

Contemporary Bollywood Dance: Analyzing It through the Interplay of Social Forces

Esha Bhattacharya Chatterjee

Department of Sociology, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India
Ph.D Scholar

Abstract- Bollywood, or the Hindi Film industry, embraces a truly enigmatic world of its own. The craze and euphoria surrounding it, not only in India but also in foreign lands, is something worth witnessing. One of the major attractions of Bollywood, which in fact distinguishes it from Hollywood, is its elaborate song-dance sequences which never fail to strike a chord with the audience. Its creation of sublime, emotional or foot-tapping escapism is simply unmatched anywhere in the world. A fact often overlooked is that, these songs and dances are intricately woven in our social fabric. It is interesting to take note of this and undertake an analysis of the same. In this article, I shall discuss about Bollywood, how the dances and songs are placed within movies, analyse the dance types, its forms in the context of social forces operating within it- 'globalization' and 'glocalization' and provide a sociological understanding of it and its changing form. Since it is not possible to discuss the entire array of dance in Bollywood, I have analysed the dances post the globalization era and after the onslaught of MTV in 1980s. I have focused mainly on those dance sequences which have won the *Filmfare Awards*¹, between year 1994 to 2013.

Index Terms- Bollywood, Dance, Culture industry, Globalization, Glocalization

I. INTRODUCTION

The Hindi film industry, or Bollywood, stands as one of the largest film industries of the world today. However, "Bollywood" as a description of popular Hindi cinema has been difficult to establish. This is because there have been intense scholarly debate on this. Although the origins of the terms are uncertain, yet some historians suggest that it was coined in the 1970s as a "parodic and cheeky echo of the North American film industry, a mimicry that is both a response and dismissal" (Gopal and Moorti: 2010). Following this line of argument, renowned actors like: Amitabh Bachchan, Ajay Devgan and directors like: Subhash Ghai view that the term "Bollywood" is demeaning and overlooks the contributions of the Indian film industry reducing it to a sub-continental clone of Hollywood. Arguing further, contemporary scholars increasingly use the term to describe that 'small slice of industry' that has gained international currency and are careful to differentiate it from the rest of the Hindi cinema. Soojata Moorti and Sangita Gopal (2010) draw on Madhav Prasad's insight that Bollywood is a name for this "new cinema coming from Bombay but also, lately, from London and Canada, which has over the ten years or so, produced a new self-image for the Indian middle classes".

However, the issue of whether the term 'Bollywood' is a pejorative or subversive description of Bombay (present Mumbai) remains unresolved.

Interestingly Bollywood is not simply about movies. In fact, movies on celluloid set the tone for events in popular Indian culture and shape the taste and ideals of beauty. Thus, in a way Hindi cinema is deeply intertwined within our social fabric. Indians adore their actors as icons so much so that their actions have a huge impact on the daily lives of Indian citizens. Therefore, it is highly significant as an Indian cultural phenomenon too. However, the features of Bollywood are not always comprehensible for everyone, especially for those who are not quite familiar with the cultures and traditions of Indian society. This is because the patterns shown are based on Indian traditions on one hand and extremely modern elements on the other.

A unique feature of our Hindi film industry is that the term "Bollywood" conjures up images of songs and dances, accompanying lithe movements of the actresses and also the actors irrespective of the genre of the movie- melodrama, action, thriller, comedy, horror and so on. In other words, it would be difficult for anyone to talk of any Hindi film without looking at or ignoring these dances or the songs incorporated in them. In fact this phenomenon has become so common and taken-for-granted that none of the Indian as well as Western scholars have ever questioned it. Along these lines, Ravi Vasudevan fundamentally defines popular Hindi films "as complex systems that include song-and-dance sequences and comedic plots" (Shresthova: 2011). Songs and dances need to be recognized as parts of an alternative narrative system that defines Hindi cinema, a "cinema of interruptions" (Shresthova: 2011). Unlike in Hollywood movies, Indian popular cinema features more narrative digressions emerged from the intermixing of Indian approaches to performance and film technology. Thus maintaining this perspective, song-and-dance sequences cannot be defined simply as haphazard digressions but are crucial for telling stories in Hindi films.

Arguing on another note, it can be said that the reason behind the popularity of songs and dances in Bollywood films is because, dance has been an integral part of Indian culture and tradition since time immemorial. While Bollywood dances have become so popular, they are gradually becoming a part of our culture, and the song-and-dance sequences depicted in the movies also heavily shape the societal structure in various ways. Therefore, Hindi films as dominant in Indian public culture or of Bollywood as a transnational phenomenon must grapple with the crucial role that song-and-dance sequence has played in such disseminations. In my article, I shall discuss Bollywood dance,

tracing its forms, evolution, changing patterns over time, identifying and situating it in the social forces, of globalization and glocalization, within which it operates (in the context of the Filmfare Award for best dance, between 1994-2013)

II. SITUATING BOLLYWOOD DANCE- ITS NATURE AND FORMS

It is very difficult to define Bollywood dance in a unilinear way. Simply put, Bollywood dance form is a special style of dance which is a mixture of numerous styles. In other words, it is a mixture of traditional Indian dance forms like: Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Bhangra, Odissi, as well as western popular dances like: bellydance, 'hip-hop', 'jazz' and even western erotic dancing.

