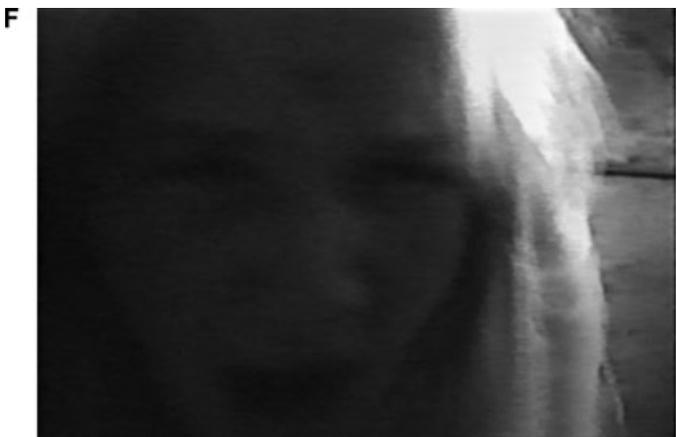
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FIGURE 6. Continued.

Protester #3: You don't know what you're *saying!*

Khan: Yes we *do!*

Protester #1: (pulling on Allen's *hanbok*) Look at *this!*

Allen: (pulling on the protester's T-shirt) Look at *THIS!* What's *THAT?*

Protester #1: These are my clothes!

Allen: Yeah, well, these are MINE!

After her clothes are torn, Allen slaps her accuser and the stage is suddenly crowded with audience members, performers, and protesters trying to calm the situation. In a 2002 interview, Kearney argued his position:

> So in the middle of one song, there was a lot of shouting. Then this woman jumped on stage, said something like "They forgot one thing," and threw a container of yellow paint on us. There was a bit of a scuffle. . . . I remember one of the women who attacked us tearing at poor Roshani's Pakistani scarf and screaming, "What IS this shit? What are you wearing? What do you think you're doing?" . . . Alex, the keyboardist, had on a sari. Well, she was white, and she was wearing Indian clothing. Guilty as charged. Roshani, our violinist, was wearing traditional Pakistani clothing. But she's Pakistani, so she's allowed, it seems to me. [Prindle 2002]

Kearny further described the intent behind the diverse costuming of the group, which was sometimes culturally specific, but also fantastic and absurd:

> [trombonist and lead singer] Mark Davies painted his face with gold paint, which seemed to bug these people, but I didn't understand that. He didn't want to look like himself, but he wasn't trying to look specifically Asian, or even specifically human. I think Mark, like me, looked at shows—any shows—as a chance to take on a completely new appearance. I saw what he was wearing as pretty abstract. Asians don't have metallic gold skin. No one does.

A few moments after the intervention dissipates, with some players continuing to talk with the protesters offstage, Davies addresses the impatient audience with a halting speech:

Audience member: Maybe you should explain yourself . . . some people think it's a joke.

Davies: I don't know if there's anything I *can* say to explain it. When emotions get to a certain level, I don't know if I can really explain it . . . in a way that

will be taken the way I mean it. But we don't mean this as a parody; to us, it's a tribute. And . . . if it's perceived in another way, we have to take that into account, I realize it. We certainly don't mean it any other way, and if we're naive . . . I can admit that we would be naive. I wish we could have—if we live in a—if we all have to be isolated in our own cultures, in our own races, there's no way any kind of communication is going to take place. That's the way I see it. I don't want to feel stuck and alienated in being a white person all the time—I think if there's going to be any healthy multicultural community, there has to be some interplay . . .

Audience members: (sarcastically) You got SOUL!

Right ON, brother!

Davies: I don't know what else to say about it . . .

Audience member: Don't WORRY about it!

