

HONORS 392: CONTEMPORARY EAST ASIAN CINEMA

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

SEMESTER: Spring 2018
CLASS HOURS: Mon./Wed. 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.
CLASSROOM: BSB 107
SCREENINGS: Online (ACNS Vid Library)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Hye Seung Chung
EMAIL:
OFFICE HRS: Mon./Wed. 4:20 – 5:20 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is not a survey of the entire history of various Asian cinemas; rather our focus will be exclusively directed to films made in Japan, Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea in the past four decades. We will examine how the global/local geopolitics specific to the post-Berlin Wall era (the dismantling of Cold War institutions; the passing of authoritarian regimes; the boom and bust of the Asian economy; the international popularity of Asian art and genre films) have influenced the reshaping of New Asian cinemas across borders. Attention will be also given to specific genres, such as the samurai film, the martial arts film, animation, the historical drama, the family melodrama, the social problem film, the horror film, queer cinema, and “extreme cinema.”

The first section of our course will investigate the ways in which historical traumas (wars, massacres, revolutions, and uprisings) have been revisited and redressed in the post-Cold War cinemas of Japan, China, Taiwan, and South Korea. What is the relationship between history and national cinema? How do such concepts as imperialism, nationalism, postcolonialism, guilt and trauma play a role in films that shoulder the “burden of history” and represent the “unrepresentable”? The second section explores selected auteurs and stars familiar to international cinephiles (such as Wong Kar-wai, Maggie Cheung, Gong Li, Zhang Yimou, Tsai Ming-liang, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Kim Ki-duk, Hong Sang-soo, Song Kang-ho, Bong Joon-ho, Oshima Nagisa, and Kitano “Beat” Takeshi). In the process, we will identify the themes, styles, genres and ideological/cultural content of East Asian film canons in the West. Are there specific aesthetic trends and thematic echoes among these films from different nations? Is canon-making itself an Orientalist act of cultural imperialism? The final weeks will be devoted to border-crossing films such as Ang Lee’s *The Wedding Banquet* (1993) and Park Chan-wook’s *Oldboy* (2003)—works that highlight such critical concerns as diaspora, hybridity, transnationalism, and globalization.

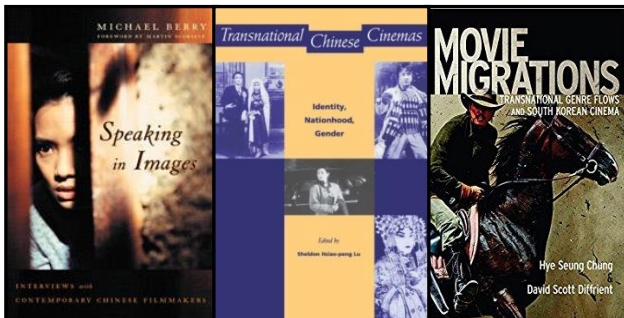


REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Michael Berry, ed., *Speaking in Images: Interviews with Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers* (Columbia Univ. Press, 2005)

Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, ed., *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1997)

Hye Seung Chung & David Scott Diffrient, *Movie Migrations: Transnational Genre Flows and South Korean Cinema* (Rutgers Univ. Press, 2015)



Academic Integrity Policy:

This course adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog (p. 7) and the Student Conduct Code.

