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Postcolonial Theory in Film

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Introduction

Postcolonial theory has hardly been a defining paradigm in the field of film studies. Postcolonial theory originally emerged from comparative literature departments and film from film and media studies departments, and despite the many intersections postcolonial theory has not been explicitly foregrounded. However, there are more similarities and natural points of intersections between the two areas than it would at first appear. For example, both postcolonial theory and film studies emerged at the end of the 1970s with the development of semiotic theory and poststructuralist thought. Both areas engage intensively with the field of representation, implying the ways in which a language, be it cinematic or otherwise, manages to convey reality as “mediated” and “discursive,” and therefore influenced by power relations. An example could be the notion of the gendered gaze by Laura Mulvey and her concept of looked-at-ness and how it also applies to the screening and representation of black and colonized bodies in films, which bell hooks later theorized as black looks, to which she proposed the response of an oppositional gaze. Despite their different genealogies, it is therefore not only very natural but also necessary to combine postcolonial theory and film in order to unearth how the visual field is inherently hegemonizing and hierarchical and therefore in need of critical appraisal and a deconstructive take, such as postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory has critically contributed to revisiting the representation of the Other, addressing long-standing tropes and stereotypes about cultural difference and racial otherness. This implies new interventions on how visual representations are implicated in the policing of boundaries between East and West, between Europe and the Rest, the self and the other, undoing or rethinking the ways in which the visual field conveys operation of a mastery that needs to be undone and decoded. For example, empire cinema contributed to specific ways of seeing, making films that legitimated the domination of colonies by the colonial powers. Colonial images of gender, race, and class carried ideological connotations that confirmed imperial epistemologies and racial taxonomies, depicting natives, in documentary or fictional films, as savages, primitive, and outside modernity. More recent cinema genres such as border cinema, transnational cinema, accented cinema, haptic cinema, migrant cinema, diasporic cinema, and world cinema can be considered affiliated with the postcolonial paradigm as they all embrace ethnic, immigrant, hyphenated counter-narratives. Yet the field of postcolonial cinema studies, which relates postcolonial theory to film, is a false friend to all these categories as it connects with but also departs from the projects they name in order to pursue the tense power asymmetries generated by the legacies of conquest and colonialism.

General Overviews/Foundational Texts

Postcolonial theory focuses on the critique of empire and its aftermath. As such, it draws from different disciplinary fields such as literature, media, anthropology, politics, philosophy, gender, and sociology, among other more recent approaches such as science and technology studies as in Harding 2011 and ecocriticism as discussed in Nixon 2013. There are topics and key concepts that are at the forefront of postcolonial theory and have been much debated from different viewpoints. Examples are notions such as orientalism proposed by Said 1978, hybridity and mimicry elaborated by Bhabha 1994 and subalternity explored by Spivak 1985, along with cosmopolitanism rethought by Gilroy 2004, and representation by Hall, et al. 1997. Though there is no clear agreement on whether postcolonialism should be considered as a historical marker (the end of colonialism and the birth of independent postcolonial nations) or an epistemological standpoint (a critique of how

knowledge is produced from a universalistic and Western perspective), there *is* consensus on the text that inaugurated postcolonial theory as a subject in its own right, causing the field to blossom and spread from its original habitat of comparative literature into many other realms due to its intrinsic interdisciplinary nature. That text is *Orientalism* by Edward Said (Said 1978). In *Orientalism*, Said developed a sophisticated discursive approach that linked Foucault's notion of knowledge and power to Gramsci's concept of hegemony, by combining the analysis of political colonial dynamics with representational issues that unearthed an ossified representation of the Other as external to the project of modernity, and often depicted as exotic, irrational, and feminized. This understanding has been highly influential for the understanding of representations in literature, painting, photography, and films as often biased and curated to reinforce the Western point of view as inherently structured around a position of superiority and domination. It is therefore important to challenge the intrinsic Eurocentrism of much media representation and film theory as analyzed by Shohat and Stam 1994 with the aid of postcolonial theory. Eurocentrism emerged as a discursive justification for European colonial expansions, making the colonizers, and their civilizational ideology, the lens through which the world is seen, valued, and judged, and to which objectivity is attributed (Shohat and Stam 1994, pp. 2–3). It justifies imperial practices under the motto of the white man's burden and the need to bring civilization and progress to the rest of the world. Other more specialized interventions are those offered by Huggan 2001, which focus more on the implications of postcolonial literature as object of exchange in the marketplace based on the fetishization of the other, or the volume Lewis 2003, which focuses on the gender implications of postcolonial theory around debated issues such as whiteness, sexuality, and the veil.

Bhabha, K. Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

Bhabha's analysis focuses on colonial ambivalence and is largely based on the Lacanian conceptualization of mimicry as camouflage. Even though the rulers created a class of subjects who would act, speak, and dress like the colonizers, the operation of mimicry always created a slippage: the colonized were like the colonizers, but not quite. So the process of colonial mimicry is both a product of ambivalence and hybridity, and with that resistance.

Gilroy, Paul. *Postcolonial Melancholia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

The book introduces Gilroy's concept of conviviality as a different term to the overused term "multiculturalism." The book primarily addresses Great Britain and Britain's melancholic relationship with her former colonies. Gilroy focuses on the reasons for diagnosing why race and imperial thinking are still at the heart of postcolonial British political discourse. The alternative to postcolonial melancholia is a cosmopolitan planetary humanism, where planetary does not mean globalization but suggests both contingency and movement.

Hall, Stuart, Julia Evans, and Sean Nixon, eds. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. 2d ed. London: Open University, 1997.

Representation embodies the notion that language, in its broadest sense, assists in the construction of meanings in the world and influences the way we look at or interpret this world. This is a textbook that has proved extremely accessible and effective in explaining how representations come about as a discursive practice embedded in power structures and ideological constructions. The book offers careful and detailed case studies drawing from theorists and media events.

Harding, Sandra, ed. *The Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies Reader*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

In this reader, philosopher of science Sandra Harding argues that science and technology studies, postcolonial studies, and feminist critique must inform one another. She brings these different fields together in a critical conversation. The contributors assess and reevaluate conventional accounts of Western scientific knowledge and technological projects, rethinking the role and influence of non-Western societies' knowledge traditions and assessing the legacies of colonialism and imperialism.

