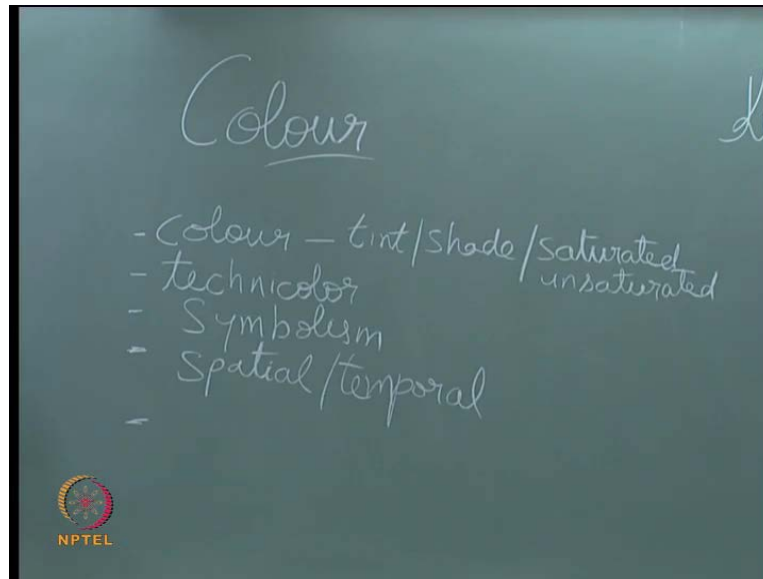


Introduction to Film Studies
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Lecture No. # 9
Color: Theory & Practice

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Good morning, today the lecture is all about color, and these are the key concept that we will be talking about, what is color and some aspects of colors. So, we all know what colors are, but here we will be looking at theories is in a very general sort of way. So, tint what is the tint, shade, what is the color value, saturated and unsaturated colors, when did Technicolor begin, what is the symbolism implicit in color schemes. Do colors have a spatial temporal value? How do film makers make use of colors in films? How is color used as a device in the progression of the narrative? We have been doing cinema is all about narrative and unless you consider antiviral film. So, we know what cinema is all about and it's basically a narrative. There should be a narrative and how film makers make use of colors to tell a story.

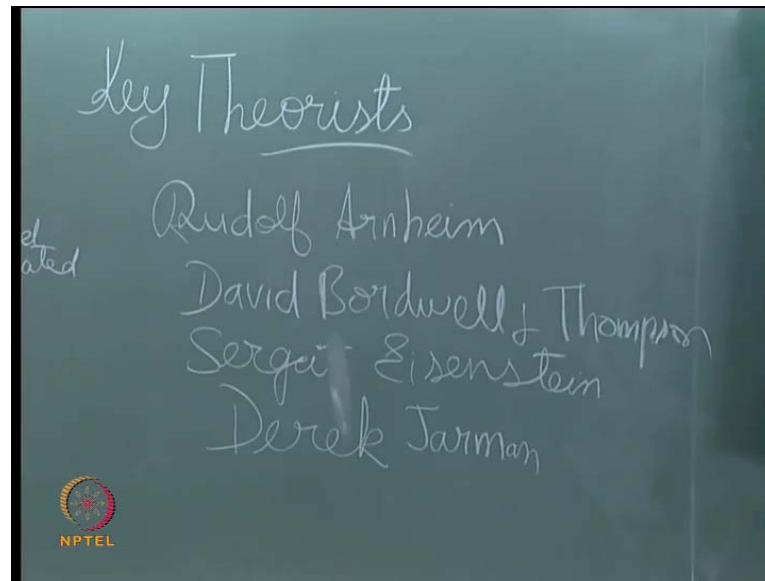
I begin with a quote by Maxim Gorky, the renowned Russian author, the creator of Mother; and he first watched the movie, the short film by Lumiar Brothers, it could have been workers leaving the factory, the Lumiar factory, we were talking about in the other day, and he commence on the grayness of a cinematic world. He says everything there; the earth, the trees, the people, the water, and the air is dipped in monotonous grey, grey

rays of the sun across the grey sky, grey eyes in grey faces and the leaves of the trees are ash in grey, and that is how cinema was in its beginning at the time when it started. Initially, there was no color, everything was in shades of grey. Colors hold a powerful position among the elements of the story structure, as we were just talking about narrative.

