

Response paper question – for viewing of *Namesake* 29 and 31 January

This movie deals with the challenge of identity in the context of migration and living in multiple cultural contexts simultaneously. Focus specifically on the son eventually named Gogol. What identity issues does he struggle with? What events trigger shifts in his identification? In what ways is his experience, triggered by the migration of his parents to the US, similar to and different from the multi-cultural experiences that Jaffrey and Nandy both address for people who remain in India? Feel free to discuss the movie together following its conclusion on January 31, and then individually prepare a one-page response highlighting the connections between elements in the movie and the theoretical discussions and readings that we have completed so far.

483 – Religion and Identity in South Asia

Spring 2008

Potential research topics

Final projects must be narrowed considerably and should focus on questions surrounding identity, broadly defined. This list is suggestive, not exhaustive. Final project selection should be declared by February 26.

Issues between religions and other elements of identity

- gender
- caste
- culture, language, westernization

Contested religious definitions

government (Indian or British) and religious identity

Contemporary practices in relation to identity

- Sacred sites / pilgrimages
- rituals / festivals
- inter-religious participation

Historical events and religious identity

- partition of South Asia
- conflicts between Sikhs and Hindus (1920 gurdwara movement, 1980's)
- Babri Masjid / Ramjanmabhumi

Specific religions and their formations

- Hindu nationalism
- Sikh separatism
- Buddhism and conversion of untouchables
- Jainism and anti-conversion laws
- specific guru movements, in any religion
- Muslims and their minority status
- St. Thomas Christians