Teaching Plan

Dr Jaspal Singh

**Paper: Radio and Cinema in India: A Social History**

Skill Enhancement Course Semester VI

SEC-VIII

Sharing Paper with Dr Jaspal Singh and Mr. Nagendra Kumar

Course Objectives:

The course will apprise students with the elementary outlines of the history of radio and cinema

in India from its beginnings till the 1980s. It will familiarize them with the varied ways in which

the Indian state attempted to regulate and conduct radio broadcasting during and after the

colonial period. It will also impart an understanding of the basic trends in the development of

cinema as a narrative medium that drew from diverse traditions of story-telling already present in

the subcontinent. The material as well as the generic contexts of these developments would also

be made comprehensible to the students.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of course students shall be able to:

• Delineate the historical context within which the beginnings of cinema and radio might

be understood.

• Analyze the state’s attempt to control and deploy radio as a medium that carried forward

the state agenda.

• Explain how cinema reflected and engaged with the larger ideological and material

tensions of society even as it was also subject to technological changes that helped

mediate these developments.

• Identify how Indian cinema engaged with social and ideological issues of its time,

especially in the three decades after independence.

Course Content:

Unit 1: Broadcasting in India (Colonial period)

a. Colonial Foundations in Inter-War Years

b. AIR Programming, Policies and Propaganda

c. Quit India Movement and Congress Radio

Unit 2: Establishment and Expansion of Akashvani under Keskar

a. Classical vs. Popular

b. ‘Ban’ on Film Music; Radio Ceylon, VividhBharati

Unit 3: Early Years of Indian Cinema

a. Silent era to Talkies: Social, Historical, Mythological and Action

b. Women enter Films

c. Studio Era: AVM and Gemini Studios

d. Colonial Censorship and Patriotic Creativity

Unit 4: Social Films of Nehruvian Era and its Aftermath

a. Angry Young Man, Melodrama

b. Music: song genres

ESSENTIAL READINGS AND UNIT-WISE TEACHING OUTCOMES:

Unit I: At the end of this unit, the students should be able to describe the complex trajectories of

the development of Radio under the colonial government. (Teaching Time: 4 Weeks Approx.)

• Gupta, Parthasarathi. (2001). "Radio and the Raj."Power, Politics and the People: Studies

in British Imperialism and Indian Nationalism. New Delhi: Permanent Black. Pp. 447-80.

• Lelyveld, David. (1995). "Upon the Subdominant: Administering Music on All India

Radio.” Social Text vol. 39, pp. 111-27.

• Pinkerton, Alasdair. (2008). "Radio and the Raj: Broadcasting in British India,

1920-1940.” Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society no. 18 no.2, pp. 167-91.

Unit II: Having completed this unit, the students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of

how All India Radio’s programming policies especially vis-à-vis music shaped up immediately

before and after the independence. (Teaching Time: 4 weeks approx.)

• Kripalani, Coonoor. (2018). "All India Radio's Glory Days and Its Search for Autonomy.”

Economic and Political Weekly vol. 53 no.37, pp. 42-50.

• Jhingan, Shikha. (2011). "Re-embodying the Classical: The Bombay Film Song in the

1950s.” Bioscope vol. 2 no.2, pp. 157-79.

Unit III: After finishing this unit, the learners would be able to trace the development of Indian

cinema in its early years, especially as it advanced from the silent era to talkies, and as it

experimented with different forms and genres. (Teaching Time: 4 weeks approx.)

• Rajadhyaksha, Ashish. (2016). Indian Cinema: A Very Short Introduction. Delhi: Oxford

University Press.

• Barnouw, Erik and Subrahmanyam Krishnaswamy. (1963). Indian Film. New York:

Columbia University Press. (The book is more accessible in its many Indian reprints by

Indian publishers.)

• Lakshmi, C.S. (2008). "A Good Woman, A Very Good Woman: Tamil Cinema’s Women."

in Selvaraj Velayutham. Tamil Cinema: The Cultural Politics of India’s Other Film

Industry. Oxford: Routledge, pp. 16-29.

133

• Mohan, Reena and Dibya Choudhuri. (1996). "Of Wayward Girls and Wicket Women:

Women in Indian Silent Feature Films, 1913-1934."Deepfocus vol. VI, pp. 4-14.

Unit IV: At the end of the unit, the students will be able to demonstrate fair degree of familiarity

with how Indian cinema engaged with social and ideological issues of its time, especially in the

three decades after independence. (Teaching Time: 4 weeks approx.)

• Prasad, Madhava. (1998). "The Aesthetic of Mobilization.” The Ideology of the Hindi

Film: A Historical Reconstruction. Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 138-159.

• Punathambekar, Aswin. (2010). "From Indiafm.com to Radio Ceylon: New media and the

making of the Hindi film industry."Media, Culture and Society vol. 32 no.5, pp. 841-57.

• Doraiswamy, Rashmi. (2008). "The Golden Fifties."Gurudutt: through Light and Shade.

New Delhi: Wisdom Tree, pp. 7-27.

• Griffiths, Alison. (1996). "Discourses of Nationalism in Guru Dutt’s Pyaasa."Deepfocus,

vol. 6, pp. 24-31.

Suggested Readings:

• Mishra, Vijay. (2002). Bollywood Cinema: Temples of Desire. New York: Routledge. (See

especially the chapters entitled "Inventing Bombay Cinema" and "Melodramatic

Staging".)

• Pandian, M.S.S. (2015). The Image Trap: MG Ramachandran in Film and Politics.

Delhi: Sage.

• Pillai, Swarnavel Eswaran. (2015). Madras Studios: Narrative, Genre and Ideology in

Tamil Cinema. Delhi: Sage.

• Raghavendra, M.K. (2016). Bollywood. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

• Rajadhyaksha, Ashish and Paul Willemen (Eds.). (1994). Encyclopaedia of Indian

Cinema. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Teaching Learning Process:

Classroom lectures on the key concepts, case studies and important arguments/debates reflected

in the course readings. Classroom lectures shall be combined with group discussions on specific

readings and presentations stemming from field work. Overall, the Teaching Learning Process

shall be geared towards closely linking essential theoretical assessments with active practical

work, i.e. the practical/application aspect of historical analysis. Moreover, the process shall work

towards providing basic exposure to related fields of studies connected to the discipline history

and to avenues of interdisciplinary postgraduate studies.

Assessment Methods:

Students will be assessed on the basis of regular group presentations and a detailed (individual)

project submission-cum-presentation. The project has to be based on a field visit/field work but

may not exclude readings.

Internal Assessment: 25 Marks

Written Exam: 75 Marks

Total: 100 Marks