

This article was downloaded by: [Wayne Marshall]

On: 08 August 2012, At: 22:41

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



South Asian Popular Culture

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsap20>

It takes a little lawsuit: The flowering garden of Bollywood exoticism in the age of its technological reproducibility

Wayne Marshall ^a & Jayson Beaster-Jones ^b

^a Department of Music, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

^b Department of Performance Studies, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA

Version of record first published: 20 Jul 2012

To cite this article: Wayne Marshall & Jayson Beaster-Jones (2012): It takes a little lawsuit: The flowering garden of Bollywood exoticism in the age of its technological reproducibility, South Asian Popular Culture, DOI:10.1080/14746689.2012.706015

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14746689.2012.706015>



PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

It takes a little lawsuit: The flowering garden of Bollywood exoticism in the age of its technological reproducibility

Wayne Marshall^{a*} and Jayson Beaster-Jones^b

^aDepartment of Music, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA; ^bDepartment of Performance Studies, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA

The Hindi film song ‘Thoda resham lagta hai’ [It takes a little silk] written by the music director Bappi Lahiri for the film *Jyoti* (1981) was a long forgotten tune before being rediscovered in 2002 by American music producer DJ Quik. Based around an unauthorized 35-second sample of the recording, the Truth Hurts song ‘Addictive’ famously inspired Bappi Lahiri to sue Quik’s associate Dr Dre (executive producer of the song), Aftermath Records, and Universal Music (Aftermath’s parent company and distributor) for \$500 million. Beyond Lahiri’s claims of cultural imperialism, obscenity, and outright theft, DJ Quik’s rearrangement of the song was, in turn, adopted by music producers, including Lahiri himself, in a wide variety of international genres. This paper tracks the use and reuse of the melody in Indian, American, and Jamaican contexts, focusing on the song’s remediation for new audiences. Yet even as this well-traveled tune evokes different historical and local meanings, it evokes an eroticized Other in each context, including its original context.

Introduction

In mid-June 2002, Mumbai-based music critic Narendra Kusnur received an email from a friend in New York reporting that a Hindi film song had been sampled in the popular hip-hop/R&B song, ‘Addictive,’ by emerging artist Truth Hurts (Shari Watson). The track begins with the words *kaliyon ka chaman tab banta hai* [‘a flower garden is then made’] in the opening moments of the song, then goes on to employ two samples from the recording as components of the accompaniment to Truth Hurts’s singing. While the identity of the prolific playback singer Lata Mangeshkar was never in doubt, Kusnur did not recognize the film song, nor did any of the music directors, musicologists, or singers that he called for hours after that. Eventually, the nephew of Lata Mangeshkar concluded that the song was written for the film *Jyoti* (1981) by the music director Bappi Lahiri. Bappi himself did not immediately recognize his song, nor did the film director, but they received confirmation from the Saregama music label in Calcutta that the samples did, indeed, come from the song ‘Thoda Resham Lagta Hai’ [It takes a little silk]. A few days later, Kusnur was shocked to discover that Universal Music India had sent him a review copy of an Indian remix album by DJ Harry Anand featuring a track, ‘Kaliyon Ka Chaman,’ that echoed the melody of same song. After talking to Anand and the remix’s lyricist and singer, it became clear to Kusnur that none of them had heard the original track from *Jyoti*, but instead had based their remix on the Truth Hurts version:

*Corresponding author. Email: wayne@wayneandwax.com

How this obscure song now suddenly had two additional versions – a remix by Truth Hurts and a ‘remix of the remix’ by Harry Anand. To add to that, I read from the internet that another mix of the song by Pakistani DJ Aphlatoon had also done the rounds in the US – this one had Lata’s vocals but didn’t feature Shari. Apparently, the Lata song was big on the US club circuit, and one of the mixes – which Truth Hurts got from DJ Quik – became big. But that was the funny part. A song that nobody knew of now had (at least) three versions besides the original. Bappi would never had dreamt any of his songs – a forgotten one at that – would be such a craze. (Kusnur, “Melody of Errors: The Sequel”)

Bappi Lahiri would appear to have the most to gain from this discovery, and he wasted no time in exploiting an opportunity to revive a career that had all but ended. In what would become a famous lawsuit, Bappi and Saregama sued Universal Music and Dr Dre (executive producer of ‘Addictive’ and part owner of the label, Aftermath, that released it), demanding song credit and a whopping \$500 million for such an offensive and unauthorized reuse of Bappi’s music that, according to the brief, it might be construed as an act of ‘cultural imperialism.’ Bappi’s attorney went on to claim in a press release, that the lyrics ‘are obscene and offensive, and cause extreme offense, to [Saregama’s] owners and to the sensibilities of many Hindu and Muslim people’ (qtd. in Roberts 83).

The ‘Addictive’ lawsuit has been addressed in several academic publications as a site for the complex interplay of cultural representation, appropriation, copyright, and race.¹ Yet these commentaries are largely confined to analyzing the reproduction of Orientalist signs in the historical context of American hip-hop produced after 9/11. Beyond the opening salvos of the lawsuit and the injunction in February 2003 that added Bappi Lahiri’s name to the Truth Hurts album, little attention has been paid to the circulation and remediation of the same melody in India and elsewhere. These reuses unsettle easy charges of appropriation, whether cross-cultural or illegal, as well as notions of ownership, whether national or personal. The use by Truth Hurts in ‘Addictive’ represents only one moment in the social life of this melody, if an important and inflecting one. As the story unfolds, it becomes apparent that the circulation of tunes and samples is as much about creative agents in global cities, situated in particular networks of meaning, media, and commerce, as it is about modes of industrial music production or legal regimes within and between nation-states.