Huggan, Graham. *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Huggan examines the cultural and economic processes through which "the postcolonial" as a field works within the field of value and exchange. Postcolonial writing becomes a commodity that trades upon the value of the exotic, the fetishization of the other, and the marketing of the margins. By distinguishing the notion of postcolonialism as a field of critique and postcoloniality as a system of exchange, Huggan offers a careful understanding of the processes of production, dissemination, and consumption.

Lewis, Reina, ed. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003.

Though feminism and postcolonialism are natural allies, there are many areas of tensions and areas that require a deeper exploration of this entanglement. This volume presents an important selection of thinkers around issues of colonialism/postcolonialism, whiteness, Third World women, sexuality, the harem, and the veil. This is an ideal volume for any reader interested in the development of postcoloniality and feminist thought.

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Through the concept of "slow violence," Rob Nixon focuses on the deep and long-term threat of many inadvertent environmental crises, in contrast with the sensational, spectacle-driven need of media interventions. Slow violence particularly affects poor, disempowered, and disenfranchised people, who are most affected by the vulnerability of fragile ecosystems. By approaching environmental justice through a postcolonial and transnational framework, the book offers an illuminating reading of writer-activists and major crises.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. London and New York: Penguin, 1978.

A founding text of postcolonial theory, it discusses "orientalism" as a powerful European ideological tool that defines, fixes, and marginalizes the Other. Said argues that the most damaging and lasting effect of colonization was not caused by Western military domination or by the violence perpetrated in the colonies but rather lay in the construction of Western scholarship on the Orient. Such scholarship constituted in truth a "Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Other" (p. 3).

Shohat, Ella, and Robert Stam. *Unthinking Eurocentrism*. London: Routledge, 1994.

The authors examine Hollywood movie genres, such as the musical, the western, and the historical epic, from a multicultural perspective, by showing how popular culture and mass media are still imbued with racial politics that protract Eurocentrism. The volume discusses non-Eurocentric media such as Third World cinema, rap video, and indigenous media as decolonizing global culture, proposing polycentrism as a valuable alternative to Eurocentrism.

Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak? Speculation on Widow Sacrifice." *Wedge* (Winter/Spring 1985): 120–130.

This seminal article is informed by feminism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and deconstructionism. Spivak problematizes the validity of Western representations of Third World women by arguing that the category of "Third World Woman" is an effect of discourse, rather than an existent, identifiable reality. The voice and subjectivity of the female subaltern are erased as she becomes the object of dispute between tradition and emancipation. She can only be represented and spoken for by others, in a distorted or "interested" fashion.

Companions, Anthologies, Handbooks, and Readers

Various works have assessed the field of postcolonial theory from its inception, tracing the different theoretical debates, from the "Holy Trinity" (Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak) to discussions of their precursors (Fanon, Cabral, Memmi, Césaire, Senghor) and current interdisciplinary spin-offs. Mentions should also be made of decolonial theory, which though focusing more on Latin America and the critique of European modernism, has been very influential in rethinking the role of capitalism and development that continues to perpetuate the divide between Global North and Global South (Mignolo 2011). Loomba 1995 offers one of the most accessible and complete overviews of the field, while McLeod 2000 offers clear examples on how to access postcolonial theory, including through stop-and-think activities. Gandhi 1998 proposes a theoretical reassessing of the field in which the two strands, poststructuralist and Marxist, are considered mutually interdependent. Moore-Gilbert 1997 provides one of the most exhaustive overviews of the field, also focusing on the reception and further life of the postcolonial trinity (Said, Bhabha, and Spivak). Chambers and Curti 1996 presents memorable chapters by major thinkers, including Stuart Hall. Williams and Chrisman 1998 provides an in-depth account of Third World thinkers and Western theorists. Equally comprehensive and more thematically in-depth are Huggan 2013 and Schwarz and Ray 2005, followed up by the same authors' three-volume 2016 *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*. Other overviews that have left a mark in the field are Mongia 1996, Goldberg and Quayson 2002, and Mongia 1996.

Chambers, Iain, and Lidia Curti, eds. *The Postcolonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

This edited volume brings together renowned thinkers (Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Larry Grossberg, Homi Bhabha, Angela McRobbie) and emerging critical voices concerning the concept of the postcolonial. The edited volume ranges from imperial histories to the contemporary culture of hybridity and multiculturalism, presenting a plurality of voices that extend beyond the Anglo-Saxon paradigm, proposing new centers.

Gandhi, Leela. *Postcolonial Theory. A Critical Introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

This is a critical introduction that maps out this field in terms of its wider philosophical and intellectual context, drawing important connections between postcolonial theory and poststructuralism, postmodernism, Marxism, and feminism. Gandhi assesses the contribution of major theorists such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, and also points to postcolonialism's links to earlier thinkers such as Frantz Fanon and Mahatma Gandhi, sketching out the ethical possibilities for postcolonial theory to engage with cultural differences nonviolently.

Goldberg, David Theo, and Ato Quayson. *Relocating Postcolonialism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Relocating Postcolonialism brings together the essays of well-established contributors to postcolonialism as well as emergent scholars. The collection includes a conversation between John Comaroff and Homi Bhabha, as well as a new essay by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Challenging well-known ideas as well as exploring new areas of concern,

Relocating Postcolonialism investigates the state of postcolonial studies by examining its central lines of inquiry.

Huggan, Graham. *The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies provides a comprehensive overview of the scholarship in postcolonial studies, while also considering possible future developments in the field. The handbook is organized into five cross-referenced sections: "The Imperial Past," "The Colonial Present," "Theory and Practice," "Across the Disciplines," and "Across the World." The handbook reflects the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of postcolonial studies and insists on the continuing relevance of the colonial past in the contemporary globalized world.

Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

A classic comprehensive and introductory text to the field that well describes the historical and theoretical dimension of colonial and postcolonial studies. Loomba illustrates key features of the ideology and history of colonialism, presents recent developments in postcolonial theory and illustrates the intersection of feminism and postcolonial studies, as well as discussing the relation between globalization and postcolonialism.

