

Oceanvale Workshop Spring 2020

21-24 March
Kirori Mal College

Working with Ideas : Cinematic, Literary and Political Representations

Madhava Prasad, Sambudha Sen, Aparna Chaudhuri

The focus of this edition of Oceanvale Workshop Spring 2020, is **ideas**. We'd like you to read a set of conceptual texts, grasp the ideas expressed in them as precisely as you can, take risks with those ideas and in the process produce insights that no one but you could have.

You will find below three modules in which each resource person has briefly outlined an area of study that is of interest to her or him. The three modules are distinct and yet intersecting. The modules also contain short lists of readings that helped in the conceptualization of the area. **Please make sure that you have read all the listed texts before you begin the work of writing your abstracts.**

We will certainly consider abstracts that confine themselves to concerns of one module. But we will give preference to abstracts that move between the listed areas. For example, you could work with the internal protocols of film criticism to look at a set of films that deal with ugliness. Similarly, is it possible to think of the Auerbach's idea of the "representative" in relation to film history or cultural studies?

In short , you must show evidence of having internalized preferably more than one key idea emerging from the texts below and of your ability to use them to discuss texts, films or cultural phenomena of your choice in original ways.

Module on Cinema Studies

Madhava Prasad

Concepts covered: Montage, Realism, Voice and Subjectivity, Gendered Spectatorship, Digital Images

This module will facilitate a quick survey of key cinema studies concepts and arguments such as the politics of realism and gendered spectatorship. The elevation of montage to a supreme cinematic technique by the Soviet cinema (Pudovkin, Eisenstein) is followed by the

claims made on behalf of realism as a more democratic aesthetic (Bazin). With the rise of apparatus theory, cinema studies turned to the ideological effects of the moving image, questions of gender and spectatorship which have seen arguments ranging from the total domination of the male gaze (Mulvey) to the recovery of multiple spectator positions available to women. The digital turn has brought ontological questions back on the agenda. Is it still cinema if the image is not recorded on a celluloid strip? This module will lead us through these stages of evolution of the argument about cinema, society and politics.

Readings:

Vsevolod Pudovkin. 'On Editing'. From Film Technique.
Sergei Eisenstein, 'The Dramaturgy of Film Form.' From Film Form.
Andre Bazin, 'The Evolution of the Language of Cinema.' From What is Cinema?
Christian Metz, 'Identification, Mirror,' 'The Passion for Perceiving,' and 'Disavowal, Fetishism.' From The Imaginary Signifier.
Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.'
Anne Friedberg, 'The End of Cinema: Multimedia and Technological Change.'

Module: The Senses and Exclusion

Sambudha Sen

This module will explore how ideas of ugliness, bad smells and eating habits, are deployed to exclude populations from the normal and the healthy . It will also explore the link between the politics of exclusion and an ambiguity that has lain at the heart of western democracies ever since the French Revolution: the slippage of rights that are understood to belong to humankind generally - The Rights of Man - into things that can be enjoyed only by a more exclusive category of human beings - those who qualify as bona fide members of a country.

Readings:

Karl Rosenkranz, *The Aesthetics of Ugliness* pp. 31-52
Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant* pp. 11-56
Catherine Gallagher, "The Potato in the Materialist Imagination" in
Gallagher and Greenblatt ed. *Practicing New Historicism* pp.110-136

Giorgio Agamben, "Biopolitics and the Rights of Man" in *Homo Sacer*
pp.126-136

Module: Form and Reality

Aparna Chaudhuri

This module centers around two key texts, which we will read closely in order to engage with the difficult question of how literary and cultural forms operate in relation to what we might call historical or experiential reality. Our first text will be Eric Auerbach's *Mimesis*, the twenty chapters of which are each anchored to a "representative" passage of a literary or theological work. Auerbach directs passionate attention at the tone, style, themes, diction and syntax of each passage, but what emerges from this simultaneously minute and far-ranging scrutiny is more than textual exegesis. It is a kind of allegoresis, a form of reading that, while preserving the literal body of the text in every detail, manages to make it the luminous figure of a larger cultural reality. "Figure," of course, is a key term of Auerbach's thought, and *Mimesis* studies the dynamic production of literary form – the pressure of reality on form and form on reality – in a way that demands to be read in juxtaposition with the semantic insights of his 1938 essay "Figura." Moreover, *Mimesis* is itself an exercise in representation, a book on books written without many books at hand, therefore a literary history that must work out how also to be a *summa* through being, first, a series of densely charged *exempla*, through the invocatory powers of mimetic moments in texts, and – this is mimetic of Auerbach's own historical situation – through discrete, fragmentary opportunities for reflection and expression on the paradoxical continuities of cultural development. My second text, Michel Foucault's *Technologies of the Self*, complements *Mimesis* in that it too is about the production of forms: the "self" is here the plastic *figura* assembled from open-ended personal experience by means of "technologies" such as introspective ethical self-development, confession, and ascetic renunciation. Both Auerbach and Foucault work at the intersection of representational form and perceived reality: to follow their thought is to train in a particularly supple and sympathetic kind of historicist thinking.