In this paper, we examine the peregrinations of ‘Thoda Resham Lagta Hai’ and its re-mediations in a wide variety of social and musical contexts. From its origins as an ephemeral melody in an almost forgotten Hindi film, to its reemergence as a sampled loop in Truth Hurts’s ‘Addictive,’ to the explosion of creative (re)appropriation that follows, each reuse replicates spectacular representations even as it complicates the musical deixis of Others.

‘Thoda Resham Lagta Hai’

Representations of the Other emerge at the very beginning of the story. The song ‘Thoda Resham Lagta Hai’ (hereafter TRLH) from the 1981 Hindi film *Jyoti* is picturized in a *kothā* (urban salon) managed by a *tawāyaf* (courtesan). These salons are highly erotic spaces within the conventions of Hindi film, the *kothā* sometimes represented as little more than a brothel, the *tawāyaf* as little more than a prostitute. The performance of a dance known as a *mujrā* is a staple representation of these salons. A stylized form of classical dance associated with the end of the Mughal era in India, the *mujrā* reflects the ambivalence of courtesan representations in Hindi film more generally. Not unlike female protagonists in certain nineteenth-century operas, courtesans are typically wealthy and beautiful, albeit tragic women whom a hero desires, but must ultimately reject lest he

damage his family's respectability. The presumed sexuality of Indian courtesans places them outside the bounds of middle class morality, and they are frequently represented in the context of an exoticized historical past. While the song and dance sequence in *Jyoti* draws from this cultural history, the courtesan in this particular film is not a tragic figure. Rather, she conspires to drain a rich landowner's son of his inheritance.² The song 'Thoda Resham Lagta Hai' points not only to the debauchery of a younger son, but to the courtesan's material aspirations. Thus, even as the association made by Truth Hurts in the video for 'Addictive' circumscribes Orientalist representations of a conflated India/Middle East in a post-9/11 era, the video's stereotypes are not so far from eroticized *tawāyaf* representations in Hindi films, hardly the site of chaste representations claimed by Bappi's lawyer.

Musically speaking, relatively little differentiates a song picturized as a *mujrā* from other kinds of film songs. Famous *mujrās* often gain this designation by association with the narrative context of the film, as well as musical allusions to India's classical music systems. In the 1970s and 1980s, *mujrās* were usually performed by a solo female vocalist, included a short unmetred vocal line that mimicked an *ālāp*, a meter in *dādrā* or *kehrwā tāl* (6 or 8 beats), a short tabla *lāggī* (solo) in an interlude, and *ghuṅgrū* (ankle bells) foregrounded in the mix. Each of these characteristics are present in TRLH, alongside conventional film song elements such as the clear dominance of vocal line over accompaniment, 'eclectic' instrumentation (Arnold 177) that does not overwhelm the lyrics, and a standard song form that alternates among refrain, verse, and musical interlude.

Cross-cultural appropriation of sound samples by Western musicians has been a ripe field for discussion in ethnomusicology. One thing that distinguishes this case, however, is that Bappi himself is known as a rampant appropriator. Indeed, the newspaper articles announcing the lawsuit usually noted the irony that in India, Bappi is widely reputed to have 'borrowed' melodies and styles of many Western artists without repercussion. It was less often remarked, however, that he frequently used the stylistic approaches of Indian music directors as well, especially R.D. Burman. TRLH bears the traces of the R.D. Burman brand, not the least of which are the high-pitched tabla and percussion used at various moments within the song.³ Generally speaking, his 'borrowings' were rarely incorporated *in toto*. Rather, they were mediated by the films' narrative requirements and by the production conventions of Hindi film songs. In some cases, Bappi imitated elements that indexed musical styles; at other times, he incorporated pre-existing melodies or countermelodies into his songs. Nevertheless, it would be a gross overstatement to suggest that he has been the only music director to do this, for the practice of deploying existing melodies and styles for film songs was well-situated in Hindi films long before Bappi.

As Kusnur's description suggests, for all its familiar signposts, TRLH was far from the canon of 'evergreen' Hindi film songs. This would change, however, once DJ Quik discovered the song and adapted it into an international hit.

'Addictive'

Released in the spring of 2002, 'Addictive,' the debut single by R&B singer Truth Hurts, epitomized and amplified a new vogue among hip-hop producers for samples from South Asia and the Middle East. It was not the first or most popular of such efforts: the producer Timbaland, who has sampled (and been sued over) similar sources, had produced a major hit, 'Big Pimpin',' for Jay-Z in 1999 that centered on a riff from the Egyptian classic, 'Khusara' (Marshall, "big gyptian"). But the timing of 'Addictive,' only six months after

9/11 and hence in the midst of a media frenzy around Islamic spaces and nations, ensured a different mode of reception than, say, Missy Elliott's 'Get Ur Freak On' (2001), which juxtaposes Japanese vocals and a bhangra-esque *tumbi* sample (also co-produced by Timbaland).