It is not like just introducing a splash of color to make someone look beautiful, it is not like that, colors do have a meaning. For example, the British movie; Peeping Tom is extremely important if you want to understand how colors are used, Peeping Tom is all about a film maker who is obsessed with the idea of capturing dying people on camera. Colors speak a universal language, do you need any explanation here. Everyone understands what is blue, what is grey, what is black and what is white. In most cultures white signifies mourning, perhaps a peace. Black on the other hand; mourning, also a formal occasion. Red could mean several things in several cultures, so colors speak a language. Colors contribute towards the aesthetics of a film, I mean watch Saawariya for instance, and colors do have a say, in the aesthetic, determining the aesthetics of the film.

Colors act to the mood; colors often delineate characters, why do we say that, colors delineate characters. Subdued characters will wear subdued colors, not bright fluorescent color, whereas someone who is shown to be extremely bubbly will always wear something more bright. Generally in films when it's a sober girl she is usually dressed in shades of pastels; white, off white and lighter shades. Whereas, the mom is serious, the mom is a naughty girl, would always be dressed in bright shades, especially the bright shades of pink. So, colors delineate characters, you are supposed to understand that we have been told something.

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Key theoretician of colors are, we were talking about realism and Rudolf Arnheim the other day, David Boldwell and Christen Thompson, Sergei Eisenstein and Derek Haman who is also a film maker, Edward The Second; British film maker. So, Rudolf Arnham has written an essay 1935 is called Remark on Color Film, and he tells you about his experience with watching a color film for the first time, and says people of taste have considered the colors in color film atrocious, when colors first began to make them presence, but this is atrocious, many have thought them unnatural. So, what he is trying to actually question, are color realistic, do colors contribute in any way towards lending a touch of realism to cinema. There is the question of realism and when film makers want to give the touch of surrealism then we know what colors they use, so we are going to discuss that also. So, colors do have a relationship with the concept of realism.

This movie let us think of The Wizard of Oz, we are not in cancers anymore. So, a cancer's is in shades of monochromatic shades of grey and sepia tone. Whereas, the moment Doorthy is out of cancer state her world turns into a colorful world, a fantasy world, because colors signify fantasy as an escape. Invention of Technicolor in the 1930, so this is the background of colors doctor Herbert and Netliclas invented something called Three Strip Technicolor and gave us shades of yellow, orange and blue. And this was an expensive process Technicolor, I mean if you look at some of the old movie posters you will find a small bylined, colored by Technicolor, and you would often wonder what does it means color by Technicolor; that means, that Technicolor was a

patent and these are the primary colors they used, they employed, it was very expensive process and. So, give weight to the more affordable Eastman color.

Does anyone know the difference between Technicolor and Eastman color, what happens to films when they are shot in Technicolor or and when they are shot in Eastman color. Eastman color is short in color, whereas Technicolor is later post production technique. I would rather stick to the economics of it at this point, as you have been already told Technicolor was an expensive process, but it was more lasting process. So, film shot in Technicolor are still around, whereas film shot in Eastman color had to be retouched and redone at some stage. Martin Scorsese; great film director, he has often funded projects, where colors are restored. We often hear films are being restored, how. What is being done to them is the color that we talk about. So, from Technicolor to Eastman color, the transition was to make the process of cinema, film making cheaper, but was it really.

So, because we could feel that many films got destroyed in the process, they did not have that sense of longevity, so therefore, the trouble. The first feature film in Technicolor was *Bouquet Shop*, a revisiting of which movie which novel, *Bouquet Shop* is the memorable character from literatures students, *Tachris Vanity Fare*, *Bouquet Shop* is a character. Technicolor was the smoother and most settled shade of Eastman color and we are often as we just talking about that Eastman color straightaway very quickly, and in the long run they lose the relationship between each other. So, therefore, they need to restore film shot in Eastman color. Any questions any comments here. So, terms some basic concepts related to colors; value, color value is proportion of light or dark in color, basically when we talk about white and black and white films. So, tint; tint is the lighter shade. Suppose, you have grey as the standard shade, and then the lighter shade becomes.