The elaborate and often extravagant Bollywood song-dance sequences are intricately built into the theme of the films such that these sequences carry a special significance in themselves. Song-and-dance sequences are used heavily in order to connect to the audience and also used as a technique to represent various circumstances like: it can be used as a tool for story-telling; or to express love between the hero and heroine of the film and so on. Sangita Shresthova (2011) states that, technically speaking, dances in Hindi films serve certain important functions at various levels:

- They serve important narrative functions. They may give expression to otherwise concealed secrets and desires.
- They allow the heroines to undulate in wet saris in men's fantasy sequences without compromising their reputations.
- Dances enable the star-crossed lovers to waltz in dreamy duets in exotic locations far away from the public and at times difficult circumstances of their everyday lives.
- Bollywood dances also act as moments of celebration so as to escape the desperation of their everyday reality, through dances that are reminiscent of folk festivities.
- Dances may also stand in as a metaphor for sexual encounters otherwise restricted by India's norms of 'culture and decency' represented by Indian censorship policies.
- In some other cases, dancers perform a song that is only partially related to the film narrative- as a momentary boisterous release of narrative tension.

There has been much investigation about the evolution of Bollywood dance forms. Observations of Gopal and Moorti in their book "*Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance*" (2010) are interesting to note. Firstly, V.A.K. Ranga Rao and Arundhati Subramaniam gave general overviews of the historical evolution of dances in Hindi films. Secondly, Ajay Gehlawat spoke about a comparison between Hollywood musicals and Hindi film sequences to illustrate the narrative and emotional complexity of Bollywood song-dance sequence. Thirdly, Ann R. David focused on the current popularity of Bollywood dance among South Asians in UK. Fourthly, Kai-Ti Kao and Rebecca-Anne Do Rozario investigated the implications

of the "*imagined space*"² created by Hindi song-and dance sequences for diasporic audiences. Fifthly, Pallabi Chakraborty talked about the links between the Indian classical dance form of Kathak and Bollywood dance. Sixthly, Anna Morcom's ethnography explored the Bollywood dance in Tibet as a form that complicates China's approaches to multiculturalism. Thus, these studies point to the historical impact, social relevance and cultural significance of song and dance. However, even as studies are being undertaken on Bollywood dance, its nature and forms, in academia, yet the fact remains that dances in popular Indian Hindi films are still to be systematically analyzed. Their content, history, cultural influences and migration which is rich in various aspects largely remains unexplored; and my article undertakes an analysis of some of the dances of contemporary Bollywood.

A look at the historical evolution of the dance forms in Bollywood shows that initially the classical Indian dances like: *Kathak* and *Bharatnatyam* were influential in designing Bollywood dance choreography. Dance scholar Purnima Shah explains that dances, especially those considered to be classical, played an important role in the larger political movement that valued tradition. In case of *Bharatnatyam*, a major controversy concentrated on approaches to *sringagara* (which means- erotic desire) and *bhakti* (or, devotion expressed through dance) and revealed how classical dance was appropriated into Hindi film dance. Rukmini Devi Arundale (a Brahmin dancer) played a significant role in reclaiming Indian dance as part of India's national anti-colonial awakening. She encouraged their socially conservative reform- exalting, the devotional aspects and downplaying the potentially secularly erotic elements of the dance. Dance scholar Uttara Asha Coorwala explains that during early post colonial India, most hip movements were strongly discouraged and effectively edited out from the dance styles altogether. The body was repositioned to express devotion rather than erotic sensuality (Shresthova: 2011). Thus, to be culturally and socially authentic, Indian film dances had to be 'respectable'; and this 'respectability' was linked to a normative understanding of a 'respectable Indian woman'. Therefore, in order to receive the respect of the public, the dancers had to conform to a contemporary middle-class ideal of a well behaved and sexually contained female.

The Bollywood dances are, as said earlier, are a fusion of traditional and classical Indian dances with some influence of *jazz*, *hip-hop* and modern dance. Timing and rhythm, energy and sharply controlled variations that are used in almost every Bollywood film in dance are as noted below. However, choreographers of Hindi films do not incorporate each dance form in its purest form. Rather, there is often a mixture of various dances. This is what makes Bollywood dance a "*hybrid*"³ one, which will be discussed in the subsequent sections of the article.

