

Course: M.A. History

Semester	IV
Paper Number	III
Paper Title	Visual Cultures and History of Modern South Asia
Paper Code	MHIS4403
No. of Credits	6
No. of periods assigned	Theory: 6 Practical:
Name of Faculty member(s)	
Course description/objective	This course aims to cultivate a critical understanding of visual culture as a historical source. By examining the intricate relationship between images, power, and politics within South Asian contexts, students will explore the profound impact of colonialism, decolonization, and globalization on visual culture. Furthermore, the course will delve into the significance of technology and commercialization in shaping visual culture, as well as the crucial role of cinema and television as mediums of cultural expression and social change
Course Outcome	Students will learn to critically analyze visual materials from a variety of sources, including films, photographs, advertisements, and art. They will develop skills in identifying and interpreting visual codes, symbols, and narratives. Additionally, students will be encouraged to consider the ways in which visual culture intersects with other aspects of society, such as religion, gender, and class. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, and independent research, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of visual culture in modern South Asia. This course will equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with visual materials critically and to contribute to ongoing debates about the role of visual culture in shaping history and society.
Syllabus	<u>Module 1</u> 1. A Theoretical Introduction to Visual Culture. a. The visual medium as a framework for studying history.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Images, power, and politics. c. Gaze, Surveillance and everyday life. <p>2. The Visual Medium, Colonial ideology, race and stereotypes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pre-colonial forms of visual cultures in South Asia b. Orientalism and the colonial lens. c. Colonial Surveys and Indian art collections. d. Emergence of Colonial Art Institutions and museums. <p>3. Nation, Nationalism and the visual medium.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Popular art as a medium of social commentary. b. The imagery of the nation and art. c. Circulation of popular images and the revolutionary movement. <p><u>Module 2</u></p> <p>1. Visual Culture, Technology and Commercialization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The rise and circulation of the visual print media- Woodcuts, Lithographs, Postcards. b. Histories of society, politics and gender through the lens of photography. c. Advertisement, brand Capitalism and the constructions of gender and racial stereotypes. <p>2. Decolonization and Visual Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introductory discussions on decolonising art and visual culture. b. Modernism, Socialism and the visual medium in the post-independence South Asia. c. Black Lives Matter and the larger debates on decolonising museums and public memorial sites.
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	<p>3. Cinema and Television</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cinema as a text for reading history. b. Nationalism, Partition, and Indian Cinema. c. Post-Independence India: the politics of representation, Nehruvian Socialism and Cinema. d. Cinema as a medium of expression for marginal identity and protests. e. Television: The Rise of Doordarshan
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<p>Reading/Reference Lists</p>	<p><u>Essential Reading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicholas Mirzoeff, “What is visual culture?” in <i>An Introduction to Visual Culture</i> (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 1 – 34 2. <i>Visual Culture: The Reader</i>, Stuart Hall and Jessica Evans, eds. (London: Sage Publications, 1999). 3. Marita Struken and Lisa Cartwright, <i>Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture</i>. 4. Homi Bhabha, <i>Location of Culture</i> 5. Partha Mitter, <i>Much Maligned Monsters</i> 6. Richard Davis, <i>Lives of Indian Images</i>. 7. Bernard S. Cohn, “The Transformation of Objects into Artifacts, Antiquities and Art in Nineteenth Century India” in <i>Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: the British in India</i>. 8. Sumathi Ramaswamy, <i>In Beyond Appearances? Visual Practices and Ideologies in Modern India</i>. Edited by Sumathi Ramaswamy. <i>Contributions to Indian Sociology, Occasional Studies</i> 10. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003. 9. Tapati Guha-Thakurta. “Visualizing the Nation: The Iconography of a ‘National Art’ in Modern India.” <i>Journal of Arts and Ideas</i> 27–28 (1995): 7–40. 10. Tapati Guha-Thakurta, “The Period of Colonialism and Nationalism” in Frederick Asher, ed., <i>The Art of India: Prehistory to the Present</i> (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2003), 109-128. 11. Kama McLean, <i>A Revolutionary History of India: Violence, Image, Voice and Text</i> 12. Anindita Ghosh, “The Battala Book Market” and “Contesting Print Audiences” in <i>Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778- 1905</i> (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 107-151, 152-188. 13. Susan Sontag, <i>On Photography</i>. 14. Walter Benjamin, “Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical
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Reproduction”

