

**Course Information Form**  
**Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)**

**Gender in Indian Literature & Film**

**Programme:** B.Tech.  
**Course:** GILF

**Year:** IV year  
**Credits:** 3

**Semester:** Even  
**Hours:** 40

**Course Context and Overview (100 words):**

This course will introduce students to some of the ongoing debates in India and the West over the representations of gender roles/identities in literature, film, and the media, and over our evolving understandings of sexual norms, and sexual orientation. Close readings of works of literature and cinema will help us rethink notions about gender and to relate these to key intellectual and social movements. Besides focusing on the specific conventions of literary and filmic narratives, we will also think about various forms of masculinity and femininity and their intersection with other vectors of identity and belonging, such as caste, class, religion, ethnicity, sexuality and nationality.

**Prerequisites Courses:** N/A

**Course outcomes (COs):**

**On completion of this course, the students will have the ability to:**

**CO1** Understand the gender system as a system of power (biology and culture: gender and sex; masculinities and femininities; gender order and gender segregation)

**CO2** Understand concepts such as Domination and Hegemony; Ideology; Agency; Sexuality; Body, and Embodiment

**CO3** Understand the history of gender relations in India as one of reform and struggle that includes overlapping intersectional struggles over rights of citizenship and belonging

**CO4** Analyze and understand representations of gender in Indian literature, film, and media

**CO5** Appreciate the role of the Humanities in understanding the objects of our desires, our social lives; learn to read films and literature critically and empathetically

**Course Topics:**

Topics	Lecture Hours
<b>UNIT 1 Gender and Power</b>	
Understanding the gender system as a system of power; biology and culture; sex and gender; Social construction of gender; Some critical terms: gender, gender order, and gender segregation; masculinities and femininities; patriarchy; ideology; domination and hegemony; body, embodiment; race, class, caste, ethnicity, sexuality and intersectionality. <b>Text</b> <i>Mai</i> by Geetanjali Shree	<b>10</b>

**UNIT II Gender and National Consciousness**

Gender in India: a history of reform and struggle; historical and contemporary analyses of gender and sex in the context of colonialism, nationalism, and globalization; gender, culture and post colonialism.

<b>Text</b> <i>Kali-katha: Via ByPass</i> by Alka Saraogi OR <i>The Home and The World</i> by Rabindranath Tagore Excerpts from <i>The God of Small Things</i> by Arundhati Roy (optional)	10
<b>UNIT III Gender and the Indian Historical Tradition</b>	
Gender in Indian society;; Women and violence; victimhood, subjectivity, resistance and agency. <b>Text</b> <b>Short Stories</b> “Memories of an Indian Childhood” by Qurratulain Hyder; “Chauthi ka Juara” and “The Flower Vase” by Ismat Chughtai; “Draupadi” by Mahashweta Devi; “Portrait of a Childhood” and “The Meeting” by Shama Futehally OR <i>The Palace of Illusions</i> by Chitra Banerjee Divakurni	10
<b>UNIT IV Gender and Film/Media</b>	
Understanding how notions of gender, race and sexuality are shaped, changed or reinforced in film and media; portrayal of gender in media and how has the media problematized gender relations and socialization; how is film/media used by feminists for social reform; the notion of ‘new woman’. <b>Text</b> Discussion/Screening of select films and advertisements portraying gender and sexuality in popular culture.	7
<b>UNIT V Paper writing and Presentation</b>	
Students will write one paper (6-7 pages in length) on a topic relevant to the course and make a presentation in class. Papers shall be evaluated based on selection of the title, quality of writing, content, and analysis.	3

**Textbook references:**

**Text Book: Primary Literary Texts (novels and short stories):**

***Novels***

Geetanjali Shree, *Mai*, Kali for Women

Geetanjali Shree., *Mai*. Trans. Nita Kumar. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 2000. Print.

Alka Saraogi, *KaliKatha: Via Bypass*, Penguin India

Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*, Penguin

Rabindranath Tagore, *The Home and The World*, Penguin Classics

Chitra Banerjee Divakurni, *The Palace of Illusions*, Picador. 2008.

***Short Stories***

Qurratulain Hyder, “Memories of an Indian Childhood,” in Lakshmi Holmstrom, ed. and trasnl. *The Inner Courtyard: Stories by Indian Women*, Rupa & Co.

Ismat Chughtai, [1] “Chauthi ka Jaura,” in Lakshmi Holmstrom, ed. and trasnl. *The Inner Courtyard: Stories by Indian Women*, Rupa & Co. [2] “The Flower Vase,” in Radha Chakravarty, ed. *Body Maps: Stories by South Asian Women*, Zubaan

Shama Futehally, [1] “Portrait of a childhood,” in Urbashi Batavia, ed. *Zubaan Anthology of Stories by Women*, New Delhi: 2006. [2] “The Meeting,” in Lakshmi Holmstrom, ed. and trasnl. *The Inner Courtyard: Stories by Indian Women*, Rupa & Co.

