

Introduction to Film Studies
Prof. Aysha
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Lecture No. # 39
Postmodernism and cinema (contd...)

-Case Study: Face /off (1997)

-The self conscious cinema

-Natural Born Killers

-Wag the Dog

Good morning. Continuing with our discussion of postmodernism and cinema; so, last time, where we stopped? We were talking about how postmodernism cinema happens to have certain features. We talked about Chinese box structure, we talked about pastiche, and we talked about fragmented editing techniques. We were referring to theories of Linda Hutcheon, especially with reference to her ideas on pastiche. And we also talked about something called self-referential cinema, where cinema makes commentary on itself. Remember? So, we talked about Eight and a Half, Fellini's Eight and a Half, which is on the commentary on the process of making a movie. How many of you have watched Eight and a Half? Are you familiar with that? Good.

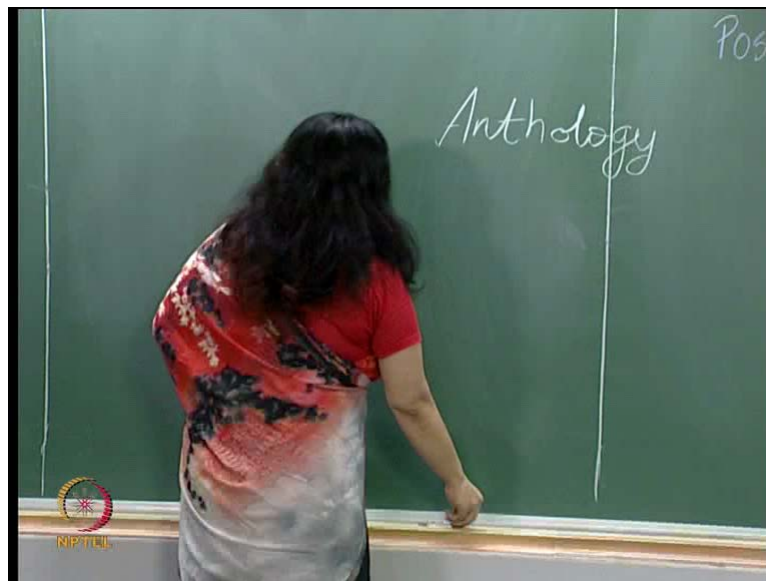
Barry Levinson's Wag the Dog; where Robert De Niro and Dustin Hoffman play the lead roles. And, Dustin Hoffman happens to be a producer, who stages a war in order to divert the American public's attention from the fact that the president is having an affair. And the elections are round the corner. So, what do they do? So, there are certain spin-doctors in the president's office headed by Robert De Niro. And they approach a film producer played by Dustin Hoffman. And then Dustin Hoffman is asked to give them a solution. And he said, if there is no war, let us invent a war and that will distract the public. And it does; so it is a wonderful commentary on the role, media plays in forging public opinion. Wag the Dog, I strongly recommend the movie; Robert De Niro, Anne Heche and Dustin Hoffman.

Stardust Memories, Purple Rose of Cairo worked by Woody Allen and also zalitt; and then, you have (()) and To Die For. We have already talked about these movies. To Die For is a movie starring Nicole Kidman, who literally we were talking about, dies for her fifteen minutes of fame. The movie was directed by Gus Van Sant.

Another important feature of postmodern cinema is hyperlink cinema. The other day we were talking about hyperlink Cinema. We talked about Babel, remember? And we also talked about recur for dream. So, hyper link cinema is a term coined by Alissa Quart for films which are multilinear in a metaphorical sense. Her Pulp Fiction tops the list.

While talking about John bending, we were discussing the other day, how Pulp Fiction is a land mark movie in the way, the narrative is constructed. Other examples of hyperlink cinema could be Adaptation, Sliding Dolls, Syriana. So, you were already mentioning Crash. I would also like to add 21Grams and City of God. I am very sure; most of these films are familiar to you.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:33)



Of late, we have been having the phenomenon of anthology movies. Well, this is nothing new. It has always been in existence. And a couple of directors coming together and making short films, but it has become a more fashionable in recent times. So, you have a number of big time film makers coming together and directing films.

Coffee and Cigarettes is an excellent example of short movies; ten minutes or so. Each movie run, the running length of each movie would be ten minutes or so. It is, but all movies were directed by Jim Jamursch, who is an independent film maker, also known for Johnny Depp starring Dead Man. You must watch Dead Man, especially for its music. It has excellent rock music.

Paris, je t'aime that is, Paris I love you, is an anthology of movies by several directors. And all movies are centered on the city of Paris. And here Paris is not just the glamorous city or the way we use city, see Paris in Midnight in Paris in Woody Allen's Paris is not that kind of Paris. You in this city, you have racial tensions; in this Paris, you have poverty; you have alienation; you have loneliness. So, it is that kind. But it is still Paris I love you and directed by the different directors.

Different from Coffee and Cigarettes because in Coffee and Cigarettes, which is the space? Are a restaurant, every, all conversations are taking place in restaurant, over coffee and cigarettes literally. Therefore, the title; Paris, I love you. I love you, Paris, in spite of all your weaknesses and faults. That is the idea.

New York, I love you, continuation is not as powerful as Paris, I love you. But it is still, it has the number of big time film makers directing films set in, short film set in New York. Shekhar Kapur is one of the directors.

And, Tokyo Stories and Toronto Stories; Toronto Stories is completely set as a title suggest in Toronto and Tokyo Stories in Tokyo. So, why are, you know we call these films, we have another title for these kinds of films. Do you know? Paris, New York, Toronto, Tokyo city symphony; these movies are also giving you a glimpse of city in its various manifestations. So and, very postmodern because they give you fragmented glimpse of something. Yes. In Coffee and Cigarettes, the restaurant is not the focus. But the conversation, kind of people you find; so, this is, you know as F.Scott Fitzgerald rightly points out in The great Gatsby, inexhaustible variety of human beings. This is what he is interested in; inexhaustible variety of human beings. So, in Coffee and Cigarettes, the director is interested in the kind of people you find; all kinds of people around us. That is the idea. So, very post-modernist, very fragmented because it is not a linear, traditional kind of a story and they are not linked at all. There no, absolutely no link between people in all these films. Any comments? About to say.

The New York stories that you remember? Three movies I keep on referring to the New York? Scorsese, Woody Allen, Coppola, all these children of new Hollywood's movement and then they come together. All these movies are set in the city of New York. So wonderful movies, but not as short as you find in Paris, *je t'aime* and *Coffee and Cigarettes*; each movie runs into some forty to forty five minutes.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:04)



Now, I am going to discuss another key text for today's class. It is John Woo's *Face/Off*. Anyone here, who is not familiar with this very popular movie, I can see lot of smiles. How kind of you and, how fortunate for me? So, John Woo directed this movie.

And, let me point your attention towards the poster. Do you find anything unique about the poster of this movie? This is what, the way the movie was released. Is it one face or two different faces? Two different faces. But how are they joined? How are they joined? The eyes become one; that too, actually these are fragments of two faces, and they are joined together. And whose faces are these? Travolta and Cage; and, one eye belong to Nicolas Cage and one eye to John Travolta. But the faces are so joined that it almost looks, it is a one face and having a common pair of eyes. Why do we need to have this kind of poster for a movie like *Face/Off*? And *Face/Off*, if you watch the movie, you know there is a literal meaning to it. Yes, literally ripping somebody's face off.

But then, have you watched the movie? You must watch it; it is very post-modernist. Therefore, we are going to discuss it. But the face slash off, there is another meaning to

it. What is it? We often use the word Mexican face off. Yes, confrontation between two people; that is the typical signature style in most Tarantino's movies and most John Woo's movies; people just pointing guns towards each other. Come, you know had long confrontation.

