

History and Evolution of Indian Film Industry

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ABSTRACT

Bollywood is recognized as the largest film producing industry in the world. India produced a total of 2961 films including 1602 feature films in 2012 alone. Movie tickets in India are among the cheapest in the world. The average ticket price in India is 25 rupees (55 cents) in comparison to the average ticket price in the US in 2010 that costs around \$ 7.50 dollars. India accounts for 73% of Asia-Pacific movie admissions. Indian film industry generated total revenues worth around \$1.86 billion (93 billion rupees) in 2011 only and it is estimated to rise to the US\$2.28 billion (138 billion rupees) by 2014. The industry is mainly supported by the vast cinema-going Indian public. According to an estimate, approximately fourteen million Indians visit cinemas daily to watch a film on regular basis. In 2012 alone, Bollywood sold around 2.6 billion tickets compared to Hollywood's 1.36 billion tickets. Indian films are gaining increasing popularity around the world, especially in countries with large numbers of emigrants. The aim of this research paper is to present an overview of the historical evolution of Indian Cinema since its inception. This qualitative historical analysis identifies the factors that lead to its phenomenal growth through all these years.

Keywords: *Bollywood, Historical Evolution, Indian Cinema, Phenomenal Growth, Largest Industry*

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Introduction

Indian Film Industry consists of motion pictures made all over India, including the regional industries in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. These movies are widely viewed across the world especially in South Asia and Middle East due to cultural and linguistic proximities.

Indian cinema was emerged as the global enterprise in the 20th century. Indian films exhibited in more than 90 countries through dynamic and fast modern media. An increasing participation in the international film festivals and cultural delegations to foreign countries strategically contributed to effective branding and promotion of Indian films in the international market. Besides the possibility of 100 percent foreign venture has turned the Indian film industry lucrative for overseas investors and production houses such as the 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures, and Warner Bros. Simultaneously, prominent native investors such as Zee, UTV, Suresh Productions, Ad labs and Sun Network's Sun Pictures engaged enthusiastically in filmmaking and distribution business. Tax benefits to picture houses have also led to the mushroomed growth of multiscreen cinemas known as multiplexers all across India. Around 30 movie making enterprises had been officially registered in India by the year 2003, highlighting the commercial existence and standing of the Indian film industry in the region. ¹

Earnings through overseas exhibition of Indian films both via formal and informal media, accounted for 12 percent of the revenue, contribute substantially to the overall revenue of Indian cinema, the net worth of which was found to be US\$1.3 billion in 2000. Music in Indian cinema is another substantial revenue generator, with the music rights alone accounting for 4 to 5 percent of the net revenues generated by a film in India. ²

Screening of Indian films in American, British, Australian, Canadian, Pakistan and other overseas movie theatres are increasing since the number of South Asians immigrants have been proliferated in these countries in recent years.

¹ "Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema." Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen, Taylor & Francis, (1991), pp. 105-106

² Ramanathan, Sharada. *International Forum on the Creative Economy; Bollywood behind the Scenes*. 1 29, 2008. <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/Matild-45433-Bollywood-Behind-scenes-11-International-Forum-Creative-Economy-whats-name-contd-Indian-Film-Industry-IFI-behin-Education> (accessed 2012).

These immigrants often consider Indian films the best medium of connection with their native tradition, language and community in foreign lands.

The acronym Bollywood is popularly but misleadingly used to refer to the whole of Indian cinema, rather than the Hindi-language film industry based in Mumbai from which it is derived. In reality Indian film industry is the combination of several regional film industries that are distinct and patronized by leading regional languages, cultures and history while Mumbai's film center is one of the largest and most prominent part of it, which is known for its mass production across the world.

According to the census of India in 1991, out of 144 regional languages of India, films are produced in about 30 languages with each of the larger languages supports its own film industry including Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam.

