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## Analyzing Restructured form of *Qawwalis* in Hindi Cinema

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### Abstract:

This paper views the (re)structured form of *Qawwali*, a genre of music, in the Hindi cinema. It explores the meaning of *Qawwali*, its traditional form and looks at what were the changes and how the changes were brought about into it after they started getting featured in films. In this paper some select *Qawwalis* have been taken up for literary analysis. These *Qawwalis* have first been translated into English followed by an analysis. The analysis includes, lyrical analysis, analysis of the *Qawwali* based on the plot of the film and also how it has been woven with the life of the protagonist of the film, and finally analyzing whether the *Qawwali* featured in the film actually fulfils the function of *Qawwali*.

### Keywords:

Qawwali, Hindi cinema, films, analysis, music, songs

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The word *Qawwali* has been taken from an Arabic word 'qual' that means 'to speak'. Its origin as a musical genre can be traced back to 8<sup>th</sup> century Persia that travelled to South Asia, Turkey and Uzbekistan respectively during the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

*Qawwali*, being a performing art, has a group of people, professional musicians, who are led by one or two singers. The whole group accompanies in the performance. *Qawwali*, being an occasion, is a gathering of people in which mysticism is realized by listening to the music or by 'sama'. The message of this mystical poetry is delivered by ceaselessly repeating the God's name (zikr). It thus fulfils a religious function that is to arouse mystic love, even divine ecstasy, the core experience of Sufism.

The credit of introducing *Qawwali* in the Indian context goes to the Sufi musician, poet and scholar, Amir Khusraw. He was a mystic and a spiritual disciple of Nizammuddin Auliya of Delhi. He is regarded as the "father of *Qawwali*". He is also credited with introducing Persian, Arabic and Turkish elements into Indian classical music. Muinuddin chisti, 13<sup>th</sup> century saint who settled in Ajmer, Rajasthan, helped to 'Indianize sama' (audition) through languages, instrumentation, melodies and rhythms resulting in increased acceptance of it. It increased *Qawwalis*' impact on Hindu musical genres such as Bhajan and other forms. Hindu-Muslim musical relationships continued in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Urdu and Punjabi are primary in the repertoire of *Qawwali*. There are some in Persian and also in some of the dialects of north India like Brajbhasha and Awadhi. The poetry is understood to be spiritual in nature. The central themes of *Qawwali* are love, devotion and longing (of man for the divine). The group of *Qawwali* musicians typically consists of eight or nine men including a lead singer, one or two side singers, one or two harmoniums and percussionist who articulate the metric framework using a

dholak or a tabla (a pair of single headed or double headed drum). There is also a chorus of four or five men who repeat key verses, and who aid percussion by hand clapping. These performers sit cross-legged on the ground in two rows- the lead singer, side singers, and the harmonium player(s) in the front row, and the chorus and percussionists in the back row. The traditional form of *Qawwali* is between 15-30 minutes long. However, the longest commercially released *Qawwali* runs over 115 minutes, 'hashr ke roz yeh poochunga' by Aziz Mian Qawwal.

It is a very energetic musical performance of Sufi Muslim poetry that aims to lead listeners to a state of religious ecstasy, to a spiritual union with Allah (God). *Qawwali* is a musical vehicle by which a group of male musicians- called qawwals delivers inspirational Sufi messages to a traditionally male assembly of devotees. Most significant of these gatherings take place in Sufi shrines, on the anniversary of death of the saint, that is associated with the Shrine. Lesser mehefil-e-sama is held throughout the year on Thursdays, when Muslims remember the deceased, or on Fridays, the day of prayer.

*Qawwali*, however took a new form and slowly became devoid of its traditional elements in many different ways. One of the reasons was the entry of *Qawwali* into Bollywood. Songs have been an integral part of Indian consciousness. Music has been there in our lives since a long time. All the celebrations were and are still not complete without music. In all different cultures of India, music is the common cultural aspect that all cultures share. In the early twentieth century music acquired a rich place in the Bollywood movies. It was in 1931, the first sound film, *Alam Ara*, that featured the first song ever in Bollywood. It was 'de de khuda ke naam pe pyaare', which was sung by Wazir Mohammad Khan. (Ganesh, 2008:02) In 1934 Hindi film songs began to be recorded on gramophones and later, played on radio channels, giving rise to a new form of mass entertainment in India which was responsive to popular demand.

