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Cosmopolitan India

Bollywood and the citizens of the world

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To Gilberto, forever

The fact is that, within the big metropolis, whether it be New York, Paris or Rio de Janeiro, there are strong discontinuities between the "world" of the ethnographer and other worlds. Consequently, whether he be from New York, Paris or Rio de Janeiro, what matters is that he is able to experiment with strangeness, unfamiliarity, or even cultural shock comparable to journeys to "exotic" societies and regions.
Velho, 1987: 126-7.

Cosmopolitanism and Anthropology

1 Sixty years after the founding of the Association of Social Anthropologists (asa), Pnina Werbner edited a collective book on "Cosmopolitanism and Anthropology" as the product of the asa Diamond Jubilee held at Keele University in 2006 (Werbner, 2008). To an extent, she stood for the increasing number of emergent discourses on cosmopolitanism, which over the previous decade had been attracting anthropologists who had previously dedicated their research to issues of globalisation, transnationalism, and diaspora.[1]

2 A number of books have been published (Vertovec and Cohen, 2003; Breckenridge *et al.*, 2002; Werbner, 2008; Hooft and Vandekerckhove, 2010; Delanty, 2012), and new research centres have started making cosmopolitanism a focal point for academic research. Should these be viewed as significant developments? At this point in the history of anthropology, the crucial question is: does "cosmopolitism" offer an original proposal from previous conceptualisations of "multiculturalism", "pluralism", "globalisation", "diaspora" and "transnationalism"? In other words, does it advance a relevant new anthropological agenda, or does it only offer new terminology for problems that anthropologists were already debating? (see Perez, 2012).

3 The growth in the number of texts on cosmopolitanism encourages us to assume that the concept has come to fill the historical and sociological gaps between the postcolonial paradigm and the new conditions of contemporary political and cultural citizenship,[2] a shift which would be in line with Bhabha's expression, "a borderline experience" (Bhabha, [1994] 2005). These emergent discourses on cosmopolitanism may be justified because, as Breckenridge *et al.* have put it: "Cosmopolitanism, in its wide and wavering nets, catches something of our need to ground our sense of mutuality in conditions of mutability, and to learn to live tenaciously in terrains of historical and cultural transition" (Breckenridge *et al.*, 2002: 4).

4 Vertovec and Cohen argued that there are six ways to look at cosmopolitanism: as a socio-cultural condition, as a philosophy or worldview, as a perspective which advocates transnational institutions, as an approach which highlights the multiple construction of the political subject,[3] as an attitude or disposition which is open and engaging with otherness,[4] and finally as a propensity to be flexible, reflective and to move between cultures without residing within them (Vertovec and Cohen, 2003).

5 These assumptions are based on the hypothesis that cosmopolitanism is a contemporary phenomenon. Nevertheless, some authors have recently questioned this premise, by pointing to past occurrences that, though they were not necessarily called cosmopolitan, were cosmopolitan in essence. For example, Walter Mignolo examined two early cosmopolitan phases. Christian cosmopolitanism at the time of the Crusades illustrates the advocation of a worldview, while the colonial or imperial vision from Columbus onwards was also a cosmopolitan vision that aimed to bring the rest of the world under the West's value system and sphere of influence (Mignolo, 2002). Pollock went further back in time and suggested that if we looked at the world across time and space we could consider an "array of possibilities" (Pollock *et al.*, 2002). As an example of what he calls an "instance of export cosmopolitanism" he mentions the Asia-wide circulation of Sanskrit poetry in the first millennium, contributing to

a translocal culture spreading from Central Asia to the South China Sea (*ibid.*: 8). In the case of "import cosmopolitanism" Pollock refers to the architectural styles of pre-war Shanghai, where people tried "to rebuild the whole world on their city streets (with Tudor-style villas, Spanish-style town houses, Russian-style churches, German-style mansions, Shangai-esque lane houses, and Li long housing complexes)" (*ibid.*: 11).[5]

6 What are we to make of this apparently conflicting data? If the term "cosmopolitanism" seems so porous, should we stay at a level of terminological choice that, however, can be evaded by adopting a more expansive—and inclusive—terminology, which would cover both institutional and non-institutional forms of cosmopolitanism? Or should we assess it at a deeper historical and anthropological level,[6] calling for a re-conceptualisation in anthropology, by evaluating the epistemological and methodological suitability of the concept?

7 Furthermore, embracing cosmopolitanism as epistemologically relevant would enable us to avoid conceiving the world in terms of binaries that reinforce power relations between the dominant self and the subordinate other, therefore facilitating a shift that enables us to open ourselves to pluralism and difference (see Beck, 2004). Rejection of the conceptual dichotomisations that frequently lie at the core of globalisation would favour a more comprehensive view, an idea of multiple belongings, a "circle of enlarging alliances" (Stanton, 2007). In this way, we might be able to diffuse the "tension between cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation" (Appadurai, 1996: 32).