1. **Bhangra**: it is the most widespread of Indian folk dances (originally Punjabi) worldwide and has influenced many of the popular music and dance, including Bollywood styles, more than any other folk dance. In turn, Bhangra has also been influenced by fusion with genres like: hip-hop and then incorporated into Bollywood films. Originally, Bhangra was only performed by male dancers, but these days both men and women perform it in Hindi movies and other

Bollywood stage performances elsewhere. An example can be the famous song from “Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham” (2001) picturized on Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan and Rani mukherjee- “*Say shava vhava*” where we find bhangra being performed on the same stage mixed with certain modes of contemporary styles.

2. **Chari**: It is a Rajasthani folk dance, performed by balancing a brass pot on the head and creating patterns with their hands. This is a graceful dance where women make beautiful formations. A form of this dance was performed by Madhuri Dixit in her famous song-dance sequence “*choli ke peeche kya hai*” from the 1993 movie “*Khalnayak*”.
3. **Garba**: this is primarily a female dance, although men also participate commonly. It is performed mainly at auspicious occasions and social events. Dancers usually accompany their movements with clapping and snapping their fingers, although they often carry small sticks called ‘*manjeera*’ that they strike. An instance of this can be seen in “*Dhol Baje*” from “*Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*” where Salman Khan dances to the tunes of the song accompanied by other females of the movie. Similarly, in Sanjay Leela Bansali’s movie “*Ram-Leela*” (2014) Deepika Padukone is seen dancing in this style.
4. **Kathak**: it originated in the North Indian states amongst the nomadic bards of ancient North India, known as *Kathaks*, or storytellers. It’s history goes by the fact that in the ancient Indian Temples, the Brahmin priests (or pandits) used to narrate the stories of Gods and Goddesses through dance. The performers were known as ‘*Kathakar*’ (who told stories) and the dance came to be known as ‘*kathak*’. Today many Bollywood dances showcase these dance forms. However, at times we also find this form of dance often mixed with other dance styles and presented a unique hybridized form of dance on the screen. In recent times, Madhuri Dixit has performed graceful Kathak dance in movies like: “*Devadas*” in the sing-dance sequence- “*Kahe cher cher mohe*” and “*Mar Dala*”. Moreover, the title track of the 2007 movie “*Aaja Nachle*” is more contemporary form of Bollywood dance which has steps of Kathak mixed with other forms; and this discussion will be made briefly too in the following section.
5. **Bharatnatyam**: Dating back to 1000B.C., Bharatanatyam is a classical dance from the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, practiced primarily by women. The dance is usually accompanied by Carnatic music and its inspiration comes from the sculptures of the ancient temple of Chidambaram. Many Bollywood movies showcase dances influenced by Bharatnatyam.
6. **Mujra**: is a form of dance originated by *tawaij*⁴ (courtesans) during the Mughal era which incorporated elements of the native classical Kathak dance into music such as *thumris*⁵ and *ghazals*⁶ or poems of those from other Mughal cultures such as Bahadur Shah Zafar. *Mujra* was traditionally performed at *mehfils*⁷ and in special houses called ‘*kothas*’⁸, where the performers

served as courtesans amongst Mughal royalty or wealthy patrons. *Mujra* has been depicted in Bollywood films like *Umrao Jaan* and *Devdas* or other films that show the past Mughal rule and its culture. Often *mujra* dances are used in Bollywood movies especially in the romantic scenes to express love and woman.

7. **Belly-dance**: it is a Western-coined name for "solo, improvised dances based on torso articulation. It originated in the Middle East, “*Raqs sharqi*”. It is something of a misnomer, as every part of the body is involved in the dance; the most featured body part is usually the hips. *Raqs sharqi* (literally "eastern/oriental dancing") is the style more familiar to Westerners, performed in restaurants and cabarets around the world. Belly dance takes many different forms depending on the country and region, both in costume and dance style, and new styles have evolved in the West as its popularity has spread globally. In Bollywood, belly-dance is often used in item numbers which are performed by women in scintillating postures and dresses. Like: “*Sheila ki Jawaani*” from “*Tees Maar Khan*”; “*Cheekni Chameli*” from “*Agneepath*”.
8. **Hip-hop dance**: refers to street dance styles primarily performed to hip-hop music or that have evolved as part of hip-hop culture. Bollywood movies like: *ABCD2* show western dance forms of different styles.
9. **Contemporary dance style**- is a popular form of dance which developed during the middle portion of the twentieth century and has become popular across the world now. This dance style is marked by an absence of ‘narrative art’ as seen in the classical forms, involves multiple and simultaneous actions, creative freedom and ‘independence’ in dance and unpredictable changes in rhythm, speed, and direction.
10. **Freestyle dancing**- Is the most common type of dance practiced today by the Bollywood choreographers. It is a form of dance improvisation which is understood as a constantly creating movement. The benefit of dance improvisation is that it creates new movement and also makes the body free from habitual movements. One of the greatest examples is that of popular dancer and singer Michael Jackson who combined improvisation in both of those definitions.

