

ASIA 61 India through the Lens of Master Filmmakers

Fall 2021

Prof. Pamela Lothspeich 124 New West (office) ploth@email.unc.edu <i>Meeting times and location:</i> Film screenings: Monday 6:00-9:00 pm, 219 New West Section 1: Tuesday, Thursday 9:30-10:45 am, 215 Hanes Art Section 2: Tuesday, Thursday 12:30-1:45, 215 Hanes Art <i>Class Zoom:</i> https://unc.zoom.us/j/94906818454	<i>Office hours:</i> Monday 2:00-3:00 (on Zoom) Tuesday 2:00-3:00 (in person) and by appointment <i>Office hours Zoom:</i> https://unc.zoom.us/j/97953925119
---	--



A still from the film *Mirch Masala* (Hot Spice), 1987

Course Description

In this course, we watch films by some of the most acclaimed directors working in various languages and regions of India. Our cinematic journey will touch on important themes in South Asian culture and history over the past 200 years. It will also introduce students to some of the formal elements of filmmaking to help them better “read” and appreciate the text of film. There will be weekly film screenings and related readings on Indian cinema and film theory.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you should be familiar with the range of Indian regional cinemas, and some of the features of “art films” in India, some of the major directors of Indian cinema, and also be able to apply some basic concepts of film theory to viewed films. You should also be conversant with the aspects of Indian culture relayed in the the assigned films.

Films

Bengali/Bangla cinema

Pather Panchali (Song of the Little Road), Satyajit Ray, 1955 <https://unc.kanopy.com/product/pather-panchali> (Reserves streaming)

Aparajito (The Unvanquished), Satyajit Ray, 1956

Apur Sansar (The World of Apu), Satyajit Ray, 1959 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N89TWYYsmqU>

Matir Moina (The Clay Bird), Tareque Masud, 2002 (in person, 219 New West, and Reserves DVD)

Hindi-Urdu cinema

Pyasa (The Thirsty One), Guru Dutt, 1957 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJK45r-j6TU> (Reserves DVD)

Manthan (The Churning), Shyam Benegal, 1976 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH_CBS2KVF4

Mirch Masala (Hot Spice), Ketan Mehta, 1987 <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/watch/mirch-masala> (Reserves streaming)

Manto, Nandita Das, 2018 (in person, 219 New West, and Netflix \$)

Kannada cinema

Samskara (Funeral Rites), Patabhirama Reddy, 1970 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGtj5L_Mbcc

Dweepa (The Island), Girish Kasaravalli, 2002 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EY-qzjFtda8>

Malayalam cinema

Nizhalkuthu (Shadow Kill), Adoor Gopalakrishnan, 2002 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$)

Joji, Dileesh Pothan, 2021 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$)

Tamil cinema

Mayabazar (Market of Illusions), K. V. Reddy, 1957 https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=LID_PO-NvBg&t=212s

Kanchivaram, Priyadarshn, 2010 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKEpFttBUHw&t=1704s>

Telugu cinema

Palasa 1978, Karuna Kumar, 2020 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$)

Vanaja, Rajnesh Domalpalli, 2006 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CpTTJ6nrG4>

Course Requirements		Grading Scale	
reaction worksheets (5 out of 6)	30%	95-100 = A	73-76.99 = C
short paper (first draft)	10%	90-94.99 = A-	70-72.99 = C-
short paper (second draft)	10%	87-89.99 = B+	67-69.99 = D+
final paper	25%	83-86.99 = B	63-66.99 = D
peer review	5%	80-82.99 = B-	62.99 and below = F
micro presentation on final paper	5%	77-79.99 = C+	
group work	10%		
participation	5%		

Please see the calendar for all deadlines.

Reaction worksheets: 5 out of 6 (500-600 words each); Submit via Sakai/Assignments.

