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Honors 211B: Indian Literature and Popular Film

Portfolio

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Briauna Azer

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India Speaks to India

Much of Urdu literature seems to investigate how dharma is affected by the constant struggle between love and duty. At a glance, this generic theme seems to be the driving force behind K. Asif's 1960 film *Mughal-e-Azam*. While the film does address the opposition of love and duty, the historically aware viewer will quickly observe that this classic struggle is merely the minor theme of the movie. In fact, this premise serves as a mouthpiece to communicate the filmmaker's primary agenda. These less-obvious themes are clearly conveyed to the audience in the movie's first scene, where the map of India speaks directly to them. In this scene the map reveals the film's historical agenda, places a heavy focus on memory, and compels the audience towards nationalism.

Filmmakers often use history as a tool to address the current state of India. In the text *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema*, author Sumita S. Chakravarty comments on this phenomenon: "History and cinema are both institutions, forms of narration, and sites of ideological struggle. As such, the cinema of a particular nation selects historical events that either glorify the past or help to throw light on the present" (Chakravarty 158). Viewers should always be cautious: most directors do not intend for them to passively listen to a depiction of history, rather they want their audience to be looking for hidden lessons throughout a rendition. Chakravarty continues on to further untangle the movie's historical implications, "The 'glory' of emperor Akbar and his power struggle with his son, Prince Salim, opens up to the conditions of social life in India for Hindus and Muslims in relation to each other and to history and its

reversals” (Chakravarty 165). The strain between the emperor and his son holds up a mirror to India; through the investigation of history, K. Asif provides a culturally relevant commentary on a current issue regard to the animosity between Muslims and Hindus.

In addition to this cultural relativism, the director also relies heavily on the theme of memory. Consider, for example, the film in its entirety. Chakravarty cleverly points out, “Because the film took fifteen years to make, *Mughal-e-Azam*’s makers no doubt experienced the trauma, although it is not know to what degree they were directly affected by the events of the time” (Chakravarty 166). Because this movie took so long to produce, the audience must understand that they are not just witnessing the product of the trauma endured by filmmakers, but the memory of it. Additionally, the map invites the audience to remember the story of Akbar, specifically the journey Akbar took to produce an heir to his throne. The map remembers the emperor was greatly troubled with his lack of offspring. As it recalls, the only remedy for this situation was that this great leader, whom everyone bowed to, eventually had to bow down in humility (*Mughal-e-Azam*). It was only after prayer and supplication that Akbar finally received word that his wife would bare him a child. The audience must be careful not to carelessly glance over the implications of this resolution: Akbar is Muslim, and Queen Joda Bai is Hindu. Despite their religious differences, Akbar and Joda Bai manage to live in peace with one another and the audience sees good sprout from their community.

By remembering this resolution, the map calls its people to nationalism. By speaking of itself as being “bound in chains,” the map is clearly conveying that this religious conflict is holding the entire country captive (*Mughal-e-Azam*). Just as Akbar had to humble himself to save his legacy, the map is now asking its people to do the same. History must move forward, the country needs to reconcile in order for India to survive. Chakravarty comments on how this rally

towards nationalism is conveyed elsewhere in the scene, “[The] map of India slowly moves upward in the frame, as though India is arising from its present state of fractured identity for Hindus and Muslims to a former state of elevated glory” (Chakravarty 169).

Although the film does serve to wonderfully address the common thematic struggle between love and duty, this is not the only message depicted in *Mughal-e-Azam*. The introduction of the film narrated by the map of India is a clear attempt to leverage history as a lens for viewing present-day problems, convey possible solutions to these dilemmas through memory, and rally the audience towards nationalism. By communicating this in the very beginning of the movie, viewers are able to closely investigate the foil theme of love versus duty as it pertains to their current situation of religious turmoil and hopefully see that the dire consequences of an inability to reconcile.

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Briauna Azer

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Is It Time To Tell Saint Mira-Bye?

Many think Mirabai is an example of the quintessential female saint; she has become an iconic figure praised for her ceaseless devotion to the God Krishna despite constant struggles and persecution. In their book, authors Hawley and Juergensmeyer comment on the character of Mira and summarize her fame, “Mira’s poems are probably the most familiar. More than any other saint...she has become a pan-Indian figure. Her songs are sung all the way to the southernmost tip of the sub-continent” (Hawley 120). After establishing her fame, the book continues by commenting on her modern-day recognition: her songs are still popular, she is actively portrayed in films, temples honor her, and schools have been founded in her memory (Hawley 121). Not everyone, however, thinks so highly of Mirabai. In Gulzar’s 1979 film *Meera* does not merely tell the age-old story of the saint and poet. In fact, the film argues Meera’s efforts to achieve *bhakti* are actually her downfall; they cause her to dishonor both husband and family, appear childlike, and ultimately bring her nothing but misery.

In the film, Meera’s fidelity to Krishna is too strong, and brings disgrace to her earthly husband and family. As the story goes, Meera is forced to take Rana as her spouse through an arranged marriage. On their wedding night, Meera tells Rana of her devotion to Krishna by telling him the god is her true husband and she will never be able to love the prince. Yet, Rana responds lovingly saying their marriage can just be worldly, and Meera’s marriage to Krishna can be her marriage of the soul (*Meera*). These lines showcase how loving and kind Rana is towards his wife, but Meera does not choose to accept his grace. As the film rolls on, the

audience sees no change in Meera, she worships her lord to a point where it hurts Rana and brings dishonor to his household. Gulzar tracks the effects of her worship in Rana's decline; this character was introduced as healthy, strong, and confident but by the end of the film he is weak, wounded, and suffers tremendous emotional pain. When Rajput women look at Meera, who is also Rajput, they see find her behavior to be inexcusable. To them Meera is damaging as she weakens her husband instead of serving and strengthening him; this woman is a clan destructor whose *bhakti* reaps nothing but dishonor.

In addition to the negative familial side effects resulting from Meera's devotion, Gulzar also chooses to comment on the maturity of her faith. Author Heidi Pauwels explains the effect this interpretation of Mirabai has in her book *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema*, "As in the scene with the little turban, Mira's devotion is reduced to a girl's fancy for a particular image" she goes on to say this scene, "has the unfortunate side effect of belittling it [her devotion] and casting it in the light of a girl's fancy for a doll" (Pauwels 114-115). These childlike implications showcase how Meera's love is undeveloped, unrefined. Pauwels echoes this sentiment elsewhere by saying Mira's *bhakti* is "overemotional and immature" (Pauwels 115). In the film, Gulzar continues to play with this theme through Meera's speech. When she talks about her Lord she describes Krishna as the "butterthief," not only alluding to a well-known episode from the god's childhood, but also hinting at her own immaturity (*Meera*). These scenes are not met to be endearing; instead they showcase how Meera's *bhakti* is flawed. There are different flavors of *bhakti* worship and the well-known devotion of Mirabai illustrates *srrigara*, where the worshiper has an erotic love for the worshiped. Through *srrigara* women's emotions are valued as the devoted apply one of the highest forms of love to a divine entity that is not fallible and worthy of all the affection worshipers can give. But by making Meera's devotion childlike, Gulzar

degrades her efforts Children are undeveloped and thus incapable of such erotic love; Meera's *bhakti* is not just premature but seems inappropriate at well, thus reeking havoc on her life.

Bhakti is a form of worship that is supposed to draw you nearer to god and help you identify with the divine. Although Meera is steadfast in her devotion, no good seems to come of it. This is not mere coincidence so much as it is a message from Gulzar: Meera's love generates misery. Consider, for example, her relationship with Rana. Through devotion to Krishna she rejects their marriage and tries to continue to love her lord Krishna as though he were her only husband. This causes Meera to disobey Rana and results in her feeling enslaved. In the scene where Meera returns from visiting the temple without his permission, he chides her and she responds:

Meera: You told me that I am not a slave.

Rana: But I also never said you were free. (*Meera*)

Rana's words hint at her self-inflicted enslavement. The audience sees Meera finally come to the realization that her misery is a product of her actions when she sings about love in the last scene of the film: "Had I known this, that when you love, you'll reap sorrow, I would have announced on the drum: No one should love!" (*Meera*).

Dulzar deviates from the commonly revered character of Mirabai in his film Meera. Meera's efforts at *bhakti* bring dishonor to her husband and family, cause her to appear childlike, and culminate in her absolute misery. Pauwels again offers perspective on the director's motives, "Mira's devotion is shown to be excessive and to undercut her real-life happiness. Thus the message is that she is not to be imitated by ordinary women, Mira is unique, no other woman can be like her or should follow her footsteps" (Pauwels 115-116). Gulzar goes out on a limb to say

perhaps this female saint who has accumulated so much fame and power, might not actually deserve the influence modern day devotees continue to give her.



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A Not So Classic Retelling

The film *Sampoorna Ramayan* was made in 1961 and offers a humble retelling of the famous Indian epic the *Ramayana*. As with most epics, the written text is quite extensive and virtually impossible to retell in its entirety, resulting in discrepancies between the movie and the text. Instead of merely dismissing these differences as necessary accommodations, viewers must consider if in these instances filmmakers are trying to tell them something, possibly offering new interpretations of an ancient story. Perhaps the best example of such adaptations in *Sampoorna Ramayan* are those with respect to Rama's divinity and Sita's descent back to mother earth. These scenes seem to deviate from the text so much so that they intentionally spark reactions from the audience, which serve to shape their consideration of the age-old epic.

In the retelling of *The Ramayana* by Ramesh Menon, Rama's divinity is presented very carefully. Readers are told Rama is Vishnu incarnate and see evidence of his holiness throughout his early years. This young man excels at everything; he is humble, serves and loves others well, and, most notably, he is blue. However, not everyone is conscious of Rama's supernatural nature and Menon seems to take great care when revealing it. Consider, for example, Rama's father. It is not until the end of book one that he realizes his son is special, "Dasaratha embraced his son. But for the first time, he saw who Rama really was and he felt ashamed that he had ever presumed the prince belonged to him at all" (Menon 60). Rama's divinity teaches his earthly father a lesson in pride. Dasaratha learns he is not due credit for Rama's goodness, and in fact, the epic forces him to quite literally let go of his pride first when Rama goes with Vasishtha and then again when King Dasaratha is forced to banish his own son.

Curiously, Rama himself seems to be naive of his holiness, “In fact, Rama was not aware of being special at all, and he gave freely and generously of his affection. However, the world saw qualities in him that were more than merely human” (Menon 63). Here, Menon leverages divinity and strategically uses it to paint Rama as a young, humble man. Perhaps he is trying to pave the way for rasa with astonishment- the reflective audience will realize the gods can work through humans and these hosts might not even be aware of it. This theme, however, is not mirrored in the film *Sampoorna Ramayan*. Rama is not especially blue, and the actor does not seem to seem to capitalize on the humble nature of his role by being divinely unaware. Instead the performance of Rama comes off as annoying; the man on the screen is not a strong, humble servant but a irritating goodie-two-shoes. Moreover, filmmakers seem to stress the divinity, power, and piety of other characters, thus downplaying, perhaps even questioning that of Rama.

One such character is Sita, specifically in the scene where she descends back to earth. In Menon’s text, Sita’s departure is an illustrious and celebratory event that further establishes her piety. Sita respectfully recites her vow with her head down, “If I have ever loved any man but Rama...may my mother Bhumi Devi, who brought me into this world, now receive me back to herself. For all my life’s purposes are accomplished and I do not want to live in this world any more” (Menon 650). Sita knows Rama’s primary dharma is for his people, and as she said before, her dharma is to love and serve her husband. This queen concludes the only way the people of Ayodhya will ever believe in her chastity and respect her marriage to Rama is through the fulfillment of this sacrificial vow. After she says this, mother earth comes to take Sita with grandeur. Bhumi Devi lifts Sita onto her throne and flowers shower down as the rightful queen is brought home to her mother. This departure seals Sita’s piety- throughout the epic she has

acted blamelessly despite the hardships and injustices that have plagued her and in her final hour she behaves no differently, thus becoming the timeless icon that still guides women today.

Yet the film depicts her exit from this life quite differently. Instead capitalizing on her piety, Sita is painted an absconder, who darkly leaves this earth through suicide. After being reunited with Rama she asks mother earth to take her and then starts running away from her beloved. Rama calls out to Sita but instead of stopping as an act of worship, she sprints onward begging to be taken. This scene is intensified with dark and stormy weather, a river rushing angrily, and by the earth finally cracking open to grant her request. Instead of being anointed in her departure, Sita is hastily swallowed up. Viewers might initially see this cinematic interpretation as a great injustice to the holy Sita from Menon's writings, however Author Vidyut Aklujkar offers valuable perspective in his contributions to the book *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema*: "Indian filmmakers have been partial to Sita, and following the lead of the Sanskrit poet Bhavabhuti, have found ways of expressing their disapproval of her treatment at the hands of her righteous husband" (Aklujkar 43). Although this portrayal seems to rob Sita of the piety she has rightly earned, it honors her in another way by stressing that Rama is the driving force behind her troubles; just as Rama was the ultimate cause of her previous two banishments from Ayodhya, he is also responsible for her death, a final banishment from this world. *Sampoorna Ramayan* begs readers to examine the way women are treated, and asks the question if there should be celebratory songs or grievous tears at the funeral of Sita.

Any retelling of a story through film allows for differences in interpretations. Through careful considerations of these adaptations viewers can find subtle messages from filmmakers questioning assumptions and interpretations that have been handed down for generations. Thus, modern mediums offer a mode of communication that breathes new meaning into age-old texts.

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Week 1- Lagaan:

In *Lagaan* several themes of basic aesthetic Rasa are expressed- most noteworthy, however, is the theme of love. In the film Gauri and Bhuvan seem perfect for each other until the “white lady” decides to offer the village her help by teaching them the game of cricket. It starts to become apparent to the film’s viewers, and Gauri as well, that Elizabeth is developing a strong love for Bhuvan. However, this messy love triangle serves a purpose much greater than mere romance. Rather, it is used to connect with the audience on a theological level. Through song and dance Gauri and Bhuvan tell the divine love story of Krishna, Gopi, and Radha for Elizabeth. Throughout the rest of the film, the camera lands on the statues of the gods, a service that continually connects the drama unfolding in front of the audience with timeless religious teachings. This theme of love is also readily used to establish Darshana. While explaining the game to the tribe, there is a scene where Bhuvan and Elizabeth look at each other intensely for a long moment. Gauri sees this and is immediately overcome with jealousy. This was more than a glance- to her it felt like a touch, a to way affair. She knows that they are having Darshana; they have connected deeply. This form of Darshana is echoed when Gauri and Bhuvan are singing about the love affair between the three gods. She asks why Krishna never tells the goddess he loves her in words, and Bhuvan responds that he says it with his eyes.