For auteurs like Timbaland and Elliott, or for DJ Quik and Dr Dre, such far-flung samples need not be subsumed so easily under the rubric of post-9/11 Orientalism. Considered within the history of sample-based hip-hop and its legal challenges, veteran 'crate-diggers' turning their attention to 'world music' bins – or in DJ Quik's case, to a satellite television channel broadcasting forgotten Bollywood productions – represents an outcome of the accelerated search for novel and obscure samples in the wake of mounting copyright infringement litigation (Marshall, "Giving Up"). Moving beyond the bread and butter of rare jazz and funk records, the use of more putatively foreign sounds around the turn of the millennium – indeed, of recordings produced outside the United States – evoked cosmopolitan chic while also attempting to keep the producers' efforts off the radar of copyright cops hunting for lucrative settlements. Reading 'Addictive' against this historical narrative offers a helpful way of getting beyond the more Manichean and reactionary criticism of such 'appropriations.' Moreover, attending closely to the actual deployment of the samples in 'Addictive' also reveals an aesthetic logic that resists simple critiques of inherent exploitation.

Given the proximity to 9/11, however, there is no avoiding an interrogation of songs (and videos) like 'Addictive' and their symbolic complicity with the War on Terror, especially when the uses of the samples from TRLH in 'Addictive,' and certain embellishments by Truth Hurts and DJ Quik, might reasonably fuel such interpretations. Lata Mangeshkar's vocals, for example, are treated as non-lexical content – just another instrument in the texture, something to sing English lyrics over without any sort of cognitive dissonance. (Clearly, Hindi-fluent listeners did not comprise a primary audience in the minds of its producers.) Further, the two loops from TRLH are filtered to emphasize high and mid-range frequencies, making them seem even more distant. Quik may have employed a high-pass filter simply to create sonic room for a new bassline and drum track, but the filter has the added effect of further estranging Lata's voice.⁴ For her part, Truth Hurts adds occasional wordless vocalizing to the track, enhancing the 'other worldly' mystique of the sample while further obscuring its Hindi lyrics. The lyrics to 'Addictive' may be read through an Orientalist lens; an emphasis on out-of-control lust reproduces a classic Western trope associated with Other music and bodies – ironically, a set of stereotypes that also haunts representations of African-Americans.

Critics of 'Addictive' also take umbrage with the apparent exoticism in the song's video, a *mélange* of Orientalist clichés amounting to little more than 'a generalized, faux-Asian aesthetic' (Roberts 83). From the choreography (especially certain head/neck and hand gestures, and torso movements suggesting belly dance), to the henna-stained hands and vibrantly-colored silk and sequins, to the harem-like backdrop, the video's vivid but flatly conflated imagery from South Asia and the Middle East might be seen, at best, as an ingenuous exploration of otherness, or at worst as akin to what Sunaina Maira calls 'Arab Face' ("Belly Dancing"), a form of racial masquerade imbricated with the 'imperial feelings' generated by the War on Terror.⁵ Then again, such mixing of putatively discrete cultural signs and practices, or the specific use of belly-dance to play with charged notions of otherness, is not simply a 'Western' thing; as noted earlier it finds expression in the Indian film industry's representations of some of its own *tawāyaf* Others. Likewise, for Kevin Miller, even as the video's 'indulgent fantasy space ... denies an accurate reference to the geopolitical origins of the Mangeshkar sample,' it also, even if

unwittingly, ‘pays homage to the eclectic fantasy sequences so common to the Bollywood cinema.’⁶ If nothing else, the ambivalent embrace of ‘Addictive’ and hip-hop songs of its ilk among South Asian and *desi* listeners, DJs, and critics suggests that the cultural work instigated by a production like ‘Addictive’ is thickly textured by its varying contexts and modes of reception.

An unremitting focus on the virtual violence or cultural imperialism of sampling TRLH without permission or on the Orientalist schlock of the ‘Addictive’ video, a focus made acute by the sensational lawsuit, draws attention away from crucial dimensions of the production. These overlooked features, however, especially the role of the other major sample in ‘Addictive,’ a well-worn drum loop from B.T. Express’ ‘Do It (Til Your Satisfied)’ (1974), point to different possibilities of interpretation and engagement. In the heat of litigation, Dr Dre notoriously described Quik’s production as nothing more than ‘a drum track, bassline and this Indian girl singing’ (Kusnur, “The melody of errors”), belittling both Lata and Bappi. And yet, this is not altogether wrong. Although it unfairly downplays the important textural and tonal elements borrowed along with Lata’s vocal lines, the production is best understood as comprising four main tracks: (1) the TRLH material; (2) the B.T. Express breakbeat; (3) DJ Quik’s original bassline; and (4) Truth Hurts’s and Rakim’s newly recorded vocals. That the accompaniment track is based largely around two main sources, TRLH and the B.T. break, both rather recognizable, is consistent with the production oeuvres of both Quik and Dre. Indeed, such layering of relatively long, relatively unprocessed samples is a hallmark of the ‘G-Funk’ sound pioneered in Los Angeles by Quik, Dre, and a handful of other producers, though the *filmi* source material here is a stark departure from the slinky 1970s funk that gave the subgenre its name.⁷

