Comparative Literature

Multidisciplinary Course

Introduced from 2023

Semester I

MDCL01– Comparative Literature and Performance Studies

Overview:

This course will explain the multiple territorial intersections of Comparative Literature and Performance Studies, two established fields of study from our location.

Objectives: The objectives of this course are to:

- study the diverse intersections between literary theories and Performance Studies
- understand the scope of Performance Studies beyond established modes of representations
- understand and interrogate 'interdisciplinary' studies.

Outcome: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- identify how students of literature can interact with ideas on performance, performativity, performing cultures, language as performance
- develop a more holistic approach towards situating the politics of 'performance'
- develop a performance text

The course will focus on the following topics (**Any two** topics will be offered):

- Indigenous Performance Cultures in India and beyond
- Forms of theatrical practices in India
- Forms of theatrical practices in non-Indian contexts
- Architecture and Performance in Santiniketan
- Performing Alterities: The queer performance space
- Organic theatre practices: problematising 'forms'
- Feminist readings on 'performativity'
- Performance in 'border' zones.
- Caste, class, race and Performance

Total number of primary texts (essays/prose pieces/poems/films) should not exceed eight to ten.

Suggested Readings:

Brayshaw, Teresa, and Noel Witts. *The Twentieth Century Performance Reader.*
Brooks, Peter. *Mahabharata.*
Cavallaro, Dani. *Critical and Cultural Theory*.
Climenhaga, Royd. *The Pina Bausch Sourcebook: The Making of Tranztheater.*
Growtowski, Jerzy, Eugenio Barbarba et al. *Towards a Poor Theatre.*
Gupta, Kaustav and Mayurakshi Sen, editors. *Organic Theatre: Manish Mitra's Manifestos and his Actor's Responses.*

Heike Oberlin, David Shulman, et al. *Two Masterpieces of Kutiyattam: Mantrankam and Anguliyankam.*
Maitra, Shefali. *Rabindra-Nrityanatya: Ekti Naribadi Path.*
Munshi, Urmimala Sarkar. *Uday Shankar and his Transcultural Experimentations: Dancing Modernity.*
___. *Alice Boner Across Geographies and Arts.*
Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction.*
Thakur, Abanindranath. *Khuddur Jatra.*
Thakur, Rabindranath. "Sangeet o Bhav".
___. *Geetobitan.*

Any one from the following performance traditions will be discussed:

Ramakaatha, Panchali, Brotokaatha, Alkaap, Bolan, Jhumur, Bahurupi, Nepali Slam Poetry, Plays by Budhan Theatre, Plays by Native Earth Performing Arts, Wall art, Kitsch, Graffiti.

Semester II

MDCL02 – Comparative Literature: Popular Literature and Culture

Overview: The course will explain the concept of 'Popular' and how one can read popular literature, films and culture through Comparative Literature methodology

Objectives: The objectives of this course are to:

- identify a methodology to read various popular literatures/films and cultures from different locations
- identify the politics of 'popular' and its ever-evolving nature within the dominant ideology of the multilingual space like India

Outcome: By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- define and describe "popular" as a category
- investigate the politics of constructing the "popular" within the literary and Cultural domain

In this paper there are two segments – i) Popular Literature and ii) Popular Culture and Films. Any ONE segment will be offered to each batch.

I) Popular Literature –Six terms and concepts will be taught from the following:

Dominant, Residual, Emergent, Canon, Periphery, Mainstream, Retellings, Plot, Tale, Motif, Theme, Myth, Legend, *Puran*, *Itihasa*, High Culture and Low Culture

Essays: (Three)

Adorno, Theodore. *The Culture Industry.* (Selections)
Arnold, Matthew. *Culture and Anarchy.* (Selections)
Bandyopadhyay, Sibaji. *Thematology: Literary Studies in India.* (Selection)
Behr, Kate. ""Same-as-Difference": Narrative Transformations and Intersecting Cultures in Harry Potter".
Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction".
Chanda, Ipshita. "New Themes for Old: Harry Potter and the Theme of Everyman".