Week 2- Ramayana:

The film *Sampoorna Ramayana* was made in 1961 and offers a humble retelling of the famous Indian epic the *Ramayana*. As with most epics, the written text is quite extensive and virtually impossible retell in its entirety. With this in mind it is up to the filmmakers on what should be included in their production. Although the *Sampoorna Ramayana* is an excellent work, especially for its time, these adaptations and interpretations seem to deviate from the original text and ultimately change the focus of the story.

In the retelling of *The Ramayana* by Ramesh Menon, the Rama’s divinity is presented very carefully. Readers are told that Rama is Vishnu incarnate and see evidence of his divinity throughout his early years- he excels at everything, is humble, serves and loves others well, and- most notably- he is blue. However not everyone knows of his supernatural nature right away and the author seems to take great care when revealing it. Consider, for example, Rama’s father. It is not until the end of book one that he realizes his son is special, “Dasaratha embraced his son. But for the first time, he saw who Rama really was and he felt ashamed that he had ever presumed the prince belonged to him at all” (Menon 60). Curiously, Rama himself seems to be unaware of his nature as well, “In fact, Rama was not aware of being special at all, and he gave freely and generously of his affection. However, the world saw qualities in him that were more than merely human” (Menon 63). Here, Menon leverages divinity and strategically uses it to paint Rama as a young, humble man. Perhaps he is trying to pave the way for rasa with astonishment- the reflective audience will realize that the gods can work through humans and they might not even be aware of it.

This theme is not, however, mirrored in the film *Sampoorna Ramayana*. Rama is not especially blue, and the actor does not seem to play up this humble role of being divinely unaware. Instead the divinity, power, and piety of other characters seem to be stressed.

Filmmakers chose not to portray as many of Rama's heroic quest but heavily focused on Sita and her exit from this earth. This credit seems disproportionate and places a higher importance on her character than the book does. The same could also be said about Hanuman. He seems to be the hero of the story and savior of Sita. Many special effects take place when he is on stage, and a sequel movie is made about him.

Any retelling of a story through a different medium will likely not be a perfect match. It is interesting to consider what each version stresses and the differences between the them- these adaptations cause the audience to relate differently to the stories and characters, thereby having the power to change their meaning entirely.

Week 3- Hum Paanch:

The film *Hum Paanch* really plays with the idea of Rasa. As viewers acclimate to the story they notice that the villagers seem to be in a trance, brainwashed by the master. His brother later comments on this saying "My brother has plugged your ears and thrown dust in your eyes." Because the master has impaired the villagers's senses, they can no longer have darshana and thus are subject to an upheaval of order in their society.

The first consequence of this lack of darshana comes with the breakdown of dharma, specifically that of the men. One character comes home from school and finds his mother deeply troubled. His father is out gambling away everything they have, neglecting his duties to pay his son's tuition, care for his wife, and marry off his daughter. Later, when the son tries to help his family by exposing the evil deeds of the master, his father again fails to carry his dharma of protecting and supporting his family when he repeatedly disowns his son and sides with the master.

Another consequence of this lack of darshana is the breakdown of a women's' roles. The movie opens with a love scene between the master and his supposed wife she tells him she is pregnant. Instead of rejoicing, he tells her to get an abortion, insults her devotion to him, says she is not his bride, and then pushes her. He knows that if this pregnancy is discovered she will likely be killed if he does not claim her as his wife but does not care. The mistreatment continues when he lies about their marriage at the temple, drives her to insanity, and later has her disrobed in public.

Yet, the many transgressions of the master do not escape the hand of justice. We see that, quite literally, he is being watched by the gods as the camera frequently looks on the big eyes of the goddess. We also know that the divine are keeping a running tally of his sins as his brother starts to count them out loud towards the end of the film. We see them accumulate as the band of revolutionaries assemble- each representing one of his injustices; viewers know a reckoning is. But master is not he is not just dethroned, he is repaid in kind by being beaten and driven out of his village.

Week 4- Utsav:

I found it very interesting to compare the differences between how each unit's film and text chooses to depict similar (or the exact same) characters differently. This unit is no exception and offers interesting variances on synonymous characters between the film *Utsav* and the text as *The Little Clay Cart*.

The most notable of these variances is perhaps found in the character of Charudutt's wife. In the text she is referred to as Dhuta and in the film she is called Aditi. However the differences extend far beyond her title- in *Utsav* she seems to be a woman of upstanding character, yet this is not played up in the movie. Instead Aditi is mostly as a side character to Vasantsena; in fact, she is used as a foil to the adulteress. This is evident in all the comparisons made between the two women- we only see Charudutt sleep with Vasantsena, Vasantsena seems to get more time with the son than the his biological mother, and Vasantsena is so desirable to Charudutt because of her jewelry (and the possibility/process of removing it) while Aditi wears no jewelry and freely gives it away. Although Aditi is likeable it seems, at least for the majority of the movie, that she is not in control and pales in comparison to Vasantsena.

Throughout the play, Charudutt's wife is made into an icon for all women- yet she only seems to live out this role in the final scenes of the film when she finally becomes enough for her husband.

Week 5- Meera:

Gulzar's 1979 film *Meera* tells the age-old story of the famous life saint and great poet Mirabai who was completely committed to the god Krishna. Mira is so devoted that she says she cannot have a true marriage with any earthly man because Krishna is her real husband. As the story goes, Mira's dedication is tested as she is persecuted by her family, husband, and in-laws- in fact her life is one of sorrow. In *Meera* Gulzar focuses on her devotion but does not seem to portray it with the same piety. Author Heidi Pauwels comments on this inconsistency in her contributions to *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema*: "Mira's devotion is shown to be excessive and to undercut her real-life happiness. Thus the message is that she is not to be imitated by ordinary women, Mira is unique, no other woman can be like her or should follow her footsteps" (Pauwels 115-116).

Perhaps the best example of the negative implications associated with Meera's attachment is the undeveloped nature of her love. Pauwels comments on this theme, "This reflects a criticism of Mira's *bhakti* as overemotional and immature. As in the scene with the little turban, Mira's devotion is reduced to a girl's fancy for a particular image" she goes on to say the scene, "has the unfortunate side effect of belittling it and casting it in the light of a girl's fancy for a doll" (Pauwels 114-115). The childlike implications of this scene showcase how

Meera's love is undeveloped, unrefined; in fact, her love seems to be insensitive and reckless. She is so devoted she disgraces her new family and brings cultural dishonor to her home. She hurts her husband and is cause for his great unhappiness. Her love lack wisdom and discernment, just as one's first love. This theme of child-like love is woven throughout the film as she calls references Krishna's- she says early on that she loves the butterthief, a well known episode of the god's childhood.

Meera's love also seems to enslave her. Consider, for example, how her marriage inhibits her from enjoying life- her marriage to the prince is the cause of great trouble instead of bliss. She can also never be free from this suffering because she will never be joined with Krishna, at least not in this life. Rana words hint at this enslavement when he chides her for leaving again without permission:

Meera: "You told me that I am not a slave"

Rana: "But I also never said you were free"

The character of Mirabai seems to be star example of piety, but as Gulzar's purposes, this may in fact not be the case.

Week 6- Mughal-e-Azam

The film *Mughal-e-Azam* is a well-known Indian epic film directed by K. Asif. In the movie Asif seems to really focus on one theme: the differences between duty and desire.

Consider, for example, Anarkali's character.

During a dance performance for the royal family she shares deep darshana with the prince and is plagued by love for him thereafter. Initially she denies her feelings because of their differences in status. As discussed in class, India has a very strict caste system that is not accustomed to making accommodations for love. Following her duty as a servant, she sends a boat down the stream refusing him. Salim sees straight through this and confronts her. As the movie progresses their romance develops until they are caught together by the emperor and chaos ensues. Then the focus of the movie moves away from Anarkali until her execution. She is asked by the emperor to say her dying wish, and Anarkali reveals her resolve to protect Salim's honor. Her death sentence is a by-product her previous choice to give in to her desire to Salim, and in death she stills echoes this resolve with her last request.

Likewise, the character of Salim puzzles readers as he chooses between his love for Anarkali and his familial duty as prince of India. When trying to convince Anarkali that they

should give into their love, he tells her the sun should become one with the moon. This is a loaded analogy- although poetic it almost undermines the goal of his argument. The sun is fundamentally different than the moon: it produces light instead of reflecting it, it is large and powerful instead of small and cratered, the entire solar system is oriented around the sun while the moon merely orbits an orbiting body, etc. After their love has gone awry and caused a great disturbance in the kingdom, the lovers have one last scene together, and then Anarkali leaves to be executed. The astute audience will certainly notice her departure is littered with deliberate elements of cinematography, which comment on Salim's character. After boyhood, Salim became a great general and warrior of India. He shed his blood over the land and brought down countless enemies. He was strong and confident and finally earned praise from his father. But that Salim is depicted in this scene. Instead we see a weak man, lying on the ground, helpless, without any control, and incoherent. His love is dressed in white, as is custom for widows; she literally turns her back on him and walks away to face death. Just as the grand place doors shut behind her the audience knows it is finally all over.

Week 7- Mirza Ghalib:

Music in the 1954 film *Mirza Ghalib* is noteworthy in many respects. Not only is the score still highly regarded today, but the leading actress, Suraiyya, actually is the voice behind her character's songs. However, the importance of music in this movie extends far beyond these two praises. Author Naseem Hines describes this phenomenon in his contributions to the book *Indian Literature and Popular Film: Recasting Classics*, "In most Indian films, the score is the most important component because it can play a crucial role in either making or breaking the film" (Powels 148). *Mirza Ghalib* filmmakers clearly understand the importance of music and use it as a tool throughout the movie to communicate subtly with the audience.

The score of music at the beginning of the film hints of the plot line to come. It starts out with ascending and descending lines with staccato notes and a backline that it pushing the tune ever forward. The loud percussion line in the background energizes the tune while the brass gives a dark tone to the song obviously hinting at an ominous ending.

In the final scene of the movie Ghalib is standing outside and he seems to hear a song (coming out of nowhere and gradually coming into a full crescendo). With confidence that it is Chaudhvi singing, he knocks on her door only to find out she has left. Thus the tune seems to be a subconscious melody symbolizing Ghalib's inability to get her voice out of his head.

In the final scene leading up to Chaudhvi's death she is singing to a score of bright resolution. The tune accompanies her calm melody and conclusion that it was not her dharma for love to come. This, however, serves dual purposes: it is also the soundtrack for Ghalib as he is searching for her. Curiously though, the music stops when they are reunited- and she dies in his arms. This quiet death makes way for the tune of Chaudhvi's voice to rise up out of the silence. After death, her voice continues to singing, carrying on as a haunting melody.

Week 8- Devdas:

In Bhansali's 2002 film *Devdas*, great care is taken in to the portrayal of the love between Paro and Devdas. Unlike the approach taken by previous versions of the classic story, Bhansali decides not to introduce the star-crossed lovers as children. Instead, he hints at the origins of their romance with brief flashbacks. Author Corey K. Creekmur offers some perspective on this tactic in his contributions to *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics* saying this mode of presentation: "Tends to take the story out of tradition – developed in part by earlier versions of this story and associated works in popular cinema of presenting true lovers as recognizing one another even as children, whose passion never 'grows up' or adjusts to class, caste, or economic realities" (Creekmur 187). Bhansali weaves in other hints at the immature romance throughout the rest of his film.

Paro and Devdas behave like children as their romance blossoms. Like captivated kids, they often spend time gazing at each other through binoculars. The audience sees just how childish this game really is when Paro is caught gazing at Devdas' quarters and she runs away. In addition, Devdas is compared to the ornery ways of Krishna in his youth. Moreover, viewers see this immaturity clearly illustrated when Devdas and Paro are together. He teases her, he hits her (almost like a brother does to a sister), and he cannot control his love for her.

The film also takes great care with its presentation of discipline. Throughout the film's childhood recollections both Devdas and Paro were physically disciplined. Yet when they are reunited again they are treated no different. Slapping is rampant and often plagues the face of Devdas. Furthermore whipping sounds make up the soundtrack to Devdas' interactions with his father. These instances of discipline imply their love is immature; it seems as though their romance needs to be refined and corrected with harsh instruction.

Week 9- Dharmputra

Chopra's *Dharmputra* is a film set in the height of the struggle of partition. The struggle between Hindus and Muslims frames the entire story of the film. Moreover, the actual drama unfolding throughout the film has themes of partition subtly woven through it.

The uncle in the film is a confusing character when trying to make sense of the partition. He definitely is willing to fight for his beliefs, and the audience sees him killed in the midst of these efforts. However, we also see a less amiable side of uncle when as he is willing to pass off

his daughter's child on a friend that owes him a favor. He is willing to do anything to save face, but how can Hindu's and Muslims expect to find peace while they are willing to live under lies?

The movie also comments on religion as a whole, "Religions do not make humans, they make humans fight each other" (*Dharmputra*). As the revolution grows outside we see Dilip's devotion to Hinduism blossom as well. Yet as he grows in his faith, he finds himself increasingly at odds with Banu. When he finds out that she is his real mother he laments, "By telling me what I was yesterday, you have killed my today" (*Dharmputra*).

Yet, this film finds peace in the humble character of Mina. Despite the efforts of both his mothers, both his religions, it seems he will not be saved from the mob. Just as Dilip is about to be murdered Mina comes to the rescue and saves his life. Cecilia Cossio comments on the importance of this scene in her contributions to *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema*, "To sanction this union, Dilip and Mina, a Muslim and a Hindu, with the public approval of all, become man and wife. This conclusion is rather idealistic, for the epoch of the story and also for 1961, the year of the film's release" (Pauwels 236). Perhaps the failure of this film at the box-office is grounded in Chopra's attempt to reconcile Hindus and Muslims. Perhaps if he had released the work at a different time, he would have gotten a warmer response.

Text read:

The Literatures of India: *An Introduction*

By: various authors (Dimock)

Main point:

The article opens by commenting on how it is difficult to distinguish Indian literature from religious documentation- the two seems to be inextricably bound.

- Author(s) overview history, dialects, geography
- Comments on the recyclable nature of the Indian literary canon: same texts are continually being reread, thought through, and closely examined

Classifies the nature of Indian literature:

“Apart from such cultural concepts as *dharma*, in an overview of Indian literature there are immediately evident two continuous traditions that run on two distinguishable levels of concern: that of the epic and that of the story. While distinguishable, the two are hardly separable since the epic literature was deeply influenced by the epics. Nevertheless, the concerns of the two traditions can be distinguished: one might be described as moralistic and the other as secular” (24).