In the subsequent sections, we shall see how and in what ways choreographers of Hindi cinema incorporate the above mentioned dance forms and its consequent implication.

III. GLOBAL BOLLYWOOD DANCE

Indian economy has witnessed major policy changes in early 1990s. The new economic reform, popularly known as, *Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization* (LPG model) was aimed at making the Indian economy the fastest growing economy and globally competitive. Consequently, there were a series of reforms undertaken with respect to industrial sector, trade as well as financial sector to make the Indian economy more efficient. It also marks the advent of the real integration of the Indian economy into the global arena, in every way- socially, culturally, politically and economically. This period of economic

transition has had a tremendous impact on the overall economic development of almost all major sectors of the economy, and its effects over the last decade can hardly be overlooked. The entertainment industry is one of the areas where the change is very much evident. It is in this context that globalization of Bollywood dance needs to be looked at. In fact, the process in which Bollywood dances became globalized is an interesting feature to take note of. Globalization of Bollywood dances take place when dance companies go on tour, or students go abroad or travel, especially since the rise and spread of the Internet. It may also happen that dancers may adopt movements and gestures from foreign dances, may train themselves completely in various styles and some will even work to adopt the cultural behaviours associated with a dance style. Further, it also may be the case that some dancers might add some of their own styles to it in order to 'make it their own'. Thus, Bollywood dance today readily incorporate different forms such as: jazz, street dance and hip-hop phrases, blend them together with their melodramatic facial expressions and extensive use of mime to convey the meanings in the song. However an important point needs to be made here. The issue of whether the style can maintain its authenticity arises once the dance forms become globalized. This, in turn, raises the question of what it means to be 'culturally authentic' in the first place, as well as whether or not a style of dance can truly be possessed by a person or people. All of these questions become even more complex when looking at Bollywood dance, a form that in its "original" state was located in India and primarily based on the classical Indian dance forms like: Kathak, Bharatanatyam and so on and later on went on to become a hybrid of elements of both Eastern and Western dance.

Looking at the dance sequences, which have won the Best Filmfare Choreography award during 1994-2013, in "Tu Cheez Bari hai Mast Mast" from "Mohra" (1994); "Rangeela re" from the film "Rangeela" (1995); "Ek Pal Ka Jeena" from "Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai" (2000); "Idhar Chala Main Udhar Chala" from "Koi Mil gaya" (2003) "Main Aisa Kyoon Hoon" from "Lakshya" (2004); "Kaisi Paheli Hai Yeh" from "Parineeta" (2005); "Sheila Ki Jawani" from "Tees Mar Khan" (2010); "Senorita" from "Zinadgi Na Milegi Dobara" (2011); "Aunty Ji" from "Ek Main Hoon Aur Ek Tu" (2012); we clearly see that the dance forms noted are western. Moreover, it is also interesting to note that in the above mentioned songs, the choreographers did not just incorporate any one form of dance; rather, the dances like: "Senorita", "Ek Pal Ka Jeena", "Aunty Ji", "Main Aisa Kyoon Hoon", "Tu Cheez Bari Hai Mast Mast", involve dances that are a combination of all the western forms of dance like: hip-hop dance styles, freestyle dance, contemporary dance, belly dance and, often in some, a 'refined' form of cabaret dance. In case of the dance-song sequence "Kaisi Paheli hai yeh" from "Parineeta" (2005), a refined form of seductive cabaret dance, is pictured in the 19th century Bengal. Hence, the gestures, movements and postures of the dancer, Rekha, are typical of a cabaret dancer who dances in a provocative way to attract the male audience. Another special mention should be made about "Main Aisa Kyoon Hoon", performed by the Indian talented actor-dancer, Hrithik Roshan, which won both the Filmfare award as well as the National award for Best choreography in the year 2005. The gestures and movements of body and hand reflect the jazz-funk dance, combined with freestyle and contemporary

dance forms. It changed the future course of dance and further established the already renowned Hrithik Roshan as a versatile and brilliant dancer, who can learn and perform almost all the western styles in a prodigious manner. Prior to this, his dance styles were also excellent in "Ek Pal Ka Jeena", from his debut movie "Kaho Na Pyaar Hai"(2000) and later on "Idhar Chala Mein Udhar Chala" from "Koi Mil Gaya" (2003), which in fact established him as one of the best dancers of Bollywood, soon after his first film. This dance had crisp and stylish hip-hop and jazz-funk movements combined to produce a truly global dance.

IV. "GLOCALIZED" AND "HYBRID" NATURE OF BOLLYWOOD DANCE

The term 'glocalization' is a portmanteau of 'globalization' and 'localization'. According to Roland Robertson, glocalization is the outcome of local conditions towards global pressures. It refers to the simultaneity or the co-presence of both. Glocalization has been defined as adaptation of a product to international markets by modifying it to fit in the local culture (Khondker: 2004).