Cued into the sampled breakbeat rather than the *filmi* loops alone, listeners are drawn more deeply into the mix. One remarkable facet of the beat to ‘Addictive’ is how the B.T. Express break, which has propelled a number of other hip-hop tracks, overlaps so directly with the recurring rhythmic pattern in TRLH. A spare arrangement consisting only of a conga, a kick drum, a hi-hat cymbal and hands clapping, the first two measures of ‘Do It (Til Your Satisfied)’ trace out a 3 + 3 + 2 cross-rhythm against the underlying pulse and pronounced backbeat. This polyrhythm jumps out of the texture, accented by two open tones struck on the conga. Felicitously, this particular pattern is commonplace in Indian popular music, Caribbean dance music, and a wide swath of African-American pop and dance repertoires. Lined up with the loops from TRLH, it fits perfectly. So crucial is this overlap to the production, it would seem, that the phrasing of the main vocal melody in the verses of ‘Addictive’ also emphasize this rhythm.

Attending to the full mix that propels ‘Addictive’ makes possible other kinds of critical engagements with the song. Note that Quik’s story of serendipitous discovery (overhearing TRLH while brushing his teeth in another room) privileges sonic power over exotic semiotics: he was moved by the sound of TRLH before seeing any belly dancing.⁸ His arrangement for ‘Addictive’ bears this out. Quik builds carefully around the original recording but hardly slavishly. For one, the bassline he composed – with its loping legato slides between notes, long sustained tones, and assertive harmonic progressions – re-contextualizes the sampled melodies while creating a dynamic degree of tension between the co-present melodic lines and their implied harmonic structures. Moreover, the two loops from TRLH represent but a small fraction of the recording from *Jyoti*, and Quik demonstrates a savvy ear with regard to which ‘foreign’ fragments might provide the basis of an R&B hit.

'Kaliyon Ka Chaman'

The logics of musical-cultural representation took a different trajectory when 'Addictive' was mediated for Indian audiences, in large part because the notion of 'remix' is itself a slippery and somewhat perilous term in India. In the most general sense, the category 'remix' describes a recording that reinterprets a preexisting film song in some way. The label might refer to a discrete genre of music promoted on television and sold in music stores, or to a musical practice in metropolitan dance clubs and DJ culture. While both song contexts (genre and practice) are present in India, mainstream media and industry discourses tend to use remix primarily in the former sense. The term emerged in the 1980s as the domestic company T-Series exploited loopholes in Indian copyright law by creating versions of film songs that had previously been released by HMV (later Saregama). In the late 1990s, after the international success of Bally Sagoo's *Bollywood Flashback* (1994), remix as a genre emerged in India. However, commercial remixes tend not to use sound samples from the original recordings, but instead record interpretations of film songs using new singers, styles, and accompaniment. Outside of India, these song interpretations would more likely be labeled 'remakes' (or 'covers') rather than 'remixes,' but the associations of remix with this earlier history has meant that the terms are largely synonymous in India. Further complicating the local valence of *remix*, film soundtracks in recent years have included remixed versions (in the practice sense) of one or more of the important songs used to market the film on radio and television.

Beginning in the late 1990s, music labels began to promote commercial remix videos on television. Mirroring the schizophrenic of Indian films more generally (Feld 258), actors lip-synced the songs. Even though most of these videos created song narratives that portrayed any number of innocuous romantic moments, the most notorious remixed songs tended to represent highly erotic moments that became metonymic with the genre as a whole. Along with young female starlets dressed for – and dancing in – urban nightclubs, ostensibly innocent lyrics were resituated to fit the narrative of an eroticized club context. Hence, in the early 2000s remix was the site of a moral panic about representations of 'vulgar' female sexuality and claimed by critics to be sign of the collapse of musical creativity in India. As an exemplar of these notorious remixes, 'Kaliyon Ka Chaman' (hereafter KKC) emerged at the height of this moral panic. However, insofar as TRLH came from a film that had largely been forgotten, and from a period of film song that critics had been trying to forget, it would be difficult to imagine that many would be offended by the reuse of this particular song, notwithstanding its association with Lata Mangeshkar. Similarly, while the video fit the conventions of early 2000s remix videos, it would be difficult to argue that the lyrics and picturization represented narrative contexts that were any more erotic than the original.

The TRLH melody's mediation for contemporary Indian audiences yielded a number of noteworthy lyrical and musical transformations in the KKC version. Despite his initial claim that his remix had no explicit inspiration, Harry Anand was later forced to admit that executives at Universal Music had approached him to create KKC. Universal Music India apparently acquired rights to use the Bappi melody that their parent company did not. Accordingly, Anand's remix is not based on TRLH but is rather a remake of 'Addictive' based upon the material from DJ Quik's samples of TRLH. Like other Indian remixes, Anand does not sample the original song, whose melody is performed by the singer Shashwati. Yet KKC is unusual in the context of popular Indian remixes because the lyrics were rewritten to fit the melody of the refrain, and because no melodic or lyric material

from the verses of TRLH appears in KKC. From a rhythmic perspective, the reggae bassline and gliding synthesizer point to transnational dance influences, even as the high-pitched congas on beats two and four index ‘Addictive’ (and its mediation of the B.T. Express sample). More than the sound of ‘Addictive,’ however, the promotional video for KKC borrows the same visual aesthetic and features women dancing in a harem-like space clearly patterned on the set of the Truth Hurts video. In other words, the KKC song and video are, perhaps unwittingly, sites of auto-Orientalism, as they (re)present sounds and images of India that originate from Western representations of India. It is worth noting in passing that KKC was not the only Indian remix of the TRLH melody to do this, as the common practice of borrowing and reframing successful ideas led to competing music labels releasing different versions in several Indian languages to capitalize on the popularity of Universal’s version of KKC.⁹