McLeod, John. *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Beginning Postcolonialism is an excellent source for students approaching postcolonial studies for the first time. John McLeod introduces the origins and development of the field, presenting and elaborating on the major areas of concern in a clear, accessible, and engaging fashion. Theory is balanced and explained with practical examples, including close readings of classic texts as well as more innovative ones. The text teaches the reader how to apply postcolonial ideas and key concepts effectively, stimulating independent thinking about the possibilities and pitfalls of postcolonial critique.

Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

In this classic text of decolonial thinking Mignolo argues that coloniality is the darker side of Western modernity, constituted by a complex matrix of power that spans from the Renaissance through the late 20th century and present neoliberalism. Decoloniality requires delinking from the colonial matrix of power in order to undo Western modernity in its reckless quest for wealth accumulation and economic exploitation at the expense of the Global South.

Mongia, Padmini, ed. *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. London: Arnold, 1996.

This reader challenges the validity and usefulness of postcolonial theory by addressing the crisis in the field and its many contestations and acclaims. It collects and reviews some of the classics of the field, engaging with the issues raised by contemporary critics, offering arguments that strongly critique postcolonial theory.

Moore-Gilbert, Bart. *Postcolonial Theory. Contexts, Practices, Policies*. London: Verso, 1997.

A very comprehensible and systematic introduction to postcolonial theory that provides a detailed description of the institutional history of the field by analyzing in detail the arguments, debates, and responses. Moore-Gilbert offers a sophisticated and nuanced take on the relation between postcolonial theory and postcolonial criticism. He gives an extremely careful presentation of the complex and elusive work of the three principal representatives of postcolonial theory, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha, their reception, and their legacy.

Ray, Sangeeta, and Henry Schwarz. *The Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016.

This three-volume *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies* brings together scholarship assembled on the colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial condition, covering the period from 1492 to the present. It comprises 400 entries on canonical writers, key texts, genres, literary debates, colonized regions, and related terminology, including emerging topics such as environmentalism, electronic mass media, and the transnational social justice movement.

Schwarz, Henry, and Sangeeta Ray, eds. *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.

This volume is a good reference tool for examining the changes that have occurred and are still occurring in the aftermath of European colonization of the globe since 1492. It illustrates major themes and practices as well as exploring different regions affected by European colonization, intersecting local and global perspectives. The different contributions provide clear introductions to the major thinkers and intellectual schools that have informed strategies of national liberation worldwide.

Williams, Patrick, and Laura Chrisman, eds. *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

This collection provides an in-depth introduction to debates within postcolonial theory and criticism. The readings are drawn from a diverse selection of Third World and Western thinkers, both historical and contemporary. A general introduction to the volume as well as introductions to each section provide historical, theoretical, and political contexts for the readings.

Postcolonial Cinema Studies

Postcolonial cinema has much in common with developments that contest ethnic, minority, immigrant, or hyphenated essentialist labels while pointing to more porous and layered dynamics. Yet the focus of postcolonial cinema is on the analysis of contemporary or past asymmetries as dictated by multiple and overlapping histories of conquest and colonialism. The challenge and denaturalization of the colonial episteme is the task of postcolonial film theory, which focuses on the unframing of occluded histories, breaking with universalisms and learning to navigate more relational modes of knowledge production. There are various examples of films, filmmakers, and productions that could rightly pertain to the realm of postcolonial cinema, and also a series of films that might precede the technical definition of postcolonial cinema but that enter into that optic of critique that interrogates it. Major works in the development of this new field of studies are Hall 1989 and Chow 1998 on the relationship between film and cultural identity, Shohat and Stam 2003 on transnational media, the artistic and critical reflection of Minh-ha 1992, Minh-ha 1999, and Murphy and Williams 1997, and the more critical work on the relation between cinema and postcolonialism Ponzanesi and Waller 2012. Weaver-Hightower and Hulme 2014 offers a film-by-film overview of postcolonial films. Postcolonial cinema is therefore to be understood not as a new genre, or a new rubric, but as an optic through which questions of postcolonial historiography, epistemology, subjectivity, and geography can be addressed (see Ponzanesi and Waller 2012). Postcolonial cinema refers to a conceptual space that opens up occluded frames and proposes a new engagement with the visual that is decolonized and de-orientalized, becoming a relational mode of representation, opening the space for often repressed, omitted or deleted, unofficial histories of nations, communities, gender, and subaltern groups. Feminist examples include Trinh T. Minh-ha, who pointed out in her groundbreaking documentary *Reassemblage* (1982) that she intends “not to speak about/Just speak nearby,” unlike more conventional ethnographic documentary films, signaling the need not to make the Other the object of interpretation but let cinema as a medium and postcolonialism as an epistemology connect to difference as an empowering and generative source of creativity. If the postcolonial optic articulated by Trinh T. Minh-ha is less explicitly polemical than Third Cinema, it is still political and concerned with hegemony and oppression. Even though

postcolonial filmmakers engage with the critique of institutions in more oblique ways than the iconic figures of freedom fighters and revolutionary leaders, they still engage with societal issues by questioning and problematizing the cinematic tools, media technologies, and distribution networks through which we receive images and information. Postcolonial cinema, while maintaining engagement with collectives, refocuses on the specificity of the individuals, who are not ideal characters but multidimensional figures—often marginalized, subordinated, displaced, or deterritorialized.

Chow, Rey. "Film and Cultural Identity." In *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Edited by John Hillis and Pamela Church Gibson, 169–175. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

The article offers critical clues to the contentious relationship between film and cultural identity. According to Chow, film has always been a transcultural phenomenon, having as it does the capacity to transcend "culture" to create modes of fascination that are readily accessible and that engage audiences in ways independent of their linguistic and cultural specificities (p. 174).

Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation." *Journal of Cinema and Media* 36 (1989): 68–81.

The article investigates the connection between cultural identity and cinematic representation in the Caribbean area. According to the author, there are at least two ways of looking at cultural identity: one is in terms of shared culture and the other is a concept that recognizes the difference, which constitutes what and who people are. The author also discusses how cultural identity ties the modern era to the past and how points of recognition about the concept of cultural identity align with the discourses of the emerging Caribbean cinema. Available online by subscription.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. *Framer Framed*. London: Routledge, 1992.

This book brings together the scripts and visuals of three of Trinh Minh-ha's films: *Reassemblage*, *Naked Spaces—Living Is Round* and *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*. It also includes interviews with scholars and filmmakers on subjects such as ethnographic film, documentary form, political cinema, and deconstruction theory.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. *Cinema Interval*. London: Routledge, 1999.