Mahasweta Devi, “Dhowli”, “Draupadi” Lakshmi Holmstrom, ed. and trasnl. *The Inner Courtyard: Stories by Indian Women*, Rupa & Co.

## Reference books:

1. Nivedita Menon, *Seeing Like a Feminist*. Zubaan- Penguin Books, Penguin Random House India, 2012.
2. ---. Gender and Politics in India. OUP, New Delhi, 2001.
3. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should all be Feminists*, Fourth Estate, London, 2014
4. Radha Chakravarty. *Feminism and Contemporary Women Writers: Rethinking Subjectivity*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2008.
5. Kumar, Neeta. Afterword: *Mai: A Discussion*. Part I: The Matter of the Mother. *Mai*. By Geetanjali Shree, Trans. Nita Kumar. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 2000.
6. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
7. Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan, *Real and Imagined Women*. Routledge: New York. 1996.
8. Virginia Woolf. *A Room of One's Own*. London: Grafton Books, 1989
9. Linda M. Zerilli, *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
10. Beauvoir, Simon De. *The Second Sex*. Trans. H.M. Parshley. London: Vintage Books, 1997.
11. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, Routledge, New York and London, 1990.
12. Estelle B Freedman, *The Essential Feminist Reader*, The Modern Library, New York, 2007.

## Reference Articles:

1. David G. Mandelbaum, "Sex Roles and Gender Relations in North India" in Carla Borden, *Contemporary Indian Traditions*.
2. Ashis Nandy, "Woman and Womanliness," in Rehana Ghadially, ed., *Women in Indian Society: A Reader*, New Delhi: Sage, 1988.
3. Joane Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism—Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations," in Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, eds. *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader*, New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2005: 110-130.
4. Ashwini Tambe, "Colluding Patriarchies: The Colonial Reform of Sexual Relations in India," *Feminist Studies*, 26, 3, 2000: 587-600.
5. Prem Chowdhry, "Persistence of a Custom: Cultural Centrality of Ghunghat," *Social Scientist*, 21, 9: 1993: 91-112.
6. Vikash N. Pandey, "Emancipated Bodies/Embodying Liberation: Debating through Fire," in Sanjay Srivastava, ed. *Sexual Sites, Seminal Attitudes: Sexualities, Masculinities and Culture in South Asia*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003.
7. Brinda Bose, "The Desiring Subject: Female Pleasures and Feminist Resistance in Deepa Mehta's *Fire*," in Brinda Bose and Subhabrata Bhattacharyya, eds., *The Phobic and the Erotic: The Politics of Sexualities in Contemporary India*, Kolkata: Se32, 46, agull Books, 2007.
8. David Glover and Cora Kaplan, *Genders*, Routledge, 2001 (excerpts)
9. Mary E. John, "Feminism in India and the West: Recasting a Relationship," in Maitreyi Chaudhuri, ed. *Feminism in India*, Kali for Women, 2004
10. Ruth Vanita, "Thinking beyond Gender in India," in Maitreyi Chaudhuri, ed. *Feminism in India*, Kali for Women, 2004.
11. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, "Is the Hindu Goddess a Feminist?" in Maitreyi Chaudhuri, ed. *Feminism in India*, Kali for Women, 2004
12. Leonard Cohen, "Masculinity as Style," in Raka Ray, *Handbook of Gender*. New Delhi: OUP, 2012.
13. Patricia Uberoi, "Dharma and Desire, Freedom and Destiny: Rescripting the Man-Woman Relationship in Popular Hindi Cinema," in Raka Ray, *Handbook of Gender*

14. Lakshmi Srinivas, "The Active Audience: Spectatorship, Social Relation and the Experience of Cinema in India," *Media, Culture & Society*, 24, 2, 2002: 155-73.
15. Vishnu Vardhan T., "Rethinking Spectator(ship) and (Male) Gaze in the Context of Indian Cinema," *Cerebration*, <http://www.cerebration.org/>
16. C.S. Lakshmi, "Bodies called Women: Some Thoughts on Gender, Ethnicity and Nation," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1997.
17. Radha Kumar, "Contemporary Indian Feminism" *Feminist Review*, No. 33 (Autumn, 1989), Palgrave Macmillan Journals. pp. 20-29. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1395212>
18. Eckert and Ginet. "An Introduction to Gender." In *Language and Gender*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
19. Judith Lorber. "The Social Construction of Gender." In *Paradoxes of Gender* (Chapter 1), Yale University Press, 1994.

**Additional Resources (NPTEL, MIT Video Lectures, Web resources etc.):**

Thelma and Louise-American film (1991)

Relevant on-line resources.

**Evaluation Methods:**

Item	Weightage
Class Participation, Quiz, Attendance, Paper writing and Presentation	25%
Midterm	25%
Final Examination	50%

**Course instructor : Dr. Manju Dhariwal**