

Free essay on analyzing bollywood songs: deewangi deewangi in om shanti om

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Indian's populist film industry, known often by its colloquial term Bollywood, often uses song and dance not only as a work of spectacle within the body of the film, but as a way to significantly discuss the narrative and characters of the film itself. Songs and dance sequences provide opportunities for the characters to explore their jubilation, sorrow or consternation, among a plethora of other emotions, and offered significant platforms for the stardom of Indian film stars, who would often also be significant presences in the film and culture scene in India. One of the most significant Bollywood film stars of the late 20th and early 21st century is Shah Rukh Khan, star of the Bollywood film *Om Shanti Om* (2007). The use of song and dance within *Om Shanti Om*, particularly with Shah Rukh Khan in the sequence for *Deewangi Deewangi*, cements his character (and Khan himself) as seductive yet respectful young man who navigates a delicate balance between masculinity and femininity. At the same time, Khan also became a symbolic example of the aspirational nature of Bollywood film stars, acting in his double role as the selfless, unassuming aspiring actor Om and the successful actor O. K. In *Om Shanti Om*, SRK plays a double role; in the first half of the film, he is Om Prakash Makhija, a young aspiring artist in the Hindi film industry of the 1970s who dreams of being an award-winning film star with the fame and money to match. However, he is eventually killed in a hit-and-run accident by a couple on their way to the hospital to give birth, after Om loses his love Shanti in a fire deliberately set by evil producer Mukesh (Arjun Rampal). However, SRK is effectively reincarnated in the form of O. K., the young boy who was born from the woman who hit Om on the way to the hospital, who subsequently becomes a film star in Om's stead.

While SRK is the star of *Om Shanti Om*, the *Deewangi Deewangi* sequence is as much of an opportunity to show off SRK's star image as it is a way to celebrate his status in the pantheon of famous Bollywood film stars of the 2000s. After winning a similar award for acting (something Om dreamed about in OK's previous life), O. K. holds an after-party where the dance sequence takes place. The song itself is fairly straightforward, being your typical Bollywood pop song with a chorus that includes "All the hot girls put your hands up and say/Om Shanti Om!", making it a general song of celebration. For the most part, the song itself acts as an interruption of the action, being a response to a plot event that happened previously (OK accepting the award); to that end, *Deewangi Deewangi* is mostly an independent piece of spectacle unrelated to the main action.

The dance sequence itself fulfills many of the expectations of a Bollywood dance sequence, including coordinated dancing in groups and as couples, a thumping pop song to back it up, and a mixture of earnest dance prowess and comedic moments. SRK's dancing and performance style is in full force in this sequence, with his exaggerated outstretched arms, dramatic head movements, and cheeky facial expressions as he mugs for the camera. However, unlike many other star dance sequences, *Deewangi Deewangi* is not just about SRK – the sequence features a regularly-entering array of famous Bollywood stars (Zayed Khan, Rekha, Preity Zinta, etc.), who are all given their own moment to dance and interact with SRK and the other stars. SRK himself gets many moments dancing by himself and spinning seductively around Sandhya (Shanti's own reincarnated figure), but the vast majority of the sequence's shots feature SRK and three or four other

Bollywood film stars dancing in single file as the camera shows them getting along and having fun with each other. By insinuating the entirety of the Bollywood film industry to the song and dance sequence instead of just SRK, SRK's own star image is enhanced in multiple ways. First, SRK is shown to be a peer of the many other stars who are recognizable in Bollywood films, as their working together frames them as part of a community and lends SRK greater legitimacy. SRK's equal-opportunity interactions with his peers plays on the star's somewhat androgynous appeal, and his ability to navigate both masculine and feminine traits.

Furthermore, the egalitarian nature of the song also allows SRK to seem magnanimous and self-effacing, as he is comfortable enough with his star status that he invites the rest of Bollywood to share in his victory – these things immensely help his star image, as he flirts and pays respect to stars of all ages and genders in the sequence. Paying respects to the film stars of the past is also important in this sequence, as it is a central theme of the film: some of the older Bollywood male stars are given small comedic moments in which SRK plays along with their limited, awkward and slightly embarrassed dance moves, dancing alongside them while everyone smiles and laughs. This sequence allows members of several generations of Hindi film stars to interact with each other in a positive, celebratory way, serving as an ode to the Bollywood industry as a whole. In this way, Deewangi Deewangi both elevates SRK's star image and that of the rest of Bollywood, showing them to be fun-loving, respectful and gregarious individuals who want nothing more than to entertain.

However, by the end of the nine-minute sequence, a major plot event occurs,

cementing Deewangi Deewangi's important role as a transition into a darker act of the film, after OK achieves such a great personal height. At one point, a mysterious figure enters the club, the film cutting to Dutch angles and saturated blue lighting when OK recognizes him. The figure is revealed to be an older Mukesh, the film cutting back to flashes of Shanti's death by Mukesh's hands – revealing that OK has inherited Om's memories somehow from his previous life, and his recollection of the accident comes flooding back to him. The images of the flashback remind the audience of the contrast in plot, performance, costumes and appearance that Bollywood films had in the 1970s by flashing back and forth between that and the more slick, modern look of the 2000s portion of the film (Wilkinson-Weber 25). This plot event ends the sequence, performing an important role in the film – Deewangi Deewangi is the last hurrah of OK's life as an unconcerned film star, before his happiness is interrupted by a cosmic debt he owes to his predecessor to avenge Shanti's death, transitioning the film's plot toward that end.

In Deewangi Deewangi in Om Shanti Om, Shah Rukh Khan establishes himself as the perfect crossover Bollywood idol. Through his double role in the film, SRK establishes both his sensitive side and the effervescent, jubilant, seductive screen personas while connecting his own style to the history of Hindi cinema. The Deewanti Deewangi sequence in particular demonstrates a thesis statement of the state of modern Bollywood cinema as compared to the old style of the 1970s. SRK, notably, pays special attention to the cameo appearance of Kajol, the star of Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, the film that made SRK a superstar; this cements the fact that the

sequence in particular is a 'thank you' from SRK to the industry and those who made him a star (Ramnarine 151). Here, SRK shows himself to be both important enough to join the ranks of a bevy of important Bollywood stars, and magnanimous enough to share substantial screen time with them. The result is a high-energy dance sequence that celebrates not just SRK's accomplishments as a Bollywood film star, but the Bollywood film industry as a whole and its debt to Hindi film history.

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