

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), KOLKATA
FILM STUDIES (GENERAL) COURSE

APPROACH PAPER

- 1. This program aims to help students become critical viewers of movies today.**

From a personal point of view, a movie is described as a state of awareness along with a set of emotions experienced by the viewer. While analyzing this state of the viewer, the students are in effect analyzing themselves. In the process, they rediscover themselves.

From a social point of view, rather than adopting a chronological study of the cinema, we emphasize those schools and styles of cinema, including those of the national cinemas, have significantly contributed to world cinema. In the process, the students not only learn about different 'cinemas' but also gain significant knowledge of societies at home and abroad.

- 2. The students will study the similarities and differences between various movie cultures on the one hand and the classical Hollywood cinema on the other.**

This approach to film studies through popular cinema makes the subject more interesting and meaningful.

- 3. The students will study Indian cinema through its similarities and differences with both Indian & Western traditions of art and culture.**

Apart from making the study of Indian movie culture more rooted, it would help the students to grasp the nature of its ideology and its social imaginary.

- 4. Movies cannot be studied apart from the technology used to produce them. Hence, students will do practical exercises in each semester.**

These exercises would include some digital hands-on experiences.

- 5. The students will study cinema through an open-ended list of movies.**

The list of movies to be studied will be kept open to incorporate, on a continuous basis, significant developments occurring in cinema and to reach out to the new generation of students joining the course.

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE, KOLKATA
(AUTONOMOUS)

SYLLABUS for FILM STUDIES

(THREE-YEAR GENERAL COURSE)

SEMESTER 1 – 75 MARKS

Theory: 50 (Ext. 40 + Int.10)

Practical: 25 (Ext. 20 + Int. 5)

PAPER 1: Classical Hollywood Cinema: The Dominant Film Paradigm

FS/UG(General)/1.1: Standardization of the Narrative Form

Screening: A Representative Hollywood Film

1. Standardization of Film Practices: Narrative Form

Linear Perspective

Formation of Genres

Melodrama, Family, Gender

2. Standardization of Film Practices: Basic Techniques

Semiotic Analysis of its Codes: Analysis of a Shot/Scene/Sequence

Camera, Lighting, Sound, Editing

3. Factors Motivating such Standardization

Ideology

Mode of Production: The Studio System

4. Evolution of the Hollywood Film Paradigm: An Overview

From Lumière to Griffith

5. Discussion of an 'Author' in the Studio System

Anyone of the Genre Authors

FS/UG(Genl)/1.2: Film and other Arts

Film and other Arts with special reference to Western Art

Discussing Cinemas' dependence on other Arts for its Semiotic Codes

Literature, Painting, Theatre and Music

FS/UG(Genl)/1.3: Use of Supplementary Teaching Methods

Seminars, Workshops, Tutorials, etc, as per norms on the subject

FS/UG/1.4: Practical

1. Slide Project

Constructing a Narrative with Stills

Reading List

Books and Articles

General Books on Cinema (introductory level)

1. The Cinema Book by Pam Cook & Mieke Bernink (Ed.), published by British Film Institute, London.
This book deals with an overview of all aspects of cinema, like the application of psychoanalysis to characters/events in films, etc (except the technological details of filmmaking equipment, like camera, etc) as well as brief historical overviews of cinemas of different countries. It does all these at some reasonably satisfactory critical level too.
2. Film Art by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, 7th ed., published by McGraw-Hill.
It discusses the analytical tools of film analysis. It also shows how to analyse certain classic (commercially successful yet critically acclaimed) films with the help of those tools. It offers no historical overview though.
3. The Oxford Guide to Film Studies by John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (Ed.), published by OUP, Oxford.
Another excellent critical book like The Cinema Book. Very useful.
4. A History of Narrative Film by David Cook, 4th ed., published by W. W. Norton, New York.
An in-depth overview of different national cinemas with some useful analysis of celebrated films.
5. How to Read A Film: The Art, Technology, Language, History, and Theory of Film and Media by James Monaco, 2nd ed., published by OUP, New York.
Discusses the analytical tools applied in understanding cinema. Also discusses technological aspects of film equipment at a rudimentary level.

