

**Anjali Gera Roy, *The Magic of Bollywood: At Home and Abroad*.
New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012. 356 pp. ISBN 9788132107323.**

The Magic of Bollywood: At Home and Abroad, edited by Anjali Gera Roy, builds upon Joseph S. Nye's concept of "soft power" and critically examines Bollywood's claim to be the agent of India's "soft power" thereby making it a distinctive and powerful disseminator of Indian culture and values abroad. The essays in the volume have been divided into four parts. The first two parts focus on "brand Bollywood" and the soft power of Bollywood, whereas the next two sections highlight its popularity in not only South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa and Russia (its traditional markets) but also in the Western nations such as Australia, Canada and Europe.

Scholars in literature, theatre, film, dance, music, media, cultural studies and sociology from different parts of the world such as Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Germany, Russia, the US, Senegal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Canada, in addition to India have approached this challenging issue from varying perspectives. Further, a variety of theoretical and empirical approaches have been deployed to focus on Bollywood's appeal to diverse ethnic groups scattered across the world. The essays which specifically engage with Nye's notion of soft power examine Bollywood's efficacy as an instrument of soft power and international relations and diplomacy, while others foreground the appeal of Bollywood films by focussing on their content, audience and use. This book also underscores the role of Indian diasporas in popularising Hindi movies in the country of their residence and also talks about the rising gross revenue by this industry. One of the scholars, M.K Raghavendra in his essay views Bollywood as a global and local global brand that functions as a "free floating signifier." On a cautionary note, Sunitha Chitrapu's essay reveals that the elation over Bollywood's globalisation and its emergence as a brand may be premature. She produces impressive figures to substantiate her thesis. In a similar vein, Schaefer and Karan, and Meena T. Pillai argue that Bollywood's shift toward a more global content in the post-liberalisation era reflects the industry's efforts to globalise the content in order to appeal to wider global audiences, a shift that threatens to erase indigenous Indian content from Bollywood films and dilute its "nationalist" ideology.

The multidisciplinary essays included in the volume have not only interestingly mapped the trajectory of Bollywood and the changes it has undergone since India's independence in 1947, but have convincingly demonstrated "the convergences as well as divergences between the attractiveness of Indian films, their brand marketing by a global cultural industry, smart power, and soft power" (21). The publication of the book in 2012, the year in which the Hindi film industry celebrated hundred years of its

existence, is a timely intervention and a joy to read. Although I tend to agree with those perceptive contributors to the study who caution against reading too much into Bollywood's soft power, the erudite work by the editor and the contributors and the intellectual fare they have provided cannot be ignored or underrated.

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