“Bollywood’s Best Marriage Scenes”
“Cricket is an Indian game accidentally discovered by the English.” - Ashis Nandy, *The Tao of Cricket* (1989)
India defeats England in One Day International, September, 2007
(victory celebration, Mumbai, Sept. 27, 2007)
Dramatis Personae:
(the Voice: Amitabh Bachchan)
the Mother—a.k.a. Yashoda-mai, *Mai* (Suhasini Mulay)
the Hero (also, the Producer):
Bhuvan (Aamir Khan)
the Heroine: Gauri ("fair"; Gracy Singh)
the Other Woman: Elizabeth Russell (Rachel Shelley)
the Villain: Capt. Andrew Russell (Paul Blackthorne)
the Champaner Eleven
Guran (Rajesh Vivek)

Deva Singh (Pradeep Rawat)
Ismail (Raj Zutshi)

Ishwar (Vallabhb Vyas)

Lakha (Yashpal Sharma)

Arjan (Akhilendra Mishra)
Goli
(Daya Shankar Pandey)

Bhura
(Raghuveer Yadav)
Kachra
(Aditya Lakhia)
Raja Puran Singh
(Kulbhushan Kharbandha)
Some themes:

village as microcosm,
village as utopia
Inter-communal harmony.....
....within an (unproblematic) majority community frame?
“saffronization”
(of politics, of popular cinema, in 1990s)
Critical perspectives:

_Lagaan_ as “Gandhian allegory”

non-violent resistance
power of mass, non-violent struggle
sustainable, non-industrial village as national ideal
uplift of harijans (“untouchables,” Dalits)

Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar
Lagaan as historically misleading:

Rajas as exploitative, British collaborators
marginalizes, tokenizes, and denies agency to women, religious minorities, and Dalits.
stress on “national unity” promotes militant nationalism, and conceals class divides
“subaltern” hero?
Music: A. R. Rahman
Songs:

Ghanan ghanan (“monsoon clouds”); seasonal folk
Mitwa (“listen, O friend!”); sant bhajan
Radha kaise na jale (“Why shouldn’t Radha be jealous?”) devotional bhakti bhajan
O rey chori (“O sweetheart”) / Waltz for a romance; bi-lingual lovesong
Chale chalo (“move forward!”); work song
O paalanhaare (“O sustainer”) bhakti bhajan
Lyrics: Javed Akhtar
(cf. “Salim-Javed”)
Sports and the Nation: Chak de India! (2007)