

Mohammed Shariff
Uteach 2010-2011

CINEMA OF THE SOUTH ASIAN DIASPORAS

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1 (2hr)

Topic: Queer Identity

1. Introduction:
 - a. Uteach program (course syllabus) and myself
 - b. ice breaker (quick intro and a interesting fact about themselves)
 - c. What is Diaspora? Why is it important and why it's worth teaching via cinema? (Power Point, to be completed winter quarter)

(25 min)

2. Film: My Beautiful Launderette
 - a. Intro to film: Director, writer, and key things for students to watch for in the narrative.
 - b. Screening
3. Assignment
 - a. Post due 24 hours before next class

(97 min)

Week 2 (50 Min)

Topic: Queer identity

1. Review My Beautiful Launderette
 - a. Lecture/discussion: about main characters, Omar and Johnny and how they contest traditional roles, and how the other characters adhere and contest traditional values, gay life in South Asian culture. (Power point, to be completed winter quarter)

(10 Min)

2. Lecture/Discussion: Gayatri Gopinath text Impossible Desires by Gayatri

Gopinath: CH.1

- a. Queer diasporas
- b. South Asian public cultures

(10 Min)

3. Post Discussion
 - a. Open to the class to discuss their posts (include Gopinath's text and the film). Queer diaspora contesting normal diaspora concept.

(30 Min)

- These two weeks will introduce the concept of diaspora and familial ideals/traditions, and how those concepts are contested and modernized through a homosexual lens. This week will merge into the impossible desires of a *Tawaif* (Shaibjaan in Pakeezah) and introducing Bollywood, expanding the traditional roles of South Asians.

Week 3 (2hr)

Topic: Bollywood and the Courtesan: The traditional female role contested and revisited.

1. Introduction:
 - a. *Pakeezah* (1972) - Kamal Amrohi writer and director.
 - b. Characters: Shaibjaan/Nargis (Meena Kumari), and Shababuddin Khan (Ashok Kumar)

(10 Min)

2. This film is lengthy; I'll need most of the class time for screening.
 - a. Film: Pakeezah
3. Remind class of post, due 24 hours before next class session.

(110 Min) (The film is 126 min. I will fast forwarding some of the songs, so the entire film can be viewed in class)

Week 4 (50 Min)

Topic: Bollywood and the Courtesan: The Traditional Female role contested and revisited.

1. Review of the film:
 - a. Brief history on Bollywood
 - b. Background of the film's Director, Writer, Industry at the time (Power Point)
 - c. Main characters: Shaibjaan, Shababuddin, Nargis, Salim, Nawab Zafar Ali Khan, NawabJaan (Power Point)

- d. What does Pakeezah mean? (Pure one). Why is she labeled this, and at first contest this labeled identity? Why does she later accept this identity?(Power Point, to be completed in Winter)

(10 Min)

2. Discuss the text: Muslim Socials and the Female Protagonist: seeking a dominate discourse at work by, Fareed Kazmi.
 - a. Projection of women in cinema, connection to South Asian celluloid.
 - b. Interpellation, why/how this film captures its audience, especially women. Introduce Vocabulary: Subaltern woman, Interpellation, Mirror Imagery, Mise-en-Scene, and clarify Hindi/Urdu Vocabulary, E.g. *Tawaif*- a courtesan who catered to the nobility of South Asia, particularly during the era of the Mughal Empire The *tawaifs* contributed to music, dance, theatre, film, and the Urdu literary tradition. Also today *Tawaif* is synonymous with prostitute. Others, *Kotha*, *Jaan*... (Power Point)

(15 Min)

3. Post Discussion:
 - a. Open to the class to discuss the topic. Some students will be called upon, to drive the discussion.

(20 Min)

- These weeks will concentrate on traditional female roles, how they're contested and brought back into stereotyped roles by patriarchy. Introduce film vocabulary. This week will bleed into the next topic concerning traditional roles and how they're contested in modern western culture.

Week 5 (2 hr)

Topic: Youths and traditional roles contested

1. Introduction

- a. Masala (1991) -Srinivas Krishna writer and director
- b. Characters to concentrate on: Krishna (Srinivas Krishna), Rita (Sakina Jaffrey), and Lallu bhai Solanki/ Mr. Tikkoo/ Lord Krishna (Saeed Jaffrey)
- c. Brief Lecture on diaspora in connection with the film: Constructed worlds, what's home?
- d.

(15 Min)

2. Screening: Masala

- a. .Watch for motifs in the film
- b. Remind class post discussion, due 24 hours before next class session.