A look at the most popular dances between 1994 and 2013 show that although many are products of Western influence, yet there are many dances which are 'glocalized', i.e. they combine global nature and simultaneously incorporate Indian elements in order to make it indigeneous. This makes Bollywood dance styles even more appealing and acceptable to the Indian masses. Such instances can be found in: "Sheher ki ladki" from "Rakshak" (1996); "Woh Ladki Hai Kahaan" from "Dil Chahta Hai" (2001); "Beedi Jalaile" from "Omkaara" (2006); "Pappu Can't Dance" from "Jaane Tu ya Jaane Na" (2008). These dances incorporate elements of both the cultures and showcase a unique form of 'Bollywood dance'.

Another issue with Bollywood dance is the fact that, while its origins lie in hybridization it also tends to make some form of an exaggerated mockery of classical and traditional Indian dance forms. Along the same line, writer Drid Williams (2009) discusses his strong disgust toward the dance style in an article that connects Bollywood dance to post-modern dance:

"Bollywood's originator and managers are aware of the rules of Indian aesthetics... Indian dancing and the many traditions that over the centuries produced India's dance forms... Bollywood's pundits undoubtedly know- or at least know about- such things, but they have chosen rampant commercialism and consumerism with its inherent tastelessness instead."

The significant facets of Bollywood dances cannot be analyzed solely by looking at the dance moves. There are other related factors, which play vital role in the making of a dance-song sequence, which need to be taken account of. Clothing, lyrics, and place of performance are elements which cannot be ignored to have a holistic view of a particular dance. Therefore, in this light, I shall discuss about these factors. Let's look at how a Bollywood dance which portrays, simultaneously, the co-existence of both global and local cultures, also takes a 'hybridized' form. **Firstly**, if we consider glocalization of dance, then we find that "Pappu can't dance", "Tu Cheez Bari Hai Mast Mast" and "Beedi Jalaile" as having both Indian and Western styles together to strike a chord with the audience. For instance, the dance sequence, from the movie "Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na"

“*Pappu can't dance*”, opens with two girls spreading their arms across and performing a Kathak style of dance with the background lyrics “*tirikiti dha na.. tiri kiti dha.. digi na na.. let's dance*” (the former being a variation of the *bol*⁹ of Kathak.) Soon after this we find the young boys and girls dancing in western styles like: freestyle and contemporary styles. Similarly, in “*Beedi Jalaile*” and “*Chor Bazari*” we find that local dances like: *ghoomar*, *bhangra* or other folk dances of India being performed side-by-side with freestyle and contemporary forms of western dance. For example, “*Beedi Jalaile*” is a famous ‘item number’¹⁰ where the choreographer Ganesh Acharya instructed the actress Bipasha Basu to dance in a provocative and western style of moving her hips and waist, showing off her midriff. At the same time, the choreographer also uses the western idea of a form of cabaret number. Hence, while some movements are of street dance, some are *Indianised* ones. Another note can be made of “*Tu cheez bari hai mast mast*” where we find that the heroine dancing in both western and Indian styles. The dance mainly showcases belly dancing, performed by the heroine Raveena Tandon and other forms of waist and muscular movements performed by the actor Akshay Kumar. Yet interestingly at times, the song is interspersed with the Indian classical *raag* lyrics “*pa ni sa pa ni sa... dha dha ni ni ni.. pa pa pa ga ga ga...*” We find the heroine dancing again in Kathak and Bharatnatyam in certain portions of the song. The same feature can be noted in “*Chor bazaari*” too where we see that *bhangra*, *ghoomar* and other forms of folk dances along with some forms of contemporary dances. Apart from the dance styles, we find that the costumes, lyrics and location also show the operation of the concept of glocalization. **Secondly**, another aspect of glocalization can be explored through an analysis of “*Kaisi Yeh Paheli*” from “*Parineeta*” and “*Ek Pal ka Jeena*” from “*Kal Ho Na Ho*”. In case of the former dance, we see that the concept and ambience reflecting western culture. For example: the former song-dance is set in a posh restaurant-cum-bar of Kolkata (India) where the lady (Rekha) sings intermittently in English “*la la la la.. zu zu zu..*” amidst Hindi lyrics. Such an idea of a woman singing in a restaurant is not something indigenous in nature, for India; rather this culture has been influenced by the western music. Moreover, simultaneously the attire worn by Rekha is ethnic (a *saree*); while the tune of the song has pop and Indian tone mixed. This is done strategically to meet the needs and suit to the taste of the Indian audience, especially the Bengali audience. Hence, an Indo-western atmosphere is intended to create in the 19th century Bengal, during which time the movie had been set. Similarly, in “*Ek Pal Ka Jeena*”, the form of dance performed by Raj (played by Hrithik Roshan) is a combination of hip-hop and *jazz funk*. The smart and fine hand, chest, and limb movement has been testimony to this fact. This dance sequence has been choreographed in a very crisp and stylish way by many times Filmfare award winner of choreography, Farah Khan. The song-dance sequence opens in a disco bar named ‘*Club Indiana*’ (in New Zealand), where some scantily clad blonde girls, in short skirt, short tops and so on, and dancing, moving their waist and hip. At the same time, the camera moves towards the entry of the disco, where we see a young ‘sober looking’ Indian girl, Sonia (the heroine, played by Indian actress, Ameesha Patel) wearing a cream-coloured *salwar kameez*¹¹, enters this bar or lounge along with her NRI cousin, who is in a western attire of jeans and top.