Indian film industry turned increasingly ethnic, regional and vernacular with the arrival of talkies (films with sound) in 1931. As some film critics claimed, "Sound in cinema compensated through (its) languages, song and music for the massive illiteracy of Indians."³

Evolution of indian cinema through different eras

Emergence of indian cinema

The beginning of Indian film industry can be dated back to 1896 when the legendary Lumiere Brothers of France exhibited six silent short films at the Watson Hotel in Bombay, namely Entry of Cinematography. Later, Hiralal Sen directed Flower of Persia in 1898, the pioneer short films in India that set the trend for rest of the filmmakers for next two decades.⁴

Dada Saheb Phalke, a scholar of Indian languages and culture ventured India's foremost full length silent Marathi film, 'Raja Harishchandra', in 1913 and thereby laid the foundation of a regular feature film industry in India.⁵ He derived ingredients of Indian films from Sanskrit epics and casted men in female characters. By 1920 Indian film industry started working in full swing,

³ Ibid. Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema, 1991, p. 101.

⁴ The Birth of Indian Cinema <http://www.sankalpindia.net/birth-indian-cinema>, submitted by aurora on January 7, 2008, retrieved on July 5, 2011

⁵ https://www.academia.edu/36534884/DADASAHEB_PHALKE_A_CINEMATIC_SOUNDSCAPE, retrieved on December 20, 2011.

producing as many as 27 feature films annually. The number of native productions rose gradually to 207 films per year in 1931.⁶ Several fresh filmmakers and production houses explored the field during the time period. The first Indian chain of cinema theaters was owned by the Calcutta entrepreneur Jamshedji Framji Madan, who patronized production of 10 films annually and distributed them throughout the Indian subcontinent.⁷ Motion pictures attained widespread popularity in India as a mass medium during the early twentieth century. Audiences opted for movie viewings as the most favourite and affordable pastime, accessible for as cheap as an *anna* (4 *paisa*) in Bombay.⁸ Bollywood formula films were largely produced considering mass attraction and taste. India's social and cultural life was featured by the young filmmakers on the silver screen. Novel foreign ideas were also experimented in Indian films during that period and global audiences and markets became aware of the presence of Indian film industry in that era.

Indian Cinema Starts Talking in 1930s

Indian Cinema witnessed revolutionary changes both in technology and style of film production in thirties. A major milestone in this era was "India's first talkie, 'Alam Ara' that was directed and released by Ardeshir Irani in 1931. The film released in Hindi and Urdu, was an instant hit on box office and set a fresh trend in the history of Indian Cinema. Several 'Talking, singing and dancing' films were produced following Alam Ara that marked the launch of the Talkies era in South Indian film industries as well. The first talkie films in Bengali (*Jumai Shasthi*), Telugu (*Bhakta Prahlad*) and Tamil (*Kalidass*) were released in the same year.⁹

Thirties was also known as the decade of social protest. In the historical decade three leading film hubs were developed in Bombay (Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata) and Madras (Chennai). Bombay used to be the center of mainstream productions distributed nationally whereas Madras and Calcutta were famous for their local productions.

⁶ Ibid. Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema, (1991), p. 104.

⁷ Remembering JF Madan, the pioneer of film production in India <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/gk-current-affairs/story/jf-madan-11701-2016-06-28>

⁸ Ibid. International Forum on the Creative Economy, (2008)

⁹ Indian cinema: origin growth and major trends." By Shodhganga, chapter 2, p. 20. shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/97432/3/th-1824_ch2.pdf, (n.d.)

The launch of 'talkies' in India led to the good luck of some film stars especially singers and musicians. The decade of thirties witnessed the upsurge of melody in Indian film industry that led to evergreen musicals such as *Indra Sabha* and *Devi Devyani*, signifying the start of song-and-dance in India's films.¹⁰

Film Studios were established throughout Indian as film making emerged as the popular industry by 1935, demonstrated by the success of *Devdas* which attracted audience nationwide. Bombay Talkies came up in 1934 and Prabhat Studios in Pune had begun production of films meant for the Marathi language audience. Filmmaker R. S. D. Choudhury produced *Wrath* (1930) that was banned by the British Raj in India as it depicted actors as Indian leaders. It was an expression which was prohibited and censored during the days of the Indian independence movement.

From 1940s To Golden 1950s

The decades of thirties and forties were turbulent period for India. The sub-continent was badly hit by the Great Depression, World War II, Freedom Movement and Indo-Pak partition calamities. During that era, majority of Indian movies were highly escapists with a few filmmakers who focused pertinent socio-political topics in their productions.