Relevance/Broader context:

- Explains the religious culture of India and how it is manifest in literature
- Because literature is so important culturally, everyone in India is reading the same texts, thus everyone is exposed to the same characters, the same system of ideals, the same theology, and the same sense of morality
 - Unites nation on this history
- Muslim literature is relatively new, only coming into play during the 11/12th centuries with poetry
- Within Indian literature there are a variety of versions of these classical texts stemming out of different regions in India

Argument:

This article seems to solely have a historical agenda, the authors(s) focus more on introducing their audience to Indian literature and building a framework for which readers can later base their studies on. The article seeks to establish the importance of the relationship between literature and theology.

Support of argument:

The article is well organized; it classifies topics by region, dialect, and includes a helpful image to support its content.

Text read:

Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics

Edited by: Heidi R.M. Paulwels

Main point:

“Studying the interface of literature and film has a wider relevance: adaptation is after all the retelling of important stories of a culture, which provides a way of negotiating cultural heritage and betrays much about the postcolonial project of coming to terms with modernity” (1).

- Indian film/text is relatively new field of study
- Special focus on gender issues; reinterprets “elite culture”
- Indian films deserve to be studied- filmmakers have deliberately put a great deal of effort into details of image, song, and dialogue

Relevance/Broader context:

Adaptations of Indian literature through film offer viewers a rich new field of study, one that deserves our attention- especially those films that interpret classical texts.

Argument:

- When we study a text of film a good place to start is through asking comparative questions
- Try to make connections between film and classical text
- Remakes have to pick and chose what to highlight and what to exclude

Main interesting points:

Films that are successful today show what people today value because each offers a certain opinion/interpretation of age-old texts

Things learned: Facts to retain/ Points to emulate in own writing:

When viewing a film it is important to consider what the filmmakers are emphasizing, the importance of certain elements of cinematography (song/dance/characters)

Text read:

BOLLYWOOD: The Indian Cinema Story

By: Nasreen Munni Kabir

Main point:

The article has a historical agenda seeking to help readers see that the rise of Indian film has become a cultural phenomena- thousands of people go to the cinema every day and hundreds of films are produced every day.

- Hindi films have cultural influence not only over the people of India but wherever they are viewed, including Britain- especially music, fashion, and entertainment
- Difference between popular art and art cinema
 - New cinema directors move beyond song and dance to explore themes of chastity, corrupt land lords, political revolution, and the mistreatment of both women and workers
- Songs from the movies are part of Indian culture and life
- Handful of songs have a clear message of Indian nationalism

Relevance/Broader context:

“What happens in daily life does not seem to interest Indian audiences, who don’t usually look to the cinema for realism. They want family entertainment, full of basic values; something that doesn’t offend cultural or religious sentiments” (11).

Main Interesting Points:

- Stories are filled with hope
- Allegories of the perfect life
- Good always triumphs

Things I Learned:

Five basic ingredients your Bollywood film must have:

- Glamour
- Emotion
- Great interval point
- Hard-hitting climax
- Every kind of entertainment you can put into the film (especially song and dance)

Text read:

Is There an Indian Way of Filmmaking?

By: Philip Lutgendorf

Main point:

The distinctive “Indianess” of popular cinema comes from four scholarly approaches:

1. Cultural-Historical
2. Technological
3. Psychological/Mythic
4. Political-Economic

Relevance/Broader context:

All the senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, etc.) are utilized to establish the “Indianess” in Indian film- even to non-Indian audiences

Focus on connection

Main Interesting Points:

Author really emphasizes the importance of observing and studying how Indian culture is alluded to in “verbal idioms, body language, and ubiquitous iconography” (5).

Things I Learned:

- Culturally “context-sensitive”; intersexuality
- Important to consider the cultural connotations of history, psychology, ideology, technology, and economics

Text read: *Indian Film and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 2: Family, Feminism, and Film in Remaking the Ramayana

By Vidyut Aklujkar

Main point:

“The movie first addresses the traditional ideal of the unity of a joint family based on sacrifice and the second modern ideals of feminism based on equality and individualism” (42).

- Ramayana = formula on which film industry is based
- Different filmmakers have different agendas
- Thus, no two tellings of the Ramayana are the same

Relevance/Broader context:

- Implied that women’s place is safe within the home but then later this tradition is questioned
- Liberties are especially taken with Sita’s character, or with her sons- Lava and Kush (clearly illustrated in *Sampoorn Ramayana*)
- One retelling offers the advice that when children are brought up properly with good values, respect for their elders selfless love and unity of the family- any sacrifice is possible
 - Sacrifice seems to be a common theme in any retelling of the Ramayana and the original text
- Sita’s story is often one that is retold

Things I Learned:

- Ramayana makes for a great film to text comparison. The epic is so much so a part of Indian cultural idealism and morality that differences in presentation from the film makers are so much more than just interpretations- they can be seen as new interpretations of old texts- offering criticism of an ideology handed down from generation to generation

Text read: *Indian Film and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 1: Bending the Bharata

By: Philip Lutgendorf

Main point:

Lutgendorf closely follows two films *Kalyug* and *Hum Paanch*, as retellings of the classic Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*. He gives a synopsis of its plot, and then discusses aesthetic and narrative strategies employed in interpreting the text.

Relevance/Broader context:

- Instead of constructing sets for the movie, filming took place in and around villages allowing villagers to appear as extras.
- Title (we five) suggests a call to action
- Parable on overthrowing of an oppressive federal order through unification of a group of young people all coming from diverse
- Krishna is interestingly depicted as a detached drunkard who wanders around in white as is kept quite and happy by the food and liquor his brother sends him

Central theme- manipulation of power => justice will come

“Yet, the film shows the hypocritical manipulation of religion by the powerful, and is careful not to ridicule faith itself, especially the conviction that providential justice will eventually catch up with a tyrant” (30).

Quote echoing this from the movie:

“An awakened village is like God’s cosmic form, and no one can equal its strength” (33).

“...*Hum Paanch* bear[s] witness, in very different ways, to the popularity and staying power of this outsider and antihero who has long fascinated *Mahabharata* audiences” (39)

Things I Learned:

“In the prolific world of Hindi cinema, directors and screenplay writers continually search for stories that will seem both original and acceptably familiar to audiences, and their borrowings from other national cinemas...are notorious to the point of being overstated by some critics” (39)

Text read: *Indian Film and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 4: Mrcchakatikam to Utsav: *Re-Creation of a Sanskrit Classic By Girish Karnad*

By: Vidyut Aklujkar

Main point:

It is necessary to understand *The Little Clay Cart* within the context of classical Indian literature

Relevance/Broader context:

“The traditional text was original not just in conceiving a complex and enjoyable world of down-to-earth and lovable characters...introduced a *ganika*, or a courtesan as a heroine along with a chaste wife” (79).

Theme of Festivals:

- Festival of love between the hero and the heroine
- Festival of spring
- Festival of political insurgence bringing fresh order

Transformation from stage to screen = transformation from verbal to visual mode of enjoyment

- Classical theater did not use stage props or other aids- most everything was conveyed to the audience through verbal descriptions

Vasantasena's jewelry is great motif to examine throughout the text and film

- “Vasantasena, covered in a dark garment, but adorned with bright firefly-like jewelry is seen as approaching” (84)
- Jewelry here is clearly being used to convey the fiery passion that drives their heated affair

Things I Learned:

“Re-creating a classic is always a challenge, where the director/scriptwriter has to achieve a fine balance between authenticity and originality. Offense can be taken by staunch purists and any change can be perceived as sacrilegious” (92)

- Filmmakers have a tough job- they have to cater to theology, tradition, cultural values, and still create a final product they feel proud of.

Text read:

Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics

Chapter 7: From ghazal to film music

Naseem Hines

Main point: Problem and answer:

- Poetry and music offer filmmakers a tool to leverage ideas and culture from the past.
- New mediums to present old truths, preserve memory
- These new mediums refresh poetry and sometimes offer a new spin on age old ideas

Relevance/Broader context:

- India cinema and television uses classical music and poetry from the ‘Indo-Muslim world’
- Ghazals of many Urdu poets have been used in popular cinema
- “In most Indian films, the musical score is the most important component because it can play a crucial role in either making or breaking the film” (page 148)
- Suraiyya’s singing is regarded as the best example of ghazal singing in Indian Cinema

Main interesting points:

- Dedicates a significant portion of the article to comparing the film and the TV Series and how they present the character of Ghalib
 - Film: reduces his life to a tragic love story
 - Serial: transcends that and gives a fuller picture of his life and works
- Trying to maintain history through love stories
 - “The significant changes to the Urdu literature they present: the ghazal becomes ‘tailored’-to-entertainment needs through a ‘cut and paste’ process” (page 166)
- Creates stereotypes and has led to the decline in understanding Urdu poetry
- Ultimately, the author is taking a position that this presentation of Urdu literature brings about a distortion to the collective works

Text read: *Indian Film and Literature: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 10: Lyrically Speaking: Hindi film songs and the progressive aesthetic

Ali Mir

Main point:

Songs represent a valued tradition of India and are engrained in the culture. When they are deployed into cinema they are leveraged into to accomplish the agenda of filmmakers.

Relevance/Broader context:

Songs and the Independence Movement:

- Articulate progressive sentiment
- British censorship- film music becomes popular beyond the walls of the cinema

Songs and Progressive Movements:

- PWA is gathering momentum- cinema was used as a huge medium to accomplish their efforts
- Evoking social change by fusing Urdu poetry with film lyrics

Progressive Lyrics Come of Age:

- Point the figure at politics
 - Those that love India/are proud of India- where are they?

Censorship:

- Response to the PWA/revolutionary agenda- ensuing ban that lasting even after independence (gov. still controlled radio broadcasting)

Support of argument:

- “It is important to remind ourselves that popular culture is a site of contestation, negotiations, meditations, and rearticulations, a space where hegemonic and oppositional values symbolically and explicitly engage one another” (page 217).
- Look at legacy of the PWA: “film songs thought t appropriate to unselfconsciously critique the disproportionate accumulation of wealth by few” (page 218)
- Didn’t shy away from portraying most of India/the worst parts of India

Text read: Hawley and Juergensmeyer

Chapter 5: Mirabai

Main point: Problem and answer

Historical context behind the story of Mirabai. Authors provide background regarding her fame, history and hagiography, and themes in her poetry. At the end of the chapter authors also provide a small selection of the poems of Mirabai.

Relevance/Broader context:

- Mira fits the build of the classic female saint, but is revered more today- vary famous figure in India
- Unparallel popularity
- Differs from male poets. Male poets had to transform themselves into women with their to gain this unique perspective of seeing God as a husband or lover. Mira did not need to undergo any sexual transformation

Main interesting points:

- “Mira’s poems are probably the most familiar. More than any other saint...she has become a pan-Indian figure. Her songs are sung all the way to the southernmost tip of the sub-continent” (page 120).
- Her songs are still popular, she is actively portrayed in films, temples honor her, and schools have been founded in her memory (page 121).
- Central question: did Mira exist? Were there many Mirabai’s? Hard to tell from the few works we have, hard to attribute them all to one person
- “The final journey in Mira’s life took her in the opposite direction from her native Rajasthan” (page 126)
 - Mira literally moves away from Rajasthan women
 - Moving away from their ideals as well?
- Themes in poetry:
 - Bhakti
 - Very simple, ample repetition
 - Family tensions
 - Emotions felt by a bride
 - Songs about rains, wife awaiting the return of her long gone husband

- Concerned about the line separating Mirabai from all of Krishna's many gopies- separation is carefully maintained
 - Gopi vs. Rasha

Text read: *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 8: Remembering, repeating, and working through *Devdas*

Corey K. Creekmur

Main point: Problem and answer

“In India, and in the transmission of popular culture through the South Asian diaspora, *Devdas* has been the vehicle of a continuous process of collective ‘remembering, repeating, and working through’” (page 175)

Relevance/Broader context:

- Seemingly classical character, but critics are reinvigorating the discussion of adaptation
 - Classical works turned into new popular media (provides numerous examples of authors and spin-offs of their works)
- “With cinema, moreover, the more typical and typically more complex examples often draw upon prior film sources as well as the Hindu myths that continue to animate many ... popular films” (page 178)

Main interesting points:

Repeating:

1. Difficult and misleading to consider other versions in isolation
2. Repetitive structure is embedded in the narrative itself- there are redundant patterns of departures and returns, addiction
3. Formal patterns in organization of words, scenes, shots etc.

Remembering:

“*Devdas* is itself fading into the historical past: in Freud’s terms Bhansali’s film may at last represent a ‘remembering’ of the story as an artifact from the past rather than as an unconscious repetition in the present” (page 186)

Possible quotes for future paper:

- “The persistent echo of diving yet erotic love of Krishna and Radha in the *Devdas* story is thus always as mocking as it is sustaining” (page 187)

- Devdas and Paro = unbreakable?
- Theme of child-like love: “presenting true lovers as recognizing one another even as children, whose passion never ‘grows up’ or adjusts to the pressures of class, caste, or economic realities

Text read: *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 9: The political aesthetic of nation and gender in Rituparno Gosh’s *Chokher Bali*

Mandakranta Bose

Main point: Problem and answer:

Celebrated themes of protest, underclass, and forbidden love.

Creates fulfilling fantasies of wealth and sex – but doesn’t necessarily see this theme through

Relevance/Broader context:

“Classics resonate with times other than their own, live beyond their own worlds, and provide the next with frameworks for self-reflection” (page 201)

Argument:

Difficult to identify- *Devdas* is forever a classic- but is new while being old

New implications

This is probably getting at what we talked about in class of reviving old works- filmmakers concentrate on the past to address the issues of the present.

Support of argument: evidence:

Closely examines a variety of works:

- *Devdas*
- Tagore’s *Chokher Bali*
- Intertextuality between Ghosh and Ray

Criticisms:

This author’s writing style is pretty cumbersome to readers, at least those of my level. Lots of complicated words were used to describe things that I couldn’t reconcile in the dictionary. Also the argument was hard to trace through the entire article. Overall, not a very fun read.