In the wake of this half-apologetic half-explanation, the camera holds on Davies for a few more seconds as the band mills about confusedly onstage. Finally the videographer turns, as if tapped on the shoulder, to film her neighbor, a young blonde woman with a red bindi dot on her forehead, who screws up her face in (genuine?) anger and yells into the camera: "I *AM* mocking you, godammit! *I* am just a mockery and so are *YOU!*"

MOCKERY, EQUIVALENCE, AND ELVIS

What is at stake here is not just the loss of original meaning in a landscape of mediated cultural signs. It is a question of equivalence—more accurately, of the lack of equivalence—between two sites of remediation whose relations to the original hang in the balance between "mockery" and "tribute." Some members of the band were involved with learning the languages of the songs they were performing, and had developed close relationships with local diasporic communities, while Khan was herself Pakistani American. But crucially, for Heavenly Ten Stems, the project was not one of representing Asian culture but of revealing the fantastic aspects of global popular music as a multidirectional social imaginary. As keyboardist Alexandra Behr later wrote about the incident, "I guess I can see how we can be taken wrong, but we're reinterpreting their (Asian) interpretations of Western pop styles. I feel sort of embarrassed that people think we're racist—but in Japan people dress up like Johnny Cash!"[24] Costume was an especially crucial factor in the Heavenly Ten Stems remediation of Asian pop culture. Windy Chien, one of the protesters at this incident, told me that it was not the group's performance of

the music but their costumed reproduction on stage that went too far. In her view, Heavenly Ten Stems did not just perform foreign music, but appropriated foreign identities.

Chien's own involvement in the protest was complex, and signals her own ambivalence toward defending an essentialist cultural identity. Throughout the 1990s, Chien worked at (and briefly owned) the well-known independent record store Aquarius, which was the retail epicenter of the San Francisco indie rock scene and its nascent interest in classic Bollywood soundtracks and other "alternative" world music. The store was very close to the Chameleon nightclub where the Heavenly Ten Stems performance was to take place, and the activists came in to tell Chien of their plan to disrupt the concert. Although she was supportive of their action, Chien decided that she was uncomfortable with direct confrontation, so she chose to stand outside of the concert and distribute a one-page commentary she had prepared to explain her stance.

> For me, the performance brought up issues, so I was like, let's talk about it. But I wasn't "being Asian American," coming from an Asian American social club per se. This indie rock world *was* my community, my social world—so these were the people I felt I should be talking to. . . . Some of the members eventually got it, but some were like "I'm part Native American, does that make it okay?" [interview, Windy Chien, May 7, 2008]

For Chien, the group performed an Asian stereotype that displayed their ignorance of ongoing Orientalist appropriations: "They kept saying, 'It's the same thing as when a Chinese person covers Elvis'—but it's *not* the same thing when there's a difference in power." At the same time, Chien recognized that her own participation in the protest could become an essentialized embodiment of "being Asian American" that did not do justice to her own complex selfhood, which was strongly identified with the "indie rock" community. But precisely because of her prominent position within this group, Chien's participation was highlighted in stories of the protest. Her role was often misremembered and overemphasized, if only because she was the only protester already known personally by many in the audience. In fact, I was told several times that Chien was the protester responsible for the onstage action at the Chameleon, although she did not enter the club and does not appear on the videotape of the confrontation.

But the protest of the performance staged a cultural remediation that cut both ways. Kearny argues that the protesters, too, appropriated Asian subjectivity by

accusing Heavenly Ten Stems of stealing "their" cultural property while refusing his response that many diasporic Asians had aided and approved of their project:

> I don't want to come down on these people too much . . . [but] it burned me up that I was supposed to accept the opinions of two Asian women from the Bay Area as the last word on the subject, and simply dismiss any Asians or Indians who had different ideas as "assimilationist."

The Heavenly Ten Stems act of remediation—to create "a completely new appearance" within the resources of Asian foreign media—was clearly at odds with that of the Asian American activists, who painted the band yellow to ironize their performance as pure Orientalist racism. But to describe this as an intercultural face-off between two incommensurable dubs would misrecognize their overlapping investments in the social poetics of appropriation.