This is a collection of Trinh's interviews and film scripts (*Tale of Love* and *Shoot for Contents*). The interviews focus on the relation of language to image and the interval or space between visual, textual, and musical communication. The interviews also expand on the roles played by such concepts as residue, resonance, repetition, indirectness, and foreignness in the creative process.

Murphy, David, and Patrick Williams. *Postcolonial African Cinema: Ten Directors*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997.

An important selection and presentation of postcolonial African filmmakers from the 1950s to the present. This volume brings together film studies, African cultural studies, and, in particular, postcolonial studies in order to combine the in-depth analysis of individual films and bodies of work by ten individual directors (e.g., Ousmane Sembene, Med Hondo, Idrissa Ouédraogo, Moufida Tlatli) with an interrogation of these films in relation to important theoretical concepts.

Ponzanesi, Sandra, and Marguerite Waller, eds. *Postcolonial Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

The diverse essays foreground the work of filmmakers in theorizing and comparing postcolonial conditions, recasting debates in both cinema and postcolonial studies. Postcolonial cinema is presented not as a rigid category, but as an active

through which to address questions of postcolonial historiography, geography, subjectivity, and epistemology. Divided into sections with separate introductions, the volume reviews a wide range of films, theory, and concepts from cinemas of Empire to globalization, focusing on the aesthetic specificities as well as the political implications of postcolonial cinema.

Shohat, Ella, and Robert Stam, eds. *Multiculturalism, Postcoloniality and Transnational Media*. New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press, 2003.

The volume brings many issues concerning media, multiculturalism, and globalization under the same umbrella, reflecting on issues of nation, race, gender, sexuality, and other axes of identity. To this purpose fields that are usually compartmentalized, such as media studies, literary theory, visual culture, and critical anthropology, are brought into dialogue with postcolonial and diasporic studies as well as some aspects of ethnic and area studies.

Weaver-Hightower, Rebecca, and Peter Hulme, eds. *Postcolonial Film. History, Empire and Resistance*. New York and London: Routledge, 2014.

This book examines films of the later 20th and early 21st centuries from postcolonial countries around the globe. The films are analyzed against the backdrop of history to form a site of interrogation for colonization and decolonization. Each chapter is a case study examining how a particular film from a postcolonial nation emerges from and reflects that nation's unique postcolonial situation.

Cinema and Race

Since the 1990s, the field of film studies has expanded its analytic paradigm to interrogate the representation of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and the nation. This is thanks in particular to the contribution of black feminism in the United States and its critique of psychoanalysis as a Western universalistic framework of patriarchy (see Gaines 2001, hooks 1992, Young 1995, Kaplan, 1997, and Doane 1991), and the rise of postcolonial studies, following the milestone publication *Orientalism* (cited as Said 1978 under General Overviews/Foundational Texts) and its aftermath. Stam and Spence 1983 offers one of the first interpretations of the relation between cinema and racism, followed by other interesting interventions such as Julien and Mercer 1988 on center and margins of visual representation, Diawara 1998 on black spectatorship, and hooks 1992 on black looks, through to more recent analysis such as that offered by Codell 2007 on gender and race in world cinema and Petty 2008 on black diasporic cinema 2008.

Codell, Julie F. *Genre, Gender, Race, and World Cinema*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

A volume of essays that focuses on the issues of gender, race, and ethnicity in the study of world cinema. It addresses the issue of negative stereotypes while offering analyses of important films from American, Asian, European, and African cinema.

Diawara, Manthia. "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance." *Screen* 29.4 (1998): 66–79.

Diawara focuses on the position of the black spectator and the problem of identification with the screen image when proposing distorted reflections of one's race and sex. Black spectatorship is then to be positioned as resistance, and as a refusal of identification leading to new forms of independent cinema. Available online by subscription.

Doane, Mary Ann, ed. "Dark Continents: Epistemologies of Racial and Sexual Difference in Psychoanalysis and

the Cinema.” In *Femmes Fatales*. 209–248. New York and London: Routledge, 1991.

This seminal essay discusses the relationship between race and psychoanalytic accounts of sexual difference. Drawing on the world of Franz Fanon, Doane analyzes two major American films: *The Birth of a Nation* and *Imitation of Life*.

Gaines, Jane. *Fire and Desire: Mixed-Race Movies in the Silent Era*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

Gaines analyzes cases of racial mixing in early cinema, contextualizing a series of silent films within contemporary understanding of race and class. This leads Gaines to question our reception of those images and their influence on modern cinema.

hooks, bell, ed. *Black Looks*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

In this collection of essays, hooks contests how white radical appropriation of blackness as Other leads to the commodification of the “primitive” by consumer culture.

Julien, Isaac, and Kobena Mercer. “De Margin and De Centre.” *Screen 29.4* (1988): 2–11.

Julien and Mercer discuss the racial ideologies that have placed whiteness at the center of visual representation and marginalized others, especially black females. As Julien and Mercer notice, the cinematic mirror often reflects back a distorted, unwanted image. Available online by subscription.

Kaplan, Ann E. *Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film and the Imperial Gaze*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Looking for the Other responds to the critique that white feminist film theories, especially psychoanalytic ones, have neglected issues of race. Kaplan defends a psychoanalytic approach to the racialized subject through examinations of gender and race in mainstream and independent film. The book is divided into two main sections: the first discusses the male and imperial gazes in Hollywood film. The second examines the ways in which independent films offer the alternative for the inter-racial gaze.

Petty, Sheila J. J. *Contact Zones: Memory, Origin, and Discourses in Black Diasporic Cinema*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008.

Petty offers an analysis of how African diasporic media work, analyzing diasporic feature films from North America, the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom, and highlighting their ongoing influences on contemporary artistic and theoretical discourses. The feature films and documentaries considered include *Sankofa*, *Daughters of the Dust*, and *The Man by the Shore*, among others. Diasporic thinkers (W. E. B. DuBois, Aimé Césaire, and Frantz Fanon) are included in the theoretical analysis along with more contemporary thinkers of the black diaspora.

Stam, Robert, and Louise Spence. “Colonialism, Racism, and Representation: An Introduction.” *Screen 24.2* (1983): 2–20.