So, when we want it to be of lighter shades we call it as tint, but if you want it to be of darker shade then it's a shade, shade is darker than the normal value. Other two terms that we should define here with are saturated and de-saturated, de-saturated are more muted bleached out colors. Saturated colors are unadulterated and strong and when film makers want to project a surrealist tendency on screen, they resort using saturated colors. We are going to see examples soon. Saturated red; redder than red, *American Beauty*, and is there are symbolic value here, passionless, betrayal, murder, many emotions, a state of

mine literatures student should be familiar with the concept of expressionism and natural colors. So, likewise you should, perhaps you can take down the term expressionism and look it up, how colors and color scheme was an important part of expressionism and from which we get the concept of saturated colors. So, saturated green and saturated red and saturated grey, I would advise you to take a look at some particular scenes from natural born killers or liver stones, where green signifies many things to many people, to some it may suggests fertility, health, at the same time it could also mean catastrophe and we poison, puss even. Old boy is in shades of green and blues.

Watch an Old Boy we will be talking about that film quite frequently in this course. So, effects of color what do what does color do to us, when objects need attention film makers resort to using three dimensions of color, to substantiate my point I would like you to do visit a movie called Insomnia; Christopher Nolands, Al Pacino and Robin Williams. Please, watch the scenes where a Al Pacino is on a trail of this killer. He never finds, but he by mistake he shoots or by mistake or by intent he shoots his partner dead, and look at the shades and various dimensions of the shades. There are various objects all in the shades of grey, the misty fog, the snow and the rocks and the pebbles. So, grey acts to add a kind of dimension to the objects around. In the same scene you also feel the temperature.

You cannot have the tactile sense while watching the movie, but there are certain scenes which try to evoke, a sense of odor is worked in a movie like perfume, perfume is a very difficult movie to translate on screen if you have red perfume, Peters Esken's novel. It is all about someone who deals, specializes in creating different smells and sense, but it is very difficult to project that on its screen, you can write novel about it, but not how to. So, the film succeeds on some levels and fails on some other level, but that is different story. So, temperature evoking temperature through color, sun shines, snow, fog excetra. Colors lend a text of poignancy, for example thing sinless list, Steve Spielbergs, there is a tinge of red and when does that red happen, a small girl passes by, and then the same girl latter we realized is killed during whole of cause period. So, red means something to the protagonist.

The entire scene is in black and white, the film is in black and black and white, but the girl; the little girl and the hero has just fleeting glimpse of that little girl in red coat, it is a beautiful scene very poignant, so to evoke a sense of poignant. Hence atmosphere old

boy, we were just talking about stark shades of blue, green perhaps red. Creating an atmosphere there are no light tones, except at the end when he erases the memory remember. Colors are also used to create symbolism, for example in a film like Edward Scissorhands, someone of you familiar with that, you smile; that means, it means something to you, heard of it Johnny Depp; Edward Scissorhands, how many of you have watched that movie, Edward Scissorhands, please watch it, make it up point to watch most of these Timbaland, Johnny Depp collaborations, and you will find some new technique, some new device taking place.

This is one of the earliest examples of their collaboration, and what does Johnny Depp play in the movie. He is a robot created by a crazy isolated scientist in an isolated tower, almost like a fairy tale, once upon a time. The movie begins that way; there was a place like this. So, he was the robot was created by a scientist in a castle, and one day and this beautiful robot as played by Johnny Depp, is very lovingly constructed or created by his maker. You know like turning the Frankenstein legend on its head. This is the very innocent, very pretty monster, but what happens tragically, that as the scientist is giving finishing touches to this robot, he has the heart attack and he died. So, he cannot give proper skin to the robot and proper hands, because they are scissors for his hands originally and that remains, because the scientist could not complete the job, and he died before doing that.