Reaction worksheets will be posted on Sakai/Resources. These worksheets will allow you to synthesize your thoughts about pairs of assigned films. They will be graded on a check-plus (10 points), check (8.5 points), and check-minus (7 points) basis. Please note I do not accept late reaction worksheets, but you only are required to submit 6 worksheets (your choice), and you can submit up to 7 total. (I will drop your lowest grade.)

Short paper (first draft): 4 double-spaced pages; Submit via Sakai/Assignments.

This should be a formal argumentative essay. This means you should include a thesis which makes a clear argument, and solid evidence to support your thesis. You only need to draw on course materials, but you must include some descriptions and analysis of scenes from films. No outside research is required or expected. Please see Sakai/Assignments for the prompts, and information about the Honor Code below.

Short paper (second draft): 4 double-spaced pages; Submit via Sakai/Assignments.

After you get instructor feedback on your first draft, you should edit it and submit it as your second draft.

Final paper: 6 double-spaced pages; Submit via Sakai/Assignments.

This should also be a formal argumentative essay, but you are free to choose your own topic for this paper. However, it should have a comparative focus, and discuss three films, one of which should be a film not assigned for this class. Again, no outside research is required or expected. Again, please see information about the Honor Code below.

Peer review:

Before the first paper is due, working in small groups, students will review each other's papers in class. To get full credit, you must submit your peer-review draft the night before, bring three hard copies of your paper to class on the day of the peer review, and actively participate in the peer review.

Micro presentation on final paper:

In the last week of class, students will give brief, informal presentations on their final papers (3-4 minutes each).

Group work:

Near the beginning of the semester, students will be divided into small groups. Then over the course of the semester, small groups will give mini presentations (on topics provided by the instructor) that will serve as film prep for the following week. Small groups will also help lead class discussions.

Participation:

Your participation grade will be based on the degree to which you actively engage in class discussions and activities (not just attendance).

University attendance policy:

"No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)."

Mask policy (from the College of Arts and Sciences):

"This semester, while we are in the midst of a global pandemic, all enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community — your classmates and me — as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask,

or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception.” For additional information on COVID-19 and masking, see [Carolina Together](#).

Honor code:

All Carolina students are expected to uphold the values and follow the guidelines of the honor code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. This includes a commitment not to plagiarize. The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance defines plagiarism as “deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.” This includes open-source websites. Although they are often unsigned, they are still intellectual property. Therefore, do not utilize material from the internet (directly quoted or paraphrased) without citing it. If you are unsure about which actions violate the honor code, please see me or see [honor.unc.edu](#).

Diversity statement:

I value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. I broadly define diversity to include race, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, political background, and physical and learning ability. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve. I appreciate suggestions.

Support for you:

I genuinely want you to succeed in this course. Please let me know at any time what I can do to make your experience in this class less stressful and more beneficial. I welcome your input and want to help and support you! Please read on to see other sources of student support on campus.

Campus resources:

- **Accessibility Resources and Service:** The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS website for contact information: <http://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs: <http://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.
- **Grade appeal process:** If you feel you have been awarded an incorrect grade, please discuss with me. If we cannot resolve the issue, you may talk to our departmental director of undergraduate studies or appeal the grade through a formal university process based on arithmetic/clerical error, arbitrariness, discrimination, harassment, or personal malice. To learn more, go to the Academic Advising Program website: <http://advising.unc.edu/faqs/academic-difficulty-appeals/>.
- **Learning Center:** The UNC Learning Center is a great resource both for students who are struggling in their courses and for those who want to be proactive and develop sound study practices to prevent falling behind.

They offer individual consultations, peer tutoring, academic coaching, test prep programming, study skills workshops, and peer study groups. If you think you might benefit from their services, please visit them in SASB North or visit their website to set up an appointment: <http://learningcenter.unc.edu>.