One of the first works to analyze the relationship between racism and colonialism through the lens of film theory. It explores the historical and political context in which these films were made and explains the impact of these films on race relations and racial identity. Available online by subscription.

Young, Lola. *Fear of the Dark: "Race," Gender and Sexuality in the Cinema*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Young explores the production of racialized and gendered representations in feature films using an interdisciplinary cultural studies framework, which is inflected by psychoanalytic insights. The book offers a critical perspective on the portrayal of female black sexuality, especially of British films between 1950 and 1990, and questions the extent to which filmmakers have challenged this stereotypical image.

World Cinema

The definition of world cinema has always been contentious. It usually refers to cinema other than Hollywood, in short meaning production outside of the Western sphere, which includes European cinema. Important overview works are Nowell-Smith 1999, Chaudhuri 2005, and Hill and Gibson 2000. Nagib 2011 and Costanzo 2014 provide a more critical take on world cinema by exploring the relation with realism and genre. Nonetheless, in a time of increased globalization and intertwined patterns of production and distribution it is becoming increasingly difficult to define world cinema outside of the most traditional frame of "regional" cinema from other areas: East Asia (Hong Kong, India, China, Japan, Thailand), Africa (South Africa, Mali, Senegal, Egypt), Iran and the Middle East, and so forth. Examples of these localized cinemas with global resonance are Armes 2006 and Thackway 2003 on African cinema, Tomaselli 1988 on South African cinema, and Krings and Okome 2014 on Global Nollywood. Other important studies are Mishra 2002 on Bollywood, and Codell 2006 on genre, gender, and race in world cinema. As cinema transcends national borders with a wider perception of culture in the postcolonial era, it is necessary to reassess and rethink critically the way the term *world cinema* is deployed and understood, beyond the general label of worldwide cinema or as "the non-Hollywood cinema." *World cinema* can be a useful umbrella term as long as it criticizes the implicit American way of looking at the world, according to which Hollywood is the center and all other cinemas are the periphery.

Armes, Roy. *African Filmmaking: North and South of the Sahara*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Roy Armes examines African filmmaking across the continent, taking into account the legacy of the colonial era, accounting for film movements and the development of filmmaking from the colonial to the postcolonial context and paying particular attention to young filmmakers, from the experimental work of Jean Pierre Bekolo (Cameroon) to the fiction of Nabil Ayouch (Morocco).

Chaudhuri, Shohini. *Contemporary World Cinema: Europe, the Middle East, East Asia and South Asia*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

A good introduction to the field of world cinema, providing a well-organized overview of cinemas from different regions, introducing key concepts and issues, and focusing also on issues of production and distribution. It includes case studies of Scandinavian, Iranian, Hong Kong, and Indian cinema, and close analysis of twelve classic world films, including Thomas Vinterberg's *Festen*, Samira Makhmalbaf's *The Apple*, Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love*, and Ashutosh Gowariker's *Lagaan*.

Codell, Julie, ed. *Genre, Gender, Race and World Cinema: An Anthology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006.

A volume of essays that focuses on the issues of gender, race, and ethnicity in the study of world cinema. It addresses the issue of negative stereotypes while offering analyses of important films from American, Asian, European, and African cinema.

Costanzo, William V. *World Cinema through Global Genres*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.

An original approach to world cinema explored through the connections with genres and film figures such as warrior heroes, wedding films, horror films, and road movies. It brings new meaning to the concept of world cinema and film genre by offering examples that show how cinematic border crossings and cultural connections work among far-flung places.

Hill, John, and Pamela Church Gibson. *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

An extensive guide covering international films and genres from diverse regions such as New German, Australian, Indian, and South American cinema. The different contributors explain the key arguments and debates involved in the study of world cinema from the 1930s until today. These include the avant-garde, the documentary, and recent technological developments.

Krings, Matthias, and Onookome Okome, eds. *Global Nollywood. The Transnational Dimensions of an African Video Film Industry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014.

This volume, composed of fifteen essays, explores Nollywood as an African cultural production in its own right, highlighting controversies surrounding commodification, globalization, and the development of the film industry on a wider scale. It analyzes Nollywood as a theoretical concept and as a traveling concept that transmits the realities of the African continent across borders and continents.

Mishra, Vijay. *Bollywood Cinema: Temples of Desire*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.

This is one of the most engaging and respected introductions to Bollywood cinema, the largest film industry in the world. Vijay Mishra argues that Indian film production and reception is shaped by the desire for a national community and a pan-Indian popular culture expanding beyond the nation in the form of diasporic desire. Vijay combines the double methodology of film studies and postcolonial theory in understanding Bollywood according to its own narrative and aesthetic principles but also in relation to a global film industry.

Nagib, Lucia. *World Cinema and the Ethics of Realism*. London: Continuum, 2011.

Nagib provides a review of past debates and theories of cinematic realism, contextualizing her notion of an “ethics of realism” as an effort to escape what she regards as the judgmental tendencies of representational approaches to film analysis and criticism. She advocates discarding the notion of a single center, placing all the different cinemas, including Hollywood, on an equal footing on the world map. Nagib emphasizes that in multicultural, multi-ethnic societies, cinematic expressions from various origins cannot be seen as “the other” or different but rather as interconnected.

Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey, ed. *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

A classic comprehensive introduction to the field of world cinema from a historical perspective. It covers different aspects of the development of cinema from starts, studios, and cultural impact to major inventions and developments in the cinema business, its institutions, genres, and personnel, highlighting the evolution of national cinemas around the world as distinctive from Hollywood. A unique aspect of the book is the special insert with features on the filmmakers and personalities—Garbo and Godard, Keaton and Kurosawa, Bugs Bunny and Bergman.

Thackway, Melissa. *Africa Shoots Back: Alternative Perspectives in Sub-Saharan Francophone African Film*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.

A critical guide to African cinema seen beyond the strictures of the postcolonial dynamics. Thackway explores the role of women on screen and the position of African cinema in Europe, in particular France. African filmmakers have produced quite a number of films on the immigrant experience, which are often neglected in African film studies. Thackway draws a distinction between a first wave of such films, which focuses on the immigrants' experience of racism and exclusion, and a second wave in the 1990s, which tends to explore multiculturalism and integration.

Tomaselli, Keyan G. *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1988.

