

**ETH ZÜRICH / D-GESS**

**CHAIR FOR MODERN GLOBAL HISTORY**

**FS 2019**

## **SE: Society, Politics and Entertainment Technology: Popular Indian Cinema as a Lens on Historical Change**



The Bollywood's dream merchants at work: shooting of *Bhuli Nai* in Bombay (1948)

**TIME:** Tuesday 10:15-11:45  
(fortnightly; starts 26 February, 2019)

**LOCATION:** IFW A 34

**INSTRUCTOR:** Prof. Dr. Harald Fischer-Tiné  
[harald.fischertine@gess.ethz.ch](mailto:harald.fischertine@gess.ethz.ch)

## COURSE SUMMARY

The seminar introduces students to the major themes and debates in Indian film history and explores the use of popular cinema as a lens through which technical, cultural, social and political change in the Indian sub-continent can be understood. The participants of this course will engage in-depth with recent research on popular Hindi Cinema (aka 'Bollywood'). The selection of the readings will focus on a variety of issues, such as the technological innovation on the art form and its social impact, the representation of history in Indian Cinema, Bollywood's stance on burning social issues such as religious tensions between Hindus and Muslims etc. Besides, the reconstruction of the specific South Asian variety of a global art form and entertainment technology will imply discussions of the problems triggered by cultural globalisation and consumerism. Skill-wise, the students will have ample opportunities to train their analytical acumen while dealing with text- and visual sources, as well as their writing and presentation skills. (Participation in the lecture "Bollywood and Beyond" is not mandatory but strongly recommended).

## REQUIREMENTS

- Regular attendance (minimum of 80% recommended)
- Regular reading of the mandatory texts (a course reader with all the texts will be provided via Polybox; the mandatory readings are marked with an 📌 in the list below)
- A class presentation of c. 25 minutes based on at least three readings (sessions 2, 3 and 7) or a group presentation on a movie (sessions 4,5 and 6)  
Link to online reader: <https://polybox.ethz.ch/index.php/s/LH7XpVz8LQ68jZr>
  - PW: bollywood19
- You can contact the teaching assistant, Carolyn Kerchof, with any questions about the course requirements or logistics: [carolyn.kerchof@gess.ethz.ch](mailto:carolyn.kerchof@gess.ethz.ch)

## OUTLINE OF THE SESSIONS

### I.

- Session 1 (26.02.2019) Introduction to the course and organisational matters**
- FISCHER-TINÉ, Harald, "Bollywood and Beyond: Popular Indian Cinema as Product, Mirror and Agent of Twentieth-century History (1896-2006)" [MSS version of a forthcoming article].
  - VIRDI, Jyotika, 'A national cinema's transnational aspirations? Considerations on "Bollywood"', *South Asian Popular Culture*, 15 (1), 2017, pp. 1-22. 📌
  - WRIGHT, Neelam Sidhar, *Bollywood and Postmodernism; Popular Indian Cinema in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), pp. 21-45.

Session 2 (12.03.2019)

### **Technologies, films and audiences in India during the silent film era (c. 1900-1930)**

- DASS, Manishita, *Outside the Lettered City: Cinema, Modernity & the Public Sphere in Late Colonial India* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 72-105. ➡
- MAHADEVAN, Sudhir, *A very old Machine, The many Origins of Cinema in India* (New York: SUNY Press, 2015), pp. 21-64.
- CHATTERJEE, Ranita, 'Cinema in the Colonial City: Early Film Audiences in Calcutta', in: Ian Christie (ed.), *Audiences* (Amsterdam: Amst. University Press, 2012), pp. 66-80.
- RAJADHYAKSHA, Ashish, 'The Phalke Era: Conflict of Traditional Form and Modern Technology' in: T. Niranjana et al. (eds), *Interrogating Modernity: Culture and Colonialism in India* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1993), pp. 47-82.

Session 3 (26.03.2019)