Readings on Film Theory and Other Aspects of Cinema

1. Movies and Methods by Bill Nichols (Ed.)
2. Film Theory and Criticism by Gerald Mast & Marshall Cohen (Ed.)
3. Film and Theory: An Anthology by Robert Stam & Toby Miller (Ed.)
4. Film Studies: Critical Approaches by John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (Ed.)
5. Key Concepts in Cinema Studies by Susan Hayward
6. Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers by Felicity Colman

Reading on the Technology of Cinema

In case you are keen on knowing the technological aspects of cinema, the following books would do:

1. The Filmmaker's Handbook by Steven Ascher & Edward Pincus
2. The Five C's of Cinematography by Joseph V. Mascelli
3. The Technique of Film Editing by Carol and Reisz
4. In the Blink of an Eye by Walter Murch

General Articles on Cinema

1. 'What is Realism?' - H. Levin
2. 'On Realism in Art' - R. Jakobson
3. 'Tales of Sound and Fury: Observations on Family Melodrama' – T. Elsaesser
4. 'Melodramatic Field: An Investigation' - C. Gledhill
5. 'Mothering, Feminism and Melodrama' - F. Ann Kaplan
6. 'Cinema and Genre' - R. Altman
7. 'Film Genre and the Genre Film' - T. Schatz
8. 'The Evolution of the Western' - A. Bazin
9. 'What is an Author?' - M. Foucault
10. 'Death of an Author' - R. Barthes

On Hollywood Cinema

Since Hollywood cinema is taken as the one constant paradigm by differentiation from which all other kinds of cinema are either identified or established, it is extremely important to know Hollywood cinema well:

1. The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960 by David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, published by Routledge, London.
2. Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction - R. Maltby and I. Craven
3. The Hollywood Studio System - D. Gomery
4. Narration in Fiction Film - D. Bordwell
5. Narrative Comprehension in Film - E. Brannigan

On Early Cinema

Books

1. Early Cinema, Space, Frame, Narrative - T. Elsaesser and A. Barker (Ed.)
2. Life to Those Shadows - N. Burch

Articles

1. 'Now you see it now you don't: Cinema of Attractions' - T. Gunning
2. 'Origins and Survivals' - P. C. Usai in Oxford History of World Cinema
3. 'Early Cinema' - R. Pearson in Oxford History of World Cinema

SEMESTER 2 – 75 MARKS

Theory: 50 (Ext. 40 + Int.10)

Practical: 25 (Ext. 20 + Int. 5)

PAPER 2: Filmmaker's Response to the Emerging Reality: 1920s – 1950s

FS/UG(General)/2.2: Introducing Film Movements: Alternate Film Paradigms

1. German Expressionist Cinema
 - Expressionist mise-en-scène
 - Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*/ F. W. Murnau's *Sunrise*/Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, etc.
2. Soviet Montage Cinema
 - Introducing Modernism
 - Signification in Cinema: Montage
 - Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, etc.
3. Italian Neo-realist Cinema
 - Representing *Reality As It Is*
 - Vittorio De Sica's *Bicycle Thief*, etc.

FS/UG(Genl)/2.2: Indian Popular Cinema: The 'Other' Paradigm

Screening: A Representative Indian Popular Film

1. Standardization of Film Practices: Narrative Form
 - Differences with Hollywood Cinema
 - Melodrama, Family, Gender
2. Standardization of Film Practices: Basic Techniques
 - Semiotic Analysis of its Basic Codes vis-à-vis Hollywood Cinema
3. Factors motivating such Practices
 - Mode of Production: The Studio Years
4. Evolution of Indian Popular Form: An Overview
 - From Silent Era to Studio Years
 - Emergence of Contemporary Forms
5. Discussion of an Indian 'Author' in the Popular Form