8 Cosmopolitanism, as an emerging trend in social theory, should represent both an object of study and a distinctive methodological approach to the social world. Consequently, cosmopolitanism would not be merely a condition marked by diversity, but would be something that is articulated in cultural models of openness to the world, through which societies transform, and in which the logic of translation plays a central role (see Delanty, 2006).[7]

9 Communities from a homogenous cultural pool are now dwelling in cultural diversity,[8] now that the world's boundaries have become more and more permeable in the wake of globalization. Nevertheless, the categorization of cosmopolitanism must not be even out with globalization, a concept that, as I suggested, presupposes essential dualisms; on the contrary, from a methodological perspective, cosmopolitanism opens up new horizons by demonstrating how we can make it possible to empirically investigate border crossings and other transnational phenomena (see Turner, 2006).

10 I do believe that the Indian diaspora allows us to situate cosmopolitanism within contemporary anthropology and to redefine other phenomena in light of present-day cultural and political relations that have developed both within postcolonial states—with the emergence of cultural pluralism, global rights movements, ideas about democracy and the right to dissent—and beyond their borders (Werbner, 2008: 6).

The singularity of the Indian diaspora: global Indians

11 The concept of diaspora, both as an analytical tool and as an ongoing historical process, would require further definition, but this falls outside the scope of this text.[9] For now, it is relevant to note that "diaspora" can be adequately used to refer to the massive displacement of groups from India to Europe in the late 1980s as a result of new technologies in production and distribution, international communication and the internet, broadcast and cable TV, all of which led to increased globalisation. Different groups from a common background are involved in India's worldwide diaspora. They comprise transnational families and transnational religions moving within a common world linked together by almost instantaneous communication (Perez, 2005). Within these groups, we must consider stratification between skilled and unskilled labour; the movement of the former, who circulate within a social and professional sphere that is distinct from that of the latter, constitutes a veritable brain drain, as specialists immigrate from India to the West.

12 In 1983, coinciding with the significant global economic and technological changes that led to contemporary India's diaspora, the Indian government passed the Emigration Act. This covered all citizens regardless of whether they lived in India or abroad[10], denying citizenship

to Indians who had emigrated. However, the national impact of the Indian diaspora led to increased political openness on the part of the Indian government, which drafted new definitions of citizenship for Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs). The Ministry of Non-Resident Indians' Affairs was created on 27 May 2004 through a notification issued by the President of India, and was renamed the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) on September 3rd of the same year, something that says a lot about the political and economic dimension of the Indian diaspora (see Perez, 2005).

13 This followed a period of liberalisation of the Indian economy, when Indians living abroad were recognised as potentially influential partners in investment and technology in India. In fact, since 1991 the Indian government has been gradually liberalising its industrial policy, its foreign collaboration policy, and its trade policy and introducing economic and financial reforms to attract investment that would help the country's economic development, targeting non-resident Indians (NRIs) through the Indian Investment Centre. The results of this liberalisation have been outstanding: after oil, monetary transfers to India by migrants rank as the second-largest source of transnational capital movement.

14 Meanwhile, PIOs launched The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) in New York in 1989, coinciding with the First Global Convention of People of Indian Origin. Initially, the GOPIO mainly fought against human rights violations suffered by people of Indian origin, in reaction to political discrimination in Fiji, Trinidad and South Africa. For this purpose, the GOPIO created a Human Rights Council that has been actively engaged since that time in monitoring the human rights situation of PIOs and NRIs. In subsequent years, the GOPIO brought other priorities to the fore, targeting the financial and professional resources of the Indian diaspora. The organisation has been holding a major yearly meeting in Delhi since 2003, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Overseas Indians Meeting). The 2006 meeting was hosted by the President of India in recognition of the important role that the Indian diaspora plays nationally and internationally and its involvement in the Indian economy (see Perez, 2005).

15 One of the most interesting aspects of India's diaspora is that while India's cultural background is being reframed, this is having an impact on various western metropolises like New York, Boston, London and Lisbon.[11] Ballard has therefore suggested that the young South Asian generation in the West should be viewed as "skilled cultural navigators", people who move comfortably between their home culture and the wider society, just as bilingual people switch easily between languages (Ballard, 1994).

16 At the same time that Indian religious practices, mainly Hinduism and Buddhism, were attracting Europeans to spiritual ashrams in India, these practices were establishing themselves in Europe, drawing an increasing number of devotees. The phenomenon in Portugal provides a significant illustration of the penetration of Indian culture and its reverberations in another society. The cult of Our Lady of Fatima is by far the most important in Portuguese religious life, and in recent years the Catholic Church has tried to make it ecumenical in order to accommodate the country's various immigrant groups. The Hindu community incorporated it into the Hindu calendar (being perhaps a repository for the worship of *Mata*, the Mother Goddess), and many Hindus go on a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima since it has become part of the sanctuary's annual religious calendar.