Sonia’s costume shows a parallel between tradition and modernity. It makes evident the touch of Indianness even in a distant disco theque of New Zealand. This touch of Indianness and the indigenous tradition is further reinforced by the fact that the name of the location is *Club Indiana*. Thus, a parallel is drawn between the two cultures in a subtle way. This can be called as a manifestation of glocalization.

While discussing about glocalization in Bollywood dance, a special mention needs to be mentioned of the the film “*Aaja Nachle*” (2007), a dance-drama starring renowned and graceful Bollywood heroine and trained *Kathak* dancer Madhuri Dixit. The movie is one of the best examples which incorporates both global and local elements. The movie starts with an English song with western dance, being performed by Madhuri (aka *Dia*). The song-dance sequence “*Dance with me*” is a catchy number with hip-hop and jazz-funk styles of dance, where she is wearing a grey leggings and skin-fit top with jacket. She dances in an energetic way with all moves and postures of jazz, hip-hop and contemporary styles. However, it is interesting to note that the other dance sequences in the movie, like: “*ore piya..*” “*Aaja Nachle*”, “*Show me ur jalwa*”, *Is Pal*” are based on completely Indian forms of dance. For instance, “*Ore Piya*” is based on Kathak and Bharatnatyam dance and then combines different forms of folk dances of India like: *ghoomar* and so on. “*Aaja Nachle*” begins with the Odissi and *natarajan* style of dance. The costumes (a black and blue *zardousi*¹² work *lehenga*¹³), gestures and body movements are all a reflection of Indian culture. Hence, we find that the same movie portrays a global culture as well as a local culture and thus making it an example of *glocalization*.

V. SOCIOLOGICALLY VIEWING CONTEMPORARY BOLLYWOOD DANCE

Studying Bollywood dance, its nature and forms, reveals that it is a part of *popular culture*. It is a product which conveys expressions and identity that are frequently encountered or widely accepted, commonly liked or approved, and characteristic of a particular society at a given time. Furthermore, situating it within a sociological context, Bollywood dance can be viewed within the framework of the theory of ‘culture industry’ of Adorno and Horkheimer, who belonged to the Frankfurt School. They have argued that popular culture is similar to a factory producing standardized cultural goods — films, radio programmes, magazines, etc. — that are used to manipulate mass society into passivity (Ritzer: 1988). Consumption of the easy pleasures of popular culture, made available by the mass communications media, makes people docile and content, no matter how difficult their economic circumstances. They argue that today culture is infecting everything with sameness. Film, studio and magazines form a system. Each branch of culture is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together. These arguments can be applied to Bollywood dance, with respect to its globalizing tendencies, of recent times and its various related aspects. Drawing a parallel between “culture industry” and Bollywood dance, it can be said that the latter has also turned into a business which caters not just to one section of the population but operates on a global platform. This can be felt by the popularity of Bollywood dance in U.S. and U.K (Kao: 2008;

Shrestha:2011). It is possible because of the process of assimilation whereby Bollywood choreographers use dance styles of West and incorporate them in their own ways. This takes two forms. *Firstly*, a dance can be completely a Western type, with hip-hop or freestyle or contemporary dancing. *Secondly*, sometimes the choreographers may use dance forms of different styles, including use of some *desi* version and mixing it with Western dance, thereby and creating a 'hybridized' dance. This is beneficial and advantageous for the production houses of Bollywood. Again, this is also because of the emerging *consumer culture*¹⁴ not only in the new economy but also in the realm of 'culture'. The film directors, producers and the choreographers work together to create a 'culture' that will be appealing to the modern westernized Indian middle class. Therefore, the standardized forms of Bollywood dances are now derived from the needs of the consumers. There is the popularity, among millions, of both the forms and this leads to its consequent reproduction, which inevitably leads to the use of standard 'products' to meet the same needs at countless locations. This is felt by the choreographers too, when they have to formulate a dance sequence. They have to create a dance which will be 'acceptable' by the Indian audience, in accordance with their cultural traits of Indian society. It can be said that the media representation depicts India's shifting relation with the world economy, but simultaneously is bound to retain its 'Indianness' in moments of dynamic hybridity. Hence, we find that Bollywood film images have begun to show a productive hybrid relation between the local and global, and have begun to help rework a national identity within newly formed cultural parameters. Audiences read, and respond anxiously, ironically, acceptingly, resisting, or even with pleasure, to the signs of the global featured in Bollywood films. These signs include the new styles of clothing, music, dance, and cinematography, as well as the diverse, worldwide settings of the films.