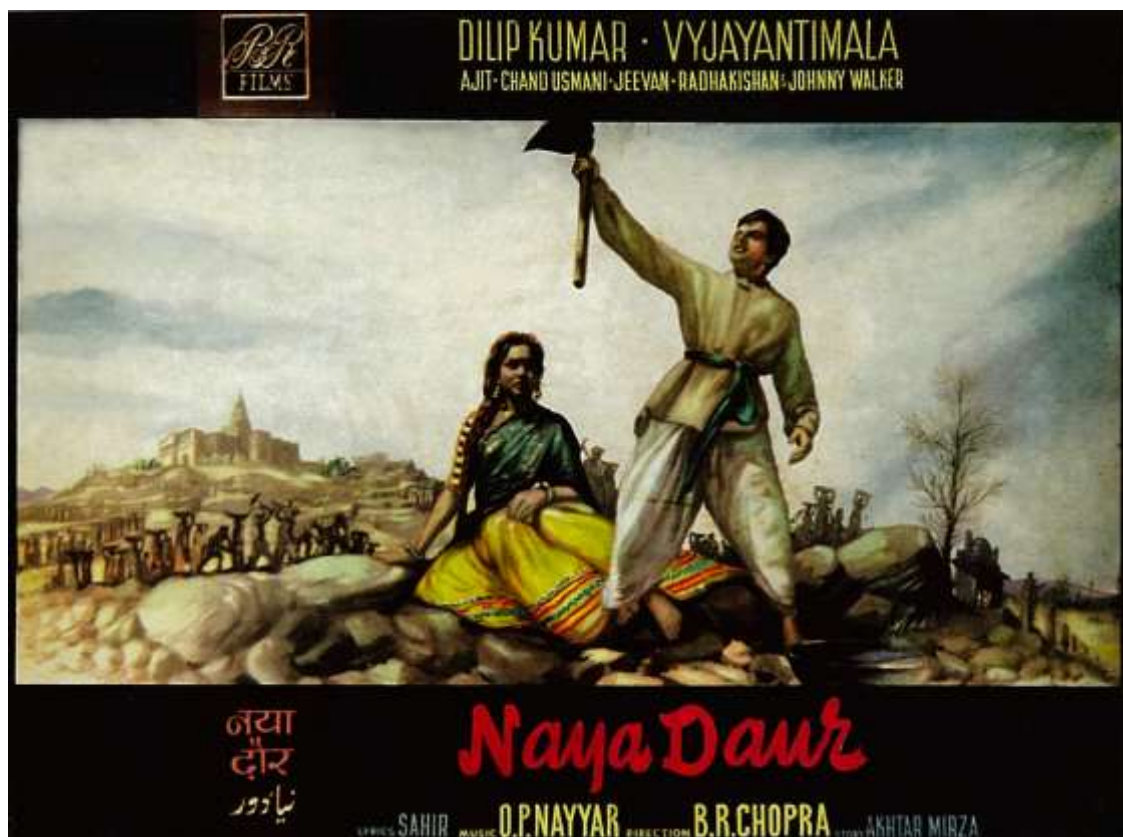
### **The 'Talkie Revolution': The arrival of sound and Music in Indian cinema (c. 1930-1950)**

- BOOTH Gregory D., *Behind the Curtain: Making Music in Mumbai's Film Studios* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press 2008), pp. 27-54. ➡
- THOMAS, Rosie 'Distant voices, magic knives: Lal-e-Yaman and the transition to sound in Bombay cinema', in: Rachel Dwyer and Jerry Pinto (eds), *Beyond the Boundaries of Bollywood. The Many Forms of Hindi Cinema* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 53-76.
- BARNOUW, Erik / KRISHNASWAMY, S., *Indian Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 59-73.
- BEASTER-JONES, Jayson, *Bollywood Sounds: The Cosmopolitan Mediations of Hindi Film Song*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chap. 2.

Session 4 (09.04.2019)

## Counter-hegemonic voices in Nehruvian Hindi films: Critique of technology and capitalist modernity in *Naya Daur* (1957)

- DESHPANDE, Anirudh, 'Indian Cinema and the Bourgeois Nation State', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42 (50), 2007, pp. 95-103. 🖱
- MISHRA, Sudesh, 'News from the Crypt: India, Modernity, and the West', *New Literary History*, 40 (2), 2009, pp. 315-344.
- MUBARKI, Meraj Ahmed, 'Looking beyond Post-Colonial Modernity: Subaltern Masculinity and the Mumbai Cinema', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, (2018) DOI: 10.1080/00856401.2018.1527430
- SARKAR, Bhaskar, *Mourning the Nation; Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham-London: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 47-87.



**Session 5 (30.04.2019) Masala Movie with A Cause: Secularism and Religious Tolerance in *Amar, Akbar, Anthony* (1977)**

- BHATIA, Sidhart, *Amar, Akbar, Anthony: Masala, Madness and Manmohan Desai* (Noida: HarperCollins India, 2013), pp. 64-124.
- DWYER, Rachel, *Bollywood's India: Hindi Cinema as a Guide to Modern India* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014), pp. 116-150.
- ELISON, William, NOVETZKE, C.L and ROTMAN, A., *Amar, Akbar, Anthony: Bollywood, Brotherhood and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2016), pp. 1-35.
- JAIN, Pankaj, 'From *Padosi* to *My Name is Khan*: The Portrayal of Hindu-Muslim Relations in South Asian Films', *Visual Anthropology*, 24 (4), 2011, pp. 345-363. ➡

**Session 6 (14.05.2019) The uses of History in recent Hindi cinema: Revisiting the Raj in *Lagaan* (2001) and *Mangal Pandey* (2005)**