Assignments, Grade Percentages, and Student Responsibilities

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (10%)	<p>Students are required to attend each class meeting. Absences for medical emergencies or participation in official university events are excusable only when you submit proper documentation (with the exact date you missed recorded). You will fail the course if you miss 8 or more class meetings without an excuse. If you have an emergency that calls for early departure from class, you must notify the professor in advance, otherwise it will be marked as an absence. It is important that you come to each meeting on time so that you do not disrupt lectures and/or presentations. Habitual tardiness will affect your grade negatively. You are expected to complete the assigned readings and screenings, and prepare questions and ideas for the film discussions. In order to foster active discussions, use of personal electronic devices (laptops, cellular phones, MP3 players, etc.) is not allowed during the class time.</p>
WEEKLY RESPONSES (22%)	<p>Each week students will write a thoughtful 300-word answer to the Questions of the Week (11 responses in total). These responses should engage the film, readings, and PowerPoint lecture material and should be posted on the Canvas Discussion Board under the appropriate question heading. Points will be determined based on the quality of students' insights and ability to apply concepts from the readings to the film analysis. Due 10pm, each Tuesday.</p>
NATIONAL CINEMA ESSAY (13%)	<p>A 5-page critical essay that examines one of the following films as an example of national cinema: <i>Dreams</i>, <i>Black Rain</i>, <i>Good Men</i>, <i>Good Women</i>, <i>Farewell My Concubine</i>, or <i>Peppermint Candy</i>. Due: February 19.</p>
MID-TERM EXAM (20%)	<p>The midterm exam will take place in class on February 28 and will consist of short identifications, matching, fill-in-the-blank questions, and short essays. There will be a review session before the exam date and a study guide will be distributed.</p>
FILM PRESENTATION (10%)	<p>In groups of two, students are required to give one 20-minute presentation on one required film (focusing on its thematic and stylistic traits, its director and/or other creative personnel, and its historical and cultural meanings). These presentations will be graded based on both the quality of the research and the effectiveness of in-class delivery. Each group should prepare a 3-page study guide summarizing required readings and additional findings and send me your draft 24 hours prior to your presentation day for pre-approval. After revising the draft as instructed, you should post it on Canvas/Discussions before your presentation. Include in your posting 4-6 open-ended discussion questions about the film and related readings to pose to classmates during your presentation. In your study guide, you should cite research sources such as books, book chapters, and academic articles related to your topic (Wikipedia, IMDB, and film blog sites are good places to start but will not be counted as legitimate research sources). Use the library catalog and research databases (e.g. Academic Search Premier, MLA International Bibliography, JSTOR, and ProjectMUSE). It is also recommended that you review any supplemental materials on DVD. Presenters are encouraged to incorporate multimedia elements (such as PowerPoint slides, frame grabs, and/or film clips) for effective communication. For fair evaluations, each group member should submit a list of work division/group experience report along with your presentation materials.</p>

FINAL PAPER
(INCLUDING A 2-PAGE PROPOSAL
AND ORAL PRESENTATION)
(25%)

In Week 14 and 15, our seminar will culminate with an informal workshop in which each student is required to **present a final paper draft for approximately 10 minutes**. Each student's presentation/paper topic should be consulted and approved by the professor in advance. Students should post a **2-page outline/draft of the presentation** on Canvas the night before the class meeting. On **May 9**, a well-researched **10-page paper on a contemporary East Asian film of students' choice** (outside of the class screenings) is due. While it is important to offer rigorous textual analysis, the final paper should demonstrate a high level of historical understanding, enhanced through in-class readings.

GENERAL NOTES ABOUT THIS CLASS

Screenings

Watching the assigned film(s) each week is mandatory and key to your success in this class. Because we do not have additional screening hours for the course, I had CSU's Academic Computing & Networking Services (**ACNS**) digitize all required screenings. You can stream class films at <https://wsnet2.colostate.edu/cwis24/acns/video/search>. One exception: *Oldboy* is available through the library catalog. You will need to log in using CSU ID and password for both websites. You must come to Wednesday's meetings after having watched each week's film(s) and having posted film/reading responses on Canvas (see "Assignments, Grade Percentages, and Responsibilities"). In addition, DVD copies of required films are on reserve at Morgan Library and in the Honors Program office.

Discussions

Although I will occasionally give short lectures so as to fill in biographical details and historical contexts related to each week's topics, readings, and screenings, this course will be **discussion-driven**. Come to class ready to share your ideas.

Papers

All papers should be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins and in 10-12 pt. font (include page numbers). Be sure to include your name, course title, and date on the **title page**. Please visit me in advance during my office hours or by appointment to discuss your topics.

Plagiarism

"Plagiarism" means turning in written work as your own that is not your own. Do not quote or paraphrase a text without including appropriate citations. When you take the ideas, arguments, or words of another individual without indicating that they are not your own, you are stealing. The consequences of plagiarism may include: an F on the assignment and a non-passing grade for the course. Academic dishonesty is also grounds for suspension.

CONTENT NOTE

Some of the films that we will watch this semester foreground themes and contain images that you might find offensive. Please be aware of the fact that discomfort is frequently part of the learning process and that we can benefit from exposure to a wide variety of texts. While I will work to accommodate everyone's concerns, the course demands that we explore sensitive topics on occasion and be mature in our discussions of selected films.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- [1] develop critical-analytical skills useful in evaluating historically significant films**
- [2] gain insight into the cultural and industrial aspects of national film production**
- [3] learn about the political systems, local economies, and religious traditions of five East Asian regions**
- [4] discover major filmmakers and popular transnational motion picture stars from East Asia**
- [5] strengthen communication skills through class presentations and group discussions**

This and additional info can be found at: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/film.shtml>

THE ELEMENTS OF COMPOSITION

Film is an incredibly complex medium. Just take a look at the credits at the end of any film. Each of the people listed there has contributed something essential to the film's production - from lighting, to sound, to wardrobe, to editing, to special effects. Because there's so much to talk about, you'll have to be selective if you want to write a good, focused essay.