So, you are left with this robot, who has been given the right hearts, but not the right body. So, the story after that certain things happened and the robot is brought into the real world, from his world of castles and very gothic world, very unreal world. He is brought down to a more real suburban world and then what colors do we see. All the houses are practically uniform, painted in shades of primary colors; red, yellow, green almost like candies, excessively bright and it gives you an impression that something is wrong with this world; things cannot be this bright, this cheerful, and this sunny. So, that is what the film maker is trying to alert us to, that suburban life, the light which is to conformist cannot be all that normal, and here this world is contrasted the world of our robot, who is always dressed in shades of, always dressed in the same costume, that is black leather, giving him that in the rocks of, punks of kind of a feel and also someone who is absolutely out of place, a misfit in this suburban, idealized suburban world. This is a beautiful movie do watch it. Three kings Mark Wahlberg, George Clooney, David o

Russell is the director and watch the film or the way it is shot, is all about the gulf war, but you look at how he uses documentary footage, he uses jump cuts; we have been talk about those elements, quick cuts, jump cuts and bleached out color scheme.

The kind of scheme we just watched and just we were discussing in relation to traffic by Steven Soderbergh. Colors are sometimes used to create a painterly effect, Kurosawa's dreams, Kurosawa was a master painter Satyajit Ray was a master painter. Some of the sets appear as the paintings, M. F. Hussain's films if you watch Meenakshi for instance, you did watch Meenakshi, watch Meenakshi and you will feel, you know it is a line up great paintings there. Mulholland Drive; two girls and look at the stock difference in colors. Let, us talk about how do color, we were just talking about colors delineate characters, what is happening here; red lipstick, dark eye, browns dark hair, blond hair two girls one has blond hair, lighter shades of makeup, lighter clothes and the other girl red and black, stark colors, dark hair, bright lipstick, bright makeup.

So, visual effect is created to delineate characters. You can think of any number of examples. Mulholland Drive is by David Lynch and another movie by David Lynch is The Blue Velvet. Again it is a biggest, very deceptively with shades of bright cheerful colors why, again American suburbs, the suburban so called suburban utopia suborted in so many films, including a very recent one by Samendis, revolutionary wrote, Kate Winslet and Leonardo di Caprio. So, suburban is not what it appears or what it claims to be is not utopian idealized event. The reality is something else and that is what David Lynch tries to tell you. So, blue velvet begins with bright cheerful sunny shades and tones of colors, but then it starts gradually begins to get darker, because the theme itself is so dark, watch it for Dennis Horpers and Isabella Rossellini.

Colors helping as a narrative device, Zanganos which film, Chinese film heroes Tonelang, Megichang, Jetly and several major Chinese film stars. It was released worldwide, but quintinturrent you know in 2002, because he was totally blown away by the aesthetics of the film. So, heroes use a tripartite color scheme. Again it is a story told from multiple perspectives, we have been talking about the concept of multiple perspectives and we discussing narratives remember. So, Kurosava's which movie; Rashomon and Xang Yumos hero, and another important story this is just a digreation, film often telling multiple all over, showing multiple perspectives while telling a narrative is vantage point. Watch Vintage Point is another remarkable film especially for

its story telling. Same event is repeated several times, repetition is the very key concept in narratives you should know that.

So, heroes employ red and gold color schemes for some portions, then blue then white and peel green dominated, and colors are not just used here indiscriminately, they denote something more, what is it; time, passage of time temporality. So, we were just talking about special temporal effects of color. So, in heroes colors are used to suggest time, passage of time. So, this story was told at a different point. It was another period and then something else and then. So, therefore, the color scheme follows the temporal scheme. So, shades of peel green and blue and white, and interestingly the film ends in white and I quote Sergei Eisenstein here, who in his selected works, he says different countries have different notions of color, white is a color of mourning for the Chinese. So, it is not always symbolic of peace as it would be in many other cultures, but here in Chinese culture, it is the color of mourning and why does heroes an honor shade of white, because most of the protagonist died while fighting for the kingdom, we have been talking about Traffic 2000 and here colors are not employed to suggest temporal difference, but a special difference.