Things learned: Facts to retain/ Points to emulate in own writing:

- Sometimes trying to sound smart makes you look dumb or pretentious to your readers, can turn them off
- Simplicity is best- very complex writing style, lots of ideas jumbled into the article- hard to find thesis

Text read: *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Chapter 11: *Dharmputra* and the partition of India

Cecilia Cossio

Main point:

“It is not our intention to review the history of partition, but only to reaffirm that the question is still foremost in people’s mind as we study how it is treated in literature and film” (page 220)

Relevance/Broader context:

Sociocultural effects of division touch many kinds of literature: Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi, and Bengali

Argument:

Observed phenomena: “the historical film often projects upon the past the problems and fears of the present in an effort to comprehend them” (page 221)

Support of argument:

Closely examines the *Dharmputra*, both the novel and the film

- Relationships between the two characters- heavy emphasis is placed on the three flashbacks
- Contrasts other aspects between the film and text

Main interesting points:

“In the film, the son of Muslims is welcomed as one’s own son, for whom there never arises the slightest feeling of ‘difference.’ Dilip, even when he becomes a Hindu extremist and thus very far from Amritray and Savitri’s way of thinking, will always be seen and loved as a flesh-and-blood son” (page 227)

“The film, in fact, takes the book as nothing more than the cue for quite a different story, whose nucleus rotates around something more subtle, ambiguous, and elusive. What the novel ignores is briefly touched on- but intensely felt- in the film: the theme of personal individuality with respect to social identity” (page 237)

Discusses the significance of the bridge:

- Symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity
- Presented in the idealistic conclusion of the movie

Text read: *Indian Film and Popular Cinema: Recasting Classics*

Conclusion

Heidi Pauwels

Main point: Problem and answer

“What are the general lessons that we have learned from this exploration in the world of North Indian popular cinema and its connection with literature” (page 239)

Relevance/Broader context:

Two main points:

1. There is no clean cut, simple way to generalize how classics are being recast- cinema in N. India is not homogeneous
2. Without a formula we try and unravel narratives to write history of N. Indian popular film that concerns itself with adapting fiction

Support of argument: evidence

Film by the book:

- Whatever the filmmaker’s agenda, there is no doubt that their reading of a text is highly influential, defines the entire film
- This phenomena also applies to the depiction of songs

Self-referentiality of film:

- Closely examined the self-representation of the film
- “Intertextual references go beyond the connoisseurs delight and carry a special significance” (page 244)
 - Play-within-a-film
 - Audience within the movie

Turning the tables:

“The adaptation from literature to film becomes a two-way affair: moving not just from book to movie, but back” (page 246)

Things learned: Facts to retain/ Points to emulate in own writing:

- Very well organized conclusion
- Managed to weave together the ideas of many authors and the content of the various articles presented in the book

Text read: National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema 1947-1987

Sumita S. Chakravarty

Main point: Problem and answer:

Summary of material not assigned in class: *Garm Hawa*

Relevance/Broader context:

Partition

Main interesting points:

“The film interweaves the personal and the political, human interest and social critique. Its evenheadedness in presenting both the Hindu and the Muslim communities as self-serving and bigoted in their relations with each other and exploitation of members of their own communities links de-communalization with decolonization as the nationalist project” (page 249)

- Fairly neutral presentation of the partition with regards to the depiction of Hindus and Muslims
- Central theme of love that leads to a tragic outcome
 - Betrayal of two lovers
 - Suicide
- Misfortunes compounding, affecting more than the transgressor, but society as a whole (orders to deliver shoes are canceled)

Narrative itself is centered around a character whose ‘superhuman’ stature masks him as an allegorical figure possessing to a marked degree the culturally valued qualities of moral strength, honesty, non-sectarianism and traditionalism...” (page 251)

Text read:

The Ramayana

Valmiki

5th - 4th c. B.C.

Sanskrit

Translation by:

Ramesh Menon

Date: 2004 (paperback edition)

Translation published by:

North Point Press, New York

Summary of main text:

- King needs an heir to the throne, granted 4 sons, Rama is barely firstborn, and the best
- Father must give up Laxman and Rama leave with Vishwamitra so they can go help him achieve part of his dharma
- Meets Sita and strings the bow
- Evil wife is manipulated by her servant to get Rama banished
- This grieves father, but he has made a promise and must keep his word
- Rama goes willingly and Sita forces herself into exile with him
- They have many fun adventures
- Sita is stolen
- Kept away, they pine for each other
- Hanuman rescues her and heals Laxman by lifting up the mountain
- They return
- He becomes king
- Her purity is brought into question
- She must be exiled, and she's pregnant with twins

- Takes a new name, twins don't know Rama is their dad and that their mother is the famous Sita
- They want her story to be resolved
- Confront father
- He comes to find Sita
- Taken into mother earth after they are reunited

Text read:

The Mahabharata

Vyasa

4th c. B.C.

Sanskrit

Translation by:

Chakravarthi V. Narasimhan

1965

Translation published by:

Columbia University Press, New York

Summary of main text:

- King Santanu marries fisher girl, they have a prenup
- Promises her son will be king
- He has another son (Bhisma)
- Boys are at odds with school and such
- Satyawati's son is author and result of sexual relations with a sage
- Game of dice- stakes are exile
- Draupidi is disrobed
- Sentenced to exile, tell stories from the Ramayana
- They take on costumes while in exile that fit their personality
- Draupadi is again assaulted
- Karna will only kill Arjuna
- Armor is exchanged for one atomic weapon
- War ensues

- Only survivor of the war is the grandson of Arjuna
- Widows weep
- Ascent to heaven

Your thoughts:

- Disrobing scene/dishonoring of women- how does this play into other themes in Indian literature/film
- I liked that this epic can be easily compared to another epic, the Ramayana. There are many similarities or important contrasts between the characters, and many instances of intertextuality

Text read:

Devdas

Saratchandra Chattopadhyay

1917

Bengali

Translation by:

Sreejata Guha

2002

Translation published by:

Penguin Books, New Delhi

Summary of main text:

- Devdas and Paro are childhood lovers
- Devdas (higher class); Paro (middle class)
- Goes away for schooling and travels abroad during breaks
- Comes home after and realizes he and Paro have come of age and they pick up where their romance left off
- Paro's parents are in favor of the marriage
- Devdas' family do not support their marriage
- Paro marries another man, a wealthy widower with children
- She still loves Devdas
- Devdas is devastated, goes to drinking spree
- Lives in a brothel with Chandramuki but never loves her like Paro
- Paro and Devdas keep encountering each other

- He is drinking himself to death
- Finally dies on her doorstep

My thoughts:

Interesting that their love is established to have origins from childhood

- It grows as they grow
- Seems immature
- Yet seems innocent
- But is also something that Devdas' parents ask him to grow out of, he cannot pursue Paro in his adulthood because of class differences

Text read:

The Little Clay (Mrcchakatika)

Sudraka

Sanskrit

Translation by:

Arthur William Ryder

1905

Summary of main text:

- Charudatta is a Brahman
- Too generous, his family is poor
- Married and has a son
- Meets courtesan, Vasantasena, and falls madly in love with her
- She loves him and cannot stay away
- She is loved by another, pompous man- Samsthanaka who is high class- related to the king
- Leaves her jewelry at Charudatta's house
- Charudatta makes Vasantasena his mistress and she almost becomes part of their family
- She fixes the son's toy by adding jewelry to it
- Charudatta and Vasantasena plan to meet
- Mix up in transportation carts
- Samsthanaka discovers their romance
 - Almost kills Vasantasena
 - Condemns Charudatta to death
- Vasantasena appears- saves him from execution and the wife from also killing herself

- They declare themselves a family
- Charudatta pardons Samsthanaka

Your Thoughts:

- It is very interesting to see the different variations of the Indian woman: Courtesan and housewife
- I find it curious that they can coexist together
- That they end up a happy family at the end
- Wives are coexisting to honor husband
 - Hints at K.S.

Text read: *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting classics*

Chapter 5: *Bhakti* songs recast: Gulzar's *Meera* movie

Heidi Pauwels

Main point (problem and answer)

To understand an India film viewer must be aware of intertextuality

- Traditional religious stories and songs
- Sight and sound (interocular and interaural)

Mira's story and popular songs have become tradition and provide a framework for the film

Gulzar's Mira is not a role model- she presents a clear illustration of radical religion and her example should not be mimicked

Relevance/broader context

Meera was made to address a specific agenda and a specific audience

- Gulzar made a movie about gender relationships directly before making *Meera*
- It is meant to be historical, not mythological
- It is directed towards female audiences
- Gulzar was an Urdu poet—he understands Mira's poetry

Support of argument (evidence)

Gulzar chose Mira's most popular songs not as accessories, but as integral parts of the story

Gulzar "remixed" the songs to:

- (1) include as many of her songs as possible
- (2) limit each song to one emotion
- (3) follow with tradition

Gulzar provides explanations for Mira's morose poems based in reality by selectively placing songs after real life events

Gulzar repeats Mira's songs in different parts of the movie, ascribed to different emotions

Text read: *Indian Literature and Popular Cinema: Recasting classics*

Chapter 6: Religious culture and folklore in the Urdu historical drama *Anarkali*, revisited Indian cinema

Alain Dèsoulières

Main point (problem and answer)

Anarkali is a work that showcases historical drama

Pays close attention to specific themes:

- Historical realism vs. popular entertainment
- Eternal love triangle, impossible marriage

Relevance/broader context

Imtiaz Ali Taj's stage direction, set descriptions, and even plot decisions were groundbreaking

- Redefined and popularized historical drama as a genre
- Historical drama traditionally relies on accurate history, but is flexible with creating new characters

Historical dramas must be realistic, must have a clear romantic/tragic plot, and must lean on popular religious and folklore works.

Typical characteristics:

- Language must be appropriate for time and place (geographic and social)
- Sharp dialogue and poetry help draw in viewer
- Having elements that viewers (both high and low class) can identify and connect with increases audience investment in story

New mythology: New stories with traditional characters

Support of argument

- Legend of Akbar
- Accurate language and setting
- Descriptions of Mughal Palace are lengthy and accurate

Class Notes

1/8/13

Languages and Literature and Aesthetic Theory

1/8/13

Region often old umbrella name "India"

Physical features

- Himalaya/Hindukush Mt.
- Rivers: Ganges + Yamuna

Political Regions

- States / languages

→ Ethnic / Linguistic

Indo-Aryan

Dravidian

Tribal

Indo-Aryan Historical

→ originally written in Sanskrit: refined language, put together
Sanskrit vs. Prakrits

highly sophisticated

opposite

upper class

South: Tamil

Hindi - Urdu ~ from ca 12C
(North)

19C divide

complex
language
situation

English ca 1757

English is a big deal

English = Hindi + English

ishq Perso-Arab concepts of 'love'

⊗ Satyajit Ray ~ note this "great artist"
art cinematography of Bengali

- ⊗ take note of where you see this in the movies

Indian Aesthetics

Darshana: "seeing" beholding

~ sound and vision

~ looking is touching (leering eye)

- ⊗ used for looking at the divine "touching the truth"

Gods have big eyes, look back, touch

- ⊗ Frontality ~ they look at audience

two way affair: eyes of image

⇒ frontality / tableau ~ freeze image to establish contact

Related term: Nazar (Indo-Islamic)

veiled women: glance of love

= touch

good can 'ra': 'his glance on you

evil use: 'ast / jealousy ⇒ effect touch

Rasa: reflection on aesthetic aspects of literature

how to create a drama

Theological importance, draw people in w/ drama → draw people in to god

definition: juice, essence, physical thing (taste) objective way you experience it

⊗ Taste

- ⊗ Drama is about getting Rasa ~ emotion + flavor

audience has potential, lots of raw emotions

Basic aesthetic rasa

love

humor

grief

anger

energy

fear

disgust

astonishment

erotic

comic

tragic

furious

heroic

fearful

horrific

marvellous — magical

Lecture 2

1/10/13

Go between

Rasa

Hero x vidūṣaka (buffoon, appetite, comedian.)

Heroine x ŚAKHĪS (girlfriends)

Śrīgāra

erotic Rasa ~ Setting Monsoon season (spring)

consequence of emotions

→ body language emotions

⊗ mix other Rasas for transient emotions

⊗ the goal is not to be realistic but idealistic

→ has to conclude in a morally right way

restore order = always happy endings

problems always solvable

Dharma - when things are fine, the way we like

↳ Karma

ordered cosmos = universe in good order

AND moral order

involves heretofore setting - fixed (someone moves out, we find out they were son of king), male and female duties

Reality ^{but} audience also falls in love w/ character

↳ go beyond

You are the same as god ~ there is only one essence

in all of us ~ go to theater to overcome this

Rasa - bliss - god is

Ambedkar ~ includes/leads "untouchables"

class
system
Brahmin
Kshatriya
Vaisya
Sudra

Writing on Literature and Film

Approaches to lit.

- Historical criticism/context
- Biographical criticism, life of author
- Formalist - internal elements of/from text = meaning
don't pay attention to author ~ how is it said
- Reader-response criticism - paying attention to informed audience
- Psychoanalytic criticism - Sigmund Freud's Oedipus complex / shared fantasy
- Archetypal / myth criticism: Carl Jung's collective unconscious and archetypal plots
- Marxist criticism, class interest, superstructure of ideology ~ base or infrastructure
- New Criticism: power/intertextuality (non-literary or sub-literary)
- Deconstruction (instability of language / ruptures / discourses of power)
- Gender criticism / queer theory position of women / men, how is one supposed to behave when falling in love, climbing the class system.
- Eco-criticism (perceptions of wilderness)

Some recent research topics

- canon formation (what becomes part of a literary canon? what/why are texts dropped)
- Public sphere / middle class
- Medium of writing: print capitalism
- Modernity and novel / hybrid
- Colonialism, Nationalism, Postcolonial
- Writing back: contestation
- Gender: masculinity / femininity

Ideas for writing about fiction

- Title
- Plot: chance, surprise, conflict, resolution, chronology
- Characters: main / secondary / round / flat / motivations / behavior
- Point of view: narrator old / wise, reliable? omniscient? language of ignorance or prestigious
- Setting: time / place of action, relation to character
- Structure (description / dialogue / narration, organization)
- Symbolism
- Theme
- Style (sentence structure / length, figures of speech)

Class Notes
1/15/2013

Jan 15 2013

Lecture

Rāmāyana

The adventures of the ideal man

Incarnation of great sky God Vishnu

Many version of Ramayanas

- Meta-Ramayana ~ little version (entrance point) in everyone's head
- 'Ur-version' Vālmīki Rāmāyana in Sanskrit (2BC-2CE)
- Retold in Jain and Buddhist versions in language of the people - Pāli and Prakrits
- Regional versions in vernaculars
 - Tamil Irāmāvatāram
 - Old Hindi Rāmcaritmānas (The holy lake) = Bible of North India

Contemporary Performance

Rāmālitā

- Performed at Dussehra festival, many episodes are performed by amateurs only, men
- Treated as if they were the gods during performance season, venerated and worship, have darshana, money flowers
- Believe as if it is happening, procession, audience sings along, grand spectacle of victory

Beginnings of film ~ religion

- First film maker from India ~ D.G. Phalke

The Mythological (dhārmik)

- very close ties w/ theatre
- Parsi Theatre (Zoroastrianism) close to Sanskrit traditional
- Regional Folk Theatre
 - actors - initially all male
 - audience: devotional attitude. swap
- Prabhat films - sound is introduced in films
- Amrit Manthan (churning of ocean for immortality drink)

Mythological → political rebellion

- "āyū Rām Rājya" now has come role of Rama against British, independence
- Banned this movie (Bharat Milap)
- Ram Rajya viewed by Gandhi

Mythological by Non-Hindus

Post independence stunt movies > Babubhai Mistry and other guy are of different religions

Politics - Movies

NI Rama Pad - plays Rama - ideal political ruler.

