

‘When did Mr Collins become the ‘Ugly American’? Representing America in the films of Gurinder Chadha’.

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### *Introduction*

This article discusses the tensions in the British and Indian films of Gurinder Chadha between the aspirations towards American success and specifically Indian familial identities and how these are problematised. Developing from my earlier work on nostalgia in contemporary British South-Asian cinema (‘Nostalgia in the Post-National: Contemporary British Cinema and the South-Asian Diaspora’, published in an earlier issue of *South Asian Cultural Studies*), this article continues by focussing on the films of British South-Asian and Sikh filmmaker Gurinder Chadha. Chadha first came a director of interest with her 1989 documentary for Channel 4 *I’m British But...* a fascinating and enlightening insight into the varying kinds of identification British South-Asians make with their multiple cultural influences. This was followed by *Bhaji on the Beach* in 1993, which Chadha wrote with the also then up-and-coming writer Meera Syal. Syal’s semi-auto-biographical tale of being a South-Asian ‘Brummie’ in the 1970s was the subject of 2002’s *Anita and Me*, which I also examined in the previous article but the central focus of this paper, *Bride and Prejudice*, as an adaptation of Jane Austen’s classical novel of frustrated girlhood and frustrating men, *Pride and Prejudice* deals with another kind of adaptive process, not just one of South-Asian to Britain but of a British text which, like so many of Austen’s novels (especially *Mansfield Park*), albeit tangentially and through implicit reference, engaged with the concept of a colonial identity and culture and the possibility of post-colonialism in the immediate period of the end of the British slave trade. Consequently, the dilemmas of America and Britain are writ large in considering the ‘truths’ of identity in Chadha’s adaptation and, it is posited, what has been lost in one country, can be found again elsewhere... at ‘home’, wherever that might be.

### *The Films of Gurinder Chadha and American Identities*

Although a first glance, Gurinder Chadha’s films might appear to be simple British-South Asian comedies, they are actually much more complex in their engagements with identity and culture-clashes and stand up well not only as more general ‘state of the nation’ studies but also as ‘state of the South-Asian diaspora’ films. In earlier work on both *Bhaji on the Beach* and *Bend it Like Beckham* (1993 and 2002 respectively), I focussed on the tensions between British and South-Asian cultural identities but what became startlingly clear, with Chadha’s 2005 film *Bride and Prejudice*, was that the references to America in this and the earlier films was not so incidental: America (or Amrika, as Kholi saab always refers to it) is as much a personified character in her films as England is, through characters like Ambrose in *Bhaji on the Beach* (his name referencing to Ambrosia and his behaviour a pastiche of the English ‘gentleman’) and Juliet Stevenson’s grotesque ‘Ugly Englishwoman’ as Keira Knightly’s (Jules’) mother in *Bend it Like Beckham*.

In this paper, whilst I shall focus on *Bride and Prejudice*, I shall discuss the development towards a discourse upon America in all three films of Chadha’s South-

Asian identities films and how the perspective upon American identity alters for Chadha in the three movies. At the heart of these analyses will be the troublesome concept of the 'Ugly American' and its contemporary comprehension since the first Gulf War of 1991 and, especially, in the wake of George W. Bush.

### *Prejudices*

Mother: We wouldn't have these problems if we had gone to US when we had the chance;...

Father (to the girls): Did I tell you about this Indian fellow who went to America and made it rich?

Mother (cutting across):... my brother did all the paperwork to sponsor us but, no, you didn't want to leave...

Father (cutting across): This fellow went to America and bought this huge American house and built three swimming pools in the garden:....

Mother:... and what do we have? An old house, an old farm and new bills.

Father:... and when his father visited from India he showed him around his mansion and three swimming pools. His father asked "But son, why do you need three pools?" His son said proudly, "Well, one is filled with cold water for when I feel hot, the second is filled with hot water for when I feel cold". The father nodded and said, "But why the third empty?" "Well, that's for when I don't feel like swimming at all."

*Bride and Prejudice*, 2005.