The Hindi song was an integral feature of Hindi mainstream cinema. Sangeeta Gopal and Sujata Moorti writes that in multi-cultural India, according to Partha Chatterjee, "the Hindi film song cut through all the language barriers in India, to engage in lively communication with the nation where more than twenty languages are spoken and... scores of dialects exist" (Sangeeta Gopal, Sujata Moorti, 14). Bollywood music has drawn its inspiration from numerous traditional sources. Bollywood songs formed the staple of popular music in south Asia for over five decades. These songs exported to most countries around Asia and wherever the Indian diaspora had spread. The spread was roused by the advent of cheap plastic tape cassettes.

The increase of globalization also affected the songs in the film industry. There were new experiments done with the songs for example the lyrics of the songs started incorporating two languages, Hindi as well as English as opposed to the strict Hindi music culture.

Since the 1940s Hindi film songs began to display different style and pattern of music. The traditional music was modified and given a new structure. This reflection of global musical fashions has continued in film songs up through present day. This new style of songs gained popularity and became a national craze, as audience responded like never before. Therefore this led to more experimentation in the songs and this is how popular music came into being.

There were changes in the film industry and along with these changes in the film industry; songs in these films also went through multiple changes. The changes involved social, cultural, political as well as technological changes. Therefore the Hindi film songs developed along these changes and grew from light classical and theatre songs and emerged in the 1940s as a distinct form known as filmy songs. Out of all the genres of music that emerged as a distinct style, one is *Qawwali*. Just like other forms of songs, *Qawwali* also evolved to become filmy *Qawwali*.

*Qawwali* as a musical genre started appearing in Bollywood movies and made a prominent position in it initially through 1950s Muslim social dramas and grew so much in popularity that it became mainstream- even continuing to live on today. Some of the earliest known film *Qawwalis* are *Hume to Loot Lia* from the movie *Al Hilal* (1958), *Yeh Ishq Ishq Hai* from the movie *Barsaat Ki Raat* (1960), *Parda Hai Parda* from the movie *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1979) etc.

These films featuring *Qawwali* became big hits at the box-office. Therefore as these film gained fame due to the *Qawwali* songs in it, it paved way for more *Qawwali numbers* in the film industry. But for making it more appealing, a number of experiments were made and slowly the traditional form and meaning of *Qawwali* started losing its design. It took a new form as opposed to the traditional one. There were a lot of experiments done with this genre and in doing so the real meaning, beliefs and the motif of it that was to connect with the divine and to reach the state of ecstasy was lost. *Qawwali* which serves a religious function, which connects human beings to the Divine, which praises the Divine and shows the love of human beings towards the Divine, was totally reversed in the early *Qawwalis* of Bollywood. However, in the later decades of the Bollywood movies, there is an altogether different form of *Qawwali* that can be seen. *Qawwali* as a genre kept evolving in its style, orchestration, lexical, picturization, themes etc.

As the songs in the Bollywood films that are a part of the plot of the film, *Qawwalis* are restructured in such a manner that they fit into the story of the film, which revolves around the protagonist of the film. Even those films in which the *Qawwali* is lyrically focused on the Divine, is shown being performed at a Shrine, cannot be called to fulfill the mannerism and quality of traditional *Qawwalis*, as *Qawwalis* in these films is somehow picturized in a manner that the viewers' attention and focus is also, not in the spiritual ecstatic *Qawwali* being featured, but on how it revolves around and is in connection with the protagonist. For example, the *Qawwalis* composed by A.R. Rahman can fall into this category, like *Kun faaya Kun*, *Khwaja mere Khwaja*, *Arziya*, *Piya Haji Ali* etc.

The traditional form of *Qawwali* has highly been misinterpreted and misappropriated in its representation in bollywood movies by presenting it as a form of entertainment, was one of the comments made by a person who was the care taker of one of the mazars at Lucknow. According to Raeez Ahmad, care taker of Hazrat kamaluddin Shah, 'mazar' in Lucknow, *Qawwali* is spiritual in nature which is the way to connect with Allah. All the listeners and the qawwal reach a state of ecstasy and they feel connected to the divine. All the qawwals sit among the listeners on the floor; there is no special stage for them. He said that yes, *Qawwali* now is made keeping in mind the interest of people but they (composers of *Qawwali* in Bollywood) forget to keep in mind the real meaning of it and by doing this they knowingly or unknowingly hurt the true nature of *Qawwali*. He cleared his point stating that when *Qawwali* in these films



are picturized as romantic numbers sung by a lover for his/her beloved, it degenerates the true meaning of *Qawwali* giving it totally a new form which is too far away from its actual meaning. There is a degeneration of love as a theme in *Qawwali* from divinity to its modern adaptation in movies. Therefore we see that in the Bollywood *Qawwali* there is a stripping down of the metaphorical and allegorical characteristics, found in the authentic *Qawwali*, thus producing a shallow, yet commercially marketable entity.