One of the first thorough analyses of South African cinema, which considers the role of foreign films and the development of a national industry. The role of racial relations and class structures under apartheid takes up an important part of the book.

Cinema, Migration, and Diaspora

Migrant and diasporic cinema looks at how colonial legacies and new forms of colonialism, some of which operate under the aegis of globalization, powerfully affect both individual nations and the world as a whole, and are responsible for new forms of racism, violence, and exclusionary practices. Migrant and diasporic cinema attempts to locate and voice how those who have been kept invisible have become center-stage multicultural and multiethnic presences. This transition is reflected in a growing number of films made by migrant and diasporic filmmakers who challenge traditional concepts of national identity by revisiting the notions of borders, language, and identity from new vantage points. The genesis of filmmaking is unclear when it comes to the question of origin and attribution. To simplify this, we can say that migrant and diasporic cinema still hinges on two key definitions: (1) films made by non-European filmmakers and (2) European films dealing with migrant themes, characters, and issues. Different theorists have worked on the framing of cinema in the context of migration and diaspora; the most notable cases are Naficy 2001, Marks 2000 on intercultural cinema, King and Wood 2001 on media and migration, Loshitzky 2010 on screening strangers, Ponzanesi and Berger 2016 on postcolonial cinemas in Europe, Desai 2004 on South Asian diasporic film, Berger and Komori 2010 on polyglot cinema, Grossman and O'Brien 2007 on projecting migration, Berghahn and Sternberg 2010 on migrant and diasporic film in contemporary Europe, and Tarr 2007 on Maghrebi-French (Beur) filmmaking. From an aesthetic point of view, migrant and diasporic cinema introduces a complex and eclectic mix of styles, genres, and forms, often emanating from non-Western traditions (Naficy 2001). Despite agreement on these key elements, migrant and diasporic cinema remains a rather controversial notion because cinema depends on an extensive collective effort, more so than other creative forms (e.g., literature, art, photography), and this therefore complicates the limitations of the label of "migrant" or "diasporic" via their application to the director. "Migrant and diasporic cinema" extends along more complex lines of mode of production, distribution channels, and targeted audiences.

Berger, Verena, and Miya Komori, eds. *Polyglot Cinema: Migration and Transcultural Narration in France, Italy, Portugal and Spain*. Vienna: LIT, 2010.

This anthology focuses on issues of plurilingualism, multilingualism and polyglottism in migrant films from France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. In addition to the close analysis of key films, the essays cover theories of translation and language use as well as central paradigms of cultural studies, especially those of locality, globality, and postcolonialism.

Berghahn, Daniela, and Claudia Sternberg, eds. *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and Diasporic Film in*

Contemporary Europe. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

This collection of essays examines the cinema of migration and diaspora in postcolonial Europe from the 1980s onward. It analyzes the work of filmmakers of immigrant descent and the representations of the experience of migration in cinema with a focus on gender and ethnic relations. It also contributes to an exploration of the institutional and economic factors that shape the production, distribution, and reception of migrant and diasporic cinema.

Desai, Jigna. *Beyond Bollywood: The Cultural Politics of South Asian Diasporic Film*. New York and London: Routledge, 2004.

Provides an introduction to Bollywood cinema from a critical cultural studies perspective that takes into account postcoloniality, globalization, and gender/queer analysis. It analyzes films such as *Mississippi Masala*, *Bhaji on the Beach*, and *Fire* and films such as *Bombay Boys* (1998), which are part of the new independent productions within India that still reflect and respond to the patterns of diasporic South Asia.

Grossman, Alan, and Áine O'Brien, eds. *Projecting Migration: Transcultural Documentary Practice*. London: Wallflower, 2007.

This volume focuses on the use of documentary by activists and scholars contributing to a new understanding of migration. The authors analyze how documentary filmmakers use reflexivity, performativity, and provocation to challenge xenophobic and ethnocentric discourses about immigrants. It also addresses the modes of production and aesthetic specificities of migrant cinema.

King, Russell, and Nancy Wood, eds. *Media and Migration: Constructions of Mobility and Difference*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.

This volume explores the relationship between the contemporary media and immigration, using examples from a range of countries. It includes essays on the ethics of hospitality and spectatorship in European cinema. In one of these essays, David Forgacs states that immigrant films allow two types of looking: one that establishes a vicarious identification with immigrant characters through immersion and one that in a distanced way exoticizes and eroticizes immigrant bodies.

Loshitzky, Yosefa. *Screening Strangers: Migration and Diaspora in Contemporary European Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

This book focuses on the representation and negotiation of identity in several European films that challenge traditional notions of borders, language, and belonging. Films such as Bernardo Bertolucci's *Besieged*, Stephen Frears's *Dirty Pretty Things*, Mathieu Kassovitz's *La Haine*, and Michael Winterbottom's *In This World*, *Code 46*, and *The Road to Guantanamo* are analyzed in relation to different phases of the migrant trajectory, with departure, arrival, and hospitality: "Journey of Hope" (chapter 1), "In the Promised Land" (chapters 2, 3, and 4), and "New Europe" (chapters 4 and 5).

Marks, Laura. *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.

Marks elaborates on the phenomenological experience of homelessness and the politics of displacement, exile, and diaspora. In her analysis of the relationships between audiovisual media and cultural memory, she foregrounds what she calls "haptic visuality" (the sense of touch evoked visually—at the limits of vision) in her discussion of how memory is embedded in and embodied by the senses and therefore mediated by the very fabric and feel of film.

Naficy, Hamid. *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Hamid Naficy has explored in great detail the elements that characterize exilic and diasporic cinema, which he describes as “accented,” to express how the origin of the filmmaker impacts on not only thematic elements but also stylistic aspects of the film. Accented cinema might be characterized by questions of belonging and identity (travel and journeys, borders and confinement), by language use (multilingualism, orality, and accents), modes of production (interstitial, collective forms of production), narrative style (autobiographical and epistolary), and the addition of haptic elements (structures of feeling accented through the senses of touch and smell).

Ponzanesi, Sandra, and Verena Berger, eds. *Special Issue: Postcolonial Cinemas in Europe: Migration, Identity and Spatiality in Film Genres. Transnational Cinemas 7.2* (2016).