Right from the beginning of Chadha's adaptation of Jane Austen's British 'state of marriage/state of the nation' novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), America is identified as something for comedy and critique: where greed and stupidity encourages the wastefulness of three swimming pools and, from Darcy (Martin Henderson)'s arrival on an aeroplane into Amritsar with Bulraj and Kiran (i.e. Bingley and his sister, played by Naveen Andrews and Indira Varma), where innate snobbery exists in rejecting that which is not understood. A damning critique indeed but, in the wake of the present Iraq war and the thinly-veiled problems within the Bush administration, this is, nevertheless, a belief and prejudice which is held by many people around the world. Consequently, and initially within the film, William Darcy is established as the 'Ugly American' filled with the wealthy tourist's arrogance. As Lalita (Elizabeth, performed by Aishwarya Rai) says to him: "You want to turn India into a theme park. I thought we'd got rid of imperialists like you." "I'm not British, I'm American", he replies. "Exactly!" she retorts before stomping down the staircase. Thus, just as in the Austen original but with a twist, the prejudice is established. However, there are two important elements to emphasise in the initial set-up of a discourse upon America (and which can also be referenced in Chadha's earlier films). Firstly, the desire to emigrate there and achieve American prosperity by many South-Asians (especially Indians): as Kholi saab (Mr Collins, Nitin Ganatra) later puts it, from that perspective: "UK's finished. India's too corrupt" - to succeed financially. Secondly, the changing of Darcy (seen throughout the film) to make him seem less socially and financially independent than in the novel: Catherine Darcy (played by Martha Mason), for example, becomes his mother instead of his aunt, Lady Catherine De Burgh. His social status is also altered in updating Austen's template: 'Fitz' is removed from his

forename (in the original, Fitzwilliam was his mother's maiden name). This subtle change is significant because the use of 'Fitz' has long denoted families related to royalty by illegitimate bloodlines. The change from aristocrat to hotel magnate both makes more Darcy more attainable, more American and also enables Bulraj and Kiran to be near aristocrats in their view of Windsor Castle and her imperious posture, which is reminiscent of the late Queen Mary. Indeed, although Kiran and Bulraj are supposed to be lawyers, they are never witnessed working whilst Darcy is seen in his management role once the action of the film moves to Los Angeles.

Thematically, both of these elements can be seen in the earlier films: America as aspiration and as land of egalitarian opportunity (although contradicting the initial prejudices in the film towards the US, these too are commonly held beliefs of 'the land of milk and honey' – ironically a phrase which originally referred to the mythical Ambrosia). In *Bhaji on the Beach*, the former is manifest through the younger girls – aged around 14 or 15 – who change into westernised clothing, put on make-up and flirt with two spotty burger-joint boys who are dressed in head to toe in a pastiche of the Wild West cowboy. The clothing for the girls represents to them a freedom and maturity to be achieved but, importantly, and to be echoed later via the soccer in *Bend it Like Beckham*, it can only be fulfilled initially by hiding the behaviour from their families – especially their parents. In all three films, there is a tension between being 'traditional' and being 'modern' which is never quite resolved and never truly debated except that, ironically, Lalita is the most feminist of all Chadha's heroines because her father is a 'Yes' man and not the 'gatekeeper' seen in other key male characters in Chadha's films: Jasminder/Jess (Parminder Nagra)'s nostalgia-ridden father in *Bend it Like Beckham* or the husband (Jimmi Harkishin) and his brothers opposed to their wives' and girlfriends' westernisation in *Bhaji on the Beach*.

However, whilst the spiritedness of Chadha's heroines and their developing feminisms is appealing to the female spectator at whom these films are undoubtedly aimed, there is no doubt that none of the heroines are entirely feminist when compared to American female leads such as Erin Brokovich or Ripley or Thelma and Louise (although *Now* magazine in 1993 did describe *Bhaji on the Beach* as Britain's *Thelma and Louise*)<sup>1</sup>. This is because, ultimately, Chadha's characters end up reinforcing normativity and tradition *but with flexibility*: Jasminder can study in the US but Jules is effectively her chaperone; Lalita can marry Darcy but it is a financially sensible marriage which Wickham (Daniel Gillies) could never have been<sup>2</sup>; and the heroine of *Bhaji on the Beach*, Ginder (Kim Vithana), can become more westernised (and her husband less violent) only if a *matriarchal* family unit is maintained. Repeatedly, Chadha sets up the possibility of feminism within a film, as more westernised women know it, only to find that a happy resolution has to integrate the traditional *behaviour* with feminist *values*. On the one hand Lalita says she cannot love a stupid man who will crush her identity yet, on the other, when singing of "Lonely Mr Kholi" she eulogises romantic love and dreams of a) an English white wedding and b) being an Overseas bride.