This argument is well captured by Ann R. David in his article "*Beyond the silver screen: Bollywood and Filmi Dance in UK*" (2007). He points out a statement made by acclaimed choreographer Saroj Khan during an interview in a BBC World Documentary, about a shift in the form of dance being showed in movies- from the traditional classical styles towards a more entertaining, more sensual form of dance. She commented in an interview on 22 October 2003 in a BBC world documentary that: "*Film dances must entertain audiences of many thousands at a time. Film dances must please everyone. You cannot have a dancer standing stiffly and moving her neck, because audiences know nothing about classical dance forms- Kathak and Bharatnatyam.... They see Mohini's sexy dance number, 'Ek do tin' [Madhuri dixit dancing in Tezaab (1988)] and the film is a hit... people want this.. they want these tantalizing moments...*" [David: 2007]

VI. CONCLUSION

The globalization of Bollywood dance can be viewed as both a positive and negative phenomenon. On the positive side, incorporating dance into film is an effective method of both spreading the art of dance to the masses and inspiring people to participate in or become interested in the dance world. The exposure to "other" forms of dance not only provides

opportunities for individuals to learn more about dance, but may inspire people to learn about tradition, and develop a better understanding and respect for other cultures. Thus, today's choreographers will incorporate jazz, street dance and hip-hop phrases, blending them together with melodramatic facial expressions and extensive use of mime to convey the meanings in the song. In this regard, Arundhati Subhramaniam talking about the latest influence on the dance, writes that an '*upsurge of bhangra-pop, dandiya-jazz, disco-kathak, even kalari-breakdance combinations epitomize an ethos of cultural hybridization*' (Rozario, Kao: 2008). On the other hand, there are several negative aspects in the globalization of Bollywood dance. While it increases multiculturalism, it is essential to note that Bollywood dance is not and cannot be considered representative of Indian dance or India. Making these assumptions or being oblivious to these facts leads to the production of or continuation of stereotypes that are unhealthy in creating a respectful, multicultural setting.

Finally, in the conclusion it can be said that Bollywood films and dance are, and continue to become, globally recognized as major elements of the Indian culture. Indian films hold a charming place of its own because they are prime examples of globalization and simultaneously glocalization. They involve hybridization between the West and India, migration, and the global propagation of Bollywood with the growth of India as a world power. Through the means of technology and communication, migration, and India's increasing power and influence in the world, the dance style has been quickly dispersed throughout the world. As Bollywood films and dance become more popular, the dance form itself has taken on many forms and adaptations. This is evident in the fact that now the dance style can be used as an element for musical films, taught in classes, performed in competitions, or used as a form of exercise. As the already hybridized dance form continues to be altered and expanded upon, it becomes questionable as to whether or not globalization is a positive or negative phenomenon.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adorno, T. & Horkheimer M. (1944). *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception. Dialectics of Enlightenment.*
- [2] David R. Ann. (2007). 'Beyond the Silver Screen: Bollywood and Filmi Dance in UK', *South Asia Research*. 27: 5-24
- [3] Gopal S. & Moorti S. (2010). *Introduction. Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance.* New Delhi. Orient Blackswan Pvt. Limited. 1-48
- [4] Gopal S. & Moorti S. (ed.) (2010). *Tapping the Mass Market: the Commercial life of Hindi Film Songs by Anna Marcom.* Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance. New Delhi. Orient Blackswan Pvt. Limited. 63- 83
- [5] Gopal S. & Moorti S. (ed.) (2010). *Dancing to an Indian beat: "Dola" Goes My Diasporic Heart by Sangita Shresthova.* Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance. New Delhi. Orient Blackswan Pvt. Limited. 243-262
- [6] Gopal S. & Moorti S. (ed.) (2010). *Bollywood Gets Funky: American Hip-Hop, Basement Bhangra and the Racial Politics of Music by Richard Zumkhalala-Cook.* Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance. New Delhi. Orient Blackswan Pvt. Limited. 308- 329
- [7] Kao T.K. & Rozario R.A. (2008). 'Imagined spaces: The implications of song and dance for Bollywood's diasporic communities', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 22(3): 313-316