The Indian *Masala* Film_ slang used for commercial films with song, dance and romance came up following the Second World War. During the 1940s, cinema in South India accounted for nearly half of India's cinema halls and cinema came to be viewed as an instrument of cultural revival. However, as a result of partition, several studios and filmmakers went to Pakistan and Indo-Pak partition and related struggle became a hot topic for many films in the subsequent decades.

S.K. Patil Commission evaluated Indian film industry in forties to assess its worth and status. According to the Commission's report, Indian cinema is a combination of art, industry and showmanship with its significant commercial value.¹¹ The commission suggested establishment of the Film Finance Corporation under the patronage of the Ministry of Finance. However, its recommendations were implemented much later in 1960s in order to give monetary assistance to capable filmmakers and producers

¹⁰ Ibid. Indian cinema: origin growth and major trends, p. 35.

¹¹ Ibid. International Forum on the Creative Economy, (2008) .

across India. The Indian government had already formed a Films Division by 1949 which eventually became one of the largest documentary film producers in the world with an annual production of over 200 short documentaries, each released in 18 languages with 9000 prints for permanent film theaters countrywide.¹²

Forties and Fifties in Indian cinema was predominantly the era of songs and dance with some of the classics from the two decades. It was the age that witnessed emergence of the 'playback singing and dubbing. Music became an essential ingredient in that age and singing stars such as Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhonsle, Muhamd Rafi, and Kishore Kumar dominated the Hindi film industry.

The period from late forties to fifties was viewed as the Golden Age of Indian Cinema by most film historians. Fifties was especially the most valued period in Hindi film industry glittered with brilliant directors and artistes with their individual signature craft and style. Satyajit Ray's classic film 'Pathar Panchali' released in 1953 proved to be a major breakthrough for Indian film industry in the global scene that won the reputed Cannes award in the best film category and led to several international and domestic honours and awards.¹³

Rai inspired his several colleagues including Mrinal Sen, Ritwik Ghatak, Aravindan, and Rituparna Ghosh who produced globally recognized films in that era and are regarded as the founding fathers of Hindi parallel cinema. Simultaneously, Indian film industry also offered commercial movies with strong social themes produced by acclaimed filmmakers such as Bimal Roy, Raj Kapoor, Mehboob Khan, and Guru Dutt to name a few.

Several films from that era, for e.g. Bimal Roy's 'Do Bigha Zamin', Mehboob Khan's 'Mother India'(1957), Raj Kapoor's 'Shree 420' (1955) and 'Awaraa'(1951), Guru Dutt's 'Pyasa'(1957) and Kaagaz Ke Phool (1959), set new records at the box office. These films highlighted social themes mainly dealing with working-class. Early examples of Hindi films in this movement include Chetan Anand's Neecha Nagar (1946). The critical acclaim as well as the commercial success of these films paved the way for Indian neorealism and the Indian New Wave. Some of the internationally-acclaimed Hindi

¹² Ibid. Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema, (1991), p. 105.

¹³ Maker of Innovative meaningful movies." *The Hindu*. www.hinduonline.com, 6 15, 2007.

filmmakers involved in the movement included Mani Kaul, Kumar Shahani, Ketan Mehta, Govind Nihalani, Shyam Benegal and Vijaya Mehta.¹⁴

Initiation of National Film Awards, establishment of Film Finance Corporations, National Film Archives of India and set up of Film and Television Institute were some of the notable initiatives that contributed to the steady growth of the industry. The organization of premiere International Film Festival in 1952 at Bombay, Chennai, Delhi and Calcutta also opened international horizons to the Indian filmmakers and encouraged them to think and work in the global perspective. Ever since the social realist film *Neecha Nagar* won the Grand Prize at the first Cannes Film Festival, Hindi films were frequently in competition for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film festival throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, with some of them winning major prizes at the festival. It was the decade that witnessed both the boom of commercial Hindi cinema as well as the rise of an emerging Parallel Hindi Cinema led by the Bengali film makers.¹⁵

Decade of 1960s and 70s:

In the two decades, production of mega- budget movies alongside art films increased. The evergreen movies of 60s and 70s include Kamal Amrohi's *Pakeeza*, Raj Kapoor's *Bobby*, Ramesh Sippy's *Sholay*, *Kabhi Kabhi*, *Amar Akbar Anthony*, *Hum Kisise Kum Nahin*, and *Muqaddar ka Sikandar*. This action plus romantic era had its own galaxy including stars such as *Rajesh Khanna* and *Dharmendra*, *Sharmila Tagore*, *Mumtaz* and *Helen*.

