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Wide Screen, Vol 1, No 1 (2009)

[Home](#) > [Vol 1, No 1 \(2009\)](#) > [Dutta](#)

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Nation, Liberalisation And Film Songs: Technology And Hybridisation In Contemporary Hindi Film Music

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Abstract

This paper seeks to study some exemplary ways in which sophisticated audio processing and packaging technologies have been incorporated into the aesthetic of Hindi film songs in the post-90s period, especially with regard to how such uses of technology correspond to post-liberalisation narratives of national identity in India. I attempt to show how technology is used to articulate newer senses of locality, mapping hybrid national subjects vis-à-vis markers of the 'rural' and the 'urban', the 'regional' and the 'cosmopolitan', the 'local' and the 'global'. On one hand, film songs from this period consciously negotiate with the 'global' (or metropolitan) market and mediascape, yet on the other, address a national audience with wide disparities in terms of economic and cultural access. In the face of these constitutive tensions, a newer studio aesthetics arises through reworking older modes of hybridity and eclecticism in the film song tradition, framed by the larger problematic of how Hindi films have addressed and narrated issues of national identity and subjectivity

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CURRENT ISSUE

ATOM	1.0
RSS	2.0
RSS	1.0

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