Indian riddims, mysterious mashups, and other interpolated interpellations

‘Addictive’ has enjoyed an extensive social life as its musical materials have been reused and remediated. Because of hip-hop’s and R&B’s global reach and resonance, DJ Quik’s sampling of TRLH for ‘Addictive’ served, essentially, to donate these musical materials to the wider world. Long in close conversation with African-American pop, dancehall reggae enjoyed its own ‘Orientalist’ moment in the first half of the 2000s (Marshall, “War Ina Babylon”). While consistent with reggae’s dominant mode of production, most of the dancehall productions nodding to the East used newly played motifs rather than samples (e.g., *Tabla, Diwali, Egyptian, Amharic, Baghdad, Allo Allo, Middle East*). One important exception was the *Bollywood* riddim, also colloquially known as ‘the *Indian*.’ Released in 2002 and produced by ‘Computer Paul’ Henton, *Bollywood* followed closely on the heels of ‘Addictive’ and represented a blatant attempt to ‘re-lick’ DJ Quik’s accompanimental track in order to bring it into local circulation as a *riddim* that would come to serve as the basis for 20 new vocal performances (eventually issued on CD and vinyl as Greensleeves’ ‘rhythm album’ #30).¹⁰

Once again, by attending to sonic matters, we appreciate how *Bollywood* emerges as it departs from ‘Addictive’ and TRLH. Comprising samples and newly synthesized parts, the *Bollywood* riddim contains telling clues about its producer’s access to – or knowledge of – all that went into ‘Addictive.’ With no access to TRLH – remember, DJ Quik made his copy from the television, and even Indian journalists had difficulty tracking down the *Jyoti* soundtrack – Computer Paul’s task demanded some crafty creativity. The TRLH samples in ‘Addictive’ are nearly always heard alongside the B.T. Express drum loop and Quik’s bassline; the only exception is the very opening of the recording, before the drums enter. Computer Paul clearly copies the Lata sample from the first few seconds of ‘Addictive,’ running it through a high-pass filter to mute Quik’s bassline. Lacking unadorned access to the second half of the chorus (‘Thoda reshama lagta hai, thoda sheesha lagta hai’), he instead takes the first part, ‘Kaliyon ka chaman tab banta hai,’ and stretches it from a two-measure phrase into a four-measure figure via some inspired digital surgery: after the phrase plays, he replays it in reverse, creating a slightly new contour for the melody while preserving its distinctive timbral qualities – and, of course, further disregarding any sort of lexical meaning. He also adds a new bassline, implying yet another harmonic recontextualization of Bappi’s melody, as well as a programmed drum track that closely imitates without actually sampling the B.T. Express break (again suggesting a lack of access), and finally, a wheezy synthesizer melody evoking the sound of 1990s LA hip-hop (and Dr Dre’s G-Funk period in particular). Sonically speaking, then,

one might hear at least two musical Others figured in the mix, indexed by the sounds of Bollywood and hip-hop.

Because Computer Paul could not easily copy the cooing-and-flute loops that undergird the verses of 'Addictive,' the Bollywood riddim takes a more spare shape, appropriate for a vehicle intended to support a diversity of vocal performances. Indeed, the 20 recordings ultimately released by Greensleeves typify the range of topics that dominate on *riddim* outings, with few engaging at all with the sound or possible connotations of the *filmi* sample: explicit odes to sex, marijuana, Rastafari, badmen and bravado, and performance prowess more generally (whether in the bedroom, the studio, or the streets). This is dancehall multi-valence at its best, and for the most part, the accompanimental track and the Lata sample are completely unremarked upon by most artists, their signs serving more strongly here, in Jamaica, to signal the contemporary sound of cool global modernity than Orientalist fantasies.¹¹

Other downstream appearances of TRLH, 'Addictive,' and KKC show how the importance of reuse, juxtaposition, and allusion in musical practice ensure a certain spillage of these materials beyond the reach of international law, especially in non-commercial and other 'underground' contexts. Enjoying such widespread circulation, the sounds and images from these productions inevitably enter into everyday circuits of cultural production and meaning. One example is a mashup combining the videos of KKC and Usher's 'Yeah' (2004). Posted to YouTube in 2006 and attributed to DJ Brown Fiyah, the video had accrued nearly 300,000 views at the time of writing.¹² Like many other mashups, 'Kaliyon Ka Chaman (Yeah Remix)' is not a distinguished production; the two songs sit awkwardly atop each other. More than anything, their combination suggests that the two tracks possess some currency for the maker of the mashup and, potentially, its audiences. The production of the mashup and its publication on YouTube serve as a sign of the creator's interests and abilities as a hobbyist digital artist as well as someone navigating, in an engaged and creative manner, the intersecting worlds of US and Indian popular music.