17 In addition to these characteristics, these populations bring with them cultures that are highly developed and historically resilient, not eroded by contact with Western cultures (see Thompson, 2002: 412). Cultural adaptation and preservation were largely made possible by manageable communication and information technology,[12] leading to the construction of what Thompson has labelled a "virtual community" *(ibid.)*.[13] Indeed, although they are geographically dispersed, often across five continents, and are therefore never able to meet the members of their "imagined community", they can participate in a shared culture and experience a sense of cultural belonging.

18 In the case of the Internet, because of the lack of restrictions and the fluid nature of the system, the image of the nation is transient and ephemeral. Fresh new voices appear more easily than in any other form of mediated communication, and this provides a feeling of empowerment. From this perspective, the Internet would seem to offer a positive contribution to the development

of a democratic public sphere (Thompson, 2002: 411). As Mitra has put it: "Everyone has a 'voice' in this space. The Internet space is indeed a cacophony of voices, all of whom feel empowered. Gaining consent becomes unimportant in the electronic space because the traditional centres disappear on the Internet" (Mitra, 1997: 73).

19 By the early 1990s, the growing economic power of NRIs was heralding the arrival of a new culture industry, in other words, the mainstream Indian film industry known as Bollywood, about which Rajadhyaksha said: "Today […] the term comes with its own narrative, one that we could perhaps call technonostalgia, and is clearly no longer restricted solely to the cinema but informs a range of products and practices" (Rajadhyaksha, 2008: 25).[14]

20 On May 10th 1998, at a national conference on "Challenges before Indian Cinema", former Information & Broadcasting Minister Sushma Swaraj declared that she would soon pass a government order attributing "industry status" to the film industry in India. Like any political decision, it had cultural and social consequences; as subsequent history would further demonstrate, what was at stake in this case was the definition of "Indianess". As Mazzarella aptly expressed it:

> As the geographical polarity of the Cold War receded, as foreign brands streamed into Indian spaces of commerce, and as new media—first transnational satellite TV and then the Internet—shifted the contexts of local imaginaries, the mid-to-late 1990s was a time of heightened anxiety about the meaning and value of "Indianess" vis-à-vis a global field (Mazzarella, 2003: 34).

Indianess has indeed become a matter of cultural and political definition and production in a cosmopolitan world, to an extent that led Gita Mehta to remark that as the pace of India's exchanges with the outside world increased, there was a growing demand both inside India and abroad for some comprehensible definition of what India actually is (Mehta, 1997: 163, in Mazzarella, 2003).

21 By analysing the connection between the Indian diaspora and Bollywood cinema, I will try to show how some dimensions of cosmopolitan subjectivity express themselves in institutional forms, both nationally and transnationally. By the same token, a less traditional approach to these institutions might recognise the role that non-state actors play in world affairs—actors in international civil society and actors committed to globally oriented 'corporate social responsibility' as corporate global citizens (see Dower, 2010: 18). In this regard, the word "citizen" would really be a placeholder for more general ideas like cosmopolitanism itself. I believe that the study of Bollywood's impact on a specific group or community offers an ethnographically significant insight into the cultural politics of cosmopolitanism (see Perez, 2011).

Culture and cosmopolitanism. The cultural consumption of Indian culture

22 Appadurai and Breckenridge defined "public culture" as "the space between domestic life and the nation-state, where different social groups […] constitute their identities by their experience of mass-culture forms mediated in relation to the practices of everyday life" (1995: 4-5). This notion was based on globalisation in general and India's modernisation in particular. Furthermore, the link between consumption and the Indian diaspora served as the basis of Pnina Werbner's arguments in favour of naming the Indian diaspora the "diaspora of cultural consumption" (Werbner, 2002).[15]

23 Up until now, the concept of "public culture" has inspired a great deal of literature (including a journal that bears the same name), but this falls outside the scope of this article. For my present purposes, I would like to refer to the book edited by Dwyer and Pinney on the consumption of public culture in India (Dwyer and Pinney, 2003). Its essays are mainly on film and mass media, exploring the connection between pleasure and nation-construction in India (for illustrations of this and other topics discussed in my paper, please see the pictures at the end). A thoughtful reading of the essays allows us to "re-dimension" the notion of political and cultural cosmopolitanism[16]—and shatter conventional notions of culture and cultural politics.[17] In the introduction to the volume, Dwyer and Pinney describe Indian popular culture as a

"citational praxis", a definition which is not far from what Homi Bhabha has called "vernacular cosmopolitanism" ([1994] 2005: 48)

24 In the case of India, cinema and the media have been central to the study of "the rise of the mall and shopping culture and consumerism" (Dwyer, 2007: 229), mainly targeting the middle class. This consumerism of cultural and non-cultural products is stimulated by other media, from newspapers to websites, also contributing to the rise of celebrity and tabloid culture *(ibid.)*.

