Course Syllabus

ANTH 4701.017 (cross-listed with) PHIL 4960 Proseminar in Philosophy - Section 004 - Bollywood and Religions of India and South Asia

Spring 2011 – 3 Credit Hours

Course Description

This course is about the ways in which the Hindi cinema recasts Indian religions and cultures, from epics and classical drama, devotional songs, Hindi-Urdu poetry, to the portrayal of religious communities. From its humble beginnings to contemporary global incarnation with the label "Bollywood", Indian film industry has consistently maintained its link with the native cultural legends such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. This course examines the Indian culture as manifested in the Hindi films. The course assumes no previous knowledge of Indic religions or cinema, and all films will be shown with English subtitles. Coursework will include a series of short response papers and a final project, as well as active participation in class discussions and regular attendance at required weekly screenings.

Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will be able to:

- Understand the Indic religious ideas in their historical and contemporary forms
- Analyze and interpret Hindi cinema within relevant cultural contexts;
- Demonstrate independent, critical thought in the analysis and discussion of Indian cinema using reasons and evidence for supporting those reasons as appropriate to the humanities.

Students completing this course will be additionally able to:

- Compare systematically the ideas and cultural practices of people from different religious communities in India;
- Identify ideas and cultural practices as embedded in Indian pre-colonial, colonial, and/or post-colonial contexts;
- Explain shifts in ideas and cultural practices connected to migration, conquest, and/or colonization in India.

Course Structure

Class time will be divided between lectures, select film and documentary screenings, and discussions of the films and required readings.

Instructor

Dr. Pankaj Jain (pankaj.jain@unt.edu)
Office: 330E Chilton Hall **Telephone:** 940-369-7574

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1 - 3:00 PM or by appointment

Course Meetings

Lectures

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays, **Time:** 3 – 4.20 pm, **Room:** Matt 109

Film Screenings

Days: Mondays, **Time:** 2 – 5pm, **Room:** Media Library, Chilton Hall, Room 111C

Note: Most Indian films are now available on Netflix and you are welcome to watch the films using an account there. This will also be very useful for your final research paper.

Caution: Some film titles may refer to different films produced in different years so please pay special attention to the year and/or producer, director before watching it so that you are prepared to take the quiz on the relevant film as mentioned below in weekly schedule.

Course Materials

Required Textbook

Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics. Heidi R. M. Pauwels, Ed. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Prerequisites

None

Grading

Grade Components

Component	Weight	Details
Class Preparation and Participation	**10%**	Class preparation and participation is essential for success in the film course. Students are expected to come to class having completed all written, readings, and viewing assignments and should be prepared to actively participate in meaningful discussion about films in question and complete a short quiz. Active participation may include sharing your questions and comments about the films with the class, engaging your class mates in relevant and meaningful dialogue based on the topics/readings, and/or participating in other class activities (e.g., small group discussions, worksheets, and so forth). Class preparation and participation is evaluated using the following criteria: A+ (100%): Outstanding class preparation and class participation. Student meets and exceeds all criteria for "A" (described below). A (95%): Student comes to class prepared, having read and thought about the assigned films and texts and having completed all written assignments. Student often comes

Component	Weight	Details
		with written notes, and participates actively in class. Student arrives on time, stays the full length of the class, is attentive, responds when called upon, and volunteers frequently with pertinent questions and comments. B (85%): Student is usually prepared, sometimes with written notes, and responds when called upon. Student is attentive, participates in all activities, and volunteers with questions and comments on occasion. C (75%): Student shows evidence of being unprepared from time to time. Due to lack of preparation, student may have some trouble responding to instructor's questions or participating in class discussion/activities. Student does not volunteer often and sometimes comes to class late/leaves early. D (65%): Student is unprepared and/or inattentive. Student never volunteers and regularly comes to class late/leaves early. F (0%): Student exhibits a lack of concern for the class, sleeps in class, or distracts his/her classmates. Student's behavior has a negative effect on the class.
Response Papers	**45%**	Three short essays (5 pages each) that synthesize your thoughts on the films, readings, and class discussions. You may write on any topic of your choosing provided that you clear it with the instructor. Ideally, each essay should include discussion of at least two of the course films and should refer to relevant assigned readings. Essays are to be submitted on Blackboard course website on the following dates: Thursday Feb 10 (Week 4), Thursday Mar 10 (Week 8), and Thursday Apr 7 (Week 12).
Final Project	**25%**	Write a research essay of about 8 to 10 pages, you must watch additional films and cite outside references for this essay. Essay topics must be decided in consultation with the instructor with a short synopsis before March 12th 2011(before the Spring break). Final papers must be submitted on Blackboard website before Tuesday May 10, 2011, 1.30pm (the final exam date and time).
Oral Presentations	**10%**	Each student will be asked to give one short oral presentation (10 minutes) over the course of the semester in

Component	Weight	Details
		which they connect films with relevant Indian cultural, social, and historical contexts. This will be based on your final project and can be work-in-progress between the Spring break and the final week.
Quizzes	**10%**	Short, weekly quizzes, administered every Tuesday at the beginning of class, will cover material from the films and readings.