TV Ramayan 1986-7

hugely successful

Fred Pakistari at partition (Director), low budget, Sunday morning ppl worship, purify their TV sets

videolatry

huge nationalism one nation belonging to one text

Actors - politics → Rise of Hindutva / BJP

Neotraditionalism accommodating modernity (consumer culture)

comercials

Nostalgia

Ramayana abroad

exported to SE Asia (Thai, politics, Japanese versions ~ Buddhism)
to Far east

Performance traditions

Puppet shows

Dance drama

Valmiki Ramayana (original Sanskrit version)

devotional retelling (not this way in Sanskrit)

→ sage, eyewitness version, 24,000 verses, 7 books, story of brother rivalry/exemplary behavior in Ayodhya (N of Ganges)

Hindu view

Not quite vita but still sacred texts (2nd Round of Revelation)

Indian view of time

Best → worst (Kali)

was named after throws of dice

4 yugas

Satya, Treta, Drāpara, Kali

Attributed to sage Vālmiki

cataclysm, period or rest

day + night

between Brahma + Vishnu

repeat

⊗ dwarf, who am I spec

clip from sweedes american actor

→ first example of belle literature (beautiful)

(influences / production / reception
reflection of historical period)

Approaches ~ writing on film

Film history - how do movies influence each other (IMDB)

Third World Cinema (poverty / social message / distribution: the festival circuit)

National Cinema (cultural heritage / national building / comparative / cross cultural reception)

Genres (road movies / cowboy western / melodrama / comedy / musical / romance) reflect how it fits w/ other cinemas

Authors (caution: no total control, different in different time or culture)

Formalism (structure and style: repetitions / analysis of visual complexity)

Ideology (entertainment but / Hollywood hegemony / feminist / race studies / class studies / postcolonial / queer theory)

Ideas for writing about film

Title ~ spelling in Roman script determined astrology
theme (title / characters / action / message / ending)

Narrative story ≠ plot arrangement: chronological? Flash back / omissions / relationship b/w events / closure / character focus / objective style / voice-over

Characters ≠ historical person ≠ actor (main / minor / realistic / fantastic / change / values represented)

Point of view ("objective or subjective / camera / relation to characters / events)

Mise en scene (lighting / costumes / sets / props / acting quality realism? / how relate to characters / space-time)

Technical details of film composition and image shots / ending

Sound (clubbed, diegetic or extra diegetic)

2 Types

ZOOM IN: close analysis of scene

In analyzing scene A in film B

In lit text: use of X (pages, chapters) uses these figures of speech

In film use Y

This is meaningful b/c Z

ZOOM OUT relate more broadly to readings

the title, beginning/end

main themes, one character, point of view

Back to Ramayana

Scholarly view

fixed ca Gupta times c 3CE

orthodox synthesis

Evolution

① *dhāds* (*dhīta*) singers = courtiers of kings, sing their praise - reflection of kingship

② all-India brahminical interpretations - how brahmins fit w/ in society

③ final theme avatāra, self epiphany

Oral composition / transmission (oral formulae ~ metrical building blocks) HINT epithet, title for somebody "bulls among men, swift footed Achilles"

Kāvya (belles lettres)

Main aesthetic sentiments (*rasas*):

Love: *sambhoga* (together) *viraha* (apart)

Heroism

Pathos

Marvel

Humor

Indian Stylistics

Sound-decorations

Alliteration Seattle Seahawks

Assonance: Hear the lark and harken to the barking

Pun: one word double meaning

Twin Yamaka opposit

Rhyme

Metre

Class Notes
1/17/2013

Lecture

Indian Stylistics

Alaṅkāra of meaning

Comparison

Simile (face like the moon)

metaphor = moon face

Reversal Vyatireka = face > moon

Bhramāṅ confusion, mistake for moon

Metonymy substitution (White House says)

Personification (Lady Poesy)

Hyperbole

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: Dharma

ideal heroes/heroine: Sītā role model

family and social roles > individual good

dilemmas of public and private duties

temporary asceticism and restraint as conditions for good king (walking around simply; in woods; exile; simple life)

(small of city/nature) City vs. forest (civilization vs. nature)

class consciousness: Kṣatriya - Brahmin elite

how they behave to priests

Themes

• David vs. Goliath

• good vs. evil

• importance of keeping word

• good kingship

• self-restraint vs. hedonism

History belongs to the victor

→ Rama associated w/ propaganda in the South

anti-Rama texts, effigy of Rama burned

SS

Retelling

Valmiki - eyewitness account

Birds shot pain in separation = viraha

Story → Narada Sage, is there any good men around?

divine gossip monger

Leitmotif: cranes = Kraunca birds

Rama is Avatāra of Vishnu

Kuśalyā (Rama)

Kaikeyi

Bharata

Sūmitrā

Lakṣmaṇa + Sītughna

Viśvāmitra

Liberation of Anālyā

women who commit adultery

Kaikeyi ~ Prenup agreement

fake or Karma

♀

sexily demoness Śurpanakhā mutilated

hunchback is dragged and kicked

Book 4. Monkeys

Sugriva - brothers w/ Vālin who Rama kills

dying by Rama's hand = liberated, enemies are blessed

Sita comovful in pleasure garden

Book 5. Hanuma's adventures

Book 7: Sugal

tells you all things on who is who

Valmiki is in it's excited village, he teaches twins

the Ramayana

twins = two fathers

Class Notes

1/22/2013

Lecture

Mahabharata

Significance

1000 BC - iron age of civilization

Inter-Indo-Aryan wars

Rivalry of Krishna w/ Magadha

(not so perfect) rivals →

Encyclopedia for Hindu views: moral, philosophical, political

All stories are incorporated - so huge

don't keep book in
your house so much
bad stuff

Mahā - grand

Bharata = legendary king

descendants: Bhārata = India

the great battle of India

VR-version attributed to Vyāsa (sage)

→ many interpolations - parts showed in later

bhāgarata

great book of India
all in the family

many versions, performance versions, vernaculars

Hindu View

The fifth Veda: for women and śūdras (may read + be enlightened).

Things are getting worse - people fight
Sage was their biological grandfather

model of how kings should behave

Sacrifice, concerns of purity

Core of bardic material

Ramayana

Krishna - peacock feather on his head

Rama and Krishna both avatāras of Vishnu

princely warrior heroes

Reformed movements w/in Vedic ~ Buddhism/Jainism
→ came about by princes

⊗ Very political text
Pāraṭam ~ politics

Draupadi - disrobed

vow of revenge

as this is going on, actors become possessed - powers are unleashed
find closure,

Resistance against British, Fort destroyed, hanged 1799 - hero
in independence movement

Influence of western education on freedom fighters

Centrality of weapons is essential → possession figures)

Conclusions old + New

This is a tradition that is always used in a modern way and is
applicable/adapting

Traditions are always political (varies by level)
seeks political closure @ end of story/film

TV versions of the Mahabharata

actors go into politics)

BJP party/position

From "reel" to "real" politics Mahabharat impact
people strongly reacted to disturbing on emotional level

♂ → = outraged

♀ = under threat, scared, feared

Yet to be controlled (Krishna consoling words)
feminism seems to have failed

Krishna ≠ Rama

wild, scheming guy

is dynastic succession a good thing? Gandhi dynasty

⊗ rallying nation against exploitation
revealing woman's vulnerability

Hum Paunch ~ not retelling but use themes/ideals

New Cinema (parallel cinema) / middle cinema

→ between popular + artsy

Art movies

· Shorter

· More realistic

· Invisible Editing

· Less song + dance

· Less escapist

serious issues,
less fun, etc.

Roman à Clef = key = knowing who is who

Based on Pottanna Kanagal book

Screen play by Muslim

Great Themes

war + peace, vengeance + reconciliation, family feuds / vendetta

asceticism and aesthetics / Enjoying the Earth

bonds of friendship / obligation

Dharma and exceptions

power to destiny

Karma comes home to roost (she laughs → get disrobed)

warrior and her character / confidant

Structure ~ movies ~ subplots / story w/ in story

multi-generational memory

multi-life memory

woman insult central rape threat

The frame story

Janamejaya's snake sacrifice

Sole survivor of war Parikshit dies due to snake bite

Story by Vyasa told by disciple

Book 1 Unhappy Family: The dynasty

Ganges River

mother throw sons in river ~ divine mortals, she releases them

last son Bhishma

Meets fishergirl - prenuptial contract

her son should be king

Bhishma sacrifice of asceticism

→ less noble than Payama, but still self sacrifice

→ leaves baby on island

Uma → reborn to kill

Via. levirate: many husbands younger brothers, uncles

author of Book sage = Island baby brought in b/c of
vow Gandhari

1) shut your eyes = blind babies: Dhrtarāstra - bride blindfold

2) turn pale = white baby: Pāndu x Kuntī x Madri

Never shoot mating animals - death will be on you to

⇒ can get any god to make love to her

abanelos 2nd child in story

Karna found by charioteer

Pāndu's curse 5 Pāndavas

RAMA

Yama / Dharma ⇒ Yudhisthira (always keeps his word)

Vāyu ⇒ Bhīma

Indra ⇒ Arjuna (archer)

Surya ⇒ Karna

Madri x Aśvins ⇒ Nakula + Sahadeva

Dhrtarāstra x Gandhari ⇒ 100 Kauravas

eldest Duryodhana // DUSASANA

Karna a? bad guys

Class Notes

1/24/2013

Lecture Continued...

Book 1 - Growing Enmity

- Pandu dies, Madri becomes sati, Kunti and boys at court in Hastinapura
- rivalry in education archery (from guru Drona) esp. Arjuna and Karna ~ always at odds

Karna needs to become a king Duryodhana gives him a kingdom

- The Lac House burned; Underground escape Adventures in forest (Bhishma marries demoness) disguise as Brahmins
- Vidura wise uncle always nice, bastard child, respectable he warns them

- She asked for good husband in previous life 5 times, marries Draupadi 5 guys

- 2 disabled, already a s'ut, sleep w/ 5 guys

born from sacrificial fire

girl → boy Sikhandin

- girls cry many up but not down
- Krishna is realitive by marriage

Book 2 The Enmity Grows

- reconciliation attempt
- Duryodhana falls in water
- Game of dice

Duryodhana & maternal uncles: bad vs. paternal uncles
Sakuni

- Draupidi disrobing
- lose 2nd game 12 y exile, 1 year incognito

Book 3 Forest Book

- Tell stories - Ramayana, Satyarthi (her father forgot to marry her off in time, her husband will die, ideal wife

truthful wife can call her husband back from 62 death, if he dies you are not good enough

sacrifice → good power → invincible

Book 4 Disguise at Virāta Court

- all dress up Bhīma as cook, Arjuna eunuch-dance teacher, Yudhishtira: courtier-dice master, twins horse groom + lowherd, Draupadī hair-dresser, assaulted
- rape victim goes to police, police don't act (modern parallels)

Books 5 Preparations for war

- Karna will only kill Arjuna
- armor in exchange for one time atomic weapon

Books 6-10 war at Kuruksetra

- Battle reported by Dhṛarastra's bard (blind king): Sanjaya
- 18 armies
- Begin of the battle, Arjuna dected, uncle Bahisma Krishna comforts (charioteer) everyone is dying anyways Bhagavadgīta revelation
- Bhīma, Drona, Karna Śalya-parvan killed through deceit and trickery w/ silk handin not noble ways of killing (muddy carts, unable to remember his wisdom)
- advice on how to be a good king

one survivor
little baby
grandson of
Arjuna

Books 11-12 Sorrow

- widows weep
- Angkor wat winter solstice egyptian temple lights king's face on b-day
- Dies in fire, drunken brawl

Book 17-18 Ascent to Heaven

- up to heaven by Himalayan mountains
- if my dog doesn't go I don't go

⊗ read article by Philip Lutendorph

Class Notes
1/29/2013

Classical Sanskrit Drama

Ramayana - evil outside vs. Mahabharata
violation of woman

Focus on woman
heroine / savit

vs.

bad girl / herlot

Overview: Sanskrit Drama the courtesan and the nāgarika
the Kāmasūtra

Kālidāsa ~ poet who wrote great dramas

The world of Sanskrit Drama and Sensuality

→ The courtesan and the nāgarika or "man about town"

The courtesan

• High class performing arts artist auspicious

• Devadāsī: connected w/ temples → female servant of the Gods

• Attached to kings' courts

⊕ not ordinary prostitution ~ high class performing artist

Dancing Hall, positions recorded on temples

→ auspicious, made festivals succeed, high esteem, good wd

1880s - colonialism, movements against customs of these dancers
(more British ladies, less intermarrying, missionaries)

→ Anti-Nautch movements

→ Rapid loss of status → common prostitutes

Groups in favor of helping Theosophical Society

helped reinvent dance traditions in cleaned up version

= Modern dancers = proper girls

Devadāsī = living on, common prostitution

sensuality ← feeling
subjectivity
subject

Kāma and its sūtras → memory aid

- 4 goals of life: kāma, artha, dharma, mokṣa
- kāma = sensuality / sophistication / art of living / desire
- To be tempered by dharma

→ Kāma-sūtra (3C; NW) by Vātsyāyana
Mallanaga; in dialogue w/ predecessors

• Many Kāma-sūtra (before and after)

→ sensuality, politics, religion - what you should do, liberation for sin and identity

• He includes everything he sees but not everything is right to do

• The man about town / playboy

Hero - Nāyaka → assistants

Heroine - Nāyika

CHAPTERS

-1: a gentleman (the ideal place)

-2: perfecting your technique

-3: seducing a virgin

⊕ -4: married life (peace among many wives, advice on how wives should behave)

-5: adultery: when are ~~some~~ women susceptible, when should affairs happen, why?