25 Rachel Dwyer suggests that there is a two-way interaction between films and society:

> In the last decade, the position of India within the world and global trends in consumerist habits and culture have shifted from fantasies to real possibilities and this is clear in recent films […], full of frothy fun, consumerist fantasies of travel, clothes and lifestyle that can be enjoyed by the gym-toned global Indian youth who moves freely around the world (Dwyer, 2007: 229-230).[18]

26 Interestingly, Bollywood cinema sets up a divide between the middle-class and the Indian bourgeoisie, whose (hegemonic) notion of culture is transmitted through academies, universities and institutes, and whose taste strikingly contrasts with the taste of the middle-class, which Ashis Nandy has criticized mercilessly in the following terms in relation to the consumption of Bollywood cinema:

> An average, "normal", Bombay film has to be, to the extent possible, everything to everyone. It has to cut across the myriad ethnicities and lifestyles of India and even of the world that impinges on India. […] Studying popular film is studying Indian modernity at its rawest, its crudities laid bare by the fate of traditions in contemporary life and arts. Above all, it is studying caricatures of ourselves (Nandy, 1998: 7).

27 Graham Huggan has addressed the global commodification of cultural difference and the booming of what he has called the "alterity industry", as a means of analysing the sociological dimensions of postcolonial studies, in particular the production and consumption of postcolonial writings (Huggan, 2001: VII), the commodification of the field of postcolonialism as an object of metropolitan consumption (*ibid.*: IX)—that is, the consumption of what he further called "the post-colonial exotic". Huggan abandoned the conventional definition of exoticism as "an aestheticising process through which the cultural other is translated, relayed back through the familiar" *(ibid.)*; instead he assumed that "in a postcolonial context, exoticism is effectively *repoliticised*, redeployed both to unsettle metropolitan expectations of cultural otherness and to effect a grounded critique of differential relations of power" (*ibid.*: IX-X; italics in the text).

28 Huggan's more emblematic focus is on what he calls *Consuming India,* about which he states that:

> Perhaps India itself has been transformed through this general process into a consumable. Whatever its status—consumer or consumed—India is currently very much in fashion; and several of its best-known writers, most of them living in the diaspora, have become minor metropolitan celebrities, late twentieth-century household names, exponents of the latest literary craze—the new "Indo-chic"[19] (Huggan, 2001: 59).

We could extend Huggan's field of research to a broader and more diverse cosmopolitan consumption of India, shifting the angle of analysis in order to encompass a more complex system of power relations. In fact, the modern desire for Indian culture reflected in food, dress, music, cinema, literature and yoga, breaks down cultural isolation and weaves a cosmopolitan intra-social and intra-communal web into the contemporary world landscape that would be hard to achieve under other circumstances. Furthermore, it provides a sense of territoriality, especially for younger generations that have never been to India, although for ritual purposes they have to cope with tradition, orthodoxy, and arranged marriages, often with unknown grooms, when the European matrimonial market is insufficient.[20]

29 In another paper I argued that "whatever happens in the Diaspora affects India" (Perez, 2005). My aim here is to analyse the extent to which the Indian diaspora has had an impact on Western patterns of cultural consumption, by creating a new trend of cosmopolitism that integrates the West and the diaspora itself. Let us leave Huggan's literary field—though this field continues to influence me strongly—and move on to Indian cinema. Although the literature by Indian

writers in the diaspora has been gaining academic and public recognition, cinema reaches a much larger audience and carries a set of meanings that will enable me to develop my argument.

30 Popular Indian Hindi cinema has been trivialised as "Bollywood", a name that many in the industry consider derogatory, because it was coined in reference to Hollywood.[21] Moreover, the Indian musical predates the Hollywood musical, a specific genre that originally developed as an antidote to the Great Depression of 1929. The Indian musical grew independently out of its own cultural roots (see Shede, 2006). Despite this, the term Bollywood has gained unprecedented global currency in recent years. Indian popular culture is identified with this term all over the world, as it heralds a new era for Hindi cinema.[22] Madhav Prasad has suggested that as a result of this, the embracing of this name in recent years signals the opposite of what it stood for in the 1990s, this is, a variation that sees Hindi cinema not as a *derivative of* but as an *alternative to* Hollywood (Prasad, 2003).

31 Bollywood consists not only of films but of the range of products intrinsically linked to every Bollywood film: music, dances and DVDs, which connect India and the diaspora in a loop that is, on the whole—and along with IT and outsourcing—emblematic of India.[23] In reality, the Indian film industry produces more films than any other country in the world, averaging over 1000 features a year, a quarter of which are Bollywood films.

32 The word Bollywood has been extensively analysed and criticised. Here I will only mention Madhava Prasad's article "This thing called Bollywood", which raises important questions about the relation between Bollywood and the media, and points out that Bollywood is a signifier for social and cultural transformations that extend well beyond cinema itself.[24] As he explains: "They [Bollywood films] have figured prominently in the emerging new culture of India […]. They have produced another variation of nationalist ideology of tradition and modernity, and most interestingly, they have relocated what we might call the seismic centre of Indian national identity somewhere in Anglo-America" (Prasad, 2003).