*Qawwali* is altered by cinema greatly. There are *Qawwalis* that are featured as item numbers, some which are in praise not of the divine but for the beloved, for example, *ae meri zohra jabeen*, from the movie *Waqt* (1965) and *Hume to loot lia mil k husn waalo ne* from the movie *Al Hilal* (1958).

The traditional or the authentic form of *Qawwali* as mentioned before is a group of male singers and was typically made for male devotees but *Qawwali* in bollywood took a major step forward by introducing even female qawwals. In the film *Barsaat ki Raat*, in the *Qawwali yeh ishq ishq hai* we can see two groups of singers out of which one is the female group.

These alteration made in *Qawwali* are generally to conform to the demands of commercial film music industry audiences accustomed to filmy songs. This filmy form of *Qawwali* is detached from the traditional spirit of *Qawwali* and has a showy quality which downgrades the religious/devotional aspect of it.

A prominent Sufi singer and qawwal Fareez Ayaz, whose roots can be traced back to the family tree of one of the earliest disciples of Amir Khusraw, and who is associated with Delhi *gharana* of *Qawwali*, commented in an interview that in Bollywood we see two parties singing *Qawwali*, in a sort of a competition. It is a highly inappropriate representation because it would mean, if the qawwal loses so does his *Qawwali*. According to him when *Qawwali* was not enough but its potential was, people started to find a way to make it entertaining. He said that *Qawwali* is not an entertainment and even if it is, it is a spiritual entertainment. *Qawwali* is all about its meaning but now in Bollywood films we also have *Qawwali* being portrayed as through a vulgar aspect. He added by saying that, "For being a qawwal you need to wear the embroidered feathered cap, be a Sufi by cleansing your internal temptations, you have to leave *sharab* (alcohol), *kebab* (meat), *shebab* (carnal desires), one needs to be a fakir to be a qawwal. People have tried to change *Qawwali* not for its name, but for their fame. *Qawwali* neither has nor will ever change".

*Qawwali* has been picturized in many indecent ways making it a part of popular culture. It has also been sexually portrayed for example in the film *Mein Hoon Na* the song *ishq jese hai ik aandhi*. As Mikko Viitamaki has said that the shift from the privacy of Sufi shrines to public sphere led to the emergence of popular *Qawwali* style characterized by a distinct conventions relating to music and lyrical content. Popular *Qawwali* has lost its function as a transformative meditative technique and acquired characteristics of entertainment. (Viitamaki, n.d:n.pag)

There are a lot of Bollywood films that feature *Qawwali* as a musical genre in them. I have taken into view a few select *Qawwalis* featured in Bollywood films. The films that I have taken to analyse the *Qawwalies* they feature will include, *Barsaat ki Raat*, *Amar*, *Akbar*, *Anthony*, and *Rockstar*.

*Barsaat ki raat* directed by P.L. Santoshi was released in 1960. This film became popular for its *Qawwali* songs. The main theme and plot of this film is based on *Qawwali*, therefore *Qawwali* in this film is not just another song of the film but it is very much the film itself. The movie starts with a practice session of singing which we later discover is a *qawwal gharana* (a place where musical ideology originated). The singers of this *gharana* are women, which was new to *Qawwali*, as in the traditional form of *Qawwali*, the *qawwals* are male. The very first change in this film was having introduced women as *qawwal*. The protagonist in the film is a shayar (poet). We find in the film that *Qawwali* is taken up as competition between different *gharanas* of *Qawwali*. Winning the competition is a way to keep the name of their family and it also is the source of income in the family. In the film, they talk about modern form of *kalam* (word of Allah) as the leader of one of the *gharanas* say “*naye andaaz ki kalam ki kami hai*” (lack of new style of writing). That meant that they (one party of *qawwals*) were losing the competition because of the preference of new style of *Qawwali* which they lacked. They had to embrace the change in *Qawwali* to earn their living. But the change that we see here in the film is devoid of any attribute we give to *Qawwali*. The lyrics first of all, instead of being for the divine (in praise of Allah or Prophet) are written in self-praise or to express either love or grief.