Das, Sisir Kumar. *Shatayu Sukumar.* (Selections)
Dev Sen, Navaneeta. *Counterpoints: Essays in Comparative Literature.*
Majumdar, A and Ashish Lahiri. *Prastutiparba: Sukumar Roy.*
Mendelsohn, Farah. "Crowning the King: Harry Potter and the Construction of Authority".
Murnaghan, S. "Classics for Cool Kids: Popular and Unpopular Versions of Antiquity for Children".
Nikolajeva, Maria. "Fairy Tale and Fantasy: From Archaic to Postmodern"
Williams, Raymond. *Key Words.*
___. *Culture and Society.*

Text: (Two)

Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, Troilokyanath Mukhopadhyay, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumdar, Rabindranath Thakur, Upendrakishor Roychoudhury, Sukumar Roy, Rajshekhar Basu, Ashapurna Devi, Kalki, Pudumaipittan, Bama, C.V. Raman Pillai, V.M. Basheer, M.T. Vasudevan Nair, J.R.R.Tolkien, C.S.Lewis, J.K. Rowling, Rick Riordan, Eoin Colfer, Jonathan Stroud, Neil Gaiman

II) Popular Culture and Films - six terms and concepts will be taught from the following:

Bourgeois Culture, Capitalism, Class, Commercial Culture, Elite, Folk, Society, High culture and low culture, Margin, Hegemony, Dominant, mainstream, Patriarchy, Gender and Film, Melodrama, Horror, Mass-culture, Bollywood, South-Indian Films.

Essays: (Three)

Black, Jeremy. *The Politics of James Bond.* (Selections)
Chanda, Ipshita. "Kya Hum Pehle Kabhi Yahan Aye Hain: Re-turning to Look at the 'Indian' in Indian Cinema through Farah Khan's Om Shanti Om".
Cook, David A. *A History of Narrative Film.* (Selections)
Cullen, Derek. *The James Bond Phenomenon: A Critical Reader.* (Selections)
Mukherjee, Madhuja. "The Singing Cowboys: Sholay and the Significance of (Indian) Curry Westerns within Post-Colonial Narratives".
___. "Of Recollection, Retelling, and Cinephilia: Reading Gangs of Wasseypur as an Active Archive of Popular Cinema".
Niranjana, Tejaswini. "Integrating whose nation? Tourists and terrorists in 'Roja'".
  ___. "Roja revisited".
Orsini, Francesca. *Love in South Asia: A Cultural History.* (Selections)
Prasad, Madhav M. *Ideology of Hindi Film.* (Selections)
Ray, Satyajit. *Deep Focus: Reflections on Cinema.* (Selections)
___. *Speaking of Films.* (Selections)
Saran, Renu. *History of Indian Cinema.* (Selections)
Vanita, Ruth. *Dancing with the Nation: Courtesans in Bombay Cinema.* (Selections)
Williams, Raymond. *Key Words.* (Selections)
___. *Culture and Society.* (Selections)

"Popular" Cinema:(Two)

Meghe Dhaka Tara, *Kapurush O Mahapurush*, *Gupi Gayen Bagha Bayen* (Trilogy), *Chiriakhan*a, *Sriman Prithiraj*, *Sonar Kella*, *Bancharamer Bagan, Hirer Angti*, *Rajlokhi O Srikanto, Kairee*, *Mother India, Sholay*, *Deewar*, *Mr. India*, *Roja*, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Nayak*, *Main Hoon Na, Om Shanti Om*, *Gangs of Wasseypur 1 and 2, Lipstick Under My Burkha*, *Super Deluxe*, *Navarasa*, *Paava Kadhaigal*, *Frankenstein,*