One final example worth considering is 'Saye Mbott' (2008), a song produced by Maga Bo, a US expatriate based in Rio de Janeiro, featuring the vocal performances of ALIF (Attaque Liberatoire de l'Infanterie Feministe), a hip-hop trio from Dakar, Senegal. Here the Indian dimensions are perhaps entirely muted, and we behold how certain elements of these recordings travel separately and take on new lives of their own. 'Saye Mbott' opens with an invocation that employs the verse melody sung by Truth Hurts – i.e., the phrasing that closely follows the central rhythm of the B.T. Express break and TRLH. This sort of allusion – sometimes designated an 'interpolation' in legal parlance – or intertextuality, is central to hip-hop and dancehall practice (the two genres most audibly informing ALIF's hybrid style). Such a recognizable melody, even some years after its moment of chart-topping ubiquity, serves as a source of global (and local) currency, a hook for catching the ears of a potentially international audience and a way to play with musical memory and the significations of the tune being referenced. This is not the first time the melody from 'Addictive' has been re-sung, and it will likely not be the last. The melodies and rhythms swirling together in TRLH, 'Addictive,' and KKC have entered into a global repertory of gestures and signs, and they will no doubt continue to serve as potent, polysemic resources for future performances. Taken together, this set of travelling, shape-shifting, always-accruing musical materials audibly embody what Sharma calls the 'circularity and multidirectionality of appropriation' (244).

Peregrination, remediation, and evaluation

As this article suggests, the song-and-sample complex gathered around ‘Addictive’ has a convoluted history that points both to diffused authorship and to a representational feedback loop of spectacular Otherness that absorbs as it reflects. From Bappi’s film mediation of Western pop songs for Indian audiences, to DJ Quik’s layering of samples in ‘Addictive’ or Computer Paul’s resourceful tweaking for the *Bollywood* riddim, to Anand’s remix-by-the-numbers or Bappi’s own (derivative) version of his original idea, each example indexes mediated encounters with difference according to its respective audiences’ generic or stylistic expectations. Against critiques of unethical appropriation or legal battles over property and propriety, these reverberations of ‘Addictive’ bear witness to a more complicated, and productive, process of transnational cultural exchange and remediation. What may seem like bald acts of appropriation also serves as rich sites of creativity and collective production of popular culture, social life, and personal meaning – as resources for shaping selfhood out of engagements with sameness and difference (cf. Novak).

Finally, beyond issues of appropriation and subjectivity, it may be worth asking whether one version is better than another. Nabeel Zuberi hardly minces words on this point: ‘This African-American use of Lata’s voice was funkier and more creative than that achieved by Hindi remix producers in India and the South Asian diaspora’ (62).¹³ DJ Quik expresses a similar evaluation in a 2005 interview with *URB* magazine:

Some Indian people are still mad at me for that song, because they thought that it bastardized their culture. I’ve had Pakistani people interview me that are so standoffish it’s almost disrespectful. They are authentically pissed off about that record ... [Dre] thought it was some innovative shit and had Truth do her vocals and mixed it. So who was the real producer? I wasn’t even in the studio when Dre produced the song. He didn’t have to throw me a bone and give me full production credit, but he did. It started a little trend. I heard Tim[baland] doing it, Erick Sermon. Even the people that sued us had to admit the shit was hot. [“Lolita was a Man Eatah”]

There is, perhaps, no better evidence for the power of DJ Quik’s basic, but novel rearrangement of two sections from TRLH than the fact that it has so strongly shaped subsequent iterations of TRLH – indeed, reviving while revising the underlying composition. Notwithstanding that KKC was produced without any reference to (or knowledge of) the original (Kusnur, “My Song”), no one should overlook the added irony of Bappi’s own attempt to cash in on the popularity of ‘Addictive’ and ‘Kaliyon Ka Chaman’ with a remix of his own – tellingly titled KKC rather than TRLH. Bappi’s version also essentially adopts Quik’s reformulation of the original, as it cuts the same material while repeating the same sections and inserting similar interludes.¹⁴ Inspiring imitation and innovation back in India – not to mention providing a major boost, in the form of an anthem, to the global *desi* remix scene (especially in London and New York) – would seem to offer strong confirmation of the sympathetic resonance of Quik’s procedures.¹⁵ One could even argue that Quik could countersue based on the success of his edit and enhancement of TRLH.

Taken together, the constellation of recordings and performances discussed in this article bears witness to a kind of collective creative labor that exceeds and escapes the restrictive logics and legal regulation of national-cultural ownership, individual authorship, or black-and-white moralizing. If it takes a little lawsuit to reveal such a flowering garden of global, (re)mediated cosmopolitanism, at least most of us can sing and dance and remediate along while the lawyers do battle to decide how much of one rich guy’s fortune should be given to some other rich guy.