So, colors mark different, narrative strengths, indicate a special differences. Benicio Del Toro's story is said in greeny washed out yellow, bleached out yellow of Mexico. However, traffic basically deals with what; drugs, drug trafficking and how drugs influences families or businesses or politics even. For the Michael Douglas story and Michael Douglas and his family, Steven Soderberg used a blue pallet, steel grey, blue and for Catherine Zeta-Jones and Dennis Quaid we get a sun rent full color, certain Santiago. We were talking about surrealism, so what is surrealism, let us talk about, the other day while discussing realism we talked about magic realism, surrealism, so what is surrealism. A subconscious state of mind a dreamlike state of mind, who was the master surrealist; most well known Salvador Dalí, Dali collaborated with viennale in assiaanthello; the movie which we were discussing the other day, a hand splicing an eye ball, so Salvador Dalí actually collaborated on that film, in creating these very gloomy, bleary and dreamlike state images.

Taxi drivers, when Robert D Niro is honor killing rampage when he shoots every possible villain and pimp in a brought hell, where jury foster is kept, by the end he is so pleased with himself. He has this delusion about himself as a kind of a one man army, a

hero. Whereas, Martin Scorsese quite ambiguous about his state, about his position. He is not really a hero for Scorsese. He is just a deranged highly disturbed man, but in his mind he is a hero, and then you have the shades of very saturated red, trickling down the wall, trickling down the travel vehicles on head and all over the place, pools of red, very saturated, not really a very realistic red, but saturated red. Film makers also make use, this is another symbol to lend very, again we are talking about delineation of characters and how colors delineate characters. So, you have a Jim Carry playing; The Riddler in Batman forever, and of course you have a Heath Ledger doing his Joker, in shades of purple green and other. So, colors are important, colors tell us about the character. Colors may also evoke nostalgia, nostalgia is evoke we do not have saturated colors; we have soft muted colors in soft muted glove.

So, one good example is Cinema Paradiso; a wonderful Italian film. So, everything is tinted with fond memories for the protagonist. Can you think of more nostalgic films, think nostalgia and you will always have soft muted colors, which is that, anything else. There is a Jim Carry movie I do not know how many of you are aware of that Early 2000 is called the majestic, it is all about the movie theatre which he tries to restore for someone who mistakes him, for his lost son, a beautiful movie short in very soft and muted colors. We often talk about black and white films, so black and white I do not know how many of you still watch black and white films, but there are occasional black and white films, which you know which gets release once in a while and people talk about it.

So, many notable examples Woody Allen's Manhattan 1979, Scorsese after taxi driver and saturated color resorted to Raging Bull, which won Robert De Niro his first academy award. No, sorry second, first was for God Father Part two. Steven Spielberg's Schindler's List, Timberton's Edward which is a biopic of a failed film maker, it is a very interesting movie watch it. Jim Jarmusch again is an expert, is very fond of making black and white movies, he is an inde film maker. Deadman with Jhony Depp, and he has also made an anthology, a very famous anthologist Jim Jarmusch which is it; Coffee and Cigarettes, it has beautiful segments, particularly with Alfred Molina and Cate Blanchett, George Clooney's drama Good night and Good luck is based on the McCarthy period and you know the communist witch hunting so called set, in set during the McCarthy period, early 50's late 40's and was released in 2005, a beautiful example of black and

white movie *Sin City*, of course it is based on a graphic novel and it is very faithful to the novel, and most recent successful example, *The Artist* 2011. Would you like to add to this list, it is a graphic novel. So, graphic novel is stay true to the concept, so therefore black and white. What effect, can it just take any movie and forget the films which are based on graphic novels, but why do you think we need to have *Raging Bull* in black and white, too much blood, but then there was too much blood in *Taxi Driver* also.