All contributions explore new ways of unpacking Europe by analyzing conventional as well as experimental film genres through postcolonial lenses. They furthermore offer alternative readings of space and mobility in European cinema at the crossroads of local, transnational, and global re- and deterritorialization. The special issue includes the analysis of mainstream films, documentaries, and road movies that subvert traditional understanding of genres in migrant and diasporic cinema. The editors’ “Introduction: Genres and Tropes in Postcolonial Cinema(s) in Europe” appears on pp. 111–117. Available online by subscription.

Tarr, Carrie. “Maghrebi-French (Beur) Filmmaking in Context.” *Cineaste* 33.1 (2007): 32–37.

This article deals with the term *beur* in relation to the film industry. The term *beur* was coined in the early 1980s as an assertive ethnicity minority term to protest against white French mainstream culture. Beur cinema focuses on problems of identity and integration faced by second-generation immigrants of Maghrebi descent in France. Available online by subscription.

Individual Postcolonial Films

Though it is very hard to define what makes a film “postcolonial,” it is important to indicate some films as representative of the postcolonial debate, either because they deal with the issue of colonialism and decolonization in their subject matter, such as the classic *Battle of Algiers* (Pontecorvo 1966), *Camp de Thiaroye* (Sembene 1987), and *Lagaan* (Gowariker 2001), or because they offer an analysis of the postcolonial impact of colonization on contemporary societies, such as Haneke’s *Caché* (2005) and Akomfrah’s 2012 the *Nine Muses*. Other films to be considered in this category might refer to other forms of domination that are not exclusively related to European imperialism, such as Rithy Pahn’s the *Missing Picture* (2014) on Cambodia or *Divine Intervention* (2002) by Suleiman on the Palestinian/Israeli conflict or Bollain’s *Even the Rain* on indigenous rights in Latin America (2010). Rosi’s *Fuocoammare* (Rosi 2016) deals with the specificity of the migration crisis in the Mediterranean through a documentary lens, whereas films such as Sissako’s *Bamako* (2006) explore neocolonial dynamics in Africa and the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as an imperialist tool. To conclude, postcolonial films are not a genre or a strict category but imply a way of looking at and interpreting films through a postcolonial optic that enhances a critical intervention in the issues of power and resistance applied to medium specificity and the visual coding of cinema.

Akomfrah, John, dir. *The Nine Muses*. Ghana and the United Kingdom: New Wave Films, 2012.

This experimental film by John Akomfrah combines archival footage with elliptical shots of an anonymous black figure alone in the Alaskan wilderness to tell the story of the immigrant experience of those coming into the United Kingdom from

1960 onward. Split into nine chapters, each of which is dedicated to one of the Greek muses, the film interweaves quotations from Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Dickinson, Beckett, T.S. Eliot, and James Joyce, showing how stories normally seen through the lens of postcolonialism could be interpreted in existential or mythic terms.

Bollaín, Icíar, dir. *Even the Rain*. Spain, Mexico, and France: Vitagraph Films, 2010.

Even the Rain sets up an intriguing dialogue about Spanish imperialism through incidents taking place some 500 years apart, while examining the personal belief systems of the members of a film crew headed by director Sebastian and his producer Costa who arrive in Bolivia to make a revisionist film about the conquest of Latin America. Set in February and March of 2000 when real-life protests against the privatization of water rocked the nation, the film reflexively blurs the line between fiction and reality, showing the plight of Latin America's dispossessed.

Gowariker, Ashutosh, dir. *Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India*. India: Aamir Khan Productions, 2001.

A Bollywood film on the surface that offers a story of resistance to British colonization and social injustices. Bhuvan (played by Aamir Khan) defends the Indian rural village against the evil British captain Andrew Russell (Paul Blackthorne) by challenging him to a game of cricket (Indians do not yet know how to play) that would bring an end to their unjust and oppressive taxes in the event of an Indian victory. Romance, leadership, sport, class, and caste intermingle splendidly in a four-hour-long visual and musical spectacle.

Haneke, Michael, dir. *Caché*. France: Les Films du Losange, 2005.

What characterizes *Caché* as a postcolonial film is not only its subject matter, but also its visual style. Haneke's ingenious device of using anonymous videotapes is an occasion to revisit the visual dynamics of France's lingering colonial guilt. The film engages with Lacan's concept of the gaze, combining, as Fanon did, the psychodynamics of postcolonial guilt with a critique of the colonial field of vision. Haneke's film questions reality, history, memory, and identity, reformulating the conventions of cinema for the purposes of rendering the effects of subjugated histories.

Panh, Rithy, dir. *The Missing Picture*. Cambodia and France: Les Acacias, 2014.

The Missing Picture explores filmmaker Rithy Panh's quest to create the missing images from the period when the Khmer Rouge ruled over Cambodia, between 1975 and 1979. Panh uses intricately detailed clay figurines intercut with archival footage that he was able to find to relay what is indelibly recorded in his memory; he creates the missing pictures of what does not exist in photographs or film.

Pontecorvo, Gillo, dir. *The Battle of Algiers/La Bataille d'Alger*. Italy and Algeria: Rizzoli, 1966.

The film narrates the dramatic events of 1957, a key period in Algeria's long struggle for independence from France, where guerrilla tactics were deployed by the FLN (Front de Libération *Nationale*) against the French imperial army. A postcolonial film par excellence, *The Battle of Algiers* offers a stunning documentary style while containing no archival footage or newsreel material. It is through editing, grainy black and white photography, and the participation of nonprofessional actors that the "politics of truth" is realized in effective political and aesthetic ways.

Rosi, Gianfranco, dir. *Fire at Sea/Fuocoammare*. Italy and France: Cinéart, 2016.

Fire at Sea presents the tragedy of Lampedusa outside of the regular schemes and screens, combining the migrant drama with the ordinary lives of people on the island, mostly through the perspective of a 12-year-old boy, Samuele, whose lazy eye becomes a metaphor for the absent sightedness of Europe. Both films propose a new aesthetic of the border, facing

new imaginaries for Europe where spaces of solidarity and cosmopolitanism are still possible.

Sembene, Ousmane, and Thierno Ndiaye, dir. *Camp de Thiaroye*. Senegal, Algeria, and Tunisia: Enaproc, Films Domireew, Films Kajoor, 1987.