⊕ -6: courtesans

-7: aphrodisiacs

life cycle of man ↓

• sensible sensuality

• taxonomy of love (colorful names to position)

• prescriptive or descriptive ~ things that were said to be done

• "speedbump" verses infused w/ dharma

What He Ought to Know

right poetry for the right moment/season

Subhāsita - words of wisdom

spring/monsoon lovers separate

description: head to toe

Alamkāra - sound (basic poetics)

→ brother-in-law cannot do this

The world of Classical Sanskrit Drama

Integration of poetry, dialogue, drama, song, dance

Nāṭaka

well known story

Rasa dominant

Prakāraṇa

Invented story

Goal of Drama → Emotional Integration = Rasa

creates a whole sensual experience

Successful aesthetic transcendent experience

Rasika → tuned in

Rasa determines plot, characters, language

Not realistic

Dharma central

Celebration of hierarchy

Solveable tragedy

Religious interpretations

"Play" reveals nature of things

→ Collapse of subject-object sense (overcoming dualism)

Erotic Rasa - śṛṅgāra

Love happens in two flavors

In Union

- embrace, kissing, nailmarks, etc

→ (warrior, fighter, battle)
↳ Viparita rati
↳ opposite position

In Separation

- more intense, more interesting
- grieving for death, lovers quarrel (māna - not really very offended, sulking), business (pravāsa)
↳ karma

Choose 1 dominant emotional tone - sthāyī bhāva

- erotic may be complemented with fear

Transient emotions - vyabhicāri - bhāva

- shame, despair, remembrance, joy, amazement, fear
confusion, jealousy

Conditionals stable (precondition for emotion - vibhāva

objective: characters, setting, season.

→ what is the character feeling → dance gestures

Consequents of movements

Language of Sanskrit Drama: Multilingual

- Sanskrit spoken by hero, high class males
- Prakrit spoken by females

Correlates w/ status and gender, audience understands

Main Characters

- Hero
- King = ideal king - rich
 - energetic - courageous
 - dharma-conscious
 - courteous - kind
 - Artistic learned

• no out of action, • so: deluded

Not out of Character

Heroine (wife or belong to someone else)

Sati

- Submissive / loyal = virtual female
- Energetic
- Erotic
- Curious-kind
- Artistic

Different types

one heroine can take all forms

- just fallen in love (pūrvāgā^{rā})
- setting out for the tryst (abhīsarikā)
- all dressed up + waiting (vāsakasajjā)
- anxiously waiting (virahotkanthitā)
- separated (vipralabdā)
- signs of unfaithfulness (khanditā)
- quarreled (kalahāntarītā)
- in control (svādhipatīkā) → he is at her feet
- lover abroad (prositapriyā)

Buffoon

- Brahmin friend of king
- ridiculed by others
- minister of amorous affairs - seduces girl
- Self indulgent - thinking about stomach

Libertine (Courtier)

- Indulging advice
- Heightening Rasa

Presentation

- Occasion: festival, marriage, birth, victory
- No Sets - walking, Indicates change of scene
- Musicians seated on stage
- Characters are colored coded (Red - passion)
- All action mime (conventions, hand gestures) stylized movements
- Audience response: exclamations, applause, throwing presents

• bilingual dialogue from director

Structure

- Prologue: invocational verse, worship of gods @ beginning
- Transition to action: swift
- Acts: introduced by interludes/preludes
- Benediction

- Many nights per act - long productions
- Green makeup for hero
- Superstitions - blind director → don't perform for awhile

Famous Dramaturgy

"Shakespeare of India) Kālidāsa

Shakuntalā Śakuntalā

- daughter of Sage + Nymph
- abandoned baby-girl ~ Sita
- Daughter of Menakā
- 2x foster-care
 - Śakunta birds
 - Sage Kanva = foster-father

Plot

- Forgets to do duties
- cursed by begger
- You will be forgotten
- lose ring
- doesn't recognize her
- Insulted
- Man takes her to heaven
- Finds them and takes them home

Locale of action

- Kanva's ashram acts 1-4
- Giri w/ deer
- water from well - eyes meet
- pregnant but he needs to go back to city

→ forgetfulness - memory in love activating why lost feelings → 69

Class Notes

1/31/2013

Jan. 31

Sacundra → 'King falls in love w/ Brahmin girl

The problem of "the love marriage"
virgin given away w/ some money: Kanyādāna

proposal from groom: brāhma

proposal from bride: prājāpatya

Selling girl for a price = low class

rāksasa: abduction (done in public)

gāndharva: mutual consent (marriage of nymph, no parental consent)

→ Ham Panch

→ marriage in this way

āsura: bride-buying

paśāca: rape while unconscious

Memory:

Skt Smara: memory, epithet of Kāmadeva

memory's role in love

Love has to be lost in order to be found

Theater = awakening / reactivation

iron → Shakuntala

Dramaturgs

The mysterys of King Śūdraka

→ play ~~knows~~ not considered classical Sanskrit

• fighting

• murder

• sleeping

} breaks taboo

Prologue

Sudrika - name of poet + 4th class
but a king

sympathized w/ revolution by lowcasts

Wandering horse = my own horse can wander =
power over land

death ← Rama - H₂O
Sudrik - Fire

ganges
suicide
funeral pyre

"Clay Cart" - unusual

usually named after hero/heroine

Finished by Sūdraka

Buddhist text

- lured children out of burning house by promising toy carts outside
 - wagon of buddism → liberation salvation
 - children's inability to see danger
 - lie for the better - lure them out
- need for a savior

Play very popular
first drama in US

Courtesan Movie: heart of gold

- muslim origin
- courtesan → many clients → fall in love w/ one

uphill battle

← desire to become respectable

→ prostitute → dance @ high wedding

↓
she dies 71

woman → wife

wife → ~~woman~~

Devi vs. Jan/Bai

In drama (loyalty, virtue, not good generous)

in play but gone in movie

Class Notes
2/5/2013

The Female Saint
Feb. 5, 2013

Bhakti - devotion

< Bhaj = to share: 2-way love; way = goal

• Bhakta: devotee

• Bhagavān: God

• Bhajana: sharing: communal singing of God's praise

God personal, accessible

Goal ≠ mokṣa or becoming one w/ Brahman

= being near God (samnidhya) ⇒ dualism

• If you can shed your personality → identify w/ God = MOKṢA

as opposed to

• Enjoying the senses, you don't want to become God, you want to get close to him

Practice of Bhakti: embodiment

• listening to songs of god that you can understand, they are in your vernacular

• Abbreviated and easy: chanting of name

• Not formal, drop in basis, do as you please, spontaneity is valued

• Communal, egalitarian

⊗ when you die, last thing you say should be the name of God

Many flavors - many ways of tasting God

• śānta: peace: Śiva/yogī

• dāsya: servitude: Hanumān

• sakhya: friendship: Arjuna

• vātsalya: child-parent love: Yāsodā (foster mom of Krishna)

• śṛṅgāra: erotic love: Gopis esp. Rādhā

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hair stands on end
→ nice thing, cools body

⊕ women's emotions valued!

ecstasy: visions, horripilation, swooning, trance, dance

LAST TWO - human emotions applied to God, someone who is perfect, worthy of your love - not fallible + mortal as humans are

→ highest emotions - mother love, love for man from a woman - ♀ treated well

⊗ Are they treated better?

Two Great Movements

Nirguna Bhakti	Saguna Bhakti
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God w/out attributes• No image worship• Low-caste saints, such as the tanner Raidās, the weaver Kabir• Egalitarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• towards God w/ attributes: Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Shiva• Image worship• Brahmins central, such as Vallabha and Caitanya• Hierarchical

The Saints: (Saints)

Raidās + Kabir most important to us

Kabir

Benares - city of dying - but did not die there

Low-caste-weaver

Muslim Name

Rejecting organizing religion: protest singer

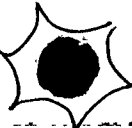
Preaching nirguni bhakti: shocking people to get them beyond common day perceptions

Raidās

Benares

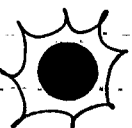
low-caste tanner

Preaching nirguni bhakti



Saguna bhakti

- loving worship: pūjā
- God is treated as guest/king @ home or temple
- Image worship: arati + prasāda
- Sensual: audio-visual, taste, smell
- Pilgrimage: tīrtha: visiting God on Earth
- Enactment: dance, theatre, festivals
- Offer something, get more back, god's grace
- worshipping w/ fire.
- No touch in some temples to distance yourself to god



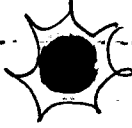
Bhakti in the South

- Assirtution of Hinduism against other religions; not always peaceful
- devotion of "leaders" Nayanārs ⇒ Saivasiddhānta and "divers" Ālvārs ⇒ Srivaishnavism

Krishna Revisited

The God Krishna:

- Incarnation of Viṣṇu
- Prequel described in Harivansha and Bhāgavata
- ↓
Bucolic-erotic
- ↓
child-god, lover of Gopīs
- Mahābhārata and Bhav
↳ advisor



as child

- Butter theft - ants in butter, very lovable
- (Foster-) Mother Yashodā
- born in jail, out to kill baby Ceil tyrant
- magical switch w/ baby girl ⇒ changes to goddess 75

- grows up to become hero of village
- lifts up mountain to protect village from storm (Mt Govardhana) as an umbrella-
- Affairs with the Gopis
- Stealing of clothes, multiplies himself
- Erotic adventures: Rāsa-līlā
- Mādhurya bhāva
- Favorite: Rādhā - example of adolescent love
- ⊗ imagine yourself as his mother or lover, no matter you gender

Krishna's Braj rediscovered

- 1500s - tracing his footsteps
- caitanya - Sampradāya ⇒ ISKCON: International Society for Krishna Consciousness
- Vallabhācārya

Mirābai

- Rajasthani princess, from Merta
- Married off to the enemies → big royal family in Prarka

Mirā's songs

Her Themes:

Her life: persecution (Rānā poems) **unresolved**

Her love: triumphant proclamation: colored by his love

dancing defiantly

Krishna's beauty / request for darśana

⊗ colored by it, black

viraha for Krishna

the mysterious yogī

please don't go,
take me w/you

Princesses should not show emotion in public (think Kate Middleton)

Mirābāī's work: not early attested

- poems are attributed to her, not necessarily by her
- lots of people say that they learn the songs in the dreams → casts doubt - which ones are really by Mira?

Grandhi's favorite bhajan:

Hari tuma haro jana kī pīra

God take away your peoples sufferings

- you kept Draupadi's chastity
- you killed demons
- you yourself took a body
- you saved the drowning elephant
- calls the Mt. lifter

→ identifies author @ end of the poem

→ appeals to those in trouble

Mirābāī's life: bad case of absence

not much evidence for life

Her own songs?

Other early Bhaktas

Nābhādas' Bhakt-māl 1600 + comm 1714

nothing in royal archives

Mirābāī's life filled out

breaking dharma: like Gopīs

gives up family

social oppression

posson story

Assertive of her faith

shocking people

Jīva Gosvāmī

untouchable guru: Raidās

Sexual harassment: sādhu stony

interfaith meetings? Akbar

Drawn into image of temple and never seen again

Whose Mirābāi?

Many Mirās

Rajput Mirā

Nationalist Mirā

Erotic Mirā

Good housewife,

Also song by low-caste people

Underdog Mirā

outcasts

Oppression of women

Class Notes
2/7/2013

2/7/13

Who is afraid of Mīrābāī?

Is Bhakti good for women? More than emphasizing them
: no intermediary necessary : ♀ have agency, = w/ all people

Mira as voice of underdog

· low-caste songs

· contest elite and patriarchal oppression

Mira is an inspiration to independent women

· Dress as widows - completely in white

· Niche of respectability

· Independent ♀, don't worry about husbands

· All done under the name of Mīrā

Not all people think positively about Mira

· ♀ leaving home

· Rajput ♀ - stick w/ husbands, not clan destructors

Mira's posin

· Perceived posin on ♀

Genre: the Devotional Movie or Sant Film

· Understudied

· Seen to be naïve

2 views:

· Expression of popular devotion: democratizing

· Manipulation of masses: confirming hierarchy

Rather: site of contestation/transformation

Film and bhakti:

Emotional development: Melodrama

· Foregrounding emotions

Darshana devotees - God (spectatorial regime - way of looking at things)

→ 2 way movement: tactility/interaction being near

Continuity of iconography

interocularity

Film ~ pop culture

poster/calendar art/advertising

comic strip

⊗ → do not get ^{sp.} drasna w/ Meera, she avoids our eyes

Political/Social Reform Devotional

• Nationalism

• Reform: abolishing untouchability

• Anti-communalism "Kabir kills communal bogey" act
Hindus and Muslims fight during partition

→ Potential: Not only untouchables, but liberating women as well

MEERA:

• Hemā Malini ~ took initiative, really wanted to be Meera - she loves married man → 2nd wife

Issues: potentially subversive aspects of Mira

→ Sympathy for inlaws

⊗ untouchable, low-caste guru

Yogini: Non-caste-appropriate behavior: public dancing like a beggar

♀ are not respectable

⊗ The little girl + her doll

Dharma Universe LLC

• Stubborn little girl

• Ravidās' image

Takes her "child-marriage" seriously

Sad to have to marry Rana

→ she has been given a doll

Role Wedding night -

⊗
Reversal Rana is very sweet, not strong + excited
girl confesses premarital passion → belittled
Guddi - makes fun, needs to grow out of her childhood infatuation

Mirabai Not out

→ passion from before = cricket / Krishna

Conclusion about bhakti

Meera is not happy

Rockin' Meera - dark lover.

if one of my girls can die for the country,
another can live

role reversal w/ Rana: examine camera angle

⊗ Vrata - ♀ keep fast for husband's welfare
not supposed to eat until they see moon through
a sleeve

→ to see ~~the~~ Krishna

real life husband comes on a white horse

Class Notes
2/12/2013

Feb. 12/2013

Maghal-E Azam

The Historical

- Historical representation
- Grand moments of the nation: patriotism
 - Maratha Shivaji (Hindu)
 - Akbar (Mughal Empire)
- View of nation held by filmmaker and or/ environment:
contesting or strengthening
→ some kind of propeganda - erasing/constructing memories
- Different ways of understanding
myth/legend/folk > "factual truth"
- Yet also post colonial: perpetuating colonial paradimes

Indigenous history

- ★ cyclical view of time (vs. linear)
- ★ 4 yugas (Kali yuga) mahāyuga; eternal repetition
- Mythical + historical time mix:
- History as family history → double story
- Literary conventions; rasa: vīra and śringāra
- ⊛ Dharma: exemplary literature love vs. duty
→ Dharma conflicts
- Memory + forgetting → constructing memory

Colonial history

- Hinduism/Muslim/Brits
- serves colonial purposes: substitute Mughal reign
- reinforced by map/census/museum
(archeology/architecture)
- glories pre-Islamic past
- medieval accretions / commentators of Islam etc.

beg of movie → map (colonial map) speaks to audience

Nationalist history

Nationalism takes over main categories

Yet: nostalgia

Purpose: creating 1 nation beyond caste/creed/religion ⇒ Hindu-Muslim unity
all nations spell Indian

⊗ unity or enmity

Communalism / riots (Hindus against Muslims religious disputes) violence - age old, or new constructor

