

Cinema and Society Across Cultures: Spring Semester Östör, Akos 2010
aostor@wesleyan.edu

Films from around the globe have captured our attention as compelling glimpses of other worlds. Masterworks of cinema, they are firmly anchored in their own societies and histories, yet they have a universal appeal. Are films from distant lands windows to other cultures? What is the relation between cinema and society? Can film esthetics (style and form) engage with anthropological knowledge to deliver the viewer cross-cultural understanding?

Taking key films from East Europe, West Africa, South Asia, and Australia (regions where the instructor has extensive first hand experience) we shall study film production and consumption, social structure and cultural meaning, film esthetics and critical knowledge, and the possibilities for intercultural understanding.

Films of Miklos Jancso, Marta Meszaros, Drijbil Mambety, Osmanu Sembene, Suleiman Cisse, Satyajit Ray, Aparna Sen, Rachel Perkins, and Tracy Moffat will be screened.

Weekly one page papers discussion notes, two five page papers, one take-home project

Jan 26 The Roundup (Jancso)
Feb 2 Diary for my Children (Meszaros)
Feb 9 Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda)
Feb 16 Fireman's Ball (Forman)
Feb 23 Xala (Sembene)
Mar 2 Yeelen (Cisse)

Spring break

Mar 23 Hyenas (Mambety)
Mar 30 Charulata (Ray)
Apr 6 The Adversary (Ray)
April 13 to be announced
Apr 20 BeDevil (Moffat)
Apr 27 One Night the Moon (Perkins)
May 4 Radiance (Perkins)

Texts available from the bookstore (&/or on reserve)

- *Satyajit Ray: In Search of the Modern by Suranjan Ganguly, Srarecrow press
- *Australian Cinema After Mabo by Felicity Collins and Therese Davis
Cambridge U press
- *Symbolic Narratives / African Cinema: Audiences, Theory and the Moving
Image, edited by June Givanni BFI British Film Institute
- *Cinema of the Other Europe by Dina Iordanova - Wallflower press

Films will be placed on reserve at Olin AFTER the date of screening

Jan 26 The Roundup

Iardonova chs 1 & 4; Liehm & Liehm The Most Important Art part ii (Hungary); Graham Petrie, History Must Answer to Man, ch 2; Okey, Eastern Europe 1740-1985, chs 3-4; Petrie in ed Paul, Politics Art and Commitment; Ash, "Does Central Europe Exist?"

Feb 2 Diary for My Children

Iardonova chs 2 & 6; Portugues The Cinema of Marta Meszaros
Liehm & Liehm parts iii - iv(Hungary) Ash, "Hungarian Lesson",
Hofer, "Construction of Folk Cultural Heritage in Hungary"

Feb 9 Ashes and Diamonds

Iardonova ch 3; Michalek The Cinema of Moral Concern; Liehm & Liehm, parts iii & iv (Poland)); Okey, chs 7-8;
Ash, "The Uses of Adversity"; Michalek and Turaj, chs 2 & 8; Ash, (use index for Poland, esp. comparison with Hungary)

Feb 16 The Fireman's Ball

Iardonova ch 5; Hames The Czech New Wave, chs 1 & 4; Liehm & Liehm, parts iii & iv (Czechoslovakia); Daniel in ed. Paul, "The Czech Difference";
Ash, "Czechoslovakia under the Ice", "Prague Advertisement"

Feb 23 Xala

Givanni, chs 3 & 8 (& parts of ch1);
articles from E-reserve: Sembene, "Man is Culture";
4 interviews with Sembene; Pfaff, Martin on Sembene; Pfaff, "The Africanness of Sembene's Film Language"; Davidson, "Thinking about Africa", "Nationalism...";
Turvey on Xala

March 2 Yeelen

Givanni, chs 5 & 6 (ch 1 again); articles from E-reserves: Pfaff on Cisse; Gentile, "In the Midst of Secrets"; MacRae, "A Political Fable"; Diawara, "Light on Africa"; Gabriel :Third Cinema"; Boughedir, "African Cinema & Ideology"; Appiah, "Arts of Africa"

Spring Break

March 23 Hyenas

Givanni, chs 8 & 9 (ch 1); articles from E-reserves: Porton, "Mambety's Hyenas"; Ukadike, "Hyena's Last Laugh"; Tomaselli et.al., "...a Theory of Orality"; Gabriel, "Third Cinema...", and "...Critical Theory"; Rayfield, "Hyenas..."

April 6 Charulata

Ganguly, Intro & ch 3; E-reserve: Cooper, "From Gazes to Threat"; Kasbekar, "Hidden Pleasures"; Gokulsingh, "...Popular Indian Cinema"; Ray, "What is Wrong with Indian Films", and "Problems of a Bengal Film Maker"

April 13 The Adversary

Ganguly, ch 5 and Conclusion ; E-reserve: Cooper on "Rasa"; Tambiah, "Routinization of Violence"; Corbridge and Harris, "Elite Revolts"; Fruzzetti & Perez, "Gender of the Nation"; Roy, "Figuring Mother India"

April 20 BeDevil

Collins and Davis, chs 1, 4-5; E-reserve: Ward, "Foreword", "Legend and Task"; Hodge & Mishra, "Return of the Repressed"; Ginsberg, "Indigenous Media"; Craven, "Towards the Millenium"

April 27 One Night the Moon

Collins & Davis, chs 8-9; E-reserve: Hodge & Mishra, "The Bastard Complex"; Kramer, "Media, Society, Culture"; Meggitt, "Understanding Aboriginal Culture"; Myer, "Representing Culture"

May 4 Optional screening &/or concluding discussion