So, that is, that is the basic theme of the movie. Nicolas Cage and John Travolta having a head long confrontation and sopping identities; not by choice, but forced by circumstances. And then, how sopping faces and sopping identities lead to the narrative. What kind of narrative emerges out of the sopping of the... So, it is a very good example of a post-modernist film because we talked about fragmented identities, structured narratives and all these features are present in Face/Off.

Face/Off is basically a very glossy...Visually very compelling movie directed by the Hong Kong super star director John Woo. Are you familiar with other movies by John Woo? The Killer, A Better Tomorrow; Yes, it is one of his well-known Chinese films; A Hong Kong martial art movie, typical wired kind of action director kind of; it is more like a psychological conflict. So, Face/Off has lot of psychological conflict. Then, the movie talks about the blurred identities and that is what you find in the poster also. And, one key feature of the film is the way it represents masculinity as the self-conscious acting out of general roles. John Woo happens to be a very hyper masculine kind of a director. All his films had a strong code of masculine conduct.

Yesterday, we were talking about how Tarantino is influenced by the cinema of... And, those directors were known for their strong masculine codes. And, so is John Woo. If you watch the movie Face/Off, you will understand both these men have a peculiar code of conduct; how to be a father, how to be a lover, how to be a husband, how to be a professional. Men on a machine, they have a personal code, they have a professional code, they have certain ethics of behaving, and those codes are important in all John Woo's movies. And, come across very strongly in Face/Off.

So, the credit sequences itself, you have watched the movie recently. How does it begin? It begins with the Nicolas Cage scene. You also have the John Travolta playing a detective, and be an I cop an agent. And, who is out to get Nicolas Cage, who is the dreaded criminal. And then, there is a scene where, it is a merry-go-round scene where john Travolta's son is short dead by Nicolas cage. Of course, he meant to kill the John

Travolta, not the kid. And after, subsequently John Travolta makes it a personal mission to catch Nicolas Cage.

And, the merry-go-round scene evokes nostalgic memories of Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* because that is the way Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*; the climax of the movie is shot. And, that too is a movie about the face-off between two men; that too hints at sopping identities. Not literally faces, sopping faces, but identities. *Strangers on a Train*. If you watch these two movies back to back, you will understand that his, how important the Hitchcock's influence is on this movie thematically. So, there is an intertextual reference.

Now, I quote Fredric Jameson here. When, he sees the reliance on the styles of the past as an indication of the particular kind of nostalgia and that is one of the defining characteristics of postmodern art. So, nostalgia happens to be a very important part of all postmodern art. And, this feature is seen very clearly in John Woo's *Face/Off*. And, Fredric Jameson also uses the term called random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, where the past is reduced to the series of spectacles. So, Hitchcock's memorable scene is, if you quote or apply a Fredrick Jameson in John Woo's hands, it becomes like a random cannibalization. But now it is up to you to decide whether it is or whether he, it is an integral part; it is an integral, intextuality happening there. So, this is what Fredrick Jameson says in postmodernism or the cultural logic of the late capitalism. I think I have been referring to this work quite often. This could be your, you know one of your theoretical discussions.

Jameson also says; and, in, this is another word, post modernism and consumer society; where, he talks about psychic fragmentation of also skits of frnniya of the postmodern life. Do take down these notes; where he says, as the experience of the isolated disconnected, discontinuous material signifiers into, which fail to link into a coherent sequence. The skits of frannie does not know personal identity in our sense.

Ascid Zoit a fragmented personality; so, the person is not aware that there are two cites; very opposing, very contradictory cites to his own personality. Do you know that *Face/Off* was adapted, not exactly or not literally, but there was an adaptation in Hindi. Which movie was that? Are you aware of it? It was a very well-known movie, much hyped. Did not do too well commercially, but for those times it was extremely well

publicized, much hyped movie called Aks. It was the first movie directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, is starring Amitabh Bachchan and Manoj Bajpai; where, they had given a touch of Indian philosophy and spiritual element to the sopping, to the idea of sopping the identities.