If you are a novice to writing about film, take the time to familiarize yourself with film terms. Knowing the terms sometimes helps you to see them on the screen. You'll begin to "see" the difference between a cutaway and a jump cut, or between a dissolve and a fade. Make sure you have a working understanding of how all the major components of film - writing, acting, lighting, composition, editing, sound, and so on - work together to create what you see on the screen.

Then, when sitting down to watch a particular film, choose from among these many elements one or two that interest you. Is the editing particularly effective? Focus on that and don't struggle to take note of the lighting. Do you find the director's use of jump cuts innovative? Watch closely when these cuts occur. Perhaps the director has used jump cuts consistently whenever characters are engaged in intimate conversations. What is he trying to convey through this technique?

If you are entirely unfamiliar with a film and aren't sure what you should be looking for, ask your professor. He or she should be able to point you to those scenes or techniques that deserve special attention.

Annotating Shot Sequences

Whenever you prepare to write a paper, you take notes. However, when analyzing a film, you may want to take a very particular sort of notes in which you *annotate* a shot sequence or scene.

Annotating a scene involves labeling each shot in a sequence. For example, a scene may begin with an establishing shot, which segues into a dolly shot. The dolly shot comes to rest in a medium shot of the main character, who is looking off frame. Next comes a reverse angle subjective close-up shot, which dissolves into a montage.

Labeling each of these shots - preferably using a system of abbreviations for efficiency's sake - enables you to keep track of the complex sequence of shots. When you review your annotations, you might see a pattern of camera movement and editing decisions (or, on the other hand, some unusual variation in the pattern) that better helps you to understand 1) how the director crafted his film, and 2) why the film has a certain effect on the audience.

DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, and ASSIGNMENTS	REQUIRED SCREENINGS
<p>1</p> <p>Jan. 17</p>	<p>WHAT IS NATIONAL CINEMA?</p> <p>Course Introduction: Studying East Asian Cinema</p> <p>- Serper, "Kurosawa's <i>Dreams</i>" [Canvas]</p> <p>clips: "Akira Kurosawa: Composing Moments"</p>	 <p>Akira Kurosawa's <i>Dreams</i> (<i>Yume</i>, Kurosawa, 1990)</p>
<p>* MODULE 1: HISTORY, MEMORY, AND TRAUMA *</p>		
<p>2</p> <p>Jan. 22</p> <p>Jan. 24</p>	<p>1945: THE BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI</p> <p>- Higson, "The Concept of National Cinema" [Canvas] - White, "The Modernist Event" [Canvas]</p> <p>- Dorsey and Matsuoka, "Narrative Strategies of Understatement in <i>Black Rain</i>" [Canvas]</p> <p>clips: <i>Hiroshima mon amour</i> (1959), <i>Barefoot Gen</i> (1983), <i>11'09"01 segment</i> (2002)</p>	 <p><i>Black Rain</i> (<i>Kuroi ame</i>, Imamura, 1989)</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Jan. 29</p> <p>Jan. 31</p>	<p>1947: THE FEBRUARY 28 INCIDENT (TAIWAN)</p> <p>NO CLASS (professor's jury duty)</p> <p>-Liao, "Rewriting Taiwanese National History" [Canvas] - Yip, "Constructing a Nation" (<i>Transnational Chinese Cinemas</i>, 139–68)</p> <p>clips: <i>Boys from Fengkuei</i> (1983), <i>The Puppetmaster</i> (1993)</p>	 <p><i>Good Men, Good Women</i> (<i>Haonam haonu</i>, Hou, 1995)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Feb. 5</p> <p>Feb. 7</p>	<p>1966-1976: CHINA'S CULTURAL REVOLUTION</p> <p>- Lee, "Historical Reflections on the Cultural Revolution as a Political Movement" [Canvas] - "Chen Kaige" (<i>Speaking in Images</i>, 83–104)</p> <p>- Larson, "The Concubine and the Figure of History" (<i>Transnational Chinese Cinemas</i>, 331–46)</p> <p>clips: <i>Yellow Earth</i> (1982), <i>To Live</i> (1994)</p>	 <p><i>Farewell My Concubine</i> (<i>Bawang bieji</i>, Chen, 1993)</p>

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1980: The KWANGJU UPRISING (SOUTH KOREA)

Feb. 12 - Cumings, "Kwangju" and "Anti-Americanism and Anti-Koreanism" [Canvas]

Feb. 14 - Chung & Diffrient, "Forgetting to Remember" [Canvas]

clips: *Petal* (1996), *A Taxi Driver* (2017)



Peppermint Candy
(*Bakha sat'ang*, Lee, 2000)

*** MODULE 2: AUTEURS AND STARS ***

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HONG KONG: WONG KAR-WAI & MAGGIE

Feb. 19 *** NATIONAL CINEMA ESSAY DUE ***
- Abbas, "Wong Kar-wai" [Canvas]