- [8] Khondker, H.H. (2004). 'Glocalization as Globalization: Evolution of a Sociological Concept', *Bagladesh e-Journal of Sociology*, 1(2): 1-9
- [9] Matusitz J. & Payano Pam. (2012). 'Globalization of Popular culture: From Hollywood to Bollywood', *South Asia Research*. 32(123):123-138
- [10] Mishra, Vijay. (2009). 'The aching joys of Bollywood song and dance', *Postcolonial Studies*, 12(2): 247-254
- [11] Shresthova, Sangita. (2011) Introduction. Is it All About Hips? Around the World with Bollywood Dance". New Delhi. Sage Publications. 1-11
- [12] Shresthova, Sangita. (2011). Dancing through the Decades: A Bit of Theory and History. Is it All About Hips? Around the World with Bollywood Dance". New Delhi. Sage Publications. 12-33
- [13] Shresthova, Sangita. (2011). Bombay and Bodies of Bollywood Dance. Is it All About Hips? Around the World with Bollywood Dance". New Delhi. Sage Publications. 34-70
- [14] Shresthova, Sangita. (2011). More Indian than India? Bollywood Dance in Los Angeles. Is it All About Hips? Around the World with Bollywood Dance". New Delhi. Sage Publications. 105-142
- [15] Ritzer, George. (1988). *From Modern to Post-Modern Social Theory: Post-Structuralism*. Modern Sociological Theory. New York. McGraw Hills. 460-469
- [16] Williams, Drid. 2009. 'Bollywood: Postmodernism's legacy to the International Dance World' *Visual Anthropology: Published in cooperation with the Commission on Visual Anthropology*, 23(1): 20-32

NOTES

- (a) *Filmfare Award*¹: The *Filmfare Best Choreography Award* is given by the *Filmfare* magazine as part of its annual *Filmfare Awards* for Hindi (Bollywood) films. It is presented annually by *The Times Group* to honour both artistic and technical excellence of professionals in the Hindi language film industry of India. The reason why I have chosen this is because, in contrast to the *National Film Awards*, which are decided by a panel appointed by Indian Government, the *Filmfare Awards* are voted by both the public and a committee of experts. Hence, the *Filmfare* awards give a greater credibility and validity to judge the dance sequences in various Bollywood films.
- (b) *Imagined Space*²: The concept of "imagined space" is explained by Kai-Ti- Kao and Rebecca-Anne Do Rozario in their article "Imagined spaces: The implications of song and dance for Bollywood's diasporic communities". According to them, *imagined space* is that space which exists outside the parameters of realism, generating a completely new, unique space constructed from generic conventions and inventions in choreography, sound and cinematography. Such a space does not exist in the real world, nor is it designed to emulate it.
- (c) *Hybrid*³: Its origin is rooted in biology and subsequently used in linguistics and racial theory in nineteenth century. Hybrid is something that is mixed or is a

mixture of something. It is seen as an effect of cultural globalization.

- (d) *Tawaif*⁴: a tawaif is a courtesan who catered to the nobility, particularly during the Mughal era. Tawaifs excelled in dance and theatre.
- (e) *Thumris*⁵: it is a common style of light classical music in Indian culture.
- (f) *Ghazals*⁶: it is a lyric poem which has a fixed number of verses and repeated rhyme, set to tune and into a song.
- (g) *Mehfil*⁷: it is understood as a congregation of close and intimate people, observed particularly in Hindustani classical music. Dance is often performed in this occasion.
- (h) *Kotha*⁸: It is common parlance, it refers to a house. However, the term specifically refers to those houses where *tawaifs* stay.
- (i) *Bol*⁹: the term is derived from "bolna" which, means "to speak". The mnemonic syllable of the North Indian classical music is called *bol*.
- (j) *Item number*¹⁰: it is a dance performance along with music. Usually now-a-days, item numbers are shown in Bollywood movies, performed by women in provocative ways to increase the popularity of the films.
- (k) *Salwar Kameez*¹¹: It is a traditional outfit of India. It consists of long, loose and light trousers, usually tapering to a tight fit around the ankle along with a long top with sleeves.
- (l) *Zardozi*¹²: Zardozi embroidery is beautiful metal embroidery which was once used to embellish the attire of the Kings and Royals of India. This intricate style of design was said to have brought to India by the Mughals. The Indian city of Lucknow became a major centre of this form of art.
- (m) *Lehenga*¹³: it is a full ankle length skirt, woven with embroidery and or embossed design, worn by Indian women during special occasions or events.
- (n) *Consumer Culture*¹⁴: it is a culture, where social status, values and activities are centered on the consumption of goods and services. It is understood as that culture which is produced for the consumption of the masses in society.

AUTHORS

First Author – Mrs. Esha Bhattacharya Chatterjee, M.A. , M.Phil, Ph.D Scholar, Department of Sociology, Jadavpur University, Kolkata (India), e-mail id: esha.bhattacharya2306@gmail.com