Requirements for Credit-Only (S/U) Grading

In order to receive a grade of S, students are required to take all exams and quizzes, complete all assignments, and earn a grade of C- or better. Conversion from letter grading to credit only (S/U) grading is subject to university deadlines. Refer to the Registration and Records calendar for deadlines related to grading.

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be marked down one letter grade per day, except in the case of excused absences. Extensions will be granted only in extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the instructor, in line with university policy on attendance. In the case of an excused absence, students should submit any missed assignments on the next class day that he/she is in attendance.

Attendance Policy

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory. Some absences may be excused in accordance with the university attendance regulation.

Absences

For every unexcused absence in excess of 2 (two), your semester grade will be reduced by one percentage point per additional absence. If you accumulate 6 (six) or more unexcused absences, your semester grade will be an F. If you miss more than 10 minutes of a class period (unless pre-approved by me), it will count as absence; however, you are still encouraged to attend so as not to miss the material covered in class.

Makeup Work

If you miss class for any reason, whether excused or unexcused, you are still expected to be prepared for the next class. Students should contact a classmate for information on missed material and assignments prior to the next class.

Course Drop Info

Please see UNT website for schedule –
http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html

Academic Integrity

Students are required to comply with the university policy on academic integrity. Assignments are intended to assess *individual* knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. In addition, aiding and abetting others to cheat or plagiarize will also not be tolerated. All individuals involved in an act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct according to UNT policy:
http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm

Policy on Equal Opportunity and Disability

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

Course Schedule

Week 1 — Indian Culture and Films

Screening: *Lagaan* ("The Land Tax"), Ashutosh Gowariker, 2001, 225 min. Screening on Jan 24.

Required Reading:
Lutgendorf, Philip. "Is There an Indian Way of Filmmaking?" *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, 10, 3 (2006), pp. 227-256.

Other Relevant Films:

Do Aankhen Baarah Haath

Do Bigha Zameen

Naya Daur

Week 2 — Hindu Epics and Films I

Screening: *Kalyug* ("The Great Descendents of Bharata"), Shyam Benegal, 1981. Screening on Jan 31.

Required Reading:

Lutgendorf, Philip. "Bending the Bharata: Two Uncommon Cinematic Adaptations", in *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics.*

Other Relevant Films:

Hum Paanch

Mahabharata

Week 3 — Hindu Epics and Films II

Screenings: *Hum Saath Saath Hain* ("We Are Together"), Suraj Barjatya. Screening on Feb 7.

Required Reading:

Aklujkar, Vidyut. "Family, Feminism, and Film in Remaking Ramayana", in *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics.*

Other Relevant Films:

Sampoorna Ramayana ("The Complete Ramayana")

The Legend of Prince Rama

Week 4 — The Islamicate Films

Screening: *Jodhaa Akbar,* Ashutosh Gowariker, 2007. Screening on Feb 14.

NOTE: First paper due in class on Thursday.

Required Reading:

Desoulieres, Alain. "Religious Culture and Folklore in the Urdu Historical Drama Anarkali, Revisited by Indian Cinema", in *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics.*

Bhaskar, Ira and Richard Allen. "Introduction", in *Islamicate Cultures of Bombay Cinema*

Other Relevant Films:

Mughal-E-Azam ("The Great Mughal"), K. Asif, 1960 [colorized version, 2004], 185 mins.

Mere Gharib Nawaaz

Fiza, Khalid Mohammed, 2000

Umrao Jaan, Muzaffar Ali, 1981

Week 5 — The Christian Social Films

Screening: *Khamoshi: the Musical* (1996). Screening on Feb 21.

Required Reading:

Jain, Pankaj. "From *Kil-Arni* to *Anthony*: Portrayal of Christians in Indian Films" in *Journal of Visual Anthropology*, 23.1, pp. 13-19.

Other Relevant Films:

Baton Baton Mein, Basu Chatterjee, 1979

Week 6 — The Parsee (Zoroastrian) Social Films

Screening: *Being Cyrus (2005).* Screening on Feb 28.

Required Reading:

Jain, Pankaj. *'Such a Long Journey': Portrayal of Parsi Community in Films*

Other Relevant Films: *Pestonjee* (1987), *Percy* (1989)

Week 7 — Renunciation and Non-Renunciation

Screenings: *Devdas*, Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Screening on Mar 7.