- **The Ombuds Office:** An ombuds is a person trained to assist members of a community or organization. We are a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for staff, faculty, students and administrators at Carolina: <http://ombuds.unc.edu>.
- **Student Wellness:** Student Wellness at UNC-CH seeks to enhance the individual and collective health of our campus and wider community through a wide range of programs, services and resources: <http://studentwellness.unc.edu>.
- **Title IX resources:** Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <http://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall: <http://interim-titleixcoordinator@unc.edu>; Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office: <http://reportandresponse@unc.edu>, Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential): <http://caps.unc.edu/>; or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (confidential): <http://gvsc@unc.edu>, to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at <http://safe.unc.edu>.
- **University Office for Diversity and Inclusion:** The University Office for Diversity and Inclusion (UODI) has primary responsibility for providing University-wide leadership on best practices and strategies to build and sustain an inclusive campus community. UODI promotes the principles of equity and inclusion in recruitment, through diversity education and functions, and development programming: <http://diversity.unc.edu>.
- **UNC LGBTQ Center:** Center staff are available to meet with people individually to discuss issues related to identity development, relationships, family, academics, and allyship: <http://lgbtq.unc.edu/programs/support/talk/>.
- **Writing Center:** The Writing Center is located in the Student and Academic Services Building and offers personalized writing consultations as well as a variety of other resources. This could be a wonderful resource to help with your writing assignments in this course (and any assignments in your other courses). You do not need a complete draft of your assignment to visit; they can help you at any stage! You can chat with someone in the writing center or set up as appointment on their website: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu>.

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be communicated via email.

Calendar

All films, readings and assignments should be completed prior to coming to class.

WEEK 1 (August 19)

Thurs.	Introduction and welcome!
--------	---------------------------

Bengali/Bangla cinema

WEEK 2 (August 23, 24, 26)

Mon.	Film: <i>Pather Panchali</i> (Song of the Little Road), Satyajit Ray, 1955 https://unc.kanopy.com/product/pather-panchali (Reserves streaming)
Tues.	Watch in class, film: <i>Aparajito</i> (The Unvanquished), 1956 (first half)
Thurs.	Watch in class, film: <i>Aparajito</i> (second half) Reaction worksheet 1 due Friday, August 27, by 11:55 pm

WEEK 3 (August 30, 31, September 2)

Mon.	Film: <i>Apur Sansar</i> (The World of Apu), 1959 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N89TWYYsmqU
Tues.	"Parallel Cinema in India," in <i>Shyam Benegal</i> , Sangeeta Datta, p. 18-43 RED GROUP ("The Problem with Apu")
Thurs.	NO CLASS—Watch "Shyam Benegal Interviewing Satyajit Ray 'An Art Of Film'" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtHXvnP9HJk&t=1083s and Film: <i>Pyasa</i> (The Thirsty One), Guru Dutt, 1957 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJK45r-j6TU By next Tuesday, September 7

WEEK 4 (September 6, 7, 9)

Mon.	Labor Day—NO CLASS
Tues.	PURPLE GROUP (Guru Dutt—contributions, style, comparisons to Satyajit Ray) <i>Film Art</i> , 12 th edition, David Bordwell et al., ch. 2 "The Significance of Film Form"
Thurs.	Reaction worksheet 2 due Friday, September 10, by 11:55 pm

WEEK 5 (September 13, 14, 16)

Mon.	Film: <i>Matir Moina</i> (The Clay Bird), Tareque Masud, 2002 (in person, 219 New West)
Tues.	"Bollywood Basics," in <i>Bollywood: The Indian Cinema Story</i> , Nasreen Munni Kabir, p. 1-23
Thurs.	Group work (Shyam Benegal—contributions, style, and the "white revolution") BLUE GROUP

Hindi-Urdu cinema

WEEK 6 (September 20, 21, 23)

Mon.	Film: <i>Manthan</i> (The Churning), Shyam Benegal, 1976 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH_CBS2KVF4
Tues.	<i>Film Art</i> , ch. 3 "Narrative Form" (first half of chapter)
Thurs.	BLACK GROUP (tax collection in the colonial period) Reaction worksheet 3 due Friday, September 24, by 11:55 pm

WEEK 7 (September 27, 28, 30)