Rather than cast this incident in terms of its failure to mediate the politics of cultural identity, I argue that the conflict was a multifaceted challenge about what kinds of things can and should be included in the "commons of influence" of global media circulation. In the face of a consumer logic that would equate all musical experiences, forms, and identities interchangeably—as sound bites in an endless flow, or costumes changed as easily as *Ghost World*'s Enid discards her "authentic 1977 punk look"—the Heavenly Ten Stems event contrasted the possibilities of cultural embodiment against its disembodiment in mediation. The problems of imagining a shared cosmopolitan subjectivity in the imbalances of global media circulation practically burst out of this dubbed-over performance. But we also begin to see the affective dimensions of remediation here, in the deeply felt identifications that belong to these assemblages. If this juxtaposition is viewed only as a violent crisis—a "clash" between discourses of cultural ethnonationalism and 19th-century Orientalism—we miss how these conflicts of appropriation are already involved in processes meant to reveal, rather than obscure, the variable trajectories of cultural mimesis.

Remediation works by pushing the limits of cultural identifications with media, and its productivity lies in its recognition of different juxtaposed interpretations. Bollywood highlights this process in its complex framework of tribute and mockery, of interruptions and dubs that erase as much as they (re-)create. When the object of this process is wrested "back" from its recontextualized performance, it creates a recognition of what is at stake, and for whom, in the dub. Heavenly Ten Stems couldn't continue in the face of this interruption, but the outcome resonated beyond the superficial violence that provoked the breakup. The event was in many ways

prescient of recent reevaluations of multiculturalism, and continues to resonate among those involved in the San Francisco Bay–area musical underground ("it still comes up all the time," said one longtime local performer).

For its participants, the incident has been memorialized because it represents the interface between three different contexts of remediation: of a particular time and place in the California-based multicultural politics of the 1990s; of a subcultural interest in the broader global mediascape in which Asian media was just beginning to present to North American members of "Generation X" (here, both non-Asians and later-generation Asian Americans); and, crucially, as part of an ongoing remediation of their own social lives. Chien eventually came to consider the confrontation as a distant moment in her own growing consciousness of self: "When you're younger, you're trying on different jackets, different identities . . . but now I know exactly who I am, so people playing around with media doesn't rock my world like it did." The considerable increase in overseas circulation of Bollywood songs over the last decade, too, has slowly made North American consumption more sophisticated as well, as listeners become familiar with the music and become involved fans. Chien, in an incredible twist, is now a producer for a branch of Apple iTunes called "iTunes Essentials." As such, she has great insight into the global circulation of popular music, and comments that North American receptions have begun to normalize the presence of Bollywood. As she puts it, "If you like a Bollywood song now [in 2008], you have to really *like* it. It's available—so it's not the exotic mystery of, 'hey, I found this in the back of a store somewhere, you've never heard it.'"

THE EXOTIC OTHER OF THE OTHER EXOTICA

The circulation of Bollywood song-and-dance sequences in North America shows that appropriation does not begin in the detachment of "authentic culture" from one site of representation, or end with its essentialization as a purely "exotic" reproduction in another. Rather, one sees multidirectional overflows of media resources shaped by cultural differences, globalist desires, and cross-cutting aesthetic affinities. In Ana Tsing's terms, these are not coproductions but unequal collaborations that juxtapose separated subjects and their diverse projects; their remediations are "overlapping but discrepant forms of cosmopolitanism" that contribute to a broader global "friction" (Tsing 2005:13).

Remediation reveals and constitutes contemporary cosmopolitanism. It stresses the contradictions of nostalgic desires to return to original sites of cultural production. It highlights multiple mediations of voices, people, and music in

feedback loops that complicate the nature of authorship. It questions what is defined as culture, and what is pulled back and held apart from that category. When does the proliferation of copies begin to affect how we perceive the original? Who has the right to quote and reference, and which mediations belong to which cultural realms? Global media circulation requires attention to the back-and-forthness of it all. By always referring to other contexts and interpretations of media, remediations put pressure on the purification projects of culturalist discourse, without boiling down to the resignifications of reception-based resistance theory. They show how contemporary media and their subjects are made to be detached, circulated, and recontextualized, creating a tension between "tribute" and "mockery" that can never be resolved.