Now, see example of pastiche in Face/Off; so, the music is seen as the pastiche. You know it is the combination of several kinds of movie. And, remember we are talking about high bro culture, low bro culture. So, you have a Handels Halle luya at one point. Nicolas Cage, of all the people he personifies evil. And, he is in a church; just, almost making a spoof of a very holy song. At the same time, you have plenty of rock music throughout the movie.

And then, you have another memorable scene, which is a shootout scene. People are shooting all over the place. And then, Nicolas Cage, he does not want his son to get exposed to that kind of violence. So, what does he do? No. Yes. He makes him wear a head phone and the song which is playing is, somewhere over the rainbow; that is, Judy Garland's from The Wizard of Oz. So, it is totally contradictory to whatever is happening outside, around the child. The child is, the child watches the scene; bullets going all over the place and people running and chasing each other, hitting each other. But he does not hear those sounds because his father has put that melodious, beautiful music on him. So, that is, and this is nothing new. This is a very common device, having background music, which is completely opposite to whatever is happening on screen.

And, how many of you are aware of Anurag Kashyap's; Bejoy Nambiar that directed the movie Shaitan. Have you watched the movie? There is a scene, where youngsters running all over the chawls of Dharavi. And ...which make them look very ridiculous. And, which is the song playing in the background? It is a shootout scene. Police is chasing them. Khoya khoya chand, remixed. Khoya khoya chand, which is originally a song, a very beautiful, melodious song, something like somewhere over the rainbow kind of song, sung by Mohammed Rafi. And, Dev Anand performed to that song, may be during the fifties or the early sixties.

But now having a song like that for a shootout scene, what does it? It is a very postmodernist device. Many a time we do not pay attention to these things. But if you look at it deeply, yes, the film maker has done lot of thinking about giving the right kind

of, very appropriate kind of background music to the situation. Otherwise, what kind of background music would you expect in a shootout scene? The bang-bang music or may be very fast based music. But imagine somewhere over rainbow, khoya khoya chand, for a scene which is extremely violent, hyper kinetic. But then, you have a song like that as in the background; so, a very strong, a very forceful, postmodernist device.

The idea of having a doppelganger or your other, your double, is very intriguing. And, this is another integral part of postmodern narratives; to have another identity and having a literal other. So, Sean Archer and Castor Pollux; Sean Archer is John Travolta and Castor Pollux is Nicolas Cage. And, both these men have a son each. They are quite alike in the way they behave, in the way they take their duties and their professions very seriously. It is almost like having your double out there.

And there is a scene where Castor Pollux advice, offers paternal advice to Sean Archer's daughter to how to save herself; gives her a knife from a potential molester. That is a very interesting scene.

Now, nostalgia; we were talking the idea of nostalgia and how it informs postmodern narratives. So, Cage's transformation into Archer; so, Nicolas Cage becomes Sean Archer. Who is Sean Archer basically originally? John Travolta. But now what is... if you have watched Nicolas cage, he happens to be a very intense actor; very intense. And, there is hardly a funny bone in him.

On the other hand, John Travolta is hardly the hyper masculine guy. He is forced to act out. So, he is not; he is the eternal cool. I mean, if you watch him in Pulp Fiction, he is what we call as a typical cool dude. That is the kind of actor John Travolta is. And, there is always a certain kind of ambiguity about him. He is not that... of hyper masculine actor at all; whereas, Nicolas Cage is. And, we have seen him performing very intense, vary dramatic roles; roles which John Travolta will never be known for, no intensity or no dramatic intensity for John Travolta. But then, when John Travolta assumes the identity of Nicolas Cage, we are taken back to corner. Yes. The hero in the stress; new stress, a romantic hero; the intense hero, the suffering the complex hero. All these attributes you can never associate with John Travolta. John Travolta, when he turns; Nicolas cage, when he turns into John Travolta; now, John Travolta is known for certain things. And, one is his coolness. And that comes through. And, suddenly we find Nicolas

Cage acting the way, because at the back of your mind you know that this is Nicolas Cage. He is just wearing John Travolta's face. But then, he assumes Travolta's identity. Right. And then, you same, doing the same walk, the same talk that Travolta is so loved for. And, we know it was the memories of Pulp Fiction. We have just seen in Pulp Fiction. We remember him for Greece and Saturday night fever. We know that he is John Travolta, is the ultimate cool. And, that is the persona that comes across. So, trade mark styles of performance.