Some portions of the *Qawwali, Yeh Ishq Ishq Hai* and its analysis

Na to caarvaan ki talaash hai  
 Na to humsafar ki talaash hai  
 Mere shauq-e-khaana kharaab ko teri rehghuzar ki talaash hai  
 Mere naamuraad junoon ka hai ilaaj koi to maut hai  
 Jo davaa ke naam pe zeher hai  
 Usi chaaraagar ki talaash hai  
 Tera ishq hai meri aarzoo  
 Tera ishq hai meri aabroo  
 Dil ishq, jism ishq, aur jaan ishq hai  
 Imaan ki jo pooch to imaan ishq hai  
 Tera ishq mein kese chod doon  
 Meri umr bhar ki talaash hai.....  
 .....Kyuki ye ishq ishq hai, ishq ishq

### Translation

I am not in search of a caravan.  
 I am not in search of a fellow traveller  
 That ruined place of my desire is in search for a path that leads to you.  
 If there is any cure for my unfortunate obsession, then it is death  
 Who gives me the medicine named poison  
 I am in search of such a healer  
 Your love is my desire  
 Your love is my honour  
 My heart is love, my body is love, and my life is love  
 If you ask about faith, that is love too  
 How could I ever leave your love?  
 That love is my lifelong search.....  
 .....Because this is love

The above mentioned lines are taken from the song *Yeh Ishq Ishq Hai* from the movie *Barsaat Ki Raat* (1960), written by Sahir Ludhianvi. The lyrics of the poetry are written in a way that each stanza out do the previous one in explaining about love. The poetry is rich in allusions, wit, and transcendent symbolism. This poetry can be understood at many levels, from religious, to romantic, to quite literal. The *Qawwali* in this film is shown as a competition. The first stanza of the *Qawwali* is sung by the male group of singers. The poet writes that he is not in search of a caravan or a fellow traveller, but he talks about his ruined desire, that is an ambiguous term which can be understood as his desire to search for that path that leads to somebody. He calls this 'desire to search for the path' ruined because may be he has been searching for this path and he has not accomplished what he has been searching for. The next stanza is sung by the female group in which the poet talks about 'unfortunate obsession'. In the context of the previous stanza this obsession can be the obsession of finding the path that leads to somebody. He calls this obsession, unfortunate. He says that if there is any cure for this obsession, it is death and he wants to search for such a healer who would give him poison in the name of medicine. This obsession is portrayed as a disease. Is it the obsession of searching for the path or is it the obsession with love that has ruined his place of desire and made this obsession unfortunate. There is a similar reference made by Shakespeare in his *sonnet 147* that talks about love being a disease. He writes:

My love is as a fever, longing still  
For that which longer nurseth the disease,  
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,  
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.

He also calls love as a disease for which he still longs. He says that by longing this disease he is nursing the disease. He says that he is feeding on the very thing that preserves the illness just to please his sickly desires. Similarly in this *Qawwali* a similar obsession is shown where the poet is unable to stop searching for the path that leads to somebody. He knows that it is an unfortunate obsession but still he does not stop.

The poet says that only the one who is suffering can understand the condition of a fellow sufferer. The poet on one hand says that this is love, this is his lifelong search and he is searching for this path that leads to the one who is poets' love (Divine or human love is not mentioned), and on the other hand he calls this obsession 'unfortunate', he calls this to be a suffering. The poet here mentions the humanly love, that is all consuming. It is a passionate kind of love which also has its suffering. He says 'mein shamma se keheta hu, mehefil se nahi mein keheta', that is he only wants to speak to the flame, flame of love. Probably he means that he wants to speak to those who would understand his condition, those who have in them this flame of love.

Outdoing his own words when the female groups of singers are to sing, he says that by dawn everything will burn and turn into ashes and everyone in the gathering will either become flame or moth. The reference of Flame and moth can also be found in John Donne's poem, *The Canonization*.