'No life, without wife' sung by Lalita and sisters in white pyjamas. The song starts out initially as, stylistically, a reggae piece but ends up as 1960s Motown before finally slowing to a processional classical resolution. The whole sequence can be viewed on YouTube

[Reggae Section]  
Lonely Mr Kholi from Los Angeles

Came to Punjab on one bent knee  
He had a Green Cars, new house, big cash  
Still made a wish with every fallen lash  
For you to do the journey with him  
To smile when he got home  
And ask how his day had been  
He wants you by his side, in joy and strife  
Poor Mr Kholi  
He has, no life, without wife.

[Motown]  
No life, without wife.  
Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.  
No life, without wife.  
Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah.

I don't want a man who ties me down  
Does what he wants while I hang around  
I don't want a man who's crude and loud  
Wants a pretty wife to make him proud  
I don't wanna man who can't be funny  
Who tells tall tales about making money

Oh Yeah...

I don't want a man who'll grab the best seat  
Can't close his mouth when he starts to eat  
I don't want a man who likes to drink  
Or leaves his dirty dishes in the sink  
I don't want a man who wants his mummy  
A balding pest with too much dummy  
I don't want a man who's dead in the head

Poor Mr. Kholi  
Aye Mr. Kholi  
Maybe he's good in bed....  
Ugghhhhh....

No life  
Without Wife  
Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah,  
yeah  
No life  
Without Wife  
Oh yeah, yeah, yeah  
Oh yeah, yeah, yeah



From <http://www.nowrunning.com/film/slideshow1.asp?movieNo=1468>  
- accessed April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007

What you don't want do matter no more  
Soon you'll be married and ready to go

A match made in heaven just like milk and honey  
You make all the Gobi he'll make the money  
Everyday will be the same according to his plans  
Forget what you want Mr. Kholi's now your man

No life  
Without Wife  
Oh yeah yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

I just want a man with a real soul  
Who wants equality and not control  
I just want a man good and smart  
A really sharp mind and a very big heart  
I just want a man not scared to weep  
To hold me close when we're asleep

Ohhh yeah....

I just want a man who loves romance  
Who'll clear the floor and ask me to dance  
I just want a man who gives some back  
Who talks to me and not my rack  
I just want man whose spirit is free  
To hold my hand, walk the world with me

No life  
Without Wife

Oh yeah,  
yeah,  
No life  
Wife  
yeah,  
Oh yeah,



yeah, yeah,  
yeah  
Without  
Oh yeah,  
yeah  
yeah, yeah

[Slower Processional]  
Sorry Mr. Kholi  
It is not to be  
My heart is set on another you see  
The wandering soul I was meant to meet  
Has finally come and swept me off my feet  
Now I dream of what it would be like  
To be an overseas bride dressed in white  
To have a little home in the country  
And live in the land of her majesty