FS/UG(Genl)/2.3: Film and other Arts

Film and other Arts with special reference to Indian Art

Discussing Cinemas' dependence on other Arts for its Semiotic Codes
Literature, Painting, Theatre and Music

FS/UG(Genl)/2.3: Use of Supplementary Teaching Methods

Seminars, Workshops, Tutorials, etc, as per norms on the subject

FS/UG(Genl)/2.4: Practical

1. Visual Dynamization

Reading List

Books and Articles

Reading relevant portions from the General Books on Cinema

1. The Cinema Book by Pam Cook & Mieke Bernink (Ed.), published by British Film Institute, London.
This book deals with an overview of all aspects of cinema, like the application of psychoanalysis to characters/events in films, etc (except the technological details of filmmaking equipment, like camera, etc) as well as brief historical overviews of cinemas of different countries. It does all these at some reasonably satisfactory critical level too.
2. Film Art by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, 7th ed., published by McGraw-Hill.
It discusses the analytical tools of film analysis. It also shows how to analyse certain classic (commercially successful yet critically acclaimed) films with the help of those tools. It offers no historical overview though.
3. The Oxford Guide to Film Studies by John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (Ed.), published by OUP, Oxford.
Another excellent critical book on the lines of The Cinema Book. Very useful.
4. A History of Narrative Film by David Cook, 4th ed., published by W. W. Norton, New York.
An in-depth overview of different national cinemas with some useful analysis of celebrated films.
5. How to Read A Film: The Art, Technology, Language, History, and Theory of Film and Media by James Monaco, 2nd ed., published by OUP, New York.
Discusses the analytical tools applied in understanding cinema. Also discusses technological aspects of film equipment at a rudimentary level.

Specific Books on Film Movements

Books

1. Haunted Screen - Lotte Eisner
2. From Caligari to Hitler - Siegfried Kracauer
3. Film Sense - Sergei Eisenstein
4. Film Form - Sergei Eisenstein
5. Passion and Defiance: Film in Italy from 1942 to the Present - M. Liehm
6. Italian Cinema: From Neo-realism to the Present - P. Bondanella

Articles

1. 'Italy from Fascism to Neo-realism' - M. Morandini in Oxford History of World Cinema
2. 'Italian Post-war Cinema and Neo-realism' - S. Monticelli in Oxford Guide to Film Studies

On Indian Popular Cinema

Books

1. Pleasure and the Nation: History, Politics and Consumption of Public Culture in India
- R. Dwyer and C. Pinney (Ed.)
2. Making Meaning in Indian Cinema - R. Vasudevan
3. The Melodramatic Public - R. Vasudevan
4. Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction - M. Madhava Prasad
5. The Painted Face - C. Dasgupta
6. Our Films Their Films - S. Ray
7. Cinema and I - Ritwik Ghatak
8. The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama & the Mode of Excess
- P. Brookes
9. Fingerprinting Popular Culture: The Mythic and the Iconic in Indian Cinema
- Vinay Lal and Ashis Nandy (Ed.)
10. Indian Film - Erik Barnouw & S. Krishnaswamy
11. Asian Cinemas: A Reader - Dimitris Eleftheriotis & Gary Needham (Ed.)
12. Fifty Indian Film Classics - M. K. Raghavendra

Articles

1. 'What Ails Indian Filmmaking?' - S. Ray
2. 'Towards a Definition of Popular Culture' - L. Fiedler
3. 'Encoding/Decoding' - S. Hall
4. 'Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' - T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer
5. 'Culture Industry Reconsidered' - T. Adorno
6. 'Myth Today' - R. Barthes
7. 'The Politics of Cultural Address in a "Transitional" Cinema:
A Case Study of Indian Popular Cinema - R. Vasudevan
8. 'An Intelligent Critic's Guide to Indian Cinema' - A. Nandy

SEMESTER 3 – 75 MARKS

Theory: 50 (Ext. 40 + Int.10)

Practical: 25 (Ext. 20 + Int. 5)