Having talked about this film, we will refer to another movie which came a little before Face/Off, Natural Born Killers. Oliver stone. And then, we will see how this movie satisfies many postmodernist conditions. So, what is it about? It is about again the, story reader on serial killers on the run. As played by Juliette Lewis and Woody Harrelson.

The basic theme is how crimes and criminals are treated in a media saturated society. How many of you have watched the movie? Very nice. Do you remember the scene; the Woody Harrelson first sets his eye upon Juliette Lewis. Yes. That is a very strange scene. He is literally carrying some dead meat, with the blood is still pouring all over the place.

But how is the scene treated? We are told that this girl, who is barely out of the ... Juliette Lewis. She is sexually abused by her father frequently. Yes. Her mother is indifferent to it. And, there is a brother, a very boorish younger brother; who is again, absolutely, who is totally into materialistic things of life. All he was interested in is how much pocket money he can get out of his parents. Father dominates the household; rules every one with an iron hand. And, it is a very dysfunctional miserable household.

And, invokes Woody Harrelson, who is as per removed from the nineteen chins among the as good be. He is nothing like that. But for Juliette Lewis character he is; because her family life is so disturbed. That, this deranged man could well be her savior; thus the idea. So, we live in a media saturated society where we are conditioned, you know love at first sight is possible. Where woman feel that, a man just walks in and he can, she can ride away into the moon light with him. And then, certainly the scene turns into something else. Do you remember what happens? It turns into a, Oliver Stone gives it a touch of a television so popular and then sit calm. Why does he do that? We live in a media saturated society. You fall in love and suddenly everything looks like, as if you are a part of television. And how much do they enjoy being on camera? Remember, later

on there is even a character; superbly played by Robert Downey Junior as a television anchor.

So, word about Oliver Stone? He comes on the heels on the new Hollywood cinema. He has learned his craft from all those people that we are talking about so far. Martin Scorsese; he is the successor to the, a very natural successor to Martin Scorsese, to Brian De Palma, to Francis Coppola and Woody Allen. And, if you watch him, you can see the influences. The influences are all there. He also wrote the screen play for Scarface directed by Brian De Palma. He actually served as a soldier in the Vietnam War, and therefore his Vietnam trilogy; Platoon, Born on the Fourth Of July starring Tom Cruise and Heaven and Earth. He has the strong political ideologies. If you watch his list of movies, it is absolutely phenomenal, astounding, the way he treats politics. And, we are talking about the man who has made JFK, who has made Nixon and also W., George W. Bush, so a man, who is strongly given to understanding the political happenings in the United States.

Some of his more entertaining movies are Wall Street, which won Michael Douglas his Oscar; and Any Given Sunday is a wonderful drama starring Al Pacino and Cameron Diaz. Even in one of his earlier film Salvador, starring James Woods as the reporter, a very young James woods. So, and it takes place in South America. It is a brilliant movie, if you watch it. One of his earlier attempts at direction, but so wonderfully done. Do you know the actor who played W Josh Brolin. And, how closely he resembles?

Now, the two major differences between Pulp Fiction and Natural Born Killers. The Natural Born Killers, although it is saturated with the violence, it is anti-violence. Whereas, Pulp Fiction tells us violence is cool.

Pulp Fiction, of course there is a typical talent in the movie. So, lot of pep music, rock and surf kind of music. Whereas, Natural Born Killers has a more, the music of the movie has more dark tones to it.