By the mid of seventies love stories gave way to the violent action themes about gangsters. *Amitabh Bachchan* is the iconic star known for his angry young man roles. He dominated the silver screen with other male leads like *Mithun Chakraborty* and *Anil Kapoor* and female actresses including *Hema Malini*, *Jaya Bachchan* and *Rekha* for several years.¹⁶

On the other side, Hindi producers including *Shyam Benegal*, *Mani Kaul*, *Kumar Shahani*, *Ketan Mehta*, *Govind Nihalani* and *Vijaya Mehta* had the credit of keeping alive Hindi parallel cinema throughout seventies. In

¹⁴ Moti, Gokulsing K, and Dissanayake Wimal. *Indian Popular Cinema. A Narrative of Cultural Change*, Trentam Books, (2004), pp. 98-99.

¹⁵ Ibid. *Maker of Innovative meaningful movies*, (2007) .

¹⁶ *Amitabh Bachchan Hindi film industry's most expensive star*. *India Today*. February 15, 1983.

response to the criticism of a state committee, conducted public undertakings investigation in 1976, the Indian Film Finance Corporation altered its focus from parallel to commercial film industry. The 1970s thus marked with the upsurge of commercial movies with trendsetter films such as *Sholay* (1975), which established Amitabh Bachchan's standing as the protagonist. Another notable production from 1975 was *Deewar*, directed by Yash Chopra and written by Salim-Javed. A crime film pitting a policeman against his brother, a gang leader based on real-life smuggler Haji Mastan, portrayed by Amitabh Bachchan, it was described as being absolutely key to Indian cinema by Danny Boyle.¹⁷

Era of 1980s and 1990s:

In the late eighties and early nineties, once again trend changed in Indian cinema and there was a marked shift from gangster movies to romantic musicals. Family-oriented films such as "Mr. India, *Tezaab*, *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak* (1988), *Maine Pyar Kiya* (1989), *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* (1994) and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995). *Chandni*, *Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikander*, *Hum Hain Rahi Pyarke*, *Baazigar*, *Krantiveer*, *Rangeela* were able to attract large audience and proved to be the blockbusters of the decades. A new breed of stars emerged from these films including Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, Shahrukh Khan, Sridevi, Madhuri Dixit, Juhi Chawla and Kajol.

It was also the age of action and comedy cinema and film stars such as Govinda and Akshay Kumar and actresses like Raveena Tandon and Karisma Kapoor often cast for the particular genre of the films. They were equally popular among the film viewers of Indian cinema.

However, "the most internationally-acclaimed Hindi film of the 1980s was Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay* (1988). The film won the Camera d'Or at the 1988 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.¹⁸

Nineties was known for the launch of unique artists and independent filmmakers who also acquired commercial success with critical acclaim. *Satya* (1998), directed by Ram Gopal Varma and written by Anurag Kashyap was the best example of it which marked the beginning of a distinctive films

¹⁷ Chaudhuri, Diptakirti. Written by Salim-Javed: The Story of Hindi Cinema's Greatest Screenwriters. Penguin Group, ISBN 9789352140084. (2015), p. 74.

¹⁸ A. Chatterji, Shoma. "Where East meets West." *The Tribune*, 6 30, 2007

category recognized as *Mumbai noir*, metropolitan flicks projecting societal issues in Mumbai city.

Shyam Benegal's *Bhumika*, Govind Nihlani's *Aaghat*, Damul (Prakash Jha), *36-Chowringhee Lane* (Aparna Sen), *New Delhi Times* (Ramesh Sharma), *Mirch Masala* (Ketan Mehta), *Rao Saheb* (Vijaya Mehta), *Debshishu* (Utpalendu Chakraborty), *Arth* (Mahesh Bhatt), *Trishagni* (Nabayendu Ghosh), *Ijaazat* (Gulzar), *Umrao Jaan* (Muzafar Ali), *Dakhal*, *Paar* (Gautam Ghose), *Dooratwa*, *Neem Annapurana*, *Andhi Gali* (Buddhadeb Dasgupta), *Aajka Robin Hood* (Tapan Sinha), *Tabarana Kathe*, *Bannada Vesha* (Girish Kasara Valli), *Accident and Swamy* (Shanker Naag), *Daasi* (B. Narasinga Rao) and *Roja*, *Bombay* (Maniratnam) were some of the significant films of eighties and nineties.¹⁹