33 Bollywood films—combining life stories, (melo)drama, music, dance and sound effects—have been described as *masala*,[25] which means a mixture of Indian spices. In this case, it means a combination, on celluloid, of nineteenth-century Parsi plays with their song and dance numbers, Urdu poetry, Victorian melodrama, and folk theatre (see Mooij, 2006).

34 Rajadhyaksha once ironically stated that all Indian films could be divided into two categories —Bombay cinema and Satyajit Ray[26]—the former a cinema for the masses, the latter an art cinema of limited commercial appeal (see Gopal, 2011). This duality has to a great extent been supplanted by "KJo", the nickname of Bollywood director Karan Johar,[27] who, over the past decade, has led to a genuine segmentation and compartmentalisation of movie audiences. This was the principal process in what scholars have called the Bollywoodization of Hindi cinema (Rajadhyaksha, 2008), a dual process consisting of cinema's immersion in media and the cultivation of an international market. KJo's films selectively draw from the popular idiom that developed in the 1970s and continued into the 1980s under the aegis of directors like Yash Chopra, Prakash Metra and Subhash Ghai (see Gopal, 2011: 170). Therefore, what should be stressed is that a cosmopolitan web was created, linking India to the rest of the world through a common aesthetic and semiological language.

35 Most of "KJo's" films star Sha Rukh Khan (informally referred to as SRK), the "King Khan", India's most famous actor internationally, who has himself become a national institution and national brand, crafted so that young people in India and abroad can see an image on the screen that they can identify with. The government of India awarded him the Padma Sri, India's fourth-highest award, and in 2011 he was honoured with UNESCO's Pyramid con Marni award. He was the first Indian to be recognised by UNESCO for his charitable work.

36 Bollywood films frequently appear in the UK box office top-10 and are often released in the US and India simultaneously. Films set in the West feature lead characters that are not NRI, exploring the theme of the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland through stories about family and romance (see Gopal, 2011). The most typical example is *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le jayenge* ("The Brave Heart Will Take the Bride"), starring Shah Rukh Khan; it was the first major film to focus on an Indian family based in Britain and was a huge commercial success

—the film had an uninterrupted ten-year run in a Mumbai cinema until 2005, and it was one of the most successful Hindi films in both the United Kingdom and the US.

37 The importance of Bollywood cinema in the context of the large South Asian diaspora is recognised as an important cultural subject for diaspora scholars, as cinema has played a prominent role in the development of an Indian diasporic culture. Cinema is therefore the most popular and significant cultural form and commodity in the transnational Indian cultural and political economy. As Desai explains:

> South Asian diasporic identities are centrally configured and contested through cinema, its production and consumption. […] While South Asian media are consumed by many parts of the South Asian diaspora, the production of South Asian diasporic media is centred in the West, specifically in the United States, Canada and Britain […] South Asian diasporic cinema is a developing cinema that negotiates the dominant discourses, politics and economies of multiple locations (Desai, 2005: 373).

38 Let us now consider the following facts: Amitabh Bachchan, who was voted the greatest star of stage and screen in a BBC online poll and has been immortalised in wax at Madame Tussaud's Museum in London, ran for the Congress Party in national elections and won a seat in the Indian Parliament[28]; his daughter-in-law, Aishwarya Rai made the cover of *Time* magazine, and even taught Oprah Winfrey and her viewers how to put on a sari; The Simpsons ended their trip to India with a dance set to a Hindi film song; Bollywood films sold more tickets in the United Kingdom than English-language films; Bollywood stars advertise trendy Western food and fashion bands; these stars also campaign on behalf of international humanitarian foundations; in the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* ("Overseas Indian Meeting") celebrated annually in the Diaspora, Bollywood stars have replaced Indian diplomats and politicians, and have been much more successful at attracting enthusiastic audiences of NRIs, PIOs and Westerners (Kavoori and Punathambekar, 2008).

39 To this we could add more data from Europe: in 2001-2002 the big-budget musical Bombay Dreams opened in London; the department store Selfridges transformed its basement into a Bollywood set; the Victoria and Albert Museum curated a special exhibition dedicated to Hindi Cinema's visual culture focusing on advertising and song picturisation, and the British Film Institute toured a series of films through various regions of the UK under the title "Imagine Asia". More recently, Shah Rukh Khan has hosted the Indian Oscars and initiated a polemic on gender by claiming that his female co-stars would come first in his films' credits (*Times of India*, varia, 2013).[29]

40 As Kavoori and Punathambekar have put it, facts such as these are interesting not only because they serve as useful starting points for considering Bollywood's interactions with the rest of the world over the past decade, but more importantly, they signal that as Bollywood emergences as a space for cultural production and for the expression of what is now decidedly global, this entails categories such as *nation, public, culture, modernity, identity and politics*, and challenges our assumptions and our understanding of the relationships between these categories (Kavoori and Punathambekar, 2008).[30]