PAPER 3: Modern Trends in Cinema since the '50s

FS/UG(Genl)/3.1: Modern Trends as Departures from the Standard Narrative

1. The French New Wave
Cahière and Left Bank Filmmakers
2. New Latin American Cinema
Cinema as Memory/Political Practice
3. Japanese Cinema
Distinctive Features of Japanese Cinema
Anyone of the following:
Kurosawa's *Rashomon*/Ozu's *Tokyo Story*/Mizoguchi's *Life of Oharu*;
Kobayashi's *Kaidan/Revolution/Harakiri*;
Oshima's *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence/Death by Hanging*, etc.
4. New Iranian Cinema
Turning Constraints into a *Language of Subversion* after the Revolution
Anyone of the following:
Mohsin Makmalbaf/Abbas Kiarostami/Tehmine Milani

FS/UG(Genl)/3.4: Non-Fiction and Experimental Cinema

Evolution of World Documentary Cinema: An Overview

Digital Aesthetics and the Independent Filmmakers

Any one of the following:

Jim Jarmush, Wong Ker Wai, Jan Shankmayer, Peter Greenway,
Lars Von Trier, American Underground Cinema, etc.

FS/UG(Genl)/3.5: Use of Supplementary Teaching Methods

Seminars, Workshops, Tutorials, etc, as per norms on the subject

FS/UG(Genl)/3.6: Practical

Making a Non-Fiction Film

Reading List

Books and Articles

Reading relevant portions from General Books on Cinema

1. The Cinema Book by Pam Cook & Mieke Bernink (Ed.), published by British Film Institute, London.
This book deals with an overview of all aspects of cinema, like the application of psychoanalysis to characters/events in films, etc (except the technological details of filmmaking equipment, like camera, etc) as well as brief historical overviews of cinemas of different countries. It does all these at some reasonably satisfactory critical level too.
2. Film Art by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, 7th ed., McGraw-Hill.
It discusses the analytical tools of film analysis. It also shows how to analyse certain classic (commercially successful yet critically acclaimed) films with the help of those tools. It offers no historical overview though.
3. The Oxford Guide to Film Studies by John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (Ed.), published by OUP, Oxford.
Another excellent critical book on the lines of The Cinema Book. Very useful.
4. A History of Narrative Film by David Cook, 4th ed., published by W. W. Norton, New York.
An in-depth overview of different national cinemas with some useful analysis of celebrated films.
5. How to Read A Film: The Art, Technology, Language, History, and Theory of Film and Media by James Monaco, 2nd ed., published by OUP, New York.
Discusses the analytical tools applied in understanding cinema. Also discusses technological aspects of film equipment at a rudimentary level.

Specific Books on Relevant Topics

1. The New Wave by James Monaco
2. Speaking about Godard by Kaja Silverman & Harun Farocki
3. The Films of Jean-Luc Godard by Wheeler Winston Dixon
4. Finally Truffaut by Don Allen
5. The Japanese Film by Joseph I. Anderson & Donald Richie
6. The Films of Akira Kurosawa by Donald Richie
7. Reframing Japanese Cinema by Arthur Nolletti Jr. & David Desser (Ed.)
8. Asian Cinemas: A Reader by Dimitris Eleftheriotis & Gary Needham (Ed.)
9. The New Latin American Cinema: Readings from Within by Samik Bandopadhyay, S, Chakravarty, & S. V. Raman (Ed.)
10. Close Up: Iranian Cinema, Past, Present and Future by Hamid Dabashi
11. Masters and Masterpieces of Iranian Cinema by Hamid Dabashi
12. Conversations with Mohsen Makhmalbaf by Hamid Dabashi
13. Iran: A People Interrupted by Hamid Dabashi
14. Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction by Patricia Aufderheide
15. New Challenges for Documentary by Alan Rosenthal (Ed.)
16. Documentary: A History of Non-Fiction Film by Erik Barnow

SEMESTER 4 – 75 MARKS

Theory: 50 (Ext. 40 + Int.10)

Practical: 25 (Ext. 20 + Int. 5)

PAPER 4: Modern Indian Cinema and the Text Films

FS/UG(Genl)/4.1: Modern Indian Cinema

1. Standardization of the Realism Paradigm and its Departures

Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen

2. Introducing the Indian 'New Wave'

1. New Indian Cinema

2. A Representative Film from any of the following Directors:

Mrinal Sen, Mani Kaul, Adoor Gopalakrishna, Shyam Benegal

Ketan Mehta, M. S. Sathyu, Kumar Sahani, Syed Akhtar Mirza, etc.