A Complex History of Islam in South Asia

Many forms of Islam

3 FLAVORS

who follows Muhammad

Sunni Islam: 4 righteous Khalifas / orthodoxy

4 legal schools: Hanafi (S Asia)

Shia Islam: party of Ali (son of prophet)

"dissenters" different line of succession:

imām

⊗ Sufism: "mysticism" within Islam

highly influential in India → see in our movie

Sufism details: mysticism; more spiritual

Special veneration, prophet as ideal and intercessor

→ tombs of saints

Extra prayer, dhikr, asceticism, personal relation with God

Stages of spiritual progress

Veneration of saints and tombs annual festivals

Music + dance

Link w/ poor, sometimes ant-nomian

· began in 8th century in Iran + Iraq (Basra)

· 11C Sufi orders (charismatic figures):

· tariqa (and silsila: chain of master-disciple)

· ~ hospices for travelers (khanga)

· where Sufi saints were buried

· Chishtiya (RBC) music + dance pol impact

· Peaceful seatriade communities in the South

→ Pre-Islamic Arab / Jewish / Christian settlers on W Coast

· Build mosques, intermarriage, settle down

→ IN North

· conquest of areas people push in

· Sindh - Gujarat pirates:

· interfering w/ sea trade of Umayyads w/ Sri Lanka / Indonesia

· 711 "conquest" of Sindh by Muhammad ibn Qasim

· Conquerors and plunderers from Afghanistan

· Mahud of Ghazna

· Sunni

· → Punjab fld. Lahore

· conflict w/ Sindhis

· raids into Gangetic plain (plunder, desecration)

· Sponsors al-Biruni's *Kitab al-Hind*

→ Construction of memory

· desecration of temple is what this guy is remembered for

⊗ Scholar refugees and more Sufi Missionaries

⊗ Christ order

· Nizam ud-Din Awliya in Delhi festival

· disciple: Amir Khusrau

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paper → Mira was Rajput?

go to shrine of Sofi even if they are Hindu and tie cloth to screen w/wish
→ common trope

Qawwālī - religious musical performances
"One who speaks well"

Mongol invasions

1399 - Tamerlane = Timur (Caghtai Turk):

Sack of Delhi

1526 - Descendent Babur (Ferghana in Tajikistan) defeats Lodi dynasty

1540 - Returns to Lodis Sher Shah Sur (son)

1555 - Return of Babur's son Hemayun x Persian Safavid Shah help

Mughal dynasty till 1857

1947 - Independence from British

Akbar 1H 16C - tolerant king

alliance x Rajputs (local elite intermarried)
tolerant / own religion

Sponsor of Shaykh Salim Ud Din Chisti
→ wants son

thanks saints by building a city

very interested in religion, theological debates

→ came up w/ own religion, son worship, put himself up as god

Prince Salim

son of Rajput mother

Opium problem

1581 Kabul campaign

1600 rebellion

- murder of favorite uncle Abul Fazl
- 1605 Ascension = Jahāngīr
- Propaganda: art/justice

Many Wives

Jah _____ favorite

→ Mughal emperors have rajput mothers

filmmakers make movies of the past to solve issues in the present

DOUBT CHECK

Colonial

Muslims come in strong
Hindus weak, woman like w/ sutras
British come in to save them

Movie tries to come to terms w/ history w/ strong Rajput ♀

Persian story-telling and theatre traditions

- Dāstān / qissāh (shorter)
- coffeehouse and court // healing
- Iranian story Shāh Nāmāh
- Famous stories told both publically and privately
- linked w/ opium

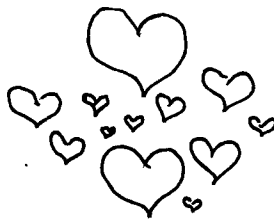
Romance, coming of age, quest, pāt (fairies), trickster figures, faqīrs, evil magician (talisman), demons/jinn
Uncle Frankzah (grisly death): Akbar's favorite story

Story Telling

style of dāstān extemporaneous ⇒ conventions

- prose + verse + rhyming
- formulaic repetitions of epithets
- cliff hangers

Class Notes
2/14/2013



Feb 14, 2013

Movie produced in 1960 but started in 1944

but - peresti - someone who does idol worship } religion of love
→ Salim @ beginning of the film
Sufi Qavalli

Nostalgia ~ Mughal period
Scales of justice

Which dharma are we trying to restore

Bahar means season of spring

debate: Prince gives her thorns - won't wither, pain will never go away vs. flower to Bahar

[love is about pain + separation viraha, not happiness and being together]

* Mirrors + reflection

- Article w/ palace room
- Moon + Sun analysis

→ Does Akbar have a relationship w/ their

[Mothers always choose husbands over children]

dāstān traditions: extemporaneous ⇒ convolutions
set pieces: garden, night women, battlefield, desert, cave

⊙ what question are you asking in the paper? → argument

Class Notes
2/19/2013

Feb 19, 2013

- Mughal Empire: Persian official language
- British Administration: Persian
Urdu vs. Hindi*

Nom. de plume (takhallus): Ghalib

Teache-student system (ustad-shāhgird) gang

Urdu Poetry - Heir movie song

• Mathnavi (narrative)

• Qasidah (elegy)/musadda (panegyric)

↳ praise

↵

• Rubā'ī (ethical aphorism) - proverbs

→ • Ghazal: lyric/shers (AA, BA, CA)
two short lines

→ Earthly love is symbolic of Divine/higher love

THEMES

⊕ In suffering love becomes more pure, like love for God

• Ishq = love (unfulfilled, unrequited, impossible)

• Divine (haqiqi) and symbolic (majazi)

• Lover = obsessed, self-sacrifice; beloved = capricious, sadistic (gender unclear: no gamm q in P)

CHARACTERS

• Lover + beloved

• Adviser

• Confidant

• Rival ~ beloved plays w/ this

• Messenger

• Doorkeeper ~ guard at beloved's house

CONVENTIONS / SYMBOLS: unrequited love:

• moth + flame ~ attraction ↘

• nightingale + rose ~ self immolation; nightingale impales

himself on thorns ↗ for god

person ^{also something}
of desire, server
of wine

- cup and wine, saqi ~ intoxicated/ecstasy
- Mosque vs. idol ~ lover > abstract god
- Making fun of Pharisee (mulla and qazi) love goes beyond the letter of the law
- Dagger and whip ~ lover is tortured by love
- Crying tears of blood

Mushaira: poetry gathering/recitation ~~to~~
The Tanwāif courtesan: elite class.
• education @ brothels

- Doms: low-caste: basket weavers/drummers/ cremating;
- Wives: mad wives
- Singing at weddings
- link w/ Romani = gypsies

Mutiny / First Battle of Indian Independence / Indian
Rebellion 1857-8
• Porkgrease ~ Hindi's treated better than muslims
→ Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan → Reform.

PWA: Progressive Writers Associated
1930s London

- Realism + social action into poetry → vote communist
- social criticism vs. lovers
- naked truth

Prose - Saadāt Hasan Manto
Poetry - Sahir Ludhianvi

⊗ British degrad prostitution → courtesans become (-)

1. PTA: Indian People's Theatre Association

· realistic drama, socially engaged, incorporate folk drama, came out of PWA

Class Notes
2/21/2013

Someone who is born of nobility

→

Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib

Ghalib impoverished but highly valued

Love affairs + wine

Pessimistic

very sad life

wine drinking = trope

not a patriot, but a poet.

all poetry is existential complaint towards god

⊕ music + memory

zoom in style

can love really win out in a Hindi movie?

Class Notes

2/26/2013

Modernity: Colonial Quandaries

Filmogenic Bengali Literature and the Devdas Phenomenon

The Novel in India

How novel is the Indian novel? Imported? Colonial product?

Derivative

Little prose writing

Indigenous precursors

Prose writings pre colonial

Performative narrative

Hagiographies

Story telling > Sanskrit/vernacular

> Persian (dāstān)

Miracle Romance (holy men miracles)

Vrata Katha ~ fasts, by ♀ for male kin (sons + husband)

worship + story telling

Arise of novel in Europe

Social: new middle class

Economical: capitalism/print

capitalism

Psychological: individualism

⊗ Feature character who is

parentless

Different in India

babus/bhadralok/confirmation of traditional social order

Colonial exploitation/import of print

group > individual

THEMES: Colonial impact in India

Negative: challenge of colonial superiority

Positive: rediscovery of India's ancient glorious Hindu past (discourse of communal history "muslim" dominance)

Colonial Impact in India Bengal 18-19 C

British critique

Manly Englishman vs. effeminate Bengali

Effete yet oversexed Babu, woman like w/ regard to
muslim rule and British influence

→ True masculinity gained by chastity

Colonial Impact in India

British Critique

· religion: polytheism / idolatry

· custom esp. regarding women:

· curtain (purdah), child + arranged marriage, dowry, mis-matched marriages, child widow, suttee (burn widow on funeral pyre of husband ~ is it legal or not? Is she provoked, or does she choose this? dowry)

· Family polygamy

· Social caste system / abuse by Brahmins and "holy men"

· Education vs. superstition: utilitarians vs. orientalist

2 Responses:

reformists (samāij)

· progressive

· reform superstition esp. help women

conservative (sanātana)

· defensive

· critique of W babu

Both: nostalgia for glorious pre-colonial past

1829: Abolition of Suttee

1891: Age of Consent Act (girls above 12)

Reformist answers:

· 1828 Brahmo Sabha / Samaj

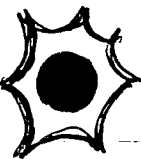
· back to Upanishads

· Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833)

· abolition of suttee

· Dwarkanath Tagore

· Debendranath Tagore



women out of purdah Brahma wedding, allow for love marriages cross class ~ untraditional

Print Capitalism

- printing press (William Carey) Bible in Bengali
- New Standardized language: Sadu bhasha
- Newspapers ~ haphazard effect b/c written in shikhas
- News
- Opinion pieces / editorials
- Fiction / Serialized novels
- Translations of Skt etc.

Education

1800 Fort William College in Calcutta (W Carey)

Study of vernaculars

⇒ need for textbooks

• School book societies

How should the locals be educated?

English education for locals

Grew up reading Victorian novels
(focus on fallen ♀, Jane Austen)

Themes in 19c novel

- Problems of traditional practices (esp. child widow + chaste)
- Centrality of ♀ / home last area of autonomy
- Sexual relationships ~ companionate conjugality
- Critique of Westernized babu:
 - Spoofs / suppressed anti-colonialism
- Novels of historical novel

generic theme

Bengali Literary Scene: Novel

Topics: initially translation from Skt and E later

- historical novels (E models)
- social issues: new babus, women

increasingly defensive

Hinduism \times Islam + Christianity

· role of holy men as adviser

· Hero Hindu Hero

· Self-sacrificing heroine

⊛ British asked to comment on novels / prizes first few trials

Bengali Novel

Bankimchandra Chatterji (1838-94)

romantic idealism

Saratendra Chatterji (1876-1938)

people wept over Dardas \rightarrow love the destructive hero

The Dardas Phenomenon

Sexual Politics: Psychology of the colonized

Colonial male subjectivity

Emasculated / neglected by fem by colonial discourse

Lack of political and sexual agency

Contradiction: search for independence + recognition

Dardas space for resistance to imperial gender ideology

Dardas inaction: broader significance

Identity

Passages about love

love / devotion / dedication / modern vs. traditional love

Passages about free will + freedom

Women + / -

Radha-Mira-Krishna triangle

Class Notes
2/28 / 2013

The woman Waylaid at the Well
Paraghata / Panihari theme

Panihari: water-carrier

Krishna as prankster / play-boy

"Eve-teasing": sexual harassment

Themes:

- Scarcity of water
- arduous task
- unhappiness
- "stranger at the well"
- "eve-teasing" or test?
- waylaid or way out

Symbols:

- Full water pot ~ prosperity / suhagin, family honor
marital happiness
- Broken pot ~ bad omen, broken boundaries of
decency / honor

Paraghata in folk song

Impersonal way of expressing discontent

- family dynamics
- economic hardship

Contestation: possible subverting norms:

- latitude to complain
- opt out

Views on "eve-teasing" / construction of subjectivity

- Enjoying flirtation yet
- keen awareness of test

Appropriation of
Theme: Buddhist Folk
Siddha

Mānībhadrā: woman siddha
~ flying away from household duties

~~Rabātī~~ inter.

Qawwali interpretation

water = God

pots = human

differences in human containers but God in all

→ Breaking of pot = fanā = absorption in God

Medieval Poetry

• God = guy making pass at ♀

• ♀ = human soul, happy to be seduced

• broken bracelets

• can't help but go

Gender role implications

(+)

• subjectivity of women expressed

• allowing for desire

• breaking out of loka-lāija straightjacket

(-)

• Krishna violently molests

• gets away with it

Theme:

① Indicates Innocent love

② courtesan performance

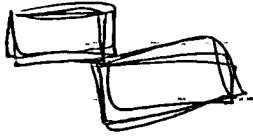
③ Forbidden love

Devdas

Paro - Dev @ well during proposal

Chan 1st Song Krishna - kases @ well

Seduction: violent, yet stylized



centered camera

Abstract Mon. wk

→ portfolio what you learned in class 10.

1) screening reports

essays

class notes

reading notes

Interculturality ~ movies reference other movies

luggage

dress american/European

→ suitcase holds childhood belongings

Class Notes
3/5/2013

Monday Abstract
Tues > Presentations
Thurs >
Friday Portfolio
Tuesday Paper

Partition

Narrative of victimhood

Who is to blame?

- Muslim League (Muhammad Ali Jinnah)?
- Indian National Congress?
- Hindu Right?
- British "Divide & Rule"

As India gained liberty → death

Partition and literature (background)

Indian National Congress

- M. K. Gandhi: non-violence
- Subash Chandra Bose: military approach
- Shriami Sahajanand Sarawati: economic freedoms

Hindu Mahasabha 1915

- V. Sarvarkar

RSS 1925

- K. Hedgewar (inspiration from Nazis)

Political players

Muslim League

- Muhammad Ali Jinnah
- 1940 Lahore resolution 2-nation history

Communist Party of India

- Fd. 1920 Tashkent / 1925 India
- 1928 Hindustan Socialist Republican Army
- 1933 relaunched x unions
- 1940 pivoted from congress (as Russia x Allies)
- Nehru Socialism x USSR

BR Ambedkar: freedom of untouchables in Hindu India

TDL

- movie
- reading last + this week
- hw
- Flash cards
- many
- Boeing email
- meeting w/ Jessica + Rachel
- paper topics
- send drs email
- run
- Julie Steele

Partition Literature

Progressive ~~1920s~~ and Conservative

SHIKK - unforgivable sin of praying to saints

How do people cope w/ trauma

Progressive writers' association

- Anti imperialism + facism (hate Britis AND Hitler, etc.)
- Realism
- lived experience ~ ~~writing~~
- social action
- social criticism
- demasking hypocrisy
- naked truth
- little technique

Premchand
1880 - 1936
Gandhian

Literary Events: Indian People's Theatre Association

- Realistic and socially engaged drama and film
- Folk drama

Saadat Hasan Manto (1912 - 55)

- PWA love-hate
- Court cases for obscenity in Karachi
- Died from liver cirrhosis (drank himself to death, Verdas)
- Stories about partition

Bhishin Sahni

- works in refugee camp
- Bombay IPTA (Indian People's theatre Association)
- Secr. of PWA
- Afro-Asian Writers Association
- Short stories
- plays
- auto biography of brother
- Novels

Khushwant Singh (b. 1915)

- Lawyer
- Journalist: All India Radio
- Editor: Illustrated Weekly / Hindustan Times
- Member Rajyasabha
- Scholarship on Sikhism
- Train to Pakistan (1956)
- Delhi (19...)