The song is quite unusual in being explicitly feminist within *any* musical, Bollywood or otherwise. The spectator is left with no doubt as to what kind of man Lalita does not desire but, in its position after the introduction of Jonny Wickham and the presentation of him within the film, so far, as somewhat of a kindred spirit for Lalita, the ultimate dénouement of the song, about Wickham but revealing Darcy very nearly takes away the political power of the song. Equally, the stylistic qualities of the song might be viewed as problematic in that the use of non-Indian music might be read as a disavowal of Indian culture but this is entirely erroneous. How many Bollywood films integrate western and eastern musical traditions within the Indian musical idiom? Chadha is merely asserting her place within this filmmaking tradition but, in making the idiom more pronouncedly western makes the influences upon the family: America and the UK more apparent and is more inclusive of the Indian diasporic audience. Consider for example the sentimental comi-tragedy *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (Nikhil Advani, 2003), a film which is as open about the influences of Western culture on Indian women as *Bride and Prejudice* is – and debates the related issues with equal levity and heart. In this film Roy Orbison's standard 'Pretty Woman' is the first big musical piece of the movie and the western song is fully integrated into the film stylistically through orchestration more than re-arrangement. For 'Lonely Mr Kholi' however, the orchestration is primarily western and it only once the slower passage enters, despite its emphasis on English tradition, that a sitar is heard as part of the ensemble – connecting English and Indian traditions in a musical sense which ensures that the scene of Lalita becoming a 'foreign' bride is less of a disavowal of Indian identity as it might first seem. Nevertheless, how this almost universal iconography of the western bride is read seems to create a dilemma in the feminist project of the film and can be argued to articulate the confusion for many contemporary women globally; how to have everything: a job, love, a family. Ultimately, perhaps for Lalita, the only way in which she can achieve this harmony, it is implied by her rejection of Kholi, is by marrying a non-Indian. This is not a particularly useful realisation within the film and again points to a rejection of tradition and Indian identity but, in creating a film about *multiculturalism* in contemporary society, narratively, irrespective of the adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* this creates a tidy resolution for the issue of 'the difficult daughter' in much the same way the original text did by having the middle-class rural girl with limited prospects marry into upper-class cosmopolitan society.

*Kholi saab – Mr Collins Meets Austin Powers*

The image of Nitin Ganatra, who plays Kholi, astride the circular bed with the Kholiwood sign behind him is not one which is very easy to forget but it does

exemplify everything about the self-representation Kholi is presenting to Lalita and her sisters: here is the main 'Ugly American' of Chadha's film. In the 'No life, without wife' sequence, although not equal in their 'ugliness' Kholi and Darcy are both presented negatively (although there is clearly something more complex happening in the coda of the song). Kholi and Darcy represent two versions of the 'Ugly American': the neo-Imperialist and dominator (Darcy) versus the conservative evangelical comic who fails to connect with anything beyond surface detail (Kholi). Both, however, also represent variations of hyper-masculinity with Darcy referencing the darkness of the Eyre sisters' Rochester (*Jane Eyre*) and Heathcliff (*Wuthering Heights*) and with a not insignificant dash of Mills and Boon: and Kholi, albeit badly, a parody of the 'Playboy'. In creating the film's versions of the 'Ugly American', nevertheless, and typical of Chadha's methods for exploring identity, the US and UK are frequently aligned as similar yet different dreams (and dream states) for female protagonists. The nightmarish version of William Darcy is set in an anachronistic English idyll with the morris dancers whilst Kholi, against the Kholiwood backdrop references a contemporary 'Americian idyll' – of sorts - also references a recent English stereotype, drawn on Bond and Jason King but manifested by Mike Myers: Austin Powers<sup>3</sup>.

Much of Mike Myer's career has been spent doing film-scale version of national parodies which, bearing in mind he spent most of his early career (in the mid-late eighties) in the UK, seem more than a little influenced by the comic characters of the then popular British comedian Russ Abbott<sup>4</sup>. Austin Powers, whilst referencing every Bond parody seen on film and television also bears a passing resemblance through his physical clumsiness to Abbott's 'Basildon Bond' (the name joking about a stationary brand and punning on the activity in inactivity – creating Bond as ultimately impotent). Furthermore, Myers' extended cast of Scottish characters in the *Austin Powers* movies and *So, I Married an Axe Murderer* (Thomas Schlamme, 1993) owe a not insignificant amount to Abbott's offensive stereotype 'Jimmy' and also to children's performers 'The Crankies'<sup>5</sup> – who were immensely popular at the same time Mike Myers was working in British children's TV.