15. Christopher Pinney. *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
16. Douglas E Haynes, *Emergence of Brand-name Capitalism in Colonial India: Advertising the Making of the Middle-Class Conjugality*.
17. *The Routledge Companion to Decolonising Art History*
18. *The Routledge Companion to Decolonising Art, Craft, and Visual Culture*.
19. Sanjukta Sunderason, *Partisan Aesthetics: Modern Art and India’s long decolonisation*.
20. Sanjukta Sunderason, *Forms of the Left in postcolonial South Asia: Aesthetics, Networks and Connected Histories*.
21. Asish Rajadhakshya, *Very Short Introduction: Indian Cinema*
22. Kaushik Bhaumik, (2004), *A Brief History of Cinema from Bombay to ‘Bollywood’*. *History Compass*, 2.
23. Debashree Mukherjee *Bombay Hustle: Making Movies in a Colonial City*, New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2019.
24. Vikrant Dadawala 2022. “The Films Division of India and the Nehruvian Dream.” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 45 (2): 220–35.
25. Suman Ghosh, 2016. “In Defiance of the State: The Nehru Era and Satyajit Ray’s Films.” *South Asian Studies* 32 (2): 144–54.
26. Chandak Sengoopta 2011 “‘The Fruits of Independence’: Satyajit Ray, Indian Nationhood and the Spectre of Empire.” *South Asian History and Culture* 2 (3): 374–96.

Suggested Reading

1. G.H.R. Tillotson, “Images of India in British Landscape Painting, c.1780-1880” in Christopher A. Bayly, ed. *The Raj, India and the British, 1600-1947* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1990), 141-151.
2. Vidya Dehejia and Pratipaditya Pal, eds., *From Merchants to Emperors: British Artists and India, 1757-1930*.
3. Mildred Archer, *Indian Painting for the British*.
4. Mildred Archer, *Company Paintings in the India Office Library*.
5. Partha Mitter, “Art Education and Raj Patronage” in *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850-1922: Occidental Orientations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 27-62.
6. William G. Archer, *Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta*,
7. William G. Archer, *Kalighat Paintings*.
8. Ashit Pal, *Nineteenth-Century Calcutta Woodcuts*.
9. Sukumar Sen, *Battalar Chapa o Chobi*.
10. Sripantha, *Battala*.
11. Partha Mitter, *Cartoons of the Raj, History Today*.

	<p>12. Siddhartha Ghosh, <i>Chobi Tola</i>, Ananda Publishers.</p> <p>13. Malavika Karlekar, <i>Revisioning the past: Early Photography in Bengal 1875-1913</i>.</p> <p>14. Malavika Karlekar, <i>Visual Histories: Photography in the popular imagination</i>.</p> <p>15. Anna McClintock, <u>“Soft-Soaping Empire. Commodity Racism and Imperial Advertising.”</u> reprinted in <i>The Media Studies Reader</i>, ed. Laurie Ouellette (Routledge, 2012), 71-82.</p> <p>16. <i>Readings of Modernism: From 75 years of Marg.</i></p> <p>17. Ritwik Ghatak, <i>Cinema and I</i>.</p> <p>18. Satyajit Ray, <i>Probondho Samagra</i>,</p> <p>19. Satyajit Ray, <i>Deep Focus: Reflections on Cinema</i>.</p> <p>20. Satyajit Ray, <i>Our Films Their Films</i>.</p>
Evaluation	<p>CIA: 20</p> <p>End-Semester: 80</p>