(()) exactly, so in *Taxi Driver* the violence is psychological in *Raging Bull* its very physical, and Scorsese wanted to avoid all that blood flying around, instead of showing red blood it is better to show blood in stock shade or muted shades of grey, and therefore they sorting to black and white. However, there is a particular segment in *Raging Bull* also which is in color, do you remember which, not towards the end, neither time when Jake LaMotta. (()) well that is just a grim so very minor scheme, but I am talking about a home video that Jake LaMotta shoots with his family. So, there is a home video that he shoots with his family, and that is the only time Scorsese allows us to watch some color on screen. Again that is very nostalgic for Jake LaMotta, who has lost everything, his money, his fame, his family, his love; all his loving ones have left him. So, the only color in his life was his family, which he loses as well. So, therefore, the use of color, it makes sense it's symbolic.

Clunes movie on the other hand is the period film, and perhaps he wanted to give a more realistic touch, and therefore you know after all its talking about those time, and television was in black and white Ed Murrow is the key protagonist there and Ed Murrow was known for his show *Good night and Good luck*, which was a black and white show, so therefore, the necessity to show that. So, most of scholars of color theory believe that black and white, even in times of color is used to make films more elegant and often more dramatic. Directors and cinematographers are often freed from the reality of color, color binds people constraints them, and certain kinds of theme call for black and white, for example when you have to portray psychological or moral conflict on screen, as in *Schindler's List*, when the setting is more naturalistic not real, but naturalist as in *Manhattan* and then of course, you are talking about dark graphic novel; such as *Sin City*, which has occasional flashes of yellow; am I right, red in yellow. Any comments you would like to make about color theory. Color; any observation, it is actually a slightly obscure to view a movie called pleasant well.

So, what happened in that is they watched this old tv show, which is in black and white and somehow through some device fixing they really explained, they end up in the tv show. So, they end up being black and white themselves, and how they refuse to that and how towards the end of the movie or entire, too peacefully (()). So that color pleasure well role in the story itself, in the plot itself. Color; use of color as a narrative, this is the very good example, pleasant well. How many of you are familiar with Three Kings, Three Kings is actually a very interesting film, if you watch it you will understand that how the horrors of war are muted, as he uses as David o Russell resorts to use those bleached out muted colors. So, colors do act to the narrative to us telling a story.

Looper is the very recent movie, listen to this. Main character is (()), he takes drugs in a (()) drops, so first time when he takes drugs, the screen become brighter shows the state of mind. State of mind, good I am glad you are thinking a lot those lines. So, the moment he starts taking drugs everything is sunny and bright, that is the state of mind, so realism we are talking about. Now let us discuss a film like The Dark Knight and The Dark Knight Rises, Batman begins was often in shades of, Batman begins, brown, muted oranges and yellows or the browns, but as a the sequel progressed, the films got more and more darker, did you notice that. The Dark Knight Rises is also remarkable, because this is the very first time that you see Batman during day time. You never have day time in city that is what the earlier versions have told us, you watch the Timbertin version of Batman with Michael Keaton, and then we also had a version with Val Kilmer, which is the fairly decent one, with Nicole Kidman, batman forever.

So, you never have daytime on screen in the Batman saga. The Dark Knight is the first movie to use daytime on screen, in the batman narrative, but that is not to say that the theme is not dark, it is the Dark Knight as you know the film progresses, it gets darker and darker and it ends on a very pessimistic, very nihilistic note if you remember, where there is a need for hero, but such other conditions, that you cannot call the real hero, hero. You need to create a false hero to keep that ray of hope alive in the people, and it ends on a very dark note and on very dark colors, if you watch the movie you will understand. The last part of this you know that, this is the final that is what Christopher Nolan tells us no more batman which is sad for the fans, but anyway cannot be added anything more to it. So, how does that movie and I mean it starts with Batman closeted, he is beaten up, he is almost like badly need of help, you see him as he walks, walking

with the help of a walking stick, all beaten psychologically, physically, morally. So, he does not want to show his face to the world, even Bruce Wayne it is not just a Batman, but Bruce Wayne and he is not the same old flam point Bruce Wayne any most.