Readings:

Auerbach, "Odysseus' Scar", *Mimesis*.

Auerbach, "Figura"

Foucault, *Technologies of the Self*

Foucault, "Scientia Sexualis" Part 3, *The History of Sexuality* Vol. 1"

Spring 2020 Timeline: The Oceanvale Workshop

Working With Ideas

Madhava Prasad, Sambudha Sen, Aparna Chaudhuri

February 6: Send out invitations for participation to all the DU colleges, along with a reading list and the concept note.

February 17: The last date for submission of abstracts accompanied by writing samples and recommendation letters.

February 19: Publication of the list of shortlisted participants in the section of the KMC website [KMC Homepage: <http://www.kmcollege.ac.in/>].

February 21: Orientation programme for Oceanvale scholars in the department of English at KMC.

February 28: The last date for students participating in the workshop to email their first papers to oceanvale.kmc@gmail.com.

March 2: The first set of workshops for the participants with the Oceanvale departmental committee in the department of English at Kirori Mal College.

March 8: The last date for students participating in the workshop to email their revised papers to oceanvale.kmc@gmail.com. Mail the revised papers to Professor M Madhava Prasad, Professor Sambudha Sen and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri.

March 21 – 22: The second segment of the Oceanvale workshop begins with the students bringing in their essays to the panel of experts. The students participate in an intensive series of workshops spread over two days—in consultation Professor M Madhava Prasad, Professor Sambudha Sen, and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri—to work on their papers.

March 23 – 24: In the third segment of the workshop, these papers will be presented, under the supervision of the panel, to an audience of literature students and teachers for analysis and discussion over the last two days of the Oceanvale programme.

June 30: Due date for the final essays which will be evaluated by a jury of three scholars with the best essay in undergraduate and postgraduate category each getting an award of Rs. 10,000. At a later stage in the programme, the best essays—and not only the prize-winning ones—emerging from the workshop may be published, both online and in print.

The Oceanvale Programme Structure

Invitations will be sent to all Delhi University colleges inviting participation in the Oceanvale programme at Kirori Mal College. Each college may send the names of three undergraduate and three postgraduate students, along with an abstract of the students' papers, and a writing sample. The writing sample may be an earlier paper, or a revised

version thereof, written by the student. Each name must be accompanied by one recommendation letter by a faculty member. In the case of postgraduate students, the recommendation letter may be written by a teacher from the college from which they graduated, or a teacher from the college they are presently enrolled in.

The Oceanvale committee in the Department of English at Kirori Mal College will shortlist the names of twelve undergraduate (BA Honours English) and eight postgraduate (MA English) students on the basis of the recommendation letters, writing samples and abstracts received from all the colleges. These students will be invited to Kirori Mal College for a brief orientation programme in which the departmental committee will introduce them to the nature of the Oceanvale programme and the objectives of participation in the workshop. The workshop aims to introduce students who have displayed exceptional scholarly potential to advanced research, analytical and writing skills by having them work intensively and closely, including one-on-one interaction, with scholars and authors of eminence in the field.

Workshop sessions will be held separately for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Each of the two groups will be divided further into sub-groups based on the areas that their papers focus on. Interactions with the resident scholar may be in the form of group discussion sessions involving small groups, with three students or less in one group, as well as on one-to-one basis.

An intensive two-day workshop with the experts will lead eventually into presentation and discussion sessions over the last two days. The duration for undergraduate and postgraduate presentations will be twenty and thirty five minutes respectively, with each presentation followed by a ten minute discussion. The audience may need to be briefed that the presentations do not constitute seminar format lectures; the focus in this workshop, instead, will be on active audience participation and feedback on the quality of research, analysis, and writing, and comments that help the writers improve their essays will be the most helpful.

After the conclusion of the workshop the students will get three-and-a-half months to work on their essays, which will be due for submission to the Oceanvale award jury on 30 June 2020. The word limit for undergraduate papers will be 3000 words, and for postgraduate 5000 words. The best paper in each category will receive an award of Rs. 10,000. The jury will consist of three scholars and will include one to two teachers from the department committee at Kirori Mal College, one member from the department of English at the university and, on a voluntary basis, the experts invited to lead the workshop programme. As workshop leaders, Professor M Madhava Prasad, Professor Sambudha Sen and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri reserve the first right to take a call on the constitution of the award jury.