Notes

1. For example, see Roberts 83–6, Demers 101–104, Zumkhawala-Cook, Sharma 247–56.
2. Indeed, at the end of the song she steals some of his jewelry as he lies passed out on her floor.
3. It is telling that in his first hearing of ‘Addictive,’ Kusnur first suspected that it was using a sample from an R.D. Burman or Laxmikant-Pyarelal composition.
4. On the other hand, one might argue that DJ Quik’s treatment of the vocals as secondary to the accompaniment is in step with recent aesthetic trends in Indian film music (Beaster-Jones 429), and hence this situation of the vocal sample is hardly unambiguously disrespectful as a gesture (not to mention that hip-hop producers have applied the same procedure to English-language vocals, again often with little sense that their lexical content matters).
5. Nitasha Sharma, for instance, indicts Orientalist hip-hop videos as an expression of ‘American nationalism aligned with Western imperial projects in the Middle East’ (245), while Maira contends that belly dancing in the US ‘taps into a larger, and quite pervasive, cultural imaginary of “un-free” Arab and Muslim women needing emancipation by Western modernity and “democracy” that is used to justify the War on Terror’ (“Belly Dancing,” 340). Chris Fitzpatrick’s 2002 review of the ‘Addictive’ video for Pop Matters, however, takes the cake for charges of cultural imperialism, arguing that assumptions about third world backwardness ‘are embedded into every note, chant, beat, image, and dance in “Addictive,” relying on the romantic notion that the Middle East and India are inherently mystical and sexy, as if everyone studies the Kama Sutra, practices Tantric Sex, rides magic carpets, and belly dances naked in the moonlight.’ Tellingly, in the course of his strident critique, Fitzpatrick romantically describes TRLH as ‘traditional Hindi music.’
6. In a 2003 interview, Raje Shwari, an Indian-American singer who was collaborating with Timbaland as a sort of in-the-studio sample-kit, echoed Miller’s sentiment in an attempt to focus on the bright side of such sampling: ‘How cool is it that they chose Indian music to make hit records while indirectly paying homage to our culture.’ http://www.desiclub.com/desimusic/desimusic_features/music_article.cfm?id=110 (accessed 25 July 2011).
7. As a term ‘G-Funk’ is derived from P-Funk, or Parliament-Funkadelic (the venerated bands led by George Clinton), from whom a great many samples derive, combined with gangsta (G) rap.
8. Quik had Zee TV, a Mumbai-based satellite channel, running in the background while he engaged in mundane activities, a testament to the cosmopolitan ordinariness of such media.
9. These ‘remixes of remixes’ include versions in Hindi by the T-Series and Venus music labels, that like the remixes of the 1980s, were deliberate attempts to mislead potential buyers (Beaster-Jones 438). Another version entitled ‘Ee Deshadalli Karunaadu’ was written for the Kannada/Telugu film *Raktha Kanneeru* (2003).
10. For more on ‘re-licking’ and dancehall reggae’s distinctive ‘riddim method,’ see Manuel and Marshall, “The Riddim Method.”
11. Not surprisingly, considering how many soca songs are patterned after contemporary hip-hop and dancehall tracks, Trinidad contributed its own permutation in 2003 with Bobo & Agony’s tellingly titled ‘Soca Taliban’ (the term Taliban serving, in the wake of 9/11, as a general slur in the Caribbean for anyone from the Middle East or South Asia). While the track’s musical logic is likely more guided by the currency of hip-hop – not to mention Indian popular music – in Trinidad than simple xenophobia, the vocalists take the opportunity to make tenuous metaphorical uses of ‘Taliban’ and ‘Bin Laden’ over the Indian-esque accompaniment, a classic Orientalist conflation. Notably, if consistent with soca studio procedures, no samples are used here; rather, the elements borrowed from ‘Addictive’ (including the B.T. drums and TRLH’s vocal and flute melodies) are replayed, with some variation, by local musicians.
12. ‘Kaliyon Ka Chaman (Yeah Remix),’ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EdBzyhTjBM> (accessed 30 July 2011).
13. This insight is, of course, contested by Harry Anand who argues, ‘My song is a much bigger hit than Addictive. It’s a rage in the UK. I asked people in England which song they liked more. They said they liked mine’ (qtd. in Kusnur, “My Song”).
14. In an attempt, it would seem, to keep all proceeds ‘in the family,’ *Bappiwood Remixes* (2003) enlists Bappi’s son and daughter for production duties and vocals, respectively.
15. The Incredible Kid, a DJ from Portland, Oregon specializing in bhangra and Bollywood-derived club music, brought to my attention a half dozen additional remixes of TRLH, ‘Addictive,’ and/or KKC – manufactured for the underground mixtape circuit – which he picked up from music shops in Jackson Heights, Queens in 2003. For a partial listing of such downstream works, see the comments left on 26 July 2008 at <http://wayneandwax.com/?p=100>.

Notes on contributors

Wayne Marshall is an ethnomusicologist (PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007) focusing on media and cultural politics across the US, the Caribbean, and the wider world. A lecturer on Music at Harvard University, he co-edited *Reggaeton* (Duke University Press, 2009), serves as associate editor of the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, and has published in such journals as *Popular Music* and *Callaloo* while writing for the likes of *The Wire* and the *Boston Phoenix*.

Jayson Beaster-Jones is an ethnomusicologist (PhD, University of Chicago, 2007) focusing on the Indian music industry, popular musics, and the value(s) of music in the marketplace. An assistant professor of performance studies at Texas A&M University, he has published in the journals *Ethnomusicology* and *Popular Music*.