The Decade of 2000s

The decade of 2000s witnessed persistent rise of Indian cinema in the world. In fact modern technology took Bollywood to novel peaks in reference to cinematography and storylines alongside mechanical advancements in terms of special effects and animation. Indian cinema is now competing globally with advanced digital projectors, converting digital format and latest production techniques.

The leading production houses in India including Yash Raj Films and Dharma Productions experimented with innovative contemporary films. The ever-expanding foreign markets, increasing global ventures and the outburst of multiplexes in metropolitan cities, resulted into record-breaking success stories including films such as *Lagaan* (2001), *Devdas* (2002), *Koi Mil Gaya* (2003), *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2003), *Veer-Zaara* (2004), *Rang De Basanti* (2006), *Lage Raho Munnabhai* (2006), *Krrish* (2006), *Dhoom 2* (2006), *Om Shanti Om* (2007), *Chak De India* (2007), *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (2008), *Ghajini* (2008), *3 Idiots* (2009), *My Name is Khan* (2010), *Raajneeti* (2010) and *Dabangg* (2010). These films came with a new generation stardom with actors like Hrithik Roshan, Abhishek Bachchan, Ranbir Kapoor, ShahRukh, Amir Khan and Salman Khan, and actresses such as Aishwarya Rai, Preity Zinta, Rani Mukerji, Kareena Kapoor and Priyanka Chopra, Deepika, Priyanka, Katrina. In the commercial category, *Lagaan* earned the Audience Award at the Locarno International Film Festival and was shortlisted in the category of

¹⁹ <https://movie.webindia123.com/movie/fact/history1.htm>, retrieved on October 12, 2011.

Best Foreign Language Film at the 74th Academy Awards. Besides, *Devdas* and *Rang De Basanti* were both selected for the BAFTA Award in the category of Best Foreign Language Films.²⁰

In the current era, Indian cinema has emerged a global phenomenon with parallel fame across the Middle East, South East Asia, South Asia, Britain, America, Australia and African regions. In fact Indian films are viewed and liked across the world. Movies like *Lagaan*, *Salaam Bombay* and *Monsoon Wedding* attracted film critics and buffs globally and marked brighter future for Hindi cinema in the international market.

Indian Commercial Cinema mostly inclined towards mass appeal films, believing that it would ensure box-office success. However, some emerging filmmakers do understand and acknowledge demographic segmentation and special interest films aiming at rural Indians, urbanites and overseas viewers. The current decade also witnessed release of a number of movies under the *Mumbai noir* genre including Madhur Bhandarkar's *Chandni Bar* (2001) and *Traffic Signal* (2007), Ram Gopal Varma's *Company* (2002) and its prequel *D* (2005), Anurag Kashyap's *Black Friday* (2004), and Irfan Kamal's *Thanks Maa* (2009). Besides super hero and science fiction films like *Enthiran*, *Ra One*, *Eega*, and *Krrish 3* also emerged as new sensation in the recent years.²¹

Bollywood Impact

In the decade of 2000s, Bollywood began influencing musical films in the Western world, and played a particularly instrumental role in the revival of the American musical film genre. Baz Luhrmann (2001) stated that his musical film *Moulin Rouge* was directly inspired by Bollywood musicals.²² The critical and financial success of *Moulin Rouge* renewed interest in the Western musical genre, and subsequently films such as *Chicago*, *The Producers*, *Rent*, *Dream girls*, *Hairspray*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Across the Universe*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Enchanted* and *Mamma Mia* were produced, fueling a renaissance of the genre.²³

²⁰ Chatteerjee, Saikat. *Bollywood goes Bollywood*. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-05-18/>. May 19, 2010.

²¹ Indian Cinema, World heritage Encyclopedia Edition. [http://self.gutenberg.org/Article.aspx?Title=Indian cinema](http://self.gutenberg.org/Article.aspx?Title=Indian_cinema), Gutenberg Publishing Press, Retrieved on November 39, 2011

²² Luhrmann, Bazz. *Talks, Awards and Moulin Rouge* (2010) .