While Tarantino experiments with the narrative in Pulp Fiction, Oliver Stone is more interested in editing in Natural Born Killers. So, he does not experiment as much with the narrative. He does not disturb that. But editing wise suddenly you find a jump cut at some where placed, split screen something else; the screen suddenly turning black and white from color and from color to black and white and the, so lot of experimentation

with editing. Tarantino takes in the sense that, if you watch, I was particularly interested in the Reservoir Dogs. If you look at the dogs, those guys' sitting around the table and the kind of conversation is extremely hyper masculine. And, the kind of violence, the ear splicing scene, you know it is a total lift from the cinema of Sam Akin. The violence is supposed to be extremely cool and very matter of act.

And, do you know there were women, when the movie was first premiered, women in the audiences fainted when they first watched the movie. But there was one woman who really enjoyed it. That woman was Madonna. She said that, I like this kind of cinema and I think violence is cool. And, Tarantino had no prizes for guessing. He was extremely flattered; Madonna complementing you on a very first directorial effort.

So, again we were talking about Fredrick Jameson and, idea of in the post-modernist society. So, this is something that you find in Natural Born Killers also. See, all the kind of expression is thick scenes that you find that distorted images. And, Natural Born Killers abounds in these images; distorted images, saturated colors. That is not the way, it really is.

I mean, I will ask you to go back to your Taxi Driver, where New York is noxious, poisonous; poisonous green gasses emanating from all over the place. So, almost like pickle is driving through A.D.s, you know the New York is held. So, that is what we find in Natural Born Killers also; psychic fragmentation, distorted images.

There is a scene where they are poisoned; where the girl is poisoned and the man is so drug induced. He is unable to look for the right medicine for her. And, the entire screen goes green. You remember? For no reason at all, they kill off a very innocent Indian, Native American. And then, the girl is bitted by a deadly cobra and then they go out hunting for the medicine for her. So, this is what Natural Born Killers is all about, if you talk about it about how post-modernist it is.

The movie is extremely rich and pastiche. There is a scene where they have kidnapped the girl from a small town. And she is tied up in the same room, which this couple lives in. And, while the girl is being tortured, meaningless torture; the couple is watching Scarface. It is very self-referential; Scarface, which was known for its hyper violence on screen. And, more importantly, it is written by Oliver Stone himself; Oliver Stone commenting on his own work that we live in a society which is full of violence.

So, you have lots of experimentation with editing techniques. So, you, we get film footage, we get television style of editing. Sometimes the character speak like cartoons, mix saw the music is a mix saw, music too is a pastiche, a mix of contemporary rock as well as very traditional, romantic kind of music. And, why does he do that? Again, we go back to our new Hollywood film makers, after all that has been his training ground.

At no stage of the movie, Oliver Stone makes any attempt to get you involved at least emotionally with what is happening on screen. He wants you to keep your distance. And therefore, all these fragmented editing techniques. Again, you are watching a movie about violence. That message comes across. He is not inviting you to get emotionally involved with the audience. And therefore, that you know that it is a kind of editing technique.

When you do not want to involve the audience, you do not call attention to the narrative and to the editing pattern. That means you almost feel like one. But suddenly when the screen goes black and white from color and the other way round, you know yes only the, you know your attention is broken off.

When you were watching a movie something very serious like father abusing his daughter on screen and suddenly the entire scene turns in to a television sit come. You know that you are watching something related to and your director is asking you to think about it. Do not just get involved in the narrative flow of the movie. That is what he is saying, Yes. That is what involved in the sense is, he was intellectually involved. We do not want such films do not invite the people to get emotionally involved; emotional involvement was the feature of the classic Hollywood kind of cinema, even for, it is more like, you know when you watch a movie which is very traditionally structured or a story which is very classically told. Then, the director is, jabtag john, a movie like this invites you to be emotionally involved because that is the kind of director, Yash Chopra is. He wants as the, therefore you know there will always be a difference between this set of directors and the other set of directors. More successful directors would always want to capitalize you; capitalize on you are emotional connect. Whereas, other set of directors do not want you to get so emotionally connected with the product because they want you to think about. Yes. That is what happening on screen.

