THE 271A07 Studies of Non-Western Film: Asian Film Genres [Fall 2016]

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Office: CW 209
Office Hours: 3-5pm Wednesday or by appointment

Class meets Tues/Thurs. 9:35-11:50am  CVA30
Meets for two sessions of 135 minutes each week, one involving in-class feature film screening (but do note that a number of films must be viewed outside of class), the other (or both) devoted to lecture/discussion.

Course Description:
This course is designed for and open to all students who are interested in Asian film and culture. It provides an introduction to local film production and aesthetics in different media-production centers in Asia broadly, with particularly attention to transnational aspects of cinema of the last two decades. Through watching, discussing, and writing about representative genre films from China, Korea, Japan, India (as well as to some extent Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore), students will learn about Asian film genre traditions and new developments across the trans-national production mode.

In addition to a critical appreciation of Asian cinematic aesthetics, this class will address issues of gender, identity, history, modernity and urbanization, shared by contemporary Asian films, which represent and reflect on social and economic changes that many countries are undergoing. This course also takes a comparative approach. It encourages students to understand and write about Asian genres across the region and in relation to Hollywood and European cinema genres.

Objectives: After completing the course, the student will be able to
• Understand what is trans-national and Pan-Asian cinema.
• Understand and recognize contemporary Asian genres.
• Gain skills and ability to analyze films critically from cultural and aesthetic perspectives.
• Produce good quality film reviews.
• Understand the differences as well as connections between Asian cinemas.
• Understand the differences as well as similarities between Asian and American film genres.
• Demonstrate critical thinking of gender, identity, history, modernity and urbanization through discussion and writing.

Required Texts:

Electronic Reading texts: you must print the essays out to bring to class on the day they are assigned or else take detailed notes on those.

Assignments and Evaluation:
3 Response Essays (60 points): You will write three (2pp, double spaced) essays, each responding to a prompt.

1 Group Presentation (40 points): You will participate in a group project, which involves research on an assigned topic and a PowerPoint presentation of your findings in class on date assigned.
Reading and Film Quizzes (60 points): There will be seven random quizzes on assigned readings and film quizzes. The lowest point will be dropped. No makeup quiz if you miss one.

Final Paper (80 points): You are required to write a 7-8pp (double spaced) analytical paper on assigned topics.

Participation (50 points): Students may accrue Two absences without incurring any penalty. You are encouraged to save the free passes for the time when a genuine illness or emergency occurs. After the first two absences, any absence (regardless excused or unexcused) will lower your participation grade by 5 points. Students are required to be in class on time and stay till the class ends. Tardiness (Being late for class more than two times) or leaving the class earlier without notifying the instructor will affect participation grade. Your grade also reflects your participation in discussion.

Assessment:
Final grades will be assigned on the basis of the following scale:
  A  90-100% of the total points possible during the course
  B  80-90%
  C  70-80%
  D  61-70%
  F:60% and below

Overview of Classroom Expectations
  ➔ NO cell phones, laptops, Ipads, or any other networked communication devices allowed. Before you enter the classroom turn OFF each and every electronic device and pack them away out of sight.
  ➔ DO bring your book and/or printed out reading materials to class on days reading is assigned and always bring a pen or pencil and paper to take quizzes and occasional notes (best combined with a pocket folder).
  ➔ Always come to class fully prepared to discuss assigned readings and films thoughtfully and to stay alert and focused on the shared materials and all-class activities throughout the session.

Topics, Reading And Writing Assignments
BE SURE to complete the readings BEFORE the class for which those materials are assigned (as on the following pages). Note: I reserve the right to shift deadlines and alter assignments during the semester as I deem necessary, with my giving students ample advance notice of any changes.

Class Schedule

Unit I  Asian Martial Arts & Action Cinema (wuxia, kungfu, and samurai films)

Week 1  Introduction to concepts of genre, film genres, regional and transnational cinema
Tu. 08/23: Overview of course structure, and introductory lecture on entertainment and film genre: How do we recognize genres? Western film genres vs. Asian genres, transnational genres
Assignment to be completed before Thursday class:
1) Read Stephen Teo, Introