ENGL 3338: Literatures of the Global South
South Asian Multiculturalisms: Cultures, Conflicts, and Diasporas

Tuesday, Thursday 2:00-3:20 p.m. Room 362 (English/Philosophy Bldg.)

X
Office Hours: Thursdays 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (and by appointment)
Office: X
Email: X

Course Description
The term ‘South Asian’ indicates a diversity of nationalities, languages, ethnicities, and religions from India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. In this course you will learn how people from these nations of the global South have contributed variously to the multicultural societies of the US, Canada, and UK, they have chosen as their home away from home. This is in keeping with the goal that students graduating from TTU should be able to demonstrate awareness and knowledge of distinctive cultures or subcultures, including but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, class, political systems, religions, sexual orientation, languages, or human geography.

South Asian writers have represented the cultural conflicts and accommodations required in the lands of their origin as well as the places of their migration. To take one example, since the 1980s, Sri Lanka, a tiny island nation in South Asia, has witnessed conflict between the two main ethnic groups: indigenous Sinhalas (the word literally means “people of the lion”) comprising the majority and Tamil migrants from India who are in a numerical minority. While the origins of the conflict can be traced to religious and linguistic differences exacerbated by British colonial rule over Sri Lanka, its perpetuation is the result of divisive political policies in the decades following Sri Lanka’s independence in 1948. One of the social effects of this conflict is large scale migration of Sri Lankans to the West, primarily Australia, England, Canada, and the US, holding out the promise of a peaceful multicultural existence.

What are the primary causes of the South Asian diasporas to the West? What literary strategies and genres do writers use to reflect and transmute the South Asian experience into aesthetics? When these experiences carry memories of violence, such as that of the long drawn out struggle in Sri Lanka, does this aestheticization diminish the horror and devastation of violence? Do authors have an ethical responsibility towards the society from which they draw their inspiration? This course attempts to answer some of these questions through a selection of South Asian writing, with a special emphasis on Sri Lankan literature. The history and fiction we will be reading thus encourages a sustained analysis of the connections between politics, violence, experience, memory, migration, literary form, and readership. This course satisfies the Texas Tech University multicultural graduation requirement.
Required Reading:


Films:

*Brothers and Others.* Dir. Nicholas Rossier. 2002.

Learning Outcomes and Assessments:

- **Learning outcome 1:** The course promotes intercultural awareness by helping students understand the meaning and implications of multiculturalism in national and international contexts. Students demonstrate knowledge and awareness of at least one distinct subculture other than their own within or outside the United States. **Assessment method:** Class participation (10%); 2 presentations (10%)

- **Learning outcome 2:** This course appraises privilege relationships at different levels (interpersonal, local, regional, national, and international) and explain how these relationships affect the sociocultural status of individuals and groups. Students assess the relevance of ‘diaspora’ as a historical and contemporary phenomena, examine class differences between migrants, analyze their contributions to multicultural societies, and examine its representation in literature and film. **Assessment method:** Mid-term exam (20%) and Final exam (20%)
Learning outcome 3: This course enhances the ability to engage constructively with individuals and groups, across diverse social contexts. Students will develop critical writing skills in relation to the varied cultures and ethnicities in contemporary literature and films discussed in the course and additional research sources.

Assessment method: Paper 1 (20%) and Paper 2 (20%)

Requirements:

Attendance policy: Since you will be making presentations on the readings, sharing your viewpoints during in-class discussions, and working on in-class writing assignments, attendance is mandatory. You may miss a maximum of 2 classes without the prior permission of the instructor. For every subsequent class missed you will be required to submit a 2-page response on the reading assigned for the day. In the absence of this submission you will be marked down half a letter grade for each class you miss. Documented absences (illness, emergencies etc.) will be excused. However, prolonged absences, for whatever reason, will not be excused. Missing more than 4 classes without adequate documentation will lead to a fail grade for the course.

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to accommodations described in a letter from the Dean of Student’s Office.

Class Participation: All students are required to show evidence of familiarity with the assigned readings for the day, to participate in class discussions, and to make constructive contributions to them. The films screened in class are part of the course material. You may not miss or excuse yourself from a film screening. Because we are in a formal learning environment, courtesy demands that all cell phones and beepers should be turned off during class. In addition, you are expected to show respect for diverse opinions during class discussions. Also expected is respect for gender, racial, ethnic, religious, and sexual differences. Expression of racism, sexism, and homophobia will not be tolerated. Students who do not follow norms of polite discussion may be asked to leave the classroom.