Call us what you will, we are made such by love  
Call her one, me another fly,  
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die

Donne says that his lover and he himself can be called a fly and also a candle. He says that we die at our own cost that is, the fly is attracted towards the flame of the candle even when the flame of the candle burns it. Therefore, even he talks about such a love which consumes them both.

The poet is trying to give a picture of all-consuming love by outdoing his own words of the previous stanza. Before he says that he is speaking only to the flame there, and in this stanza he writes that there is nothing that will not be affected by this feeling of love. Everyone there in the gathering will either become flame that is symbolic of the one being loved, or they will become moth that is symbolic of the lover. As the moth always searches for a path that leads to the flame, in the same way the poet says that he is searching for a path that will lead him to his flame that is his lover. Therefore he says that this is love.

Another movie that featured *Qawwalis* in large is *Amar Akbar Anthony*.

On 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1977, *Amar Akbar Anthony* was released that was directed by 'Manmohan Desai'. It is a comedy film based on a lost and found theme. In it, three brothers are separated from their parents and from each other in childhood. They are raised in three different faiths, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. This movie had a lasting impact on pop culture, with its songs.

Analyzing the lyrics of the *parda hai parda*, *Qawwali* from this film:

Shabaab pe mein zara si sharaab phekunga  
 Kissi haseen ki taraf ye gulaab phekunga  
 Parda hai, parda hai  
 Parda hai parda, parde ke peeche parda nashin hai  
 Parda nashin ko be-parda na kar du to akbar mera naam nahin hai

Mei dekhta hu jidhar log bhi udhar dekhen  
 Kahaan theherti hai jaakar, meri nazar dekhen  
 Mere khawabo ki shehzaadi, mei hu akbar illahbaadi  
 Mei shaayar hu haseeno ka, mei aashiq mehjabeenno ka  
 Tera daaman na chodunga, mein har chilman ko todunga  
 Na dar zalim zamaane se, ada se ya bahane se  
 Zara apni surat dikha de, sama khubsoorat bana de  
 Nahin to tera naam leke, tujhe koi ilzam deke  
 Tujhko is mehfil mein ruswa na kar du toh  
 Akbar mera naam nahin hai  
 Parda hai parda...  
 .....Parda hai parda...

### Translation

Let me pour some wine on this youth.  
 And throw this rose towards a beauty  
 There is a veil  
 There is a veil, behind that veil there is a secret  
 And if this secret is not unveiled by me, then my name is not Akbar)  
 Wherever I look, people should also look there



They should look there, where my gaze stops  
Oh princess of my dreams, I am Akbar Allahbaadi  
I am a poet of the beautiful; I'm a lover of the shy ...  
I will not leave your side; I will tear apart every curtain (that separates us)  
Don't be afraid of this cruel world  
Either by grace or by some excuse,  
Show your face, and make this occasion beautiful  
Otherwise by taking your name and putting some blame on you,  
If I do not dishonor you in this gathering  
Then Akbar is not my name.  
There is a veil...

The lines mentioned above are taken from a film *Amar Akbar Anthony*. The poet/lyricist of these lines is Anand Bakshi. This *Qawwali* is devoid of any kind of divinity or spiritual context. It is a monologue where the poet is asking his beloved to show her face which is hidden behind a *burqa*. He does not ask her directly to uncover her face, but in the whole song he tries to say this by using different words and expressions. Sometimes he praises her and sometimes he is also seen threatening her.

The song starts where the style of *Qawwali* is used. There is no music in the first two lines. It is sung like a phrase in *Qawwali* at the beginning. The song can only be called a *Qawwali* seeing the style of it but that too in a modern sense that is in the song the only element that makes it a *Qawwali* is the style of its performance. The lyrics of the song do not make it fit into the category of *Qawwali*.

The poet says in the first two lines that he wants to pour some wine on this youth and he wants to throw a rose at a beauty. During the performance of this song Neetu Singh, the beloved of Rishi Kapoor in the movie, is sitting in the audience. As she is wearing a burqa, he sings there is a veil. The poet says that behind this veil there is a secret. This combination of a veil and a secret is probably used to express two things. One, the face that none other has seen is like a secret and two, the lovers' feelings that are still not revealed. The lover says that if he does not reveal the secret then Akbar is not his name.

