

THE ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD

MA Cafeteria Elective Courses

Offered by Department of Film Studies

Semester – III

Course title	Film Theory II								
Category (Mention the appropriate category (a/b/c) in the course description.)	Domain Specific. Core.								
Course code	MAFSC505 / MAFSCE505								
Semester	III								
Number of credits	04								
Maximum intake									
Day/Time	Monday 4-6PM & Wednesday 11AM-1PM								
Name of the teacher/s	Prof. Hariprasad Athanickal								
Course description	Brief description of the Course This course builds upon the conceptual foundations established in Film Theory I by examining the major theoretical developments that transformed film studies from the late 1960s onwards. Beginning with structuralism and semiotics, the course traces the emergence of psychoanalytic film theory, French apparatus theory, British Screen theory, feminist interventions, cognitivism, phenomenology, and contemporary philosophy of cinema. The course explores how cinema came to be understood not merely as an aesthetic object but as a complex signifying practice that produces meaning, subjectivity, ideology, desire, and embodied experience. It introduces students to competing models of spectatorship, ranging from psychoanalytic and ideological accounts to cognitive, phenomenological, and philosophical approaches. Throughout the course, students will critically engage with foundational theoretical texts while applying these frameworks to the analysis of films from diverse cinematic traditions. Particular attention is given to the continuing relevance of these debates for contemporary film scholarship and for the study of Indian and other non-Western cinemas. By situating film theory within broader developments in linguistics, structuralism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, phenomenology, and philosophy, the course equips students with the conceptual tools necessary for advanced research in film studies. Course Learning Objectives Following are the course learning objectives: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>A</td><td>To introduce students to the linguistic and structuralist turn in film theory and its influence on the study of cinema.</td></tr> <tr> <td>B</td><td>To develop an understanding of semiotic, psychoanalytic, and ideological approaches to cinematic meaning and spectatorship.</td></tr> <tr> <td>C</td><td>To familiarize students with French Apparatus Theory and British Screen Theory as major paradigms of post-1968 film theory.</td></tr> <tr> <td>D</td><td>To examine feminist interventions and theories of gender, desire, and visual</td></tr> </table>	A	To introduce students to the linguistic and structuralist turn in film theory and its influence on the study of cinema.	B	To develop an understanding of semiotic, psychoanalytic, and ideological approaches to cinematic meaning and spectatorship.	C	To familiarize students with French Apparatus Theory and British Screen Theory as major paradigms of post-1968 film theory.	D	To examine feminist interventions and theories of gender, desire, and visual
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		pleasure in cinema.
E		To critically evaluate cognitivist, phenomenological, and philosophical approaches as alternatives to psychoanalytic film theory.
F		To enable students to apply multiple theoretical paradigms to the close analysis of films across different historical, cultural, and national contexts.
G		To cultivate advanced research skills, critical writing, and independent theoretical inquiry in contemporary film studies.
Modules Module I The Linguistic Turn: Structuralism and Semiotics This module introduces the structuralist revolution in the humanities and examines its influence on film studies. It explores cinema as a system of signs and investigates the relationship between language, narrative, ideology, and representation. i. Ferdinand de Saussure and structural linguistics ii. Roland Barthes: myth, narrative, and ideology iii. Claude Lévi-Strauss and structural anthropology iv. Christian Metz and the semiotics of cinema v. Peter Wollen and structural approaches to authorship Module II Psychoanalysis, Spectatorship and Subjectivity This module examines psychoanalytic approaches to cinema and the constitution of cinematic subjectivity. It explores how desire, identification, fantasy, and unconscious processes inform spectatorship. i. Freud and visual desire ii. Jacques Lacan: the Mirror Stage, the Imaginary, and the Gaze iii. Christian Metz: The Imaginary Signifier iv. Identification, fantasy, and cinematic pleasure Module III French Apparatus Theory and British Screen Theory This module explores ideological approaches to cinema developed in France and Britain during the 1970s. It examines cinema as an ideological apparatus that constructs subjects through representation. i. Jean-Louis Baudry and the cinematic apparatus ii. Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni: cinema, ideology, and criticism iii. Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe iv. Ideology, realism, and cinematic discourse Module IV Feminist Film Theory and Gendered Spectatorship This module introduces feminist critiques of classical cinema and psychoanalytic theory,		