The redemptive moment in the film version of *Ghost World*—the moment that brings Enid's alienation into perspective as part of a desire for authentic selfhood—takes place in the transformation of her listening from ironic appropriation to intimate absorption. After being mocked for her inauthenticity as a punk, she returns home to change her clothes and flip through her cassettes in a dissatisfied manner, until she remembers the old blues LP from Seymour. She pulls it from its sleeve and puts it on the turntable. As she dyes her hair back from green to black, the 1931 Skip James recording of "Devil Got My Woman" radiates out from the speaker; Enid stops drying her hair and stares at the turntable, focusing on the revolutions of the wobbly, warped vinyl. She stands stark still in the middle of her room as the camera circles around her face and its expressionless expression of total absorption. We see her flat on her back, listening to the track over and over, as the sound spins out into her room from the record she picked up for a laugh—like her videotape of *Jaan Pehechaan Ho*—from a strange pile of stuff.

How much time, and how much space, is required to separate an object from its reiteration; an echo from the source of the sound? Through how many ears must that sound travel before its reverberation reveals more than repetitions, but begins to stand apart, in the new places in which it re-sounds? The power of music cannot close these incommensurable gaps between sources and representations. Enid is no closer to understanding Skip James, or the anonymous dance she imitates from *Gumnaam,* and she knows it. But somehow this ghostly world finds its way to feeling, to a transformative embrace of alienation. To learn through this process, we must see (and hear, and dance) appropriation in its constitutive relationship with cosmopolitan subjects. The versions of the Self created through encounters with the strange and familiar worlds of media should not be reduced to a purist

form of Orientalism. This is the Exotic Other of the Other Exotica, lost and found again in the self-consciousness of remediation.

ABSTRACT

This essay considers the process of remediation in two North American reproductions of the song-and-dance sequence Jaan Pehechaan Ho *from the 1965 "Bollywood" film* Gumnaam. *The song was used in the opening sequence of the 2001 U.S. independent film* Ghost World *as a familiar-but-strange object of ironic bewilderment and fantasy for its alienated teenage protagonist Enid. But a decade before* Ghost World's *release,* Jaan Pehechaan Ho *had already become the lynchpin of a complex debate about cultural appropriation and multicultural identity for an "alternative" audience in the United States. I illustrate this through an ethnographic analysis of a 1994 videotape of the Heavenly Ten Stems, an experimental rock band in San Francisco, whose performance of the song was disrupted by a group of activists who perceived their reproduction as a mockery. How is Bollywood film song, often itself a kitschy send-up of American popular culture, remediated differently for different projects of reception? How do these cycles of appropriation create overlapping conditions for new identities—whether national, diasporic, or "alternative"—within the context of transcultural media consumption? In drawing out the "ghost world" of Bollywood's juxtapositions, I argue that the process of remediation produces more than just new forms and meanings of media, but is constitutive of the cosmopolitan subjects formed in its global circulations.*

Keywords: remediation, Bollywood, music, media studies, globalization, circulation.

1. It is important to distinguish Bollywood from recent "Bollywoodesque" productions, non-Bollywood films both in Indian and Western cinema, that do not follow the structural format of Bollywood films but pay homage to central stylistic features. In 2009, British director Danny Boyle's Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire* was often mislabeled as a Bollywood film in Western markets, along with other crossovers such as Mira Nair's 2001 film *Monsoon Wedding* and Gurinder Chadha's 2004 *Bride and Prejudice* (all of which make varying degrees of reference to Bollywood tropes, esp. song-and-dance sequences). Recent Bollywood-related nonfilm productions have included the Broadway musicals *Bombay Dreams, Miss Bollywood, The Merchants of Bollywood,* and the 2009 cable TV comedy *Bollywood Hero.*

2. The masked lead singer is played by choreographer Master Herman, but voiced by the famous Mohammad Rafi, while the surfy guitar riffs and drum beats are provided by groundbreaking Bollywood rock-and-rollers Dilip Naik and Leslie Godinho, respectively. For a history of musicians in the Bollywood film industry, see Booth 2008.

3. The explosion of comix in the 1980s followed from the work of several California-based artists in the 1970s, most famously Robert Crumb, whose life was the subject of *Ghost World* director Terry Zwigoff's first major feature film *Crumb* (1994). Rosencranz 2003 and Skinn 2004 describe this early history, while Hatfield 2005 offers a literary critique of later comix artists such as Harvey Pekar, Gilbert Hernandez, Clowes, and others. By the 1990s, comix artists had made major inroads into commercial art and literature with Art Spielgelman's *Maus* winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1992, and Chicago-based artist Chris Ware featured in the 2002 Biennial of the Whitney Museum of Modern Art.