More to the Right Acarya (learned master) Catursern Shastri

- Depicted in our more
- writer ~ historical novels
- anti-muslim
- socialist/communist party
- Novel of Utsav
- Ramayan reworking

⊗ Directors can get tax break if content can be read

as a nationalist cause

Compare Book / Film?

Who is to blame?

Should one commemorate past atrocities?

How to do so?

Experiential/affective history via literature? Pitfalls

Memory > history / locating memories

Nostalgia: recovering the pre-modern past

Metonymic displacements of past and present: danger of sacralizing discourse

Class Notes
3/7/2013

Novel by Hoorya Sastu
British ~ narrative voice
communist (3rd son) } generational conflict

Thursday 3/7/13

Framed by friendship Hindu x Muslim

Uncle/Grandpa: complex character

older, more flexible in his thinking, modern

Ending: Love from Mina ~ bridge

Gunias of reality

Sattva - clearness

rajas - passion, unclear

thamas - total opaqueness

What if you were born one of them? What is your true self? are you really that different from your enemies

(*) Paper topic see reverse

two mothers both want same thing for Dilip
two religions both want same India.

Allegory
Clay art ~ chains

British remove honor from Utsav.

Movie Notes
Ramayana

Ramayana

Movie Notes

Exo's conversation - it is a down, the feelings, bearing all

... the

... ..

Divinity -

Rama is ... ?

Book
Quote from him:
from
blue

Movie
Not very blue.
Lot of clear
more manlike

Rama frees ppl

father
w/ out Rama,
Rama leaves
slays lady.
dies peacefully



Sita's divinity/
devotion
... ..
both are made
greater

Movie Notes
Hum Paanch

Hum Paanch

God should come down here and take your blessing

I am not —, I am frightened

really rough, doesn't want to marry her, tells her to
terminate pregnancy, pushes her to ground

→ now class matters
brothers will kill her

sister unmarried, wife alone at home, dad gambling, brother
absent

→ men in leadership stink (gambling, drinking, neglecting,
mistreating women) brainwashed

Is he your son or are you his son - "blinded your senses"
no Rasa

"Master" mindless chanting

Spitting at the moon does not deface it

married infirmity of goddesses → silent
does god speak to the poor

priest - so stupid, brainwashed

who are you and me to interfere w/ big people

big eyes of goddess sound her memories → laugh
crazy, dancing, breaks, skips like school girl

drinking man @ temple

spill the beans → keeps him drunk

my brother has plugged your years and those dust
in his eyes → village
reckoning is coming

Bhima - Lahiya

"eat the food on the plate and throw it away"

she is a platter

+ bruises him

got paid for my service - ostracised

assemble team of misfits like Lajjan
to where to stay

mindless spinning

wards, which

shadows

trying to have long looks in doorways for face

brother against brother

E.D. & AS: a golden jubilee

@ wedding he is sleeping w/ another girl?

looking at watch

traditions crush people revolution

woman is disrobed in front of many men

brother - brother face off family fight

hendi men

are you keeping
eyes her ash
pushes sister -
Krishna

track of your sin
tomorrow you will cry at my feet
brother comes and redeems her

tears drown fire

brother coming after

not fighting but awaking a sleeping village

always looking/peering out from behind a village

fire - sleeping village

dishonor a priest

where is religion

at your feet - washing

counting sin

she beats him, role reversal

drama of truth

100 sins

106

out numbered - near five

all get to punch him

run like a dog w/ tail in between legs

castrate him

raped village and land

nobody is stronger than the enlightened village
crush under foot

religion and cycles of time

sinner's don't have to give birth to sinners
injustice will always be crushed by justice

Rasa at the end

Movie Notes
Utsa V

Movie Notes ~ Utsav

Explanations of the "arts"

The politicians are always anonymous

Parrot you and your music

Loneliness - entranced by his singing, art

king's brother in law harassing

hair covers his face tangled in it

tangled in her jewelry - spider web, caught

slave is trying to sell himself, gambled money he didn't have

tyrant → revolution

If a man's name can save me why can't God's
Magic of a name

committed artist, leaves his woman, history be done.

you → all men are the same

Rain
bathing

taking off jewelry in the rain

hooks for thorns

freeing from chains

Why don't you resent me
- you make me feel rich
- better in bed
- you're old

can only win a woman by patience

his wife is really nice

giggles like school girls helps her get ready, sing together
gives toy cart, tells him this is your mother

trade outfits

"may your marriage be safe in the middle of the night
cart, can't see mother

Gold - adorning things w/ gold

moved up cars = identity loss

king in law is @ her feet

→ why does she sleep w/ him?

Movie Notes

Meera

Meera Screening Notes

- seems love sick sitting in her room
- Cover your head - dhanu sword
- Sun shows on Meera when introduced/made aware of the situation
- Snake hump to play for the snake he is giving birth to
- Tells sister to cover her head again and she does not
- Color festivals offer disguise
- long moment of dharma when he gives her the ring
- coughing
- sacrifice
- squeaky shoes
- certain death going to fight
- worship sitting down
- position given to ~~her~~ the betrothed daughter
- tells husband to be and he laughs at her marriage from soul
- marriage that is worthy
- marriage = lord
- Krishna = husband
- Meeting and separation are two sides of a coin
- You have told me that I am not a slave
→ but I also never said you were free
- Ask flute player to change his path
- Devotees are a form of the gods
- Close the temple
- drags her to temple - so she doesn't have to ruin family prestige
- sister drops idol down a well and locks her in her room
- leads worship herself

HUSBANDS DECAY

- joined to enhance status not win it
- not tied to the shackles of family bonds
- body is not more important than soul
- gives up family + society
- ruined royal prestige
- husband tells her to ask for forgiveness, or run away
- "I free you from the sin of killing me"
- husband's kingdom falls apart the more he knows / loves her - he becomes weaker + weaker
 - sister warns
 - can't hold her gaze, feels help^{less}, is helpless (Meera)
 - can't see anything / is drowning
 - leaning on pillar, out of breath
- "I'm walking on my path of truth so don't call me back"
 - don't you know to not call someone back from the waterfront?

Director K. Asif
producer Shapoorji Pallonji
Mughal-e-Azam

only as good as your
offspring, why love
affair is such a big
deal

Great Emperor - all he needs is a son

Map talks to viewers

Scales of Justice - he plays w/ them

prince reveals mischievous nature, insubordination, disrespect

intoxicated prince stagsening

mothers tender love → armour, scorching desert

Queen vs. Mom = forget dignity - she may pine and not weep

great general wounds = flowers, sword = assassin + lover

Salim's blood = Akbars blood = spread over the land

but there is still some left

Salim now humble serent → invited to return

after 14 years

Rewarding the messenger

Mom wants him to come back and forget

w/ dance, song, et

She will forget god when he returns

Pearls for time keeping

"So cruelly you have shed my blood" - Mom

"Not hiding, but hidden"

Darsnana w/ the statue

why did you remain silent when the arrow was shot

→ I wanted to see how legend becomes reality

Kings come from heaven but their queens come from anywhere

Steals herself to reach the letter behind a locked door

Water transports her love message in closed flower

Salim must open it

Refusing b/c of status/class

Sun become one w/ moon

can't want candle

like the name of a candle

memory
she "forgets"
win a son

we agree love devalues life yet is it not fulfilling
that after death the world remembers you
→ thorns

She is always trying to cover her face
garden tree sheds all its petals growth of
love

How could I convince him that I ^{never} loved him
when I never had the ~~change~~ courage to tell him
I loved him

Hits her and talks about how she a blot needing to
be cleansed

Destines changes, times ~~time~~ ^{changes} a nation's history
changes, emperors change

→ Salom you will have to change
My heart is not your inda for nke

"Have you forgotten I am a part of your
body?"

"You ask me pay a price for your milk"

"A sword is held by a soldier not a disappointed
lover"

→ death in battle is better than death in prison

Sculptor wants to take truth of his art to every
corner of the kingdom

tells the sculptor to many Ankali
justice vs. tyranny

I am mocking the gifts of a fool
Not advisable for emperor to enter rebel's camp
alone

- right of a father

dancer speeds up
he breaks mirrors

Anarkali
Salim

We pray that on the battle field god protects you from
the wrath of Akbar.

~~"Justice is more precious than our son"~~

No Mercy

Dying wish to be queen, Salim's queen so
that he ~~he~~ may not blush for not fulfilling
a promise to a maid

Death scene (he is lying on the ground, helpless,
brought down by his love and she wedding
white as a widow must turn her back
to him, walk away, die. Shiny doors shut
on their love and close his connection to
her

HE REMEMBERS NOTHING

goes back on his word

ring lands on scale, it goes up & down, he
brings it to rest

Secret that she is alive

remains eternal symbol of love

blank state, really alive

"I swear I am not an enemy of love but a
slave of principles"

Movie Notes

Devdas

Devdas Movie Notes

Mother is excited for son to come to come home
family makes fun of her

like Ramayana, Salim ~ son coming home

Her lamp love will never burn out lamp/love
wind blows her hair wild + reckless
Never go out even w/ her tears
tangles in white curtains ~ widowed

Tempest ~ her son = tempest

A gust of wind will come w/ the one you seek
throwing color dust
caught in a haze

I get to see devdas first, shut your eyes Rasa
revealing main characters
her light up

Hesitates to have Rasa w/ him

"Go I do want to see your face"

"Prodical son"

Beating children

"only in the moonlight he gets to see my face"

Face - Moon ~ Scaring, dark side

he tries to put out candle

her eyes are closed

GLASS

Burns finger puts on lip

what brings the moon down to earth

Tries to store her words like a problem

brings him to tears

Banoculars

love seems childless playful as he tries to put on bracelet
rough w/ her

Calls husband landlord

Circle around Paro's mom plotting
Paro's mom sings + dances about the moon

Krishna + Rhada
Landlord sheds a tear

removes her jewelry
hurts her

foot is bleeding

Standing

"Good or bad the coin is known by its tinkle
who?"

So late at night

in the dark ~ dark side of the moon

aren't you afraid

What you can't get away with by the light of day you try
at night?

"Not alone; you carried w/ you the honor of our family"
Have you left your honor behind?"

Court case:

"Don't you realize our family ranks much higher than
hers."

- I object

hearing, standing

"The tempest ought to pass

If I stay on, much will be undone
It's as much his test as it is yours

burns his rejection letter
where the anklets tinkle

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hair shatters mirror

"Your mirror couldn't bear to see my face, I'm sorry for your loss.

Prostitute has flame

her sari slaps him

Krishna Raha song again

status You are a woman, ~~let's~~ chuchiamukhi realize who you are
→ his status

"Not even the moon is that rain"

But the moon is scared ← 2nd time

[branded by their?]

What have you done?

I have scared you like the Moon with the mark of my love

phases of moon = phases of love

uses her own blood to paint + part

The wound you have left on me only adds to my beauty

holds candle out of cart

pride he sets afire

You won't even touch spirits + yet you are anesthetized

"If he doesn't come before candle is burnt out then

you will wear these dancing bells

Dinks @ brothel

Why torture yourself ~ every heart on trial

revelat. is same

No pride to what goes up in smoke

Ders mother in my tempest

whipping sounds

Remembering childhood

→ good at arithmetic

Name Changes ... Dev Bapo
Parvati

Bolder - cuts into her husband's question

He is my love and he is my VANITY and
he is w/ me always

The lamps lit in celebration have set fire to our
house

Always put out fires that threaten your
home ~ won't let mother in law put out
candle

metaphores about eyes

I must face myself before I'm lost

Movie Notes

Dharmputra Bano - Javed

Movie Notes

"The best way to start this picture is to start from where it started"

Revolution ~ Hindus + Muslims are brothers

Freedom is a birthright

Loss of chasity = disease

Javed ~ nobility, class system

Sadism ~~physic~~ Meeras man → diled w/ her dishonor
Same w/ uncle

→ into picture frame = remembering (Rasa w/ pictures)

Chess ~ Queen + mate

Doc. an image of god

Today ^{not} a brother will save his sister even at the cost of his own life
Duty and humanity are demanding their rights

"I can't really make anything out" ~ solution ~ vision ~ rasa

Lonely ~ bring back memories of the bygone days

curtain between them

• fabric

• beads

• hair (whendring)

In her love / The memories she is very childish / childlike

• while sitting and remembering she seems old / weak

• music abruptly stops just as their romance did

• up in the mountains ~ her cold heart

• talk about unity and coexisting but they want to keep a secret

• sweet smelling loneliness

moon = face

wedding night ~ moon keeps being covered by clouds

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miscarriage

"Somebody gets 2 and somebody gets none"

god's justice

You're my son

→ no, stays w/ the aunt

road divides them

no one who refuses to be the son of his own mother

traitor of his country can never be anyone's friend

uncle talks about being a freedom fighter... hypocryt!

calls others traitors to their own country, but he betrays his own daughter

bridge between houses

"Freedom is attained by those who don't turn their backs

"how fast man changes, how fast he forgets god"

sisters reunited over bridge

Son has turned out to be a fanatic Hindu ~ muslims

shouldn't live there

"one must change w/ changing times"

"you have grown up but don't know anything"

throughout film references of eyes

Rain = wet Sari!

cut out of India burning, history, people

"Hail Lord Hanuman"

"by telling me what I was yesterday you have killed my today"

"Isn't religion born w/in, does it come from the outside?"

"religions do not make humans, make humans fight each other"

2 mother ~ orphan

2 religions / two nations ~ nationless

"Whoever you are you are mine" meena

"this land is a motherland to all who consider it their mother ~ touches her feet"

love remedies
identity crisis

[20]

standing on

ends

bridge