	focusing on gender, visual pleasure, spectatorship, and representation. i. Laura Mulvey and the Male Gaze ii. Mary Ann Doane and female spectatorship iii. Teresa de Lauretis and technologies of gender iv. Linda Williams and body genres Module V Contemporary Film Theory: Cognitivism, Phenomenology and Philosophy This module examines major critiques of psychoanalytic film theory and introduces contemporary philosophical approaches to cinema. It explores cognition, embodied perception, affect, ethics, and the ontology of cinematic experience. i. David Bordwell and historical poetics ii. Noël Carroll and cognitivism iii. Vivian Sobchack and phenomenology iv. Stanley Cavell and the ontology of film v. Gilles Deleuze: Movement-Image and Time-Image vi. Jacques Rancière, Alain Badiou, and Slavoj Žižek vii. Contemporary debates in film philosophy																		
Course delivery	Lecture/Seminar/Screening																		
Evaluation scheme	All assignments are compulsory <table><tr><td>1st Assignment/Presentation</td><td>:</td><td>20 Marks</td></tr><tr><td>2nd Assignment/Presentation</td><td>:</td><td>20 Marks</td></tr><tr><td>3rd Assignment/Presentation(Optional)</td><td>:</td><td>20 Marks</td></tr><tr><td>Term Paper</td><td>:</td><td>60 Marks</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3"> </td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>:</td><td>100 Marks</td></tr></table>	1 st Assignment/Presentation	:	20 Marks	2 nd Assignment/Presentation	:	20 Marks	3 rd Assignment/Presentation(Optional)	:	20 Marks	Term Paper	:	60 Marks				Total	:	100 Marks
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3 rd Assignment/Presentation(Optional)	:	20 Marks																	
Term Paper	:	60 Marks																	
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Reading list	Readings Andrew, Dudley. <i>Concepts in Film Theory</i>. Oxford University Press, 1984. Barthes, Roland. <i>Image–Music–Text</i>. Fontana, 1977. Barthes, Roland. <i>Mythologies</i>. Hill and Wang, 1972. Baudry, Jean-Louis. “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematic Apparatus.” <i>Film Quarterly</i>, vol. 28, no. 2, 1974–75, pp. 39–47. Baudry, Jean-Louis. “The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema.” <i>Camera Obscura</i>, no. 1, 1976. Bordwell, David. <i>Making Meaning</i>. Harvard University Press, 1989. Bordwell, David. <i>Narration in the Fiction Film</i>. University of Wisconsin Press, 1985. Bordwell, David, and Noël Carroll, editors. <i>Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies</i>. University of Wisconsin Press, 1996. Carroll, Noël. <i>Mystifying Movies</i>. Columbia University Press, 1988. Cavell, Stanley. <i>The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film</i>. Harvard University Press, revised ed., 1979. Comolli, Jean-Louis, and Jean Narboni. “Cinema/Ideology/Criticism.” <i>Screen</i>, vol. 12, no. 1, 1971, pp. 27–38. De Lauretis, Teresa. <i>Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema</i>. Indiana University Press, 1984. Deleuze, Gilles. <i>Cinema 1: The Movement-Image</i>. University of Minnesota Press, 1986. Deleuze, Gilles. <i>Cinema 2: The Time-Image</i>. University of Minnesota Press, 1989. Doane, Mary Ann. <i>The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s</i>. Indiana University Press, 1987. Elsaesser, Thomas, and Malte Hagener. <i>Film Theory: An Introduction Through the Senses</i>. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2015. Heath, Stephen. <i>Questions of Cinema</i>. Indiana University Press, 1981. Lacan, Jacques. <i>Écrits: A Selection</i>. Translated by Alan Sheridan, Routledge, 1977. Lévi-Strauss, Claude. <i>Structural Anthropology</i>. Basic Books, 1963. MacCabe, Colin. <i>Theoretical Essays: Film, Linguistics, Literature</i>. Manchester University Press, 1985. Metz, Christian. <i>Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema</i>. University of Chicago Press,
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1974.

Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. Indiana University Press, 1982.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1975, pp. 6–18.

Mulvey, Laura. *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image*. Reaktion Books, 2006.

Rancière, Jacques. *Film Fables*. Berg, 2006.

Rancière, Jacques. *The Future of the Image*. Verso, 2007.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. *Course in General Linguistics*. McGraw-Hill, 1966.

Sobchack, Vivian. *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience*. Princeton University Press, 1992.

Sobchack, Vivian. *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*. University of California Press, 2004.

Stam, Robert. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Blackwell, 2000.

Stam, Robert, Robert Burgoyne, and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis. *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics*. Routledge, 1992.

Williams, Linda. *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy of the Visible."* University of California Press, 1989.

Wollen, Peter. *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*. BFI, 1969.

Žižek, Slavoj. *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. MIT Press, 1991.

Žižek, Slavoj. *The Fright of Real Tears: Krzysztof Kieślowski between Theory and Post-Theory*. BFI, 2001.

Suggested Filmography

1. *Rear Window* (spectatorship, gaze, psychoanalysis)
2. *Vertigo* (Mulvey, Lacan, desire)
3. *Persona* (phenomenology and subjectivity)
4. *Blow-Up* (semiotics and spectatorship)
5. *Mirror* (Deleuze's time-image)
6. *Nayakan* and *Elippathayam* (Indian context)