4. One character is named "Dan Pussey," a lonely and desperate comic collector whose adventures in an alternate world of pop culture obsession are narrated with exacting and often pathetic detail.

5. The character development in the film version unfolds through Enid's ambivalent relationship with Seymour, a record collector whom she meets at his garage sale. She's looking for "old Indian 1960s rock and roll music," but he recommends a classic blues collection, and she patronizingly accommodates him by buying the LP for $1.75. But Seymour's out-of-it difference from the ordinary world eventually becomes appealing; "In a way, he's *such* a clueless dork, he's almost kind of cool."

6. In fact, Clowes's art had been used a few years earlier in advertising a weird "third soda" called OK Soda, a short-lived Coca-Cola product that attempted to capitalize on the disaffection of Generation X consumers toward dichotomized consumer choices such as "Pepsi vs. Coke."

7. The "slacker" withdrawal from consumer culture relied strongly on the tools of irony, which managed societal anxieties about the effects of flexible capitalism (Heiman 2001). But slacker irony was not without its dangers for the subject, as parodied in an oft-cited exchange between two slackers in the audience of an "alternative" music festival in the 1996 episode of *The Simpsons* entitled "Homerpalooza," As Homer approaches the stage to perform, one turns to the other and mutters "Oh, *he's* cool." The second slacker responds, "Dude, are you being sarcastic?"; the first looks confused and answers despondently, "I don't even *know* anymore."

8. Other popular clips included Shammi Kapoor's famous Beatles imitation from Dev Anand's 1965 film *Jaanwar* (interestingly, this track is also performed by a band called "Ted Lyon and His Cubs," possibly using the same group of studio musicians as *Jaan Pehechaan Ho*), and the psychedelic haze of R. D. Burman's oft-remixed *Dum Aroo Dum* from Dev Anand's 1971 classic *Hare Rama Hare Krishna,* which is regularly sampled by hip-hop DJs, most prominently in the 2004 Method Man–Redman hit *What's Happening.*

9. Several sources credit the garage-rock group The Cramps with their first exposure to *Jaan Pehechaan Ho,* when band leader Lux insisted on showing the clip on the local Los Angeles television show *Request Video* in the early 1990s. Bootleg tapes of this show and the *WFMU-TV* episode with the clip circulated for several years among underground music fans in North America, and the song was eventually included on a popular compilation CD called *Doob Doob O'Rama: Filmsongs of Bollywood,* released on German indie label QDK Media in 1999. My own role as an informal distributor of the *Jaan Pehechaan Ho* footage reached its fruition at Columbia University around this time, when I screened it in a class on Bollywood film just before the release of *Ghost World* in 2001. A few weeks later, several students e-mailed that they had been shocked to recognize the obscure clip while sitting in a local movie theater.

10. Lata Mangeshkar's voice, which has famously been listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the most-recorded in history, is subject to particularly acute attention among music directors, who consider her voice the ideal for all female playback singers. In Daman Sood's words, "Every artiste who steps before a microphone is equal to the other, but Lataji is unique" (Bhimani 1995:236).

11. Amit Rai (2009) extends Gopalan's idea of interruptions further in his recent book *Untimely Bollywood,* describing a "media interval" that assembles individual sensory experiences of Bollywood film within the disjunctures of its circulation.

12. These two compilations illustrate the range of representational approaches in repackaging Bollywood songs for alternative consumption. *The Bombay Connection* (2007) was restored from rare vinyl LPs with essays and extensive track notes by Dutch record collector Edo Bouman, who licensed all of the recordings included on the CD. *Bombay the Hard Way* (1999),

on the other hand, has no proper credits, makes no mention of the fact that several tracks have been remixed by producers Dan "The Automator" Nakamura and DJ Shadow, and does not indicate which sounds are original and which are overdubbed.