Dracula, Vertigo, Seven Samurai, *James Bond* Series, *Star Wars* Series, *Taxi Driver, Solaris,*
Indiana Jones Series, *God Father, Rebecca, Harry Potter* Series

Suggested Readings:

Banerjee, Sumanta. *The Parlour and the Street – Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth–Century Calcutta.*
Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory.*
Bhaumik, Kaushik. "Migration and Contemporary Indian cinema: A Consideration of Anurag Kashyap and la politique des auteurs in the Times of Globalization."
Brooks, Peter. *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, melodrama, and the Mode of Excess*.
Brunt, Rosalind and Caroline Rowan. *Feminism, Culture, and politics.*
Cawelti, John.G. "The Concept of Formula in the Study of Popular Literature".
Chanda, Ipshita. *Packaging Freedom: Feminism and Popular Culture.*
Chatterjee, Gayatri. *Mother India*.
Das, Sisir Kumar. "Popular Literature and the Reading Public".
Gordon, Andrew. "Star Wars: A myth for our time".
Holte, James Craig. *Dracula in the Dark: The Dracula Film Adaptations*.
Mehta, Monika. "Fan and its Paratexts".
Strinati, Dominic. *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture.*
The Oxford History of World Cinema.
Thomas, Rosie. "Melodrama and the negotiation of morality in mainstream Hindi film."
Truffaut, Francoise, and Alfred Hitchcock. *Hitchcock/Truffaut*.
Uberoi, Patricia. "The diaspora comes home: Disciplining desire in DDLJ".
Virdi, Jyotika. *The Cinematic Imagination: Indian Popular Films as Social History.*
Whited Lana A., and Katherine Grimes, editors. *Critical Insights: The Harry Potter Series.*

Semester III

MDCL03 – Comparative Literature and New Media

Overview: This course will focus on the study of the changing aspects of literature in respect to the emergence of New Media.

Objective: This course aims to:

- provide students with a primary understanding of the New Media
- explain the connections between New Media and Comparative Literature.

Outcome: By the end of the course, the students should be able to:

- identify the key terms and concepts associated with the study of New Media
- understand the relevance of New Media in contemporary literary studies
- explain the interrelationship between New Media and Comparative Literature.

Terms and concepts (any six):

New Media and its significance in literary studies, Digital platform, Big data, Meta data, Digital Archive, Social Networking, Online activism, User interface, Digital Divide,

Interactivity, Web 1.0, Web 2.0, Web 3.0, Artificial Intelligence, Born-digital Texts, online gaming, Hypertext, Community Building, Database, Algorithm, Digital Humanities, End User, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Open Source, Online Journalism.

Essays (any two):

Aime´e Morrison. "Blogs and Blogging: Text and Practice"
Rosario, Giovanna di, et al. "The Origins of Electronic Literature: An Overview."
Flores, Leonardo. "Artistic and Literary Bots."
Hjorth, Larissa. "Games as New Media."
Lewis, Diana M. "Online news: A new genre?"
Green, Lelia. "The Digital Divide."
Sen Narayan, Sunetra and Shalini Narayanan. "An Overview of New Media in India."
Pandey, Uma Shankar. "The Internet in India: Crystallizing the Historical Inequalities."

E-Texts: (Any three)

Shelley Jackson: *My Body – a Wunderkammer*
Joellyn Rock: *Remixing Shakespeare: A Netprov in Three Acts*
Chris Funkhouser: *improvised is how the voice is used...*
SBS: *The Boat*
Online poem generators
Certain YouTube videos and other online materials available in the public domain

Suggested Readings:

Siapera, Eugenia. *Understanding New Media.*
Everett, Anna and John T. Caldwell, editors. *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality*.
Jones, Steve. *Encyclopaedia of New Media: An Essential Reference to Communication and Technology*.
Lister, Martin. *New Media: A Critical Introduction*.
Siemens, Ray and Susan Schreibman. *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*.
Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."
Hammond, Adam. *Literature in the Digital Age: An Introduction*.