²³ Guide Picks. *Top Movie Musicals on Video/DVD*. 2009. Retrieved on May 13, 2012.

Besides, the famous Indian musician, A. R. Rahman composed the music for Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Bombay Dreams*, and a musical version of *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* has played in London's West End. The Bollywood musical *Lagaan* (2001) was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), which has won four Golden Globes and eight Academy Awards, was also directly inspired by Bollywood films²⁴ and is considered to be a homage to Hindi commercial cinema.²⁵

Finances

Bollywood productions are exorbitant including the costly productions investing near about 100 billion Indian rupees till date.²⁶ Till the 1990s, the situation was quite different with no such world-class standards for sets, cinematography and special effects. Following the open market policy and economy, Indians gained wider access to the Western films and television and thereby faced a mounting competition for Bollywood movies especially in areas of action and special effects.

The new trend resulted into mega-budget films with an outburst in the action and sci-fi category. Sequences shot overseas have proved a real box office draw, so Mumbai film crews are increasingly filming in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, continental Europe and elsewhere.

Mostly Bollywood films are funded by private distributors and some large studios. Formerly, Indian banks and financial institutions were prohibited from lending loans to production houses. However, this ban has now been lifted.²⁷

As finances are not regulated, some Hindi films are also supported by the Mumbai underworld which is tarnished for patronizing famous chosen celebrities. Occasionally, these gangsters use their capital and contacts to

²⁴ *Slumdog draws crowds, but not all like what they see.* 2008. <http://www.theage.com.au/world/slumdog-draws-crowds-but-not-all-like-what-they-see-20090124-7p33.html>. (Accessed in 2012).

²⁵ Maker of Innovative meaningful movies. *The Hindu*. www.hinduonline.com. 6 15, 2007.

²⁶ McCarthy, Niall. "Bollywood: India's Film Industry by the Numbers (Infographics)." *Forbes.com*. 3 9, 2014. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2014/09/03/>, accessed on October 14, 2014).

²⁷ Rediff. *I & B Ministry will help film industry*. 3 31, 2001. <http://www.rediff.com/entertai/2001/mar/31sush.htm>. Assessed 18 11 ,2013

finance action-based, violent films and thereby influence producers and public indirectly.²⁸

Bollywood is confronting an extensive copyright violation issue. Pirated DVD copies of Indian films are easily accessible prior to the release of original prints in cinemas. Manufacturing of bootleg DVD, VCD, and VHS copies of the latest movie titles is a well-established 'small scale industry' in parts of South Asia and South East Asia. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) estimate that the Bollywood industry loses \$100 million annually in loss of revenue from pirated home videos and DVDs.

Conclusion

Global Appeal of Indian Cinema is undeniable. Over the last years of the twentieth century and beyond, Bollywood progressed in its popularity as it entered the consciousness of Western audiences and producers.²⁹ Bollywood movies have reached almost all the continents including Europe, North America, Oceania & Pacific Islands, and South America and Africa. However, it is still competing with Hollywood movies due to cultural and language differences.

Bollywood films are widely watched in South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Many Pakistanis watch Bollywood films, as they understand Hindi due to its linguistic similarity to Urdu.³⁰ Besides, as Time of India mentioned, "Hindi films have also been popular in numerous Arab countries, including Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and the Gulf countries, Most imported Indian films are usually subtitled in Arabic upon the film's release."³¹

²⁸ Jones, Matthew. *Bollywood, Underworld and Indian Cinema; Misconceptions, Meanings and Millionaire- Visual Anthropology*. Vol. 23, chap. 1, (2010), pp. 33-43.

²⁹ Wadhvani, Anita N. *Bollywood Mania Rising in United States*. 8 9, 2006. <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2006/08/20060809124617nainawhdaw0.8614466>. (accessed 7 29, 2010).

³⁰ *Despite official ban, Hindi movies are a craze in Pakistan*. 2 5, 2008. s <http://www.newindpress.com/NewsItems.asp>. Accessed 12 21, 2012

³¹ Times of India. *Bollywood films gaining popularity in Gulf Countries*. 2006. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/2121632.cms>. (Accessed 11 21, 2008).

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