41 It is worth mentioning that Bollywood is putting India on the world map, as art-cinema did much earlier starting with Satyajit Ray, and more recently thanks to Bengali director Aparna Sen, Buddhadeb Dasgupta (whose *Uttara* earned him the Special Director's Award in Venice), Jabbar Patel, Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalakrishna, who have received recognition at A-list festivals (such as Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Rotterdam). Not to mention internationally known NRI directors such as Mira Nair *(Salaam Bombay, Monsoon Wedding)* or Deepa Mehta *(Fire, Earth and Water, Midnight's Children)*.[31]

42 This further highlights the potential for Indian cinema to reach a global audience, and reinforces changing perceptions of India—a fact that Academy Awarded-winning director Shekhar Kapur (director of *Bandit Queen, Elizabeth* and *The Golden Age*) aptly summed up in his now-famous statement that Bollywood will determine global entertainment in the 21st century.

43 In "The Cinema after Babel. Language, Difference, Power", Ella Shohat argued that: "Hollywood especially came to incarnate a linguistic hubris bred of empire. Presuming to

speak for others in its native idiom, Hollywood proposed to tell the story of other nations not only to Americans, but also to other nations themselves, and always in English" (Shohat, 2006: 109). Taking Shoat's statement as a point of reflection, we could suggest that Bollywood proposes to tell the story of India not just to Indians, but to other nations as well. Provided that we do not limit ourselves to conceptualising cosmopolitanism only at a textual level, and that we take fieldwork as a key foundation on which relevant theories can be formulated, thus breaking with a certain predisposition in anthropology to abandon the field in favour of cosmopolitan themes, and giving precedence to the context over the text. "Far from rendering ethnography irrelevant or impotent, we should recognize that it offers us the basis for a reactivation of the critical force of our discipline as a locally rooted, globally minded, and politically productive project of understanding" (Mazzarella, 2003: 61).

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44 Am I offering a persuasive answer to my opening question about whether "cosmopolitanism" offers something innovative, different from previous conceptualisations in anthropology?[32] Perhaps not; however, by treating the consumption of Indian cinema both by the Indian diaspora in the West and by Westerners themselves as a form of cosmopolitism, I feel that I am bringing an old anthropological agenda to a close, that in which diaspora overlapped with displacement, social and linguistic minorities, Western cultural hegemony, or even what might be simply characterised as otherness. Thus a new agenda opens, in which the analysis of human diversity no longer implies a series of binary options, and which sheds new light on India's growing influence on mainstream culture, "threatening the perceived pre-eminence of Western popular culture" (Turner, 2006).

1. An advertisement of Vogue India (January 2008) highligting the secrets of Gauri Khan, an interior designer and film producer married to the "King", Shahrukh Khan (Connaught Place, Delhi).
2. Hrithik Roshan, a Bollywood actor painted on a wall of the Restaurant Mirsh Massala, with Gandhi and mirsh ("peper") (Ahmedabad, India).
3. Film advertisement in a street of Diu, India.
4. Sharuhkh Khan, one of the most famous Bollywood stars, advertising Pepsi, Arjuna, Goa.
5. A poster of Neel Kamal ("Blue Lotus"), a 1968 Hindi film, staring the actress Waheeda Rehman and the actors Ram and Manoj Kumar.
6. Painting of Raj Kapoor (1924-1988), an Indian actor, producer and director (Restaurant Mirsh Massala, Chandkheda, India).

Photos by Rosa Maria Perez.

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Notes

1 In the previous year, 2006, Domna C. Stanton entitled her presidential address to the Modern Language Association of America "On Rooted Cosmopolitanism", evoking the distinction between cosmopolitanism and citizenship.

2 The idea of a "global citizen" in contemporary world must be clearly specified: "What is it to *be* a global citizen? Alongside the policy prescriptions, political stances and institutional arrangements which are expressive of cosmopolitanism, there are individual existential dimensions and ethical commitments which constitute the cosmopolitan identity and motivate the cosmopolitan outlook" (HOOFT and VANDEKERCKHOVE, 2010: XVII; italics in the text).

3 Campbell applied this question to the field of politics by questioning whether cosmopolitanism is a truly unique and original approach in contrast to other normative theories of international relations (CAMPBELL, 2010).

4 Gould addressed the interrelations between cosmopolitanism in ethics and in democratic theory and argued that people possess capacities for self-transformation, which can assume individual or socio-cultural forms; hence, cosmopolitanism entails more than people's abstract equality (GOULD, 2010).

5 See also POLLOCK, 1998.

6 George goes even further by regarding cosmopolitanism as a mere fact of human dynamism inherent in our ability to reconstitute the self in response to changes in our environment, which shows, "not an accidental survival instinct, but one of our constitutional ambivalences, a truly cosmopolitan impulse" (GEORGE, 2010: 80). However, the author raises the question: "Does such a conception militate against all efforts to conceive normative frameworks?" *(ibid.)*.