Groups: undergraduate students (12): four groups of three each; postgraduate students (8): four groups of two each.

The Oceanvale Workshop: Spring 2020

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, KIRORI MAL COLLEGE

Working With Ideas: Cinematic, Literary and Political Representations

Madhava Prasad, Sambudha Sen, Aparna Chaudhuri

The Department of English, Kirori Mal College, is delighted to announce the Spring 2020 programme of the Oceanvale Workshop for undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University of Delhi. The Oceanvale programme has been instituted in the memory of Ravi Singh, a former student of the Department of English at Kirori Mal College. Ravi intended to devote himself to the art and craft of writing but his early demise meant that *Oceanvale*, published in 1995 shortly after he graduated, remains his first and last published novel. The bi-annual Oceanvale programme aims to introduce students with exceptional scholarly potential to advanced research, analytical, and writing skills by having them work intensively and closely with scholars and authors of eminence in the field.

The workshop for Spring 2020 will be conducted over a period of four days, on 21-24 March 2020, in the supervision of Professor M Madhava Prasad (Department of Cultural Studies, The English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad), Professor Sambudha Sen (Department of English, School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SoHSS) Shiv Nadar University, Noida) and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri (Department of English, Ashoka University, Sonapat).

The workshop will consist of separate sessions for undergraduate and postgraduate students in the form of one-on-one mentoring, group discussions and, finally, presentation of papers with critical discussions. The final segment of the workshop—the presentations—will involve students as well as invited faculty members from participating colleges.

After the conclusion of the workshop, participating students will get three months to work on their essays, which will be due for submission to the Oceanvale award jury on 30 June 2020. The word limit for undergraduate papers is 3,000 words, and for postgraduate 5,000 words. The best paper in each category will receive a cash award of Rs. 10,000. **Essays that display exceptional scholarly abilities**—including but not limited to those that win the cash award—**will also be eventually published both online as well as in print.**

Each college should send the names of a maximum of three undergraduate and three postgraduate students, along with an abstract of about 250 words of the students' papers. The abstract should draw on the themes outlined in the concept note, and aim to develop its thesis in engagement with the workshop reading list. Works not referred to in the reading list but pertinent to the theme may be included for commentary and analysis.

Each paper abstract must be accompanied by a recommendation letter by the college faculty, and a writing sample from the student. The recommendation letter should be confidential, and focus on the student's research, analytical, and writing skills, and scholarly

potential. The writing sample may be an earlier essay by the student, or an excerpt therefrom, and should be of 500 to 1,000 words. In the case of postgraduate students, the recommendation letter may be written by teachers from the college from which they have graduated, or teachers from the college they are presently enrolled in.

The English department at Kirori Mal College will shortlist the names of twelve (12) undergraduate (BA Honours English) and eight (08) postgraduate (MA English) students on the basis of the writing samples, abstracts and recommendation letters received from all the colleges. These students will be invited to Kirori Mal College for an orientation programme on 21 February 2020 in which the Oceanvale committee will introduce them to the nature of the Oceanvale programme and the objectives of participation in the workshop. In their second visit on 28 February 2020 the students will participate in their first Oceanvale workshop supervised by the Oceanvale committee at KMC. The students will submit their revised papers on 08 March 2020, papers which they will then discuss with Professors Madhava Prasad, Sambudha Sen, and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri, in the final segment of the workshop on 21-24 March 2020.

The deadline for receiving abstracts is 17 February 2020. The names of shortlisted candidates will be published in the KMC website on 19 February 2020. Students should email their writing samples and abstracts to their teacher-in-charge, and the referees should do the same with their recommendation letters. Each page of a student's application should carry her name, college, and class on top, in the 'header' section of a word document. Thus, for example:

Pragya Nandrajog
B.A. (Hons.) English, IInd Year
Kirori Mal College

The cover page must carry the email address and phone number of the applicant. The complete application should be emailed by the teacher-in-charge to the following email address on or before 17 February 2020:

oceanvale.kmc@gmail.com

The reading list is most crucial, for it is in close engagement with these readings that Professor Madhava Prasad, Professor Sambudha Sen and Dr. Aparna Chaudhuri expect participating students to compose their abstracts and essays. The concept note lucidly introduces questions and themes that the students might think about in working on their papers. The timeline on the website should help students synchronize their timetable with the workshop schedule.

Looking forward to an enriching engagement.

Sincerely,

Pankaj Bharti
Teacher-in-charge
Department of English
Kirori Mal College

For any questions or clarifications, please call or email:

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