- DWYER, Rachel, 'Bollywoods India: Hindi Cinema as a guide to modern India', *Asian Affairs*, 41 (3), 2010, pp. 381-398.
- LICHTNER, Giacomo and BANDYOPADHYAY, Sekhar, 'Indian Cinema and the Presentist Use of History: Conceptions of "Nationhood" in *Earth* and *Lagaan*', *Asian Survey*, 48 (3), 2008, pp. 431-452.
- MAJUMDAR, Rochona and CHAKRABARTY, Dipesh, 'Mangal Pandey: Film and History', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42 (9), 2007, pp. 1771-1778.
- MENDES, Ana Cristina and LAU, Lisa, 'India through re-Orientalist Lenses', *Interventions*, 17 (5), 2015, pp. 706-727. ➡



**Session 7 (28.05.2019) The 'Multiplex Revolution': Bollywood's new audiences and new aesthetics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

- ATHIQUE, Adrian, 'From cinema hall to multiplex: A public history', *South Asian Popular Culture*, 9 (2), 2011, pp. 147-160. 🖱
- KUMAR, Akshaya, 'Provincialising Bollywood? Cultural economy of north Indian small-town nostalgia in the Indian multiplex', *South Asian Popular Culture*, 11 (1), 2013, pp. 61-74.
- RAI, Amit S., *Untimely Bollywood: Globalization and India's new Media Assemblage* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 133-178.
- RAO, Shakuntala, 'The Globalization of Bollywood: An Ethnography of Non-Elite Audiences in India', *The Communication Review*, 10 (1), 2007, pp. 57-76.



## ***BOLLYWOOD - A Basic Bibliography***

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- ATHIQUE, Adrian, 'From cinema hall to multiplex: A public history', *South Asian Popular Culture*, 9 (2), 2011, pp. 147-160.
- BANAJI, Shakuntala, *Reading ,Bollywood': The Young Audience and Hindi Films* (New York and Hound-Mills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
- BARNOUW, Erik / KRISHNASWAMY, S., *Indian Film*, New York etc. <sup>2</sup>1980.
- BASKARAN, Sundararaj Theodore, *History through the Lens. Perspectives on South Indian Cinema* (Hyderabad:Orient Blackswan,2009).
- BASU, Anustup, *Bollywood in the Age of the New Media: The Geo-televisual Aesthetic* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).
- BHARAT, M. /KUMAR, N. (eds), *Filming the Line of Control: The Indo-Pak Relationship through the Cinematic Lens* (London-New York-New Delhi: Routledge, 2008).
- BOSE, Mihir, *Bollywood: A History* (Stroud: Tempus Publishers, 2006).
- BOOTH, Gregory D., *Behind the Curtain: Making Music in Mumbai's Film Studios* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press 2008).
- CHATTERJEE, Gayatri, *Mother India* (London: BFI Publishing, 2002).
- CHOWDHRY, Prem, *Colonial India and the Making of Empire Cinema. Image, Ideology and Identity* (New York: Manchester Univ. Press, 2000).
- DASS, Manishita, 'The Crowd Outside the Lettered City: Imagining the Mass Audience in 1920s India', *Cinema Journal*, 48 (4), 2009, pp. 177-198.
- DESAI, Jigna, *Beyond Bollywood: The Cultural Politics of South Asian Diasporic Film* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005).
- DIMITROVA, Diana, *Religion in Literature and Film in South Asia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
- DUDRAH, Rajinder Kumar, *Bollywood: Sociology goes to the Movies* (New Delhi-Thousand Oaks-London: Sage, 2006).
- / DESAI, Jigna (eds), *The Essential Bollywood Reader* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2008).
- DERNÉ, Steve, *Movies, Masculinity and Modernity: An Ethnography of Men's Filmgoing in India* (Westport, CN and London: Greenwood Press, 2000).
- DWYER, Rachel, *Bollywood's India: Hindi Cinema as a Guide to Modern India* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014).
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- , *Filming the Gods: Religion and Indian Cinema* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).
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- / PINNEY, Christopher, *Pleasure and the Nation: The History, Politics and Consumption of Public Culture in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press 2001). GANTI, Tejaswini: *Bollywood. A Guidebook to Popular Hindi Cinema* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).
- GARGA, B.D., *So Many Cinemas: The Motion Picture in India* (Mumbai: Eminence Designs, 1996).  
 ———, *From Raj to Swaraj: The Non-fiction Film in India* (New Delhi: Viking, 2007).
- GOKULSING, K. Moti / DISSANAYAKEI, Wimal, *From Aan to Lagaan and beyond. A Guide to the Study of Indian Cinema* (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham, 2012).
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- HAFNER, Annemarie, 'Die frühe Kinokultur in indischen Großstädten', in: Ahuja, R./ Brosius, C. (eds), *Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata: Annäherung an die Megastädte Indiens* (Heidelberg: Draupadi-Verlag, 2006), S. 99-112.
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