7 Rita Kothari has shown that translation is not merely a transfer of words between cultures, it is also a transfer of cultural meanings. For a systematic study of translation as a social and political process, see KOTHARI, mainly 2011.

8 Although, as George has pointed out: "it is not certain whether attitudes and comportments towards the 'other' have thereby changed. The creative potential of the self's moral impulse is yet to be exploited. Communication and the information revolution, trade, travel, technology and television have made the real the virtual, but the reality of the virtual other, the cry of the distant other, is still falling on deaf ears. Our world is now porous through and through" (GEORGE, 2010: 81).

9 As I argued in another text, the concept of diaspora was first and foremost coined from a North Atlantic perspective. The focus on the Asian diaspora forces us to incorporate a more adequate conceptual and methodological apparatus (PEREZ, 2011). As an example, I would recall Vertovec's early definition of diaspora as practices, experiences, knowledge, discourses, spaces marked by tensions of discrimination and exclusion, on one hand, and identification with broader cultural, national and religious entities on the other (VERTOVEC, 1999), therefore reproducing an early discourse on diaspora that stresses displacement, dislocation, trauma, and adaptation impasses.

10 The Act provides a definition of *emigration* that is worth quoting: " 'Emigrate' and 'Emigration' mean the departure out of India of any person with a view to taking up any employment (whether or not under an agreement or other arrangements to take up such employment, and with or without the assistance of a recruiting agent or employer) in any country or place outside India."

11 As in any process of social identification, group identity (which in its essence is relational and not permanent) imposes itself on individual identity, and the processes adopted depend on the context and on the relationship between the different groups in the diaspora (Hindus, Muslims, Christians) and the respective European country. Strategies of adaptation are complex and ambivalent, and are linked both to the old country and to the new one. Therefore, in some situations a person can be primarily Indian, in others Gujarati, Bengali, and Tamil, Catholic, Buddhist, or a doctor, lawyer, tailor, mason, etc.

12 There is a vast literature on each of the information and of communication in their relation with the Indian diaspora in the world (see PEREZ, 2011). For an interesting study of Indian advertising, see MAZZARELLA, 2003.

13 It is worth quoting Thompson: "Benedict Anderson argued that the 'imagined community' of the nation in the modern secular nation-state displaced not only dynastic empires but also ancient religious communities, which had been imagined through sacred scriptures and narratives. It has since been argued

that, more than print media, it is visual media that have translated the idea of the nation-state into a vocabulary of Indianess in South Asia and abroad" (THOMPSON, 2002: 414).

14 Mazzarella drew our attention to the extent to which the events that took place after 1991—the year the Indian government enacted a series of reforms—resulted in the flooding of shop shelves with foreign brands. In his words: "billboards all over India cities and towns, newly launched satellite-television channels, and the print media positively exploded with appeals to the desire to identify with a hotchpotch of brands that placed Philips alongside Videocon, Levi's alongside Sunnex" (MAZZARELLA, 2003: 36). Based on my own knowledge of India, I would suggest that this tendency reached its apex at the turn of the 21st century.

15 Werbner argued that South Asian trans-ethnicity mobilises different national affiliations and religious identities; British South Asians in their films and novels "celebrate this shared cross-ethnic sensibility, irrespective of religion and national origin" (WERBNER, 2002: 121). Independently of the relevance of Werbner's analysis, she groups different national affiliations and linguistic and religious identities under the label "South Asians", a reductionism found in the theses of many other scholars (see PEREZ, 2005). Moreover, they do not take account of the fact that in new socio-cultural locations "South Asians" may re-territorialise and redraft their identities.

16 See also GOKULSING and DISSANAYAKE (eds), 2009, particularly Mehta and Fazal.

17 Peter Jackson called our attention to some unexpected conclusions he drew based on his fieldwork in the UK. Regarding the consumption of Indian culture in this country, he claimed that British consumers were more prepared to appropriate "Indian" cuisine than to wear "Indian" clothing such as *salwaar-kameez*, because clothing is, in his view, a highly charged commodity with a strong cultural significance (JACKSON, 2004). He also demonstrated the resilience of local consumption cultures, challenging the more exaggerated claims that have been made in the name of "globalisation" *(ibid.)*.

18 Young women develop their agenda through participation in broad-based youth movements (see for example the important National Hindu Students Forum, which was created in Britain in 1991 and had a strong impact on other youth Hindu forums in Europe). It spread transnationally through the Web, reconciling India's values with European education and socialisation (PEREZ, 2005).

19 The term *indo-chic*, as a sign of cultural difference that can be manipulated by the Indian subject herself, was taken, via the media, from a Padmini Mongia's paper on Arundhati Roy: "As Mongia's paper demonstrated, the publicity Roy's novel attracted, and which it continues to this day to generate, has helped place it firmly within the recent media-invented tradition of 'Indo-chic' " (HUGGAN, 2001: 67).