In the whole poem, looking at it through a *Qawwali* perspective, there is no facet in it that makes it a *Qawwali*. Not even a modern form of *Qawwali*, I would say, because modernization as a factor in *Qawwali* did not mean to sever all connections with the divine. It meant to experiment with the traditional form of *Qawwali* without affecting the real purpose of it. Looking at the song from a lyrical perspective, it would not be appropriate to call it a *Qawwali* because calling it a *Qawwali* would entirely change the meaning of *Qawwali*. Other songs of this movie also have a degraded picture of *Qawwali* like the song "*Taiyyab Ali Pyaar Ka Dushman (Taiyyab Ali is an enemy of love)*"

Next *Qawwali* of this film comes in a very different manner where Akbar Allahbadi (Rishi Kapoor) sings a *Qawwali* in a temple. One of the themes of this film was national and religious integration for which *Qawwali* is portrayed in a temple in spite of its Muslim background. This *Qawwali* -bhajan became very famous, "*Shirdi Wale Sai Baba*", and is still played and listened to. Yet again, in spite of the fame that it achieved, the major concern here is about the portrayal of *Qawwali*. The *qawwal* in

between the assembly of the devotees, sing this *Qawwali* altogether for a different religion.

Another *Qawwali* featuring film, *Rockstar*, was released in 2011. It is directed by Imtiaz Ali, starring Ranbir Kapoor, Nargis Fakhri as the male and female protagonists. It is a film based on music and love. These two themes dominate the film. It is one of the few films that do not have a Muslim based story line. Ranbir Kapoor is the male lead of the film who wants to become a singer, a rockstar. He tries very hard for it but one of his friends in the film tells him that there is no pain in his voice. He says that that pain will not come until he feels it himself in his heart. After that the journey of his life begins and situations in his life make him so miserable and give so much of pain that he no longer yearns for the fame he once wanted. The first painful event that takes place in his life comes from his family. He is thrown out of his own home. The *Qawwali* in this film has a realistic picture, as when he is thrown out of his place, he goes to the 'dargah' of Hazrat Nizamuddin to find shelter. He stays there and in the due course of time he joins the *Qawwali* group for the routine *Qawwali* that takes place every week. He brings his guitar and plays it along with the other traditional instruments of *Qawwali*. This is how the main *Qawwali* of this film is featured. Although it does not have any vulgarity neither is it devoid of spiritual lyrics, it somehow can be woven with the life of the protagonist and his problems.

Lyrics of the song '*Kun Faya Kun*'

Ya Nizamuddin Auliya,  
Ya Nizamuddin Salqa  
Rangreza  
Kun Faya Kun...  
Rangreza Rang Mera Tan Mera Mann,  
Le Le Rangaayi Chaahе Tan Chaahе Mann,

Sajra Savera Mere Tan Barse  
Kajra Andhera Teri Jalti Lau  
Qatra Mila Jo Tere Dar Par Se  
O Maula... Maula...

Kun Faya Kun, Kun Faya Kun  
Mann Ke Mere Ye Bharam,  
Kachche Mere Ye Karam  
Leke Chale Hai Kahaan,  
Main Toh Jaanoon Hi Na  
Ab tu he hai khudaya  
Sach tu he hai khudaya  
Kun faya Kun...

### Translation

Oh Ruler of the Saints,  
Oh Ruler of the crestfallen  
He who fills me with color  
[He said] Be, and it is!

My painter, color my body my soul  
Take away the colors of desires, from the body, from the soul  
The Morning showers (blessings) rain on me  
and it cleans up the dark soul of mine which is like darkness of night.  
Each drop of it showers from your door  
Oh Lord...  
There is a mirage in my mind  
The weakness of my actions  
Have got me somewhere; that I'm not aware of  
I'm lost...  
Only you are the just  
You are the truth  
[He said] be and it is, be and it is...

This *Qawwali* is featured in the 'dargah' of Hazrat Nizamuddin at Delhi. The *Qawwali* is composed by A.R. Rahman. The lyricist is Irshad Kamil. The phrase that is repeated in the *Qawwali* is 'Kun faya Kun'. It is an Arabic term mentioned in the Qur'an that means that when God intends for some work to be done, he just says 'kun' that means *Be* and it is completed.

The *Qawwali* starts with a phrase without music which calls out to the lord by saying *o God's messenger Nizamuddin, O Nizamuddin, friend of the fallen*. After this the music begins. In the first stanza, the poet asks the lord to come into his life. He says to the lord to remove all the distance that persists between them. He asks him to take a step forward and come into his life. He says that there is a void in his life without the almighty. He asks him again to come and fill this void. He calls himself lord's beloved when he asks the lord to come into his beloved's home (*pee ka ghar tera*). This stanza can entirely be related to Ranbir Kapoor's life in the film. He was all alone as his family had abandoned him. Therefore there was a void in his life.