A product of new Hollywood cinema; Oliver Stone's movies are basically, extremely anti-authoritarian. And, this is the trait you find in Natural Born Killers as well. So, all those people who are supposed to uphold our society; parents, sheriff, cops, media reporters, they are generally portrayed as corrupt, violent, and exploitative. Did you find that? Yes. So, there is a statement in the movie, which fixes the central idea of the film very well.

In contemporary America, reality exists only in the context of media images. Do you remember? simply crime and simply chrome and both we well the Gulf war did not take place. Whatever, you watch on media that is the only truth. You, and that is the idea in Wag the Dog as well. There is no war, but producer has shot the war. Ok. Therefore, there is a war. And, you are supposed to accept it because I am showing it to you and it is there.

So, the post-modernist cinema and there is an entire list of cinema, which is focused on relationship between films and other media, films and other television, films about films. So, a general characteristic of this kind of self-referential, self-conscious cinema is that basically these films tempt to offer a critic of the commodification of American culture. demap the decline in the ability of Americans to distinguish between fiction and reality. It is very important.

And, if you look at our society, what is happening around us? I mean, look at all these reality shows, you know this is a comparatively a new phenomenon for us. But do not you feel that increasingly, we, as the society, we are feeling to distinguish between reality and fiction as seen through the media images. The bottom line is that, everything has been reduced to entertainment. And, there is no fixed, ordered and central reality. Thus, the basic tenet of post- modernism.

So, watch these two movies again; Natural Born Killers, Pulp fiction and also Wag the Dog. And, you will understand. Some other examples: Sidney Lumet's Network, classic movie. And, there is a classic line in this movie. There is no America, there is no democracy, and what do we have? IBM union carbide, Dow and.... It is a wonderful critic of American capitalism and media, from the director of Twelve Angry Men and Dog Day Afternoon. More examples, where self-conscious cinema tells us that media is taking dangerous proportions. David Cronenberg, the Canadian film maker's

Videodrome and Elia Kazan's *A Face In the Crowd*. The media is addictive as well as corrupt. Robert Redford's *Quiz Show*... All these movies, I am very sure they are familiar to you. You just have to refresh and apply the theory.

Confessions of a Dangerous Mind, directed by George Clooney and then watch Scorsese's very honorable flop *King of Comedy*, which almost wiped him off. After *New York, New York*, he came up with *King of Comedy* again with De Niro. In between there was another flop, but at least an Oscar... the flop *Raging Bull*. *Raging Bull*, let me tell you it is a big flop; commercially flop when it was first released.

After these flops, what did he make? Three flops in a row; *King of Comedy*, *Raging Bull*, *New York, New York*. Out of which *Raging Bull*, at least was critical success. Exactly, *Last Temptation of Christ*, which was commercially successful. And, Martin Scorsese, if you read his biographies and auto biographies, there is a book called *Scorsese on Scorsese*; wonderful ... book. Where, he tells you that people used to laugh in his face, after these three movies. But then, *King of Comedy* is a very good critic of ...

And, before we wind up today's class, I want to talk to you about our own attempts at postmodernist cinema; which is Anurag Kashyap's *Dev D* and if you look at this still here, do you find echoes of *Face/Off*? Why? ...tell me why? And, whose faces are joined here? Blurring of identities? *Devdas* and *Paaro*. But where is.... This is not your linear, traditional *Devdas*. But is very postmodernist and very counter cultural *Devdas* because that is the kind of director Anurag Kashyap is.

So, when he was asked that, why *Devdas*? I am quoting in from one of his interviews. He said that, *Devdas* is very applicable in India because ours is the country is known for self-pity and that is the kind of hero *Devdas* is. Who is the hero? I mean, he is not an eternal loser, he is trying to find himself, and he is coming of age movie. ... So, it is a remake of old *Devdas* plus sex, drugs and rock and roll. And, all these are characteristics of the counter culture cinema.