Feb. 21 - Bordwell, "Romance on Your Menu" [Canvas]
- Brunette, "Chungking Express" [Canvas]

clips: *In the Mood for Love* (2000), *2046* (2004)



Chungking Express
(*Chung hing sam lan*, Wong, 1994)

7

MIDTERM

Feb. 26 Review (Study Day)

Feb. 28 *** MIDTERM EXAM ***

8

JAPAN: OSHIMA NAGISA & KITANO TAKESHI


Mar. 5 - Tessier, "Oshima Nagisa or The Battered Energy of Desire" [Canvas]
- Desser, "Toward a Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai Film" [Canvas]

Mar. 7 - Stephens, "Deadly Youth" [Canvas]
clips: *Death by Hanging* (1968), *Zatoichi* (2003)




Taboo
(*Gohatto*, Oshima, 1999)


*** SPRING RECESS (Mar. 10-18) ***

9	CHINA: ZHANG YIMOU & GONG LI	
Mar. 19	- Chow, "The Force of Surfaces" [Canvas] - "Zhang: Flying Colors" (<i>Speaking in Images</i> , 109-36)	
Mar. 21	- Cui, "Gendered Perspective" (<i>Transnational Chinese Cinemas</i> , 303-30)	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Ju Dou (Zhang, 1990) </div>
	clips: <i>Hero</i> (2002), <i>House of Flying Daggers</i> (2004)	

10	TAIWAN/KOREA: TSAI MING-LIANG & KIM KI-DUK	
Mar. 26	- "Tsai: Trapped in the Past" (<i>Speaking in Images</i> , 363-95) - Chung, "An Auteur Is Born" [Canvas]	
Mar. 28	- Chong, "Alienation in Modern Metropolis" [Canvas] - Chung, "Reconciling the Paradox of Silence and Apologia" [Canvas]	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Vive L'Amour (<i>Ai qing wan sui</i>, Tsai, 1994) 3-Iron (<i>Binjip</i>, Kim, 2004) </div>
	clips: <i>The Isle</i> (1999), <i>Bad Guy</i> (2002)	

11	KOREA: BONG JOON-HO & SONG KANG-HO	
Apr. 2	- Klein, "Why American Studies Needs to Think about Korean Cinema" [Canvas]	
Apr. 4	- Chung and Diffrient, "From <i>Gojira</i> to <i>Goemul</i> " (<i>Movie Migrations</i> , 148-76)	<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;"> The Host (<i>Goemul</i>, Bong, 2006) </div>
	clips: <i>Memories of Murder</i> (2003), <i>Snowpiercer</i> (2013)	

*** MODULE 3: GLOBALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONALISM ***

12	QUEER CHINESE DIASPORA IN NORTH AMERICA	
Apr. 9	- "Ang Lee: Freedom in Film" (<i>Speaking in Images</i> , 325-59) - Dariotis and Fung, "Breaking the Soy Sauce Jar" (<i>Transnational Chinese Cinemas</i> , 187-220)	
Apr. 11	- Marchetti, "The Wedding Banquet" [Canvas]	

	clips: <i>Pushing Hands</i> (1992), <i>Brokeback Mountain</i> (2005)	The Wedding Banquet (Xiyun, Lee, 1993)
13	OLDBOY AND TRANSNATIONAL ASIAN CINEMA	
Apr. 16	- Lee, "Salute to Mr. Vengeance!" [Canvas]	
Apr. 18	- Chung and Diffrient, "Extraordinarily Rendered" (<i>Movie Migrations</i> , 177-207)	
	clips: <i>Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance</i> (2002), <i>Okja</i> (2017)	Oldboy (Park, 2003)
14	FINAL PAPER WORKSHOP I	
Apr. 23	Student Presentations	
Apr. 25	Student Presentations	
15	FINAL PAPER WORKSHOP II	
Apr. 30	Student Presentations	
May 2	Wrap-up discussion and course evals	
16	FINALS WEEK	
May 9	*Final Paper Due 5:30pm via Canvas*	

USEFUL RESOURCES

Midnight Eye: <http://www.midnighteye.com>

Kinema Club: <http://kinemaclub.org>

Darcy Paquet's Korean Film Page <http://www.koreanfilm.org>

Modern Chinese Literature and Culture bibliography <http://mclc.osu.edu/rc/filmbib3.htm>

Journal Databases: Academic Search Premier, MLA International Bibliography, JSTOR, Project MUSE
(available through the Library website: <https://libguides.colostate.edu/az.php>)

Film Periodicals: *Asian Cinema*, *Cineaste*, *Cinema Journal*, *Film Comment*, *Film Quarterly*, *Sight and Sound*, *Screen*, *Journal of Japanese & Korean Cinema*, *Velvet Light Trap*