Cultural Change and Fluidity through Art

There has been a lot written on Deepa Mehta’s films *Fire* and *Water*. Scholars such as Subheshni Moodley have argued that Mehta is concerned for the subaltern, about the suffering of the Indian women and who is trying bring change in Indian culture. However, I argue that Mehta’s message is not merely for Indian women, but her message is universal. Mehta’s films show that choices should be available to all women. Her message is about the condition of women in our global culture. What I mean is that cultures are fluid and are affected by other cultures in our global society. Her films address the issue what I call genderism, that is, the oppression of women by both males and females. Feminist philosophers such as Simone de Beauvoir argue for the equality of women, but this issue is better addressed if we consider philosopher Hannah Arendt’s view of the private and the public and an individual’s obligation to think. Thinking in the sense of the speech is political if it leads to action, and thus it is crucial for the survival of the human race. Arendt is not an explicit feminist, but she is a humanist thinker. Thus, the issue of discrimination against women is the issue of preserving the human race.