So, this is another theories used to look at Gerard Genette', who proposes the term metatextuality. Metatextuality are the critical relationship between one text and another, whether the commented text is explicitly cited or only silently evoked. And, you will have plenty of references of this in *Dev D*. The commented text is explicitly cited or only silently evoked. See, if you watch '*Dev D*, it is not homage to Bimal Roy's *Devdas*

starring the great Dilip Kumar or Sanjay Bhansali's Devdas starring the greater Shahrukh Khan. Ok. I can see a lot of sniggers here, but ok. That is alright.

But you see, so it is not homage, it is actually hostile reaction towards some of the earlier adaptations. Ranjith, any comments here? You have a hostile reaction towards what I had just said Yes. Completely submerged in the kind of music you would expect in Devdas. I mean, after all this is not Devdas Mukherjee, but he is Devendra Dhillon. And therefore, he is Dev D. Ok. There is, text is silently evoked. Now, Leni as played by Kalki. She is travelling in a coach and watches the video of Bhansali's Devdas. She watches the scene where Paaro and Chandramukhi are dancing together from Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Devdas. So, the text is silently evoked. Ok. And, in the original novel, the two women cross pass just once. They do not dance together, but they happen to cross pass. While this one is leaving the town, the other is entering the town, which is portrayed in Bimal Roy's version starring Vyjayanthimala and Suchitra Sen.

There is a scene in Dev D, Anurag Kashyap's Dev D, they two women do come across face to face in the Chandigarh bound train. They were sitting across each other and they acknowledge each other. It is a very metatextual kind of scene. And, very postmodernist in its narrative and there are three parts to it. You get those cards reading this is Dev, this is Paaro, and this is Chanda. Remember the narratives? If you have missed all that, Please go and watch the movie again.

Ok. And, there is another very interesting example. Again, the original or Bhansali's version is evoked. When Dev is led by Chunilal to the bar, he passes the poster of Shahrukh Khan in Devdas, that 2002 version. Did you notice that? Please do watch it. And, while he is entering this underground bar which is not just a bar, but also a center for many other addictions. And outside on the wall you see the poster of Shahrukh Khan in his Devdas avatar.

So, Dev D's journey from rustic Punjab to London and back. And also, explores the dark...Delhi, something which is not usually shown in the films. Delhi is usually the clean cut, a very sanitized cinema of Yash Chopra.Ok. Beautiful girls in beautiful clothes and some heroes in their beautiful cars; so, that is the kind of Punjab or Delhi or Punjabi culture that you are treated to in a... cinema, but not here. So, the film is all about Dev

D's journey, literal as well as metaphorical. And, see how it also satisfies all the conditions given by Joseph Campbell.

Take away from today's class, you... read up on Fredric Jameson, Linda Hutcheon's idea of pastiche. Fredric Jameson's essay on Dog Day Afternoon from Signatures of the Visible and then, The Hero with a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell. Do read it. It is a very interesting take. It gives you an insight into the journey of our heroes; well known, recognizable heroes.

Ok. So, Devdas, the romantic Devdas of Bhansali and Bimal Roy and the postmodern Devdas of Anurag Kashyap; so, while the earlier versions reflect idealism, but not really social reform. Dev D is more indicative of the globalized Indian youth. So, you have Dev D on the postmodernist globalized times. So, the reading of Dev D, which I highly recommend is a pastiche. Yes. I mean, even music is the pastiche; emotional..., contemporary rock, classical Indian ragas, everything is there. It is self-reflexive and highly self-referential in tones and satisfies Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossic narrative... narrative offering multiple perspectives on an event. There are certain events which are repeated, if you watch it carefully. You do not have that fixed, ordered narrative. But, it is a very disrupted kind of a narrative. Thank you very much.