Class Presentations: Each student is required to sign up for two 5-minute class presentation: one of these will be on any aspect of the required reading related to the course; the other will be a on a visit to a cultural event or site (such as a festival, a musical recital, a theatrical performance promoting awareness of a subculture within the US) which enhances learning objective 1. These presentations may be reworked as papers to be submitted during the semester in consultation with the instructor.

Papers: All papers must be completed and submitted at the beginning of class on the day assigned in the proper format. Late submissions are unacceptable except in the case of documented medical emergencies. A late submission will be marked down one letter grade for each day after the due date. Each paper should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 font, double-spaced with one-inch margins with your name, course number, the name
of the instructor and the date on the top left hand corner of the first page. You should keep a copy (xeroxed, printed or saved to disk) of each paper turned in. **Never** turn in the only copy of your work. Evidence of plagiarism (use of another's ideas, data, and/or statements without acknowledgment or with only minimal acknowledgement) will lead to an “F” for the course.

**Disability Policy:** Students with documented disabilities are entitled to accommodations described in a letter from the Dean of Student’s Office. Any student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations.

**Grading Criteria:**

Class participation and presentations: 20%

Mid-term Exam: 20%

Paper 1 (5-6 pages): 20%

Paper 2 (8-10 pages): 20%

Final Exam: 20%

**Weekly reading schedule:**

**Week 1** (8\(^{th}\) January)
Thursday: Introduction to the course; Screening of *Desi: South Asians in New York*

**Week 2** (13\(^{th}\), 15\(^{th}\) January)
Tuesday: In class writing assignment; Judith Brown “Introduction,” “Traditions of Stability and Movement” (1-28)
Thursday: Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (1-100)

**Week 3** (20\(^{th}\), 22\(^{nd}\) January)
Tuesday: Judith Brown “Making a Modern Diaspora” (29-58); Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (100-150)
Thursday: Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (150-250)

**Week 4** (27\(^{th}\), 29\(^{th}\) January)
Tuesday: Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (250-291); Judith Brown “Creating New Homes and Communities” (59-111)
Thursday: screening of *The Namesake*

**Week 5** (3\(^{rd}\), 5\(^{th}\) February)
Tuesday: **Paper 1 (5-6 pages) due**; screening of *The Namesake*
Thursday: Shamita Dasgupta “Introduction” and “The Language of Identity” (1-32)
Week 6 (10th, 12th February)
Tuesday: Kamila Shamsie Kartography (1-150)
Thursday: Kamila Shamsie Kartography (150-250)

Week 7 (17th, 19th February)
Tuesday: Kamila Shamsie Kartography (250-304); Shamita Dasgupta “Being Amreekan” and “Three Hot Meals” (33-45 and 206-221)
Thursday: **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 8 (24th, 26th February)
Tuesday: Judith Brown “Relating to the new homeland” and “Relating to the old homeland” (112-70)
Thursday: Vijay Prashad The Karma of Brown Folk (7-84)

Week 9 (3rd, 5th March)
Tuesday: Vijay Prashad The Karma of Brown Folk (85-132)
Thursday: Vijay Prashad The Karma of Brown Folk (157-203)

Week 10 (10th, 12th March)
Tuesday: Shyam Selvadurai Funny Boy (1-150)
Thursday: Shyam Selvadurai Funny Boy (151-203); Shamita Dasgupta “Sexual Exiles” and “Naming Desire, Shaping Identity” (62-93)

Week 11 (17th, 19th March)
No classes (Spring Break)

Week 12 (24th, 26th March)
Tuesday: Shyam Selvadurai Funny Boy (204-305)
Thursday: Screening of At the End of a Gun: Women and War; Michael Ondaatje Anil’s Ghost (1-75)

Week 13 (31st March, 2nd April)
Tuesday: Michael Ondaatje Anil’s Ghost (79-157)
Thursday: Michael Ondaatje Anil’s Ghost (161-231)

Week 14 (7th, 9th April)
Tuesday: Michael Ondaatje Anil’s Ghost (236-307)
Thursday: Vijay Prashad The Karma of Brown Folk (157-203); discussion on presentations for Paper #2

Week 15 (14th, 16th April)
Tuesday: Screening of Brothers and Others
Thursday: Library research day

Week 16 (21st, 23rd April)
Tuesday: Class Presentations on Paper # 2  
Thursday: Class Presentations on Paper #2

**Week 17** (28th April)  
Tuesday: **Paper #2 (8-10 pages) due**; conclusion to the course

**Final Exam:** Friday, May 1 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in Room # 360