FS/UG(Genl)/4.2: Five Text Films

This area is being completely left open with the following proviso:

One from Modern Indian Cinema

One from Indian Popular Cinema

One from Western Cinema

One from Documentary Cinema

One from Avant-garde Cinema

FS/UG(Genl)/4.3: Use of Supplementary Teaching Methods

Seminars, Workshops, Tutorials, etc, as per norms on the subject

FS/UG(Genl)/4.5: Practical

1. Continuity Film

Reading List

Books and Articles

On Serious Indian Cinema

Western writers are still unable to do justice to Indian cinema. Consequently my recommendation for Indian cinema is to go to the writings of the masters as far as possible:

1. Our Films Their Films by Satyajit Ray, published by Orient Longman, Calcutta.
2. Cinema and I by Ritwik Ghatak
3. The Maverick Maestro (on Mrinal Sen's films) by Dipankar Mukhopadhyay
4. Speaking about Films by Satyajit Ray
5. My Years with Apu by Satyajit Ray
6. The Cinema of Satyajit Ray by Chidananda Dasgupta
7. Guru Dutt by Munni Kabir
8. Fifty Indian Film Classics by M. K. Raghavendra

Apart from the above, there are also now books available on individual filmmakers like Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalkrishnan, Aparna Sen and Buddhadeb Dasgupta. It is, however, unfortunate that till now none exist on Mani Kaul or Kumar Shahani.

General Books on Cinema (Sections on Indian Cinema)

1. The Cinema Book by Pam Cook & Mieke Bernink (Ed.), published by British Film Institute, London.
This book deals with an overview of all aspects of cinema. Read chapters 'Third world and Postcolonial Cinema' and 'Hindi Cinema'. It deals with them at some reasonably satisfactory level.
2. The Oxford Guide to Film Studies by John Hill & Pamela Church Gibson (Ed.), published by OUP, Oxford.
Another excellent critical book. Read chapters on 'Concepts of National Cinema' and 'Indian Cinema'.
3. A History of Narrative Film by David Cook, 4th ed., published by W. W. Norton, New York.
An in-depth overview of different national cinemas with some useful analysis of celebrated films. Read articles on Indian Cinema viz. 'Satyajit Ray' and 'Parallel Cinema'.

On Popular Indian Cinema

Since serious Indian cinema basically signify a departure from Indian popular cinema, it is necessary to understand popular cinema for a better grasp of the subject matter.

Books

1. Pleasure and the Nation: History, Politics and Consumption of Public Culture in India
- R. Dwyer and C. Pinney (Ed.)
2. Making Meaning in Indian Cinema - R. Vasudevan
3. The Melodramatic Public – R. Vasudevan
4. Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction - M. Madhava Prasad
5. The Painted Face - C. Dasgupta
6. Our Films Their Films - S. Ray
7. Fingerprinting Popular Culture - Vinay Lal and Ashis Nandy (Ed.)
8. Indian Film – Erik Barnouw & S. Krishnaswamy
9. Asian Cinemas: A Reader - Dimitris Eleftheriotis & Gary Needham (Ed.)
10. Fifty Indian Film Classics - M. K. Raghavendra

Articles

1. ‘What Ails Indian Filmmaking?’ - S. Ray
2. ‘An Intelligent Critic’s Guide to Indian Cinema’ - A. Nandy
3. ‘The Politics of Cultural Address in a “Transitional” Cinema:
A Case Study of Indian Popular Cinema - R. V