Mon.	Film: <i>Mirch Masala</i> (Hot Spice), Ketan Mehta, 1987 https://video-alexanderstreet-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/watch/mirch-masala (Reserves streaming)
------	---

Tues.	<i>Film Art</i> , "Writing a Critical Analysis of a Film" (Appendix)
Thurs.	GREEN GROUP (Manto's short stories on Partition, for example, "Khol Do")

WEEK 8 (October 4, 5, 7)

Mon.	Film: <i>Manto</i> , Nandita Das, 2018 (in person, 219 New West, and Netflix \$)
Tues.	"Towards a Theoretical Critique of Bombay Cinema," Vijay Mishra, in <i>The Bollywood Reader</i> , p. 32-44
Thurs.	RED GROUP (the meaning of "samskara" and the Dalit movement) Reaction worksheet 4 due by Friday, October 8, by 11:55 pm

Kannada cinema

WEEK 9 (October 11, 12, 14)

Mon.	Film: <i>Samskara</i> (Funeral Rites), Pattabhirama Reddy, 1970 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGtj5L_Mbcc Short paper for peer review, due Monday, 11:55 pm
Tues.	Peer review of short paper—Bring 3 hard copies to class.
Thurs.	Short paper (draft 1) due Friday, October 15, by 11:55 pm

WEEK 10 (October 18, 19, 21)

Mon.	<i>Dweepa</i> (The Island), Girish Kasaravalli, 2002 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EY-qzjFtda8
Tues.	<i>Film Art</i> , ch. 6 "The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing" (first half) Reaction worksheet 5 due by Friday, October 22, by 11:55 pm
Thurs.	Fall break—NO CLASS

Malayalam cinema

WEEK 11 (October 25, 26, 28)

Mon.	Film: <i>Nizhalkuthu</i> (Shadow Kill), Adoor Gopalakrishnan, 2002 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$)
Tues.	PURPLE GROUP (Adoor Gopalakrishnan—contributions, style, and new wave cinema in Malayalam)
Thurs.	<i>Film Art</i> , ch. 6 "The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing" (second half)

WEEK 12 (November 1, 2, 4)

Mon.	Film: <i>Joji</i> , Dileesh Pothan, 2021 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$)
Tues.	
Thurs.	BLUE GROUP work (Abhimanyu in the Mahabharata) Reaction worksheet 6 due Sunday, November 7, by 11:55 pm

Tamil cinema

WEEK 13 (November 8, 9, 11)

Mon.	Film: <i>Mayabazar</i> (Market of Illusions), K. V. Reddy, 1957 https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=LID_PO-NvBg&t=212s Short paper (draft 2) due Tuesday, November 9, by 11:55
Tues.	"The Bollywoodization of the Indian Cinema: Cultural Nationalism in a Global Arena," Ashish Rajadhyaksha, in <i>The Bollywood Reader</i> , p. 190-200
Thurs.	BLACK GROUP (silk weaving in India)

WEEK 14 (November 15, 16, 18)

Mon.	Film: <i>Kanchivaram</i> , 2010 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKEpFttBUHw&t=1704s
Tues.	"Bollywood and the Frictions of Global Mobility," Nitin Govil, in <i>The Bollywood Reader</i> , p. 201-215
Thurs.	GREEN GROUP (sexual harassment, legislation against it, and #MeToo in India)

Telugu cinema**WEEK 15 (November 22, 23, 25)**

Mon.	Film: <i>Palasa 1978</i> , Karuna Kumar, 2020 (in person, 219 New West, and Amazon Prime \$) Extra credit assignments (maximum 2) due Monday, November 22, by 11:55 pm
Tues.	Watch before class, film: <i>Vanaja</i> , Rajnesh Domalpalli, 2006 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CpTTJ6nrG4
Thurs.	Thanksgiving break—NO CLASS

WEEK 16 (November 30)

Mon.	Micro presentations on final papers
Tues.	Final thoughts

Final paper due Friday, December 3, by 11:55 pm