Required Readings:
Jain, Pankaj. "Renunciation and non-renunciation in Indian Films" in *Religion Compass.*
Creekmur, Corey. "Remembering, Repeating, and Working through Devdas", in *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics.*

Other Relevant Films:

Guide, Vijay Anand, 1965

Siddhartha, Conrad Rooks, 1972

Trishagni, Nabendu Gosh, 1998.

Week 8 — The Music of Indian films

Screening: *Mirza Ghalib,* Gulzar. Screening on Mar 21.

NOTE: Second paper due in class on Thursday

Required Readings:
Hines, Naseem. "From Ghazal to Film Music: The Case of Mirza Ghalib"

Mir, Ali. "Lyrically Speaking: Hindi Film Songs and the Progressive Aesthetic"

Week 9 — The "Mythological" Films

Screening: *Hanuman*, 2005, 138 min. Screening on Mar 28.

Required Reading:

Dwyer, Rachel, "The Mythological Film", in *Filming the Gods*

Philip Lutgendorf, "A Monkey's Childhood"

Other Relevant Films:

Mahabharata, Babubhai Mistry, 1965

Agni Varsha ("Fire and Rain"), Arjun Sajnani, 2002

Jai Santoshi Maa ("Hail, Mother Santoshi"), Vijay Sharma, 1975

Week 10 — the Devotional Films

Screening: *Meera,* Gulzar. Screening on Apr 4.

Required Reading:

Pauwels, Heidi. "Bhakti Songs Recast: Gulzar's Meera Movie" in *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics.*

Lutgendorf, Philip. "The "Mira Trope" in Mainstream Hindi Cinema: Three Examples from Notable Films"

Other Relevant Films:

Sant Tukaram ("Saint Tukaram"), Vishnupant Damle and Sheikh Fattelal, 1937

Week 11 — Religion in "Secular" Films

Screening: *Dosti,* Satyen Bose, 1964. Screening on Apr 11.

Required Reading:

Dwyer, Rachel, "The religious and the secular in the Hindi Film", in *Filming the Gods*

Jain, Pankaj. "Virtue Ethics of *Boot Polish* and *Dosti* vis-à-vis *Slumdog Millionaire*" in *Journal of Visual Anthropology*.

Other Relevant Films:

Boot Polish, Prakash Arora, 1954

Week 12 — Religion in "Secular" Films II

Screening: *Bombay,* Mani Ratan. Screening on Apr 18.

NOTE: Third paper due in class on Thursday

Required Reading:

Jain, Pankaj. "From Padosi to My Name is Khan: Portrayal of Hindu Muslim Relations in Indian Films", in *Journal of Visual Anthropology,* 23.1, pp. 44-50.

Other Relevant Films:

Padosi, V Shantaram, 1941

Zakhm, Mahesh Bhatt, 1998

Week 13 — Films from Pakistan and Bangladesh

Screening: *Khuda Kay Liye,* 2005. Screening on Apr 25.

Iftikhar Dadi. "Registering Crisis: Ethnicity in Pakistani Cinema of the 1960s and 70s." in Beyond Crisis: A Critical Second Look at Pakistan, edited by Naveeda Khan (Routledge, 2009), pp. 140-171.

Mushtaq Gazdar. Pakistan Cinema 1947-1997, OUP, 1997.

Sajid Iqbal, "Pakistani Cinema," on the British Film Institute website http://www.cscsarchive.org/

Films of Ritwik Ghatak (Bangladesh): http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/03/ghatak.html

Other Relevant Films:

Clay Bird

Khamosh Pani

Week 14 – Romance, Consumerism, and Diaspora

Screening: ***Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge*** ("The Brave Heart Gets the Bride"), Aditya Chopra, 1995, 190 min. Screening on May 2.

Required Reading:

Patricia Uberoi, "The Diaspora Comes Home: Disciplining Desire in *DDLJ*," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 32:2 (July-December 1988): 305-336.

Corey K. Creekmur, "Bombay Boys: Dissolving the Male Child in Popular Hindi Cinema," in *Where the Boys Are: Cinemas of Boyhood*, ed. Murray Pomerance

and Frances Gateward. (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2004)

Additional Resources:

Anupama Chopra, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (London: BFI, 2002).

Ronald Inden, "Transnational Class, Erotic Arcadia and Commercial Utopia in Hindi Films," in *Image Itineraries: Audio-Visual Media and Cultural Change in India*, ed. Christiane Brosius and Melissa Butcher (New Delhi: Sage, 1999): 41-66.

Other Relevant Films:

Dil Chahta Hai ("The Heart Desires"), Farhan Akhtar, 2001, 185m.

Pardes ("In a Foreign Land"), Subhash Ghai, 1997

Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham ("Sometimes Happiness, Sometimes Sorrow") Karan Johar, 2001

Kal Ho Na Ho ("Whatever Tomorrow Brings"), Nikhil Advani, 2003

Salaam/Namaste, Siddharth Raj Anand, 2006