Within *Bride and Prejudice*, through Kholi visually referencing, albeit briefly, Austin Powers, is a useful shorthand for the spectator which brings together a number of complex elements within the Kholi character. On a number of occasions within the film, Kholi disavows his Indian identity and echoes the opinion of Mrs Darcy concerning India in the US (although subtly done, this comes straight from Jane Austen): "There's nothing you can't find in LA", he tells Lalita when he proposes to her in Amritsar and, Mrs Darcy later opines, to be challenged by Lalita, "Well, with yoga, and spices and Deepak Chopra and the wonderful eastern things here, I suppose there's no point in travelling there any more". Similarly, although supposedly British, Austin Powers, in performance and iconography, is an evangelist for anglophile America. Austin Powers must get his teeth fixed in order to become more attractive: Kholi has to have access to three swimming pools. Yet this disavowal of India by Kholi is problematised by his wish to have a 'traditional' wife: something heavily criticised Lalita and her father as hypocritical. He sells America as the land of success but also lambastes what happens to "our women out there". Nevertheless, rejected by Lalita, he does succeed in 'selling' America to Lalita's best friend, Chandra (Charlotte of the original) and she later tells Lalita "I love it here". These confusions for the characters over their prejudices about America and yet their love of the lifestyle it can offer are frequently useful in Chadha's films because they enable an articulation of the diasporic dilemma: to leave means to reject my own culture and

to embrace another yet we should not lose our identity. What *Bride and Prejudice* seems unable to decide is whether or not America represents the 'theme park' India for the Indian diaspora or simply an evolution of identity. A noticeable clue, perhaps, is in the different ways in which the UK and the US are represented as the Bakshi family travel to Los Angeles. London is introduced by a rapid montage of London landmarks *including* the Sikh temple (an image of London which is inclusive) whereas LA is established through the Hollywood sign, palm trees down Rodeo Drive, a Beverly Hills signpost and the rapping fanfare "Hey, must be the money". The status is very clearly different and again the potential for affluence is manifested. Houses (and Wickham's canal boat) in London are small, pokey, whilst Kholi's version of suburbia is new, large and happily accommodates the travelling family. Again, this echoes the different representation of the UK and US in the *Austin Powers* films: the tight spaces of the first film's London later become replaced by the open deserts of the opening of *Goldmember* with Tom Cruise as Austin Powers in the spoof trailer and Powers' teeth are fixed.

Kholi saab, however, is no Tom Cruise. As a comic, Nitin Ganatra, is a character actor and not typically a heroic figure. His 'Ugly American' is physically played for laughs. He is clumsy, dresses badly, gesticulates widely and has a peculiar laugh as well as messy eating habits. He uses language badly – calling Mr Bakshi "Mamaji" when it's how he should (and later does) address Mrs Bakshi and, as pointed out earlier, constantly mispronounces America and Amrika despite his Americanised accent. Darcy meanwhile, is conventionally signalled as a character for redemption by being handsome: the spectator knows he is not the true 'Ugly American' even if the spectator has never read nor seen *Pride and Prejudice* because his is, in short, not ugly. Kholi is a comedy Indian which borders on a 1970s offensive stereotype but it succeeds because of the comic tradition of Mr Collins in Austen's original (the comedy vicar) and because Kholi's neo-conservatism, constant self-contradiction, clumsiness and mispronunciation of simple words, references the man who for many is a personification of the 'Ugly American': George W. Bush.

George Bush has provided a characterisation of the American President which is, for the distanced spectator, embarrassing. Like Deputy Prime Minister throughout the Blair government, John Prescott in the UK, Bush is not seen as somebody who can articulate himself well but whose aims for self-aggrandisement have ultimately led him into questionable decision-making processes. Just as Kholi seeks to make his family understand that American is the only way forwards for personal success, so Bush's 'global policeman' routine (in imitation of his father's more articulate "New World Order" speech of 1990) parallels the cultural imperialism debated in the film. It is not a heavily weighted parallel, between Kholi and Bush junior, in *Bride and Prejudice* but it is, nevertheless, clear that certain stereotypes are being used by Chadha to set apart Kholi (an accountant) and Mrs Darcy (who power-dresses in the style of Nancy Reagan) as Republicans and Darcy and Georgie (his sister) as Democrats (the willingness to embrace change and well-meaning (if sometimes misguided) intentions). Both Kholi and Bush take pride in their actions and talk-up their abilities but it is the fall of Darcy's pride that enables him to cease being the secondary 'Ugly American' and for Kholi to begin to be seen as more culturally integrated (and hence not so 'ugly') in the film's final dramas.