In the next stanza a little more music with a rhythm is added. A word 'Rangreza' is repeated that means someone who fills with color. Here it is referred to the lord. There is darkness in Ranbir Kapoor's character (Jordon) in the film. The poet calls upon the lord who would fill color in his life. Then the chorus comes and the phrase 'Kun faya kun' is repeated many times. This element of repetition as mentioned earlier is called 'zikr'. Here the purpose of 'zikr' is justified unlike many other filmi *Qawwalis*. As the phrase is taken from the Qur'an, therefore is spiritual.

In the next stanza the poet says that at the time when there was nothing anywhere to be found, the lord was there at that time. Even in the film it is shown that when Jordon had nowhere else to go he found lord's door. The poet says that God is that mystery who is found everywhere. He says "God is there in you, God is there in me". Then the chorus is repeated.

There is contradiction in the next two lines of the song. At first the poet calls the lord a painter and asks him to paint poet's body and his soul. Right in the next line the poet writes that for doing so the almighty can take away the colours from poet's body and soul. The contradiction is that on one hand the poet first asks the lord to paint his body and soul and on the other hand he says that '*le le rangai chahe tan chahe man*' that is 'if you wish you can take away the colours from either my body or my soul'. Probably in the second line the poet asks the lord to take away the colours of flesh that

is the colours of humanly traits, to take away the carnal desires and materialism from his life and fill his body and his soul with his colours.

At this part of the *Qawwali*, Ranbir Kapoor joins and starts singing. The next stanza is portrayed as him being the singer of the following lines. '*sajra savera mere tann barse..... O maula...*' He says that the morning rain showers blessings on his body and it is this blessing that purifies the dark part of his soul. Rain is a metaphor used for purification or it can also have a spiritual connotation. Rain is something that helps in the harvest, it is considered as the blessings of the lord while drought on the other hand is regarded as a curse. There is imagery in this stanza that shows two pictures simultaneously, picture of darkness and light. It says '*kajra andhera teri jalti lau*', that is there is hope in the darkness and that hope is God. The poet brings in this imagery that there is darkness and in that darkness there is a God who is like a flame. He calls out to the lord and says that each drop of purity that he has received is found at lord's door. Ranbir Kapoor is shown to be lost in the journey of life and this probably meant that after he came to God's house he received his blessings. Morning rain is used as the metaphor for God's blessings. The phrase '*kun faya kun*' is repeated at the end of the stanza and the lyrics which talked about lord being everywhere is repeated too.

A few phrases are sung in the praise of the lord. The poet writes, Allah is the truth, the magnificence, and the nature. He says that the Prophet is generous and his messengers speak the truth and he says that may there be peace and blessings on him, the

In the next stanza the poet writes addressing the lord that the lord would be very generous if he grants his request that is to free the poet from himself. He says '*ab mujhko bhi ho deedaar mera*' that is he wants to meet his own true self. That is why he asks the lord to free him from all the material things of the world, from his own pride and ego, from earthly bonds that he has created. He asks the lord again to free him from his own self. It can be analysed as a full devotion of a human soul towards the divine. He wants to leave all the things that make him a human soul and connect to the lord completely.

The poet says that all the illusions of his mind, all the deeds of his life that are unrefined are taking his life to some path that he is not aware of. Then he says to the lord that the lord is in his heart, and he has brought him to some place. He then says that he is in lord's heart and he is going behind the lord's path. Again there are two contradictory statements made by the poet. One in which he says that God is inside him and he is taking him to some place and two, in which he says the opposite that he is inside God's heart and he is following his path. What place he finally reaches is unclear in the lyrics. Through these lyrics it can be assumed that the poet is lost, as mentioned above in the lyrics, where the poet talks about being lost. It can be said that he is lost because at first he says that his own deeds and his mind full of illusions is taking him somewhere, later he says God is taking his life to a certain path and finally he says that he himself is following the lord's path. This is the reason that poet probably asks the lord that he wants to meet his true self as he is lost in the world that is materialistic and egoist. He goes on to say to the lord that he is one of God's shadows as God is his creator but he was not liked by the world but the almighty took him in his arms. As in the film Ranbir Kapoor is disowned by his family, he is thrown out of his own home; he finds shelter at God's place. The poet says to the lord that it is only the lord who



embraced him therefore he is the only just and he is the only truth and reality. Then the chorus is repeated. *Kun faya kun...*