References

- Arnold, Alison. "Popular Film Song in India: a Case of Mass-Market Musical Eclecticism." *Popular Music* 7.2 (1988): 177–88. Print.
- Beaster-Jones, Jayson. "Evergreens to Remixes: Hindi Film Songs and India's Popular Music Heritage." *Ethnomusicology* 53.3 (2009): 425–49. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Illuminations*. London: Fontana Press, 1973. 211–44. Print.
- Demers, Joanna. *Steal This Music: How Intellectual Property Law Affects Musical Creativity*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 2006. Print.
- Feld, Steven. "From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis: On the Discourses and Commodification Practices of 'World Music' and 'World Beat'." *Music Grooves*. Ed. Steven Feld and Charles Keil. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1994. 257–89. Print.
- Fitzpatrick, Chris. 2002. "Boom Go the Bombs, Boom Goes the Bass." *Pop Matters* 11 June 2002. Web. 25 July 2011.
- Kusnur, Narendra. "Melody of Errors." *Mumbai Mid-Day* 21 June 2002. Web. 25 July 2011.
- Kusnur, Narendra. "Melody of Errors: The Sequel." *Mumbai Mid-Day* 26 June 2002. Web. 25 July 2011.
- Kusnur, Narendra. "My song is a bigger hit: Harry Anand." *Mumbai Mid-Day* 9 Oct. 2002. Web. 25 July 2011.
- "Lolita Was a Man Eatah, and other music news . . ." Blog. *Sepia Mutiny*. 17 Nov. 2005. Web. 2 June 2012. <http://sepiamutiny.com/blog/2005/11/17/lolita_was_a_ma/>
- Maira, Sunaina. "Belly Dancing: Arab-Face, Orientalist Feminism, and U.S. Empire." *American Quarterly* 60.2 (2008): 317–45. Print.
- Marshall, Wayne. "big ggyptian." *Wayneandwax.com* 16 Apr. 2010, Web. 25 July 2011.
- Marshall, Wayne. "Giving Up Hip-hop's Firstborn: A Quest for the Real after the Death of Sampling." *Callaloo* 29.3 (2006): 868–92. Print.
- Marshall, Wayne. "War Ina Babylon: Jamaica and the War on Terror." *XLR8R* 8 Aug. 2005. Web. 25 July 2011. Print.
- Manuel, Peter, and Wayne Marshall. "The Riddim Method: Aesthetics, Practice, and Ownership in Jamaican Dancehall." *Popular Music* 25.3 (2006): 447–70. Print.
- Miller, Kevin. "Bolly'hood Remix." *Institute for Studies In American Music Newsletter* 33.2 (2004). 30 May 2012. Web.
- Novak, David. "Cosmopolitanism, Remediation, and the Ghost of Bollywood." *Cultural Anthropology* 25.1 (2010): 40–72. Print.
- Roberts, Tamara. "The Elusive Truth: Intercultural Music Exchange in 'Addictive.'" *Interculturalism: Exploring Critical Issues*. Ed. Dianne Powell and Fiona Sze. Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2004. 83–6. 30 May 2012. Web.
- Sharma, Nitasha. *Hip Hop Desis: South Asian Americans, Blackness, and a Global Race Consciousness*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010. Print.
- Zuberi, Nabeel. "Sampling South Asian Music." *South Asian Technoscapes*. Ed. Radhika Gajjala and Venkataramana Gajjala. New York: Peter Lang, 2008. 49–70. Print.
- Zumkhawala-Cook, Richard. "Bollywood Gets Funky: American Hip-Hop, Basement Bhangra, and the Racial Politics of Music." *Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance*. Ed. Sangita Gopal and Sujata Moorti. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2008. 308–30. Print.

Discography

- Anand, Harry. "Kaliyon ka Chaman." *UMI 10 v.3*. Universal Music India, 2002. CD.
- Bobo & Agony. "Soca Taliban." *Lif Up Yuh Leg an Trample*. Honest Jon's Records, 2004. CD.
- B.T. Express. "Do It ('Til You're Satisfied)." Scepter Records, 1974. CD.
- Computer Paul. *Bollywood (Greensleeves Rhythm Album #30)*. Greensleeves Records, 2002. CD.
- Elliot, Missy. "Get Ur Freak On." *Miss E... So Addictive*. Elektra, 2001. CD.
- Jay-Z. "Big Pimpin'." *Vol. 3... Life and Times of S. Carter*. Roc-A-Fella Records, 2000. CD.
- Lahiri, Bappi, *Bappiwood Remixes*. Bappiwood Records, 2003. CD.
- Lahiri, Bappi. "Thoda Resham Lagta Hai." *Jyoti*. Gramophone Company of India, 1981.
- Maga Bo. "Saye Mbott." *Archipelagoes*. Soot Records, 2008. CD.
- Sagoo, Bally. *Bollywood Flashback*. Columbia, 1994. CD.
- Truth Hurts. "Addictive." *Truthfully Speaking*. Aftermath/Interscope, 2002. CD.
- Usher, "Yeah." *Confessions*, Arista. 2004. CD.

Filmography

- Jyoti*. Dir. Pramod Chakravorty, Music Dir. Bappi Lahiri. Pramod Films, 1981. Film.
- Rakta Kanneeru*. Dir. Sadhu Kokila, Music dir. Sadhu Kokila. Vrushabhadri Productions, 2003. Film.