*Pride*



In *Bend it Like Beckham*, Jasminder's pride in her abilities lead her to secretly maintain her membership of the Hounslow Harriers football team and it is her father's finally admitted pride in her which permits her to leave, with Jules, for the soccer training schools in the US. Throughout the film, whilst David Beckham (ironically now leaving to play in LA) is the aspiration as far as ability goes for Jasminder (and his poster fulfils the role of confessor throughout the early part of the film), places at an American university are the ultimate quest for the teenager and her friend. Unlike *Bhaji on the Beach*, where the final reference to American identity is through the male strippers in Blackpool with their stars and stripes G-strings and America is much more sexualised, in *Bend it Like Beckham*, the concept of the, literally, American Dream is central to the heroine's actions and provides her motivation throughout the second half of the film. America is not criticised within Chadha's footballing film although there is some concern about the maintenance of cultural integrity explored through the family's reluctance to let Jasminder play football in the first place. Neither is America viewed as stereotypically ignorant and although there is the presence of an American stereotype (the coach), the film lacks the presence of an 'Ugly American'... but this film was made in the summer before the attack upon the Twin Towers in 2001 and the resurgence of American imperialism seen in the second Gulf War.

Since those initial dark days following the attack which it feels that the world watched live on September 11<sup>th</sup>, America has staunchly defended its pride in the American identity (as basically liberal modernisers) against the pride of conflicting nations in their own identities (as generally finding pride in cultural tradition). This has created a huge debate around neo-imperialism and furthered the arguments around globalisation which began over a century ago. These two positions are also central to how *Bride and Prejudice* represents the battle of wills between Darcy and Lalita. In order for both to progress, both have to compromise and in both the original novel and the film, the key motivator for this is Wickham's elopement with Lakhi (Lydia) and Darcy's subsequent admission that he did the same with Georgie (Georgiana). Three things change, however, in the film, which substantially alter the tone of Darcy's pride. Firstly, it is established much earlier that Darcy's feelings towards Lalita are misunderstood by moving a key conversation about mistakes of prejudice to their second dance from a later scene. Secondly, when in LA and prior to Chandra and Kholi's American wedding (in a hybrid style), Lalita and Darcy evidently spend a number of days falling in love with a montage of fountain dances and beach walks complete with gospel choir and singing surfers: and, thirdly, Georgie's experience of Wickham is not an elopement but a pregnancy. The child from which is not referred to and so it must be assumed an abortion took place. This updates the offence of Wickham's behaviour for Darcy more powerfully and makes his behaviour in not telling Lalita until Lakhi elopes more comprehensible for a contemporary audience. However, unlike Austen's original, the secrets cease at this point and Darcy's pride is quickly sublimated by Lalita and Darcy finding Lakhi together – and making the family much less indebted to Darcy than the Bennets are in the 1813 novel.

In the action of removing Darcy's pride (from pride to embarrassment when his first proposal to Lalita humiliates him when he and Lalita find Lakhi) Darcy is transformed from the secondary 'Ugly American' into the 'knight in shining armour' and the conventional hero with the Boeing 747 as he takes the 'red-eye' to Heathrow as his white steed. Kholi himself has his 'ugliness' transmuted by the fact that his doing so in fact makes Chandra happy. She has none of the world-weariness of Charlotte after a few months of marriage to Mr Collins in the novel and the American wedding

is a very informal event only ruined by the artifice of both Mrs Darcy and Anne (her intended wife for Darcy). Indeed, by the end of the film, Kholi's ugliness is transformed from gross obsequiousness to being simply eager to please and asking Darcy if he'd "like a beer". Narratively, if Lalita (as the spectator knows she must) is to end up marrying Darcy, the negative representations of America must be resolved as ultimately harmless. She must subsume her own pride and compromise herself... but does she?