This *Qawwali* is another example that shows a close picture of the traditional *Qawwali*. In its picturization too, the *qawwals* are sitting among other worshippers facing the *dargah* and addressing the divine. It has shown a real picture of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin where *Qawwali* takes place in an almost similar fashion. It is only that during the *Qawwali* being played in the background, Ranbir Kappor is picturized in the front screen that diverts the attention of the viewer. Therefore the *Qawwali* is heard but the viewers automatically associate the lyrics and the music of the *Qawwali* with the situations of the life of the protagonist. However, there are efforts to keep alive the real meaning of *Qawwali* that was lost in the earlier decades.

*Qawwali* in Bollywood has brought many changes in the sound, in the meaning as well as in the rendition of *Qawwali*. Being from a sacred, spiritual performance, a way to connect with the almighty, it has become a dominant genre in the entertainment industry. After the declination of *Qawwali* along with Sufism, this tradition was losing its ground but with the establishment of the recording industry, *Qawwali* once again found its position as a large number of population was now able to listen to it. According to Qureshi the recorded form of it entered the lives of Muslim families when they started to purchase gramophones in the late 1930s. (Regula, 1999:69).

The meaning of *Qawwali* has also been transformed. The rendition of *Qawwali* has been taken from the Sufi shrines out to the public stages, marriage ceremonies, clubs, pubs etc. and all these renditions are shown in Bollywood movies encouraging such practice. The renditions are made in a way to suit the place of its performance.

The term *Qawwali* is now known for the style of its performance. It is not the meaning or the sound or the purpose of *Qawwali* that is taken into thought. There are such *Qawwalis* in Bollywood that have entirely taken the picture of what *Qawwali* looks like and modeled the song of the movie in that way. For example the *Qawwali*, *Tumse mil ke dil ka hai jo haal* from the movie *Mein Hoon Na*, shows the outer structure of *Qawwali* but the song is nowhere close to it.

In Bollywood, when the recorded *Qawwalis* became available to a larger audience, it broke the traditional gender divided criteria of *Qawwali* audience. The traditional sphere of *Qawwali* belonged to the male domain and women were secluded from and marginalized from being the part of this 'sama'. Bollywood paved way for women audience as well as women *qawwals*. This benefited the economy of film industry as *Qawwali* became a popular genre and it has consistently been a popular form of music till date. There have been experiments in the rendition of *Qawwali* since the first time *Qawwali* got featured in a film till now. The way it drifted apart from its real form, it was difficult to bring it any closer to what it was especially in today's world where all sorts of experiments are being done to craft something new. The compositions of A.R. Rahman have, however, given a closer view of *Qawwali*'s real purpose and have made an attempt to give a look of authentic *Qawwali* in his compositions. He has given music to these *Qawwalis* and has also been one of the singers of *Qawwali*. *Qawwalis* like *pija Haaji Ali* from the movie *Fiza*, *Khwaja mere Khwaja*, from the movie *Jodha Akbar*, *Kun faya Kun*, from *Rockstar*, *Arziyan*, from *Delhi 6*, are the once that bring back the spirit of real *Qawwali*. These are all Rahman's compositions. There



is another pattern in Bollywood films featuring qawwal where most of these films have a certain Muslim background.

Concluding from the analysis done of a few selected *Qawwalis* of Bollywood, we can see that lyrically many of the *Qawwalis* are ambiguous in nature, the ambiguity about the addressee. However, some of them are totally devoid of *Qawwali* fervor except the outer structure of it. While there are a few, the latest once which are clearly addressing the lord and are performed in the Sufi shrines. Obviously there are those in the film industry who are only concerned with the marketing part of it, who only uncover ways to make it more attractive so as to increase the consumers but if there are those who would see through this materialism and make efforts to keep the spirit of real *Qawwali* alive, then it can again be 'a spiritual rendition, to connect with the divine'. Sufis' purpose to unite people irrespective of religion can stay alive through music. Therefore the (re)structuring of *Qawwali* in Bollywood can take any shape with the support of performers as well as consumers.

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