Very much like Citizen Kane as well, because he is alone in the house, the way they talk about measure, nobody has seen them in a while, especially the way the manner is shown is almost bit like Citizen Kane, and this shows (()). A huge castle choking with the Brit Hebets and beautiful things which are assembled in that castle, so that is the similarity he is drawing, this is the parallel cross between Citizen Kane's ardo and Bruce Wayne's Castle, but how does the movie end The Dark Knight Risers, on a dark note or on. Positive yes, because finally he has found peace, the batman is dead, but still Bruce Wayne lives on, and what is the color scheme there, its bright, its certain Italy, where Alfred's character, Michael Kane is gone to Italy and he is unspoken bond between them, some kind of a deal between them, they wouldn't show any recognition.

They would not exhibit any recognition of each other, but they do acknowledge each other while sitting at two different corners of the open restaurant. It is not a closed dark restaurant, but it is very open air kind of a place, and batman is with his lady; cat women, and its bright sunny and glowing, and booth dressed up very differently the way they used to dress earlier. So, what do color signify here, a change in transition also happy ending. So, it was good to see a Batman series ending that we honor note of hope, anything else that you can think of.

Did you say that (()), in times of color, why just Hindi, why not talk about Indian cinema.


Because, like culturally the colors (()) renowned color, but let us assume we want to make a movie based on a silent cinema period, 1930s or early 40s and wouldn't be more wiser, more prudent to use black and white colors scheme, and they can use a smart film makers can use, but usually we like to play it safe, (()) such as classic black and white film, and did you like it. I think it was 2005, watched the film in color, I remember the billboards screaming at us, but did you watch that movie and did you like that colors. You prefer it in black and white, because of its simplicity and elegance, I think it may much more sense when it was in black and white. I do not know may be they wanted to reach out to the younger generation, and that something most of us noticed, that when it

is a black and white movie people do not like, especially in our country, so they are bang on.

Culturally, we do have, any other nation; we do have prejudices towards black and white cinema, especially in times of color. Why are you using black and white screen at all when color is easily available. So, we are used to watching color on screen, but I do not think that internationally this practice prevails, because to my knowledge I have never seen a black and white class Citizen Kane goes color, imagine we do not want to watch that Citizen Kane in color. It makes perfect sense in an original avatar, no need to mess up, mess around with it. So, this a matter of personnel taste, but I do not feel that classics once they are made, they should be restored, but not, no need to add colors to it, because that is the way they were intended to be, any comments, observations. Color trilogy, that is very important polish film maker Losskin. So, blue, red and white we will be discussing the film, because that is also there is thread burning through the film, that is a logic, there is the theme there, we will be discussing the film if we have the time.

Losskin's short film about (()) in that as the movie progresses all the shade it becomes more and more the frame becomes more and more covered with shades. You know what European cinema is much more experimental with their color pallet, and with their innovative uses of color on screen. There is a movie called Red Balloon, and it is a very symbolic, very suggestive movie, full of a deep kind of images. So, colors do play a very important role, it is not like they just have Red Balloon there, it stands for something. So, European cinema has some kind of an ideology, some kind of a method, behind using a particular color scheme. Colors in a narrative are meant, to add the verbal communication in the sense, that certain shades of feelings and emotions are incommunicable in words, hence the employment of colors. Further, colors also elicit certain emotions or reactions in the human and also in animals. Think showing a red rack to a bull. So, this acts as a Physic stimulant, therefore the significance of colors. So, thank you very much and we meet tomorrow.

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Lecture 9

Topic: Color

QUIZ

1. Answer in one-two sentences:
 - i. What does colour lend to a film?
 - ii. Explain the rise of Technicolor.
 - iii. Why do some filmmakers still use black and white photography instead of color in films?

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Assignment

- Watch Zhang Yimou's *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991) and comment on the use of color.

Suggested readings:

- Bordwell, David. *Poetics of Cinema*. NY & London: Routledge, 2008.

Suggested websites/links:

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-19557914>
- <http://gizmodo.com/5972740/the-color-of-movies-visualized>