The film was shot on African soil. It deals with a dramatic depiction of Senegalese soldiers after serving their time in the French army during World War II. Still considered second-class citizens, these famous *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* decide to organize a mutiny against their revocation of pay. The French commando retorts by killing all African soldiers in their tents at night, producing a massacre that will remain ingrained in history and ignite independence movements.

Sissako, Abderrahmane, dir. *Bamako*. Mali, France, and United States: Artificial Eye, New Yorker Films, 2006.

This courageous movie centers on a symbolic trial taking place in a courtyard of Bamako, the capital of Mali, where international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF have been brought up on charges against African society because of their disastrous economic policies, which have left Africa caught in a vise of debt. Witnesses from all over, most of them real people and very articulate, are called upon to testify about imperial exploitation, neocolonialism, and globalization.

Suleiman, Elia, dir. *Divine Intervention*. France, Morocco, Germany, and United States: Avatar Films, 2002.

Set against the background of Palestinian life under Israeli occupation, the film focuses on the longing of two lovers. The film has a surrealist touch and is a deadpan comedy of sorts. The film's consideration as a candidate for Best Foreign Film at the Academy Awards was an occasion for considerable controversy, based on the rumors that the Academy Motion Picture did not recognize Palestine as a state according to their regulations. The film was eventually considered for an Oscar, as the committee decided to treat Palestine as an exception.

Postcolonial Films and Gender

Another important aspect is to understand films as postcolonial not only for their subject matter but also because of the aesthetic interventions and innovations they make in proposing a different representation of the "Other" or of intercultural and interracial relationships, focusing on the position of minorities, and the intersection of race, gender, ethnicity, and religion, and highlighting power dissymmetries and a politics of resistance that is articulated visually as well. Some critical texts offer a good overview such as the pioneering work Minh-Ha 1989 along with more recent publications such as Ramanathan 2006 and the ambitious companion Hole, et al. 2017. Among the films dealing with issues of postcolonialism and gender it is worth mentioning *Bhaji on the Beach* (Gurinder Chadha, 1993), *Monsoon Wedding* by Mira Nair (2001), Tlatli's *Silence of the Palace* (1994), and *Fire* by Deepa Mehta (1996), all films with an explicit gender component. *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002) by Frears can also be included as it offers an analysis of the intersection of migration and transnational dynamics in relation to class, sexuality, and race in a European context.

Chadha, Gurinder, dir. *Bhaji on the Beach*. UK: First Look International, 1993.

Bhaji on the Beach is an entertaining as well as dramatic representation of the lives of South Asian women living in England, portrayed during a one-day trip to the seaside resort of Blackpool, which unleashes all sorts of cross-cultural and generational conflicts linked to living between two or more cultures.

Frears, Stephen, dir. *Dirty Pretty Things*. UK: Buena Vista International, 2002.

Dirty Pretty Things is a film about illegal economies and illegal migrants in London. The film contests the image of London familiar from glossy tourist representations, showing the underside of the cosmopolitan city by bringing to the foreground the illegal workers who keep up the facade of the service industry, providing hotel management, cab driving, and sexual favors. This underclass is portrayed through three main characters in the film: an illegal immigrant from Nigeria, Okwe; a Turkish asylum seeker, Senay; and a black British prostitute, Juliette.

Hole, Kristin Lene, Dijana Jelača, E. Ann Kaplan, and Patrice Petro, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Cinema and Gender*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2017.

An ambitious companion of forty-three chapters that is both an overview of, and intervention into the field of cinema and gender. The essays included here address a variety of geographical contexts, from Islam and women to female audience reception in Nigeria, and changing class and race norms in Bollywood. Some essays address the histories of female filmmakers in a variety of non-Western contexts.

Mehta, Deepa, dir. *Fire*. Canada and India: Zeitgeist Films, 1996.

A controversial film that was initially banned in India for explicitly showing homosexual relations. Sita and Radha are young Indian women whose husbands choose celibacy or mistresses over their wives. The two women become friends and grow closer together, forming a forbidden but liberating relationship.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Anthropology and discourse theory are used to connect the oppression of women with the oppression of Third World peoples.

Moufida, Tlatli, dir. *The Silence of the Palace*. Tunisia: Amorce Diffusion, Capitol Entertainment, 1994.

A painful story of a singer who visits the palace where her mother was once employed as a servant, signaling the last days of French influence in Tunis and the rise of the independence movement. The visit to the palace unleashes many traumatic recollections of her mother's abuse and sexual harassment by the palace owners and her mother's attempt to spare her daughter from the same destiny at her own expense.

Nair, Mira, dir. *Monsoon Wedding*. France, Germany, Italy, and United States: USA Films, 2001.

Bollywood meets independent cinema where modern India clashes with a tradition in which gender, caste, and class oppression are still dominant vibrant. The occasion is a family reunion for a wedding in Punjab, which follows an arranged marriage. The film is built around five intersecting stories that emerge, each navigating different aspects of love as they cross boundaries of class, continent, and morality. The film deals with sensitive issues of incest, caste division, and gender inequalities.

Ramanathan, Geetha. *Feminist Auteurs*. London: Wallflower, 2006.

Ramanathan examines film from diverse cultural traditions, while paying attention to the feminist intervention in different cultural contexts. There are exhaustive interpretations of twenty-four films, both classic and contemporary, including *India*

Song, Bhaji on the Beach, Chocolat, and Daughters of the Dust.

Shohat, Ella. "Gender and the Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema." In *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices*. Edited by Ella Shohat, 17–69. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006a.

Ella Shohat has written extensively on the crucial role of sexual difference for the culture of empire. In this seminal essay she discusses how imperial narratives are organized around metaphors of rape, fantasies of rescue, and eroticized geographies. Gender and colonial discourses intersect with Hollywood's exploitation of Asia, Africa, and Latin America as the pretexts for eroticized images.

Shohat, Ella. "Post-Third Worldist Culture: Gender, Nation, and the Cinema." In *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices*. Edited by Ella Shohat, 290–330. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006b.

In this essay Shohat examines recent post-Third World feminist film productions in order to see how the reversing of the imperial and exoticizing representations takes place. The term *post-Third World* indicates a moving away from this dichotomy toward more intertwined and diasporic formations that signify transnational formations and modes of production. Post-Third World analysis proposes an engagement with issues of nation, race, and gender, critiquing national movements and ethnic communities that are exclusive and monocultural.

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