(105 Min)

Week 6 (50 Min)

Topic: Youth and traditional roles contested

1. Review of the film:

- a. Director and writer biographies
- b. Film Reviews
- c. Main Characters: Lecture on Characters, Mostly on the protagonist Krishna and his struggle to find an identity. Does he find one in the end?
- d. Bollywood parodied
- e. Religious imagery
- f. Multilayered issues

(Power Point, to be completed winter quarter)

(10 Min)

2. Lecture on text: Beyond Bollywood by Jigna Desai: CH.4, Reel a State: Diaspora, Homeland, and Nation-state in Srinivas Krishna's Masala.

- a. Issues of the nation and national culture to diasporic politics and global process.
- b. Discuss and define hybridity
- c. Diasporic spectatorship

(10 Min)

3. Quiz:

- a. Several questions to be answered, and tuned in after allotted time

(10 Min)

4. Post discussion

- a. Open to class, to discuss their ideas, and interpretations.

- These weeks will focus on social hybridity, living between two worlds America/India Home/Homeland. How youth revolts and conforms. This idea blends into the next topic, because the film and text address interracial relationships, but doesn't deal with it as closely as Mira Nahir's *Mississippi Masala*.

(20 Min)

Week 7 (2 hr)

Topic: Interracial Relationships

1. Introduction:

- a. Mississippi Masala (1992) –Mira Nair Writer—Sooni Taraporevala
- b. Brief Lecture on characters: Mina (Sarita Choudhury), Demetrius Williams (Denzel Washington), and Jay (Roshan Seth)

(10 Min)

2. Screening: Mississippi Masala

- a. Remind Students about post, due 24 hours before next class session

(110 Min) (This film is 118 min; I will be fast-forwarding some parts)

Week 8 (50 Min)

Topic: Interracial relationships: Mississippi Masala (1992)

1. Review of the film:

- a. Introduce Mira Nair and Sooni Taraporevala

- b. Characters: Mina, Demetrius, Jay (father) examined, longing for homeland vs. home.

Explain the two concepts of home and homeland (Power Point, to be completed in winter quarter)

(10 Min)

2. Lecture on text: Essay from Multiculturalism, Postcoloniality, and Transitional media: Emigrants Twice Displaces: Race, Color, and Identity in Mira Nair's *Mississippi Masala*

- a. Twice displaced Indians, what does this mean?
- b. African Indian? Explain the history of diaspora, where Indians were colonized. Racial indifference.
- c. Concept of color
- d. Hybridity re-visited (Power Point, to be completed winter quarter)

(10 Min)

3. Post discussion:

- a. Open to the class, to discuss their ideas, and interpretations.

(30 Min)

- This week will address in-depth the taboo issue of interracial relationships and colonization of Indians from India to Africa, UK, US, etc. Questions that will be answered and further developed is what is homeland vs. home and how through this films narrative are these questions answered, are they answered, or is the audience left to decide on their own? Leading into the final topic and week of religion; Fitting in with the religious iconography in *Masla*, and *Mississippi Masla* in which the Hindu religion is represented.

Week 9 (2 hr)

Topic: Religion

1. Introduction:

- a. My Son the Fanatic (1998) –Udayan Prasad Writer—Hanif Kureishi
- b. Characters: focus on three main characters, Parvez (Om Puri), Bettina/Sandra (Rachel Griffiths), and Farid (Akbar Kurtha).
- c. Hanif Kureishi as a closing writer (power Point, to be completed winter quarter)

(15 Min)

2. Quiz:

- a. Final quiz, several questions, turned in after allotted time.

(17 Min)

3. Screening: *My Son the Fanatic* (1998)

- a. Remind students about final post. For this post the students will have to analyze all films and give their interpretations on diaspora and what diaspora means to them, what they've learned in the class. 300- 500 words.

(88 Min)

Week 10 (50 Min)

Topic: Religion, and final thoughts on diaspora

1. Review of the film:

- a. Reviews on the film
- b. Hanif Kureishi
- c. dichotomy between generations, a reversal role, Farid becomes an Islamic fanatic while Parvez doesn't really care for religion, and is the one who is 'westernized'.
- d. Characters, symbolism, social standing (Power Point, to be completed winter quarter)

(10 Min)

2. Lecture on text: Chapters 1 (Construction of 'the Asian' in post war Britain), 5 ('Race' and 'culture' in the gendering of labor markets), and (Diaspora, border and transnational identities), from, Cartographies of Diaspora contesting identities.

- a. The concepts of culture and identity
- b. Home away from home
- c. Religion and its impact on youth

(10 Min)

3. Post discussion/ Small celebration:

a. Open to the class to talk about what they've learned. Surprise for students!

(30 Min)

- This course outline will change slightly as i further develop the course.