13. Along with beats drawn from U.K.-based *bhangra* producers, classic Bollywood songs have increasingly been sampled in hip-hop and dance tracks that have become major hits in the U.S. market. Many songs that feature prominent Bollywood samples have passed uncontested, but other appropriations have begun to be challenged under international copyright law. For example, *Addictive* by Truth Hurts in 2002 featured a clip of Lata Mangeshkar singing the 1981 song *Thoda Resham Lagta Hai,* composed by Bappi Lahiri. Lahiri charged the group and producer DJ Quik with "cultural imperialism" and won an injunction against the distributor Interscope Records in 2003.

14. In 2003, however, British novelist Barbara Taylor Bradford blocked the production of the popular TV series *Karishma: Miracle of Destiny* with the charge that its plot was substantially based on her novel *A Woman of Substance.* The appeal was rejected by India's Supreme Court with a judgment that "the plaintiff cannot have a monopoly on a woman making it from rags to riches" (Pearson 2003).

15. In fact, fan communities revel in the mimetic pleasures of recognizing copies of Western songs in Bollywood tracks. On www.itwofs.com, for example, Karthik Srinivasan details the "chronicles of plagiarism in Indian film music" by tracking down the sources for "inspired Indian film songs." Thanks to Lawrence Liang for bringing this site to my attention.

16. See, for example, the complex reconfiguration of Karnatic music as "classical" music in Weidman 2006.

17. Even the most "Indian" of things can be used differently in the feedback loops of cosmopolitan identifications. For some contemporary Indian youth, even native cultural markers like the nose ring (a traditional symbol of Indian womanhood) can now also signal a transnational cosmopolitan identity, as "not just westernized (such girls simply choose not to get their noses pierced) but a member of an alternative community that exists outside the mainstream of westernized Indian youth" (Ahuja 2008:1).

18. In this, "evergreen" Bollywood is a commodity cycle much like the repetitions of "vintage Japan" described by Marilyn Ivy, in which already circulated commodities "provide the necessary distance from the present while allowing ready recirculation" in a new media context (Ivy 1995:56).

19. Film songs become especially crucial for expressing the distinctions of middle-class taste by stressing the redemptive moments of singing within the larger narrative. For novelist Kushwant Singh, "all that redeems the three hours of unmitigated boredom produced by wasted celluloid is the singing. Although I am well aware that our current crop of musical directors are bigger thieves than the writers of film scripts, I have never been able to resist the singing" (Pendakur 2003:121).

20. Rajadhyaksha proposes that the current use of the word "Bollywood" derives from a British disaporic context of "ethnic" programming on Channel 4, boosted by literary work on Hindi film as a mass culture (by critics Shashi Tharoor, Farrukh Dhondy, et al.). The diasporic lens reflects the distanced view of Indian popular culture in the West, taking on "the outsider's fascination with a slightly surreal practice that nevertheless appears to possess the claim to be a genuine popular art form" (Rajadhyaksha 2007:119).

21. Bollywood has also been extremely popular in Russia and Eastern Europe for several decades. On the impact of Indian films among post-Stalinist Soviet audiences, see Rajagopalan 2009.

22. My own background as a participant in this social and musical world has been crucial for the ethnographic component of this essay, and in gathering materials about the 1990s U.S. independent music scene. Although I did not attend the event myself, I know members of the group as well as one of the protesters, and had heard stories about the controversial performance from many contacts over the years. My access to a copy of the videotaped concert was provided by a former member of Heavenly Ten Stems.

23. Regrettably, my interlocutors were unable to identify the protestors who appear in this clip.

24. This quotation is excerpted from Behr's writings about the incident at the time in her diary, some of which were reprinted (without permission) on www.markprindle.com.

Editors Note: *Cultural Anthropology* has published many essays on media, remediation, and new forms of circulation; see in particular "Very Bombay": Contending with the Global in an Indian Advertising Agency" by William Mazzarella (2003b); Deirdre de la Cruz's (2009) "Coincidence and Consequence: Marianism and the Mass Media in the Global Philippines"; and "Dislocating Sound: The Deterritorialization of Indonesian Indie Pop," by Brent Luvaas (2009). For a fuller list of essays in *Cultural Anthropology* on media, see http://culanth.org/?q=node/19.

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