20 An analysis of the matrimonial page in the Sunday edition of the daily national newspaper *Times of India* offers an extremely accurate picture of this topic.

21 Rita Kotahri uses the word *Hinglish* to refer to the code-switched language of mainstream Indian cinema, which mixes Hindi and English (KOTHARI, 2011). Regarding the Indian diaspora in the world, she states that films in Hinglish speak to audiences that do not have to leave their homes to be connected to India (*ibid*.: 125).

22 It was in the late 1980s that Indian commercial cinema started being regarded as a cultural product, worthy of the attention of the Anglo-American academics, and Bollywood became a subject of discourse in the Cinema Studies, with a growing number of courses offered in Film and Media studies (see MEHTA and PANDHARIPENDE, 2010).

23 There is a large body of research on Bollywood and the diaspora, an illustration of which would exceed the scope of this article. I will therefore only single out a few authors who have continuously inspired me to regard Bollywood as more than just a film industry: Jigna Desai, Rachel Dwyer, Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Vijay Mishra, Madav Prasad, Gayatri Gopinath.

24 The referential dimension of Bollywood within India is manifested in the adoption of the term "Kollyood" for the non-Hindi cinema of Kolkata (previously Calcutta) in the east, and "Tellyood" for the (vast) production of films in Telugu in the south, or "Lollywood" for the Pakistani cinema of Lahore. In Africa, the phenomenon called Nollywood (the cinema of Nigeria) should be considered.

25 One of the more successful *masala* was *Devdas*, the most expensive film ever made in India, inspiring forty screen adaptations. It was co-financed by French producers and premiered at Cannes.

26 As I have said, this is a quite ironic and reductive view, which obscured other equally important art-cinema directors such as Guru Dutt whose *Pyaasa* (1957, *Thirsty*) and *Kaagaz Ke Phool* (1959, *Paper Flowers*) are unforgettable films in the world cinema landscape.

27 He directed films that became international references: *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (1998, Something is Happening), *Kabhi Kushi Kabhie Gham* (2001, Sometimes Happiness, Sometimes Sadness), *Kal Ho Na Ho* (2003, If Tomorrow Comes). These films became institutions in themselves and created a transnational/cosmopolitan dialogue, weakening cultural and national boundaries.

28 There is an interesting literature analysing this icon (the BigB). See particularly Bhawana Somaaya, 1999, *Amitabh Bachchan: The Legend*, Delhi, Macmillan Publishers, which was awarded various literary prizes in India; Khalid, Mohamed, 2004, *To Be or Not to Be Amitabh Bachchan*, Delhi, Saraswati. If

one googles *Amitabh Bachchan,* it is astonishing to see the number of books he has inspired, written by Indians and non-Indians. Some national facts are even more striking: once when he was hospitalised, the nation came to a standstill and people offered all kinds of gifts to wish him a speedy recovery.

29 It is worth quoting Ashish RAJADHYAKSHA: "Globalization isn't merely another word for Americanization—and the recent expansion of the Indian entertainment industry proves it. For hundreds of fans around the world, it is Bollywood […] not Hollywood that spins their screen fantasies. Bollywood, based in Mumbai, has become a global industry. India's entertainment moguls don't merely target the billion South Asians, or desis, at home: they make slick movies, songs, and TV shows for export. Attracted by a growing middle class and a more welcoming investment environment, foreign companies are flocking to Bollywood, funding films and musicians. The foreign money is already helping India's pop culture to reach even greater audiences" (2008: 17).

30 They further argue that "these fragments of a larger and more complex narrative of Bollywood's arrival on the global stage also point to rapidly changing, complex and often surprising connections within and between cultural practices and state policies, sites and modes of consumption, and networks and forms of sociality that criss-cross regional, national, and transnational boundaries and affiliations" (KAVOORI and PUNATHAMBEKAR, 2008: 21).

31 However, Desai's questions should be considered: are these films "foreign" despite North American funding? Does an "Indian" director living in Canada make national or international films? Is Monsoon Wedding a Bollywood film? (DESAI, 2005).

32 Clifford has written an inspiring text on the "mixed feelings" stimulated by cosmopolitanism (1998).

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Résumés

This paper debates the modern conceptualization of cosmopolitanism in the social sciences, grounded on the Indian diaspora in the world. Its main focus is the growing Bollywood cinema in Hindi and the role that it plays in the international consumption of the Indian culture.

Inde cosmopolite : Bollywood et les citoyens du monde

Cet article interroge le concept moderne de cosmopolitisme dans les sciences sociales, à partir de la diaspora indienne dans le monde. Son principal objet est l'essor du cinéma Bollywood chez les Hindi et le rôle qu'il joue dans la consommation culturelle indienne.

Entrées d'index

Mots-clés : Bollywood, cinéma indien, cosmopolitisme, consommation culturelle
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