In the novel, the key activity in Elizabeth's admission of love for Darcy is that she admits she was wrong and he was right about Wickham. Jane's betrayal, by Darcy, regarding Bingley, is central to her anger at the first proposal but it is brushed aside in the conclusion as an error of prejudice by Darcy. In other words, they reach a compromise by *both* being wrong about something. In Chadha's film, however, the sequence before the wedding in LA, with Darcy and Lalita falling in love, removes Wickham from the equation somewhat, as does his on-screen flirting with Lakhi throughout his visit to Amritsar. Lalita dreams about a wedding to Wickham but she is never represented as falling in love with him in the same way as Darcy. What happens in Goa is, as she says herself of the hotel, not real and the fantasy is less important than Darcy's challenging of her expectations of him when he takes her to Mexican restaurants and flies her across the Grand Canyon. Lalita, unlike Elizabeth, never really has to admit she is wrong and thus, Lalita's pride remains unchallenged and, in Lakhi's return to the family undeflowered, unchanged. How does this affect the film as an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*? Well, bearing in mind the 1813 resolution to Austen's own variation on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, demanded the woman's subservience to her husband, *Bride and Prejudice* actually maintains the equality of the protagonists: achieving the kind of relationship Lalita sings of in 'No life, without wife'. Ironically, then, unlike Austen, for Chadha, pride is a good thing and it's prejudice that causes all the problems: and this encapsulates the position of all her films towards the complex issues of diasporic identity: have pride in who you are but don't judge those around you. Kholi saab spends most of the film judged by the sisters as the 'Ugly American' but he ends the film as a good husband; Darcy makes mistakes because he judges his friends emotions falsely; and Lalita constantly chooses to misunderstand what Darcy tries to express to her. Changing the title to *Bride and Prejudice* was not just because it puns on the original title but because it diffuses the very thing Chadha sees as a strength, when balanced with kindness, throughout her films: pride.

## Endnotes

1. *Erin Brokovich* (2001). Dir. Steven Soderbergh. *Alien* (1979). Dir. Ridley Scott and *Aliens* (1986). Dir. James Cameron more than *Alien 3* and *Alien Resurrection*. *Thelma and Louise* (1991). Dir. Ridley Scott.
2. It is interesting not note that in *Bride and Prejudice* Lakhi (the youngest daughter), when she elopes with Wickham, *does not* marry him and is not 'spoiled'.
3. The Bond films have been parodied even before they began from *Carry on Spying* (1962 – released in the wake of *Dr. No*) to *Otley* (1968) and even within themselves throughout the Roger Moore period. Jason King, meanwhile was a foppish 'hero' seen in two ATV series of the 1960s and 1970s, the latter as the main character and exemplified even further the permissive society as seen on television as spy-'medallion man'. The three *Austin Powers* films (1998-2004) have mercilessly, and cleverly, parodied not just James Bond but the entire spin-off spy films/tv series genre

combining the characterisations from Bond with plots which owe more to *The Man from Uncle* and imagery from *The Prisoner*.

4. *Russ Abbott's Madhouse* was the incarnation of the *Russ Abbott Show* running throughout Myers' period of work on shows such as the Saturday morning kid's magazine programme *No. 73* and *Wacaday*. Both were made by Thames Television.

5. The 'Jimmy' character was basically a thin version of Myers' obese Scottish thug in the *Austin Powers* movies. 'The Crankies' were/are a husband and wife team performing and father and child with the child ('Jimmy Crankie') as a Scottish version of William from the *Just William* novels of the 1940s. They also had their own ITV television series throughout most of the 1980s and were regular guests on Saturday morning television.

#### Filmography

*Alien* (Ridley Scott, 1979).

*Aliens* (James Cameron, 1986).

*Alien 3* (David Fincher, 1992).

*Alien Resurrection* (Jean-Pierre Jeunet, 1997).

*Anita and Me* (Metin Hüsyein, 2003).

*Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* (Jay Roach, 1997).

*Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* (Jay Roach, 1999).

*Austin Powers in Goldmember* (Jay Roach, 2002).

*Bend it Like Beckham* (Gurinder Chadha, 2002).

*Bhaji on the Beach* (Chadha, 1993).

*Bride and Prejudice* (Gurinder Chadha, 2005).

*Carry on Spying* (Gerald Thomas, 1964)

*Dr. No* (Terence Young, 1962)

*Erin Brokovich* (Steven Soderbergh, 2001)

*Kal Ho Naa Ho* (Nikhil Advani, 2003)

*Otley* (Dick Clement, 1968)

*So I Married an Axe Murderer* (Thomas Schlemme, 1993)

*Thelma and Louise* (Ridley Scott, 1991).