

HL3004: World Cinema

Course Description

Taking a leaf out of Wimal Dissanayake’s “Issues in World Cinema,” this course accepts that “world cinema” has evolved from the Third Cinema, that is, any films outside of the hegemony of the First Cinema (Hollywood movies) and the Second Cinema (European films). As such, this course is mainly concerned with four main regions of the movie-making industry: Africa, Latin America, Middle East, and Asia. Many but not all of these countries contained within the regions struggled with coming out of the difficulties caused by colonialism and the power vacuum left behind, as we shall see in the first section of the course. The second section (on global film genre) and third (on topics) showcase the diversity of World Cinemas, an unruly mixed bag that may or may not have much in common.

Course Outline

Week/topics	Films	Required readings	Suggested readings & films
Section 1: The Empire and World Cinemas			
1. Introduction	NA	NA	-Chanon, “Who’s for ‘World Cinema’?” -Dissanayake, “Issues in World Cinema.”
2. Definitions	NA	-Anderson, “Imagined Community.” -Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” -Croft, “Concepts of National Cinema.” -Dennison and Lim, “Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem.”	- <i>The Hour of the Furnaces</i> (1968, Argentina) -Getino and Solanas, “Towards a Third Cinema.” -Higson, “The Concept of National Cinema.”
3. Revolutions	<i>The Battle of Algiers</i> (1966, Algeria)	-Murphy, “Africans Filming Africa.” -Baratieri, “Terrorists and Veils.”	- <i>Chronicles of the Years of Fire</i> (1975, Algeria) -Armes, <i>African Film-making</i> , Chapters 1 and 5. -Mellen, <i>Film Guide to Algiers</i>
4. Nation Building	<i>Mother India</i> (1957)	-Jameson, “Third-World Literature in an Era of Multinational Capitalism.” -Rajadhyaksha, “Filming the Nation.”	- <i>Pather Panchali</i> (1955, India) -Rajadhyaksha, “A Theory of Cinema that Can Account for Indian Cinema.”
Section 2: Genres of Sublimating Colonial/War Trauma			
5. Fantasy/horror	<i>Pan’s Labyrinth</i> (Spain/Mexico, 2006)	-Gee, “Introduction,” <i>Magic Realism</i>	- <i>The Shape of Water</i> (2017, USA/Mexico)

		-Costanzo, "Chapter 3," <i>World Cinema Through Global Genres</i> Note: First assignment due	-Modleski, "The Terror of Pleasure." -Dennison, "Issues in Contemporary Film-making in the Hispanic World."
6. Anime	<i>Spirited Away</i> (2001, Japan)	-Bock, "Japanese Film Genres." -Botz-Bornstein, "Baudrillard and Cuteness." -Napier, "Matter out of Place."	- <i>New Gods: Nezha Reborn</i> (2021, China) -Chen, <i>The New Generation in Chinese Animation</i> -Ue, "Narrative, Time, and Memory."
7: The hero/gangster	<i>Oldboy</i> (2003, South Korea)	-Warshow, "The Gangster as a Tragic Hero." -Choi, "Chapter 1," <i>Healing Historical Trauma in South Korean Film and Literature</i>	- <i>15</i> (2003, Singapore) -Choi, "No Blood? No Tears!: Gangster Cinema." -Shin, "The Rise of Korean Cinema."
Recess Week			
Section 3: Topics			
8: Race	<i>Sepat</i> (2005, Malaysia)	-Khoo, "Cosmopolitanism, Sufi Islam and Malay Subjectivity." -Lim, "Malay(sian) Patriotic Films as Racial Crisis and Intervention." Note: Second assignment due	- <i>Mukhsin</i> (2007, Malaysia) -Rahman, "Gender and Religion in Malaysian Cinema." -Wang & Kerry, "Filmic Depiction of Malay Subjectivity."
9: Social Class/Poverty	<i>City of God</i> (2002, Brazil)	-Krstic, "Introduction," <i>Slums on Screen</i> -Kantaris, "Space, Politics and the Crisis of Hegemony."	- <i>Slumdog Millionaire</i> (2008, UK/India) -Dennison, "Brazilian Cinema." -Sales & Muniz, "Image and Racism."
10: Gender	<i>Persepolis</i> (2007, Iran)	-Ince, "Global Women's Cinema." -Mikdash, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East." -Shohat, "Post-Third-Worldist Culture."	- <i>The Rose-seller</i> (1998, Colombia) - <i>The Milk of Sorrow</i> (2009, Peru) -Gonul, <i>Women in Cinemas of Iran and Turkey</i> , chapter 4

			-Petersen, “Female filmmakers and Muslim women in cinema.”
Week 11: Deepavali			
12: Sexuality	Watch in this order: 1. <i>Cherry Magic</i> (first episode, Japan, 2020, 20 min) 2. <i>Cherry Magic</i> (first episode, Thailand, 2024, 40 min) 3. <i>Cherry Magic</i> (first episode, anime, Japan, 2024, 20 min)	- Baudinette, <i>Boys Love Media in Thailand</i> , Chapters 1 and 2	- <i>I Told Sunset About You</i> (2020, Thailand) -Welker, <i>Queer Transfiguration</i> , chapter 1 -Storer, “Performing Sexuality Identity.” - Jackson, “Offending Images.”
13: The Digital World Cinema	NA	NA	-In class screening: <i>The Sympathizer</i> Episode 1 (2024, Vietnam/USA) directed by Park Chan-wook of <i>Oldboy</i> -Davis, “Instantaneous Worldwide Release” - Friedberg, “The End of Cinema.”

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify key terms, concepts, historical issues, and theories in relation to World Cinema.
2. Apply concepts and theories in reading the films.
3. Ability to observe the diversity, differences, concerns, anxieties, similarities across global films outside the hegemony of Hollywood blockbusters.
4. Interpret films and present cogent arguments about World cinema.
5. Understand the ideologies at work behind each film within historical, social, and cultural contexts.

Assessment

Class participation	10%
2 Essay Assignments	40% (15% first essay + 25% second essay)
Exam	50%

Course Materials (will be provided)

1. Films and TV

The Battle of Algiers (1966, Algeria)

Cherry Magic (2020, Japan, first episode)

Cherry Magic (2024, Japan, first episode, anime)

Cherry Magic (2024, Thailand, first episode)

City of God (2002, Brazil)

Mother India (1957)

Oldboy (2003, South Korea)

Pan's Labyrinth (2006, Mexico/Spain)

Persepolis (2007, Iran)

Sepat (2005, Malaysia)

Spirited Away (2001, Japan)

2. Readings

Anderson, "Imagined Community."

Baratieri, "Terrorists and Veils."

Baudinette, *Boys Love Media in Thailand*, Chapters 1 and 2.

Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."

Bock, "Japanese Film Genres."

Botz-Bornstein, "Baudrillard and Cuteness."

Choi, "Chapter 1," *Healing Historical Trauma in South Korean Film and Literature*.

Costanzo, "Chapter 3," *World Cinema Through Global Genres*.

Croft, "Concepts of National Cinema."

Dennison and Lim, "Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem."

Gee, "Introduction," *Magic Realism*.

Ince, "Global Women's Cinema."

Jameson, "Third-World Literature in an Era of Multinational Capitalism."

Kantaris, "Space, Politics and the Crisis of Hegemony."

Khoo, "Cosmopolitanism, Sufi Islam and Malay Subjectivity."

Krstic, "Introduction," *Slums on Screen*.

Lim, "Malay(sian) Patriotic Films as Racial Crisis and Intervention."

Mikdashi, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East."

Murphy, "Africans Filming Africa."

Napier, "Matter out of Place."

Rajadhyaksha, "Filming the Nation."

Shohat, "Post-Third-Worldist Culture."

Warshow, "The Gangster as a Tragic Hero."

Notes

1. Students should familiarise themselves with simple film terminology. Timothy Corrigan's *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* is a popular choice for its brevity. A more detailed book used in most introductory film courses is David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *Film Art*.
2. Students need to watch the films and do the readings before coming to class. The class is run seminar-style so to make each lesson successful, students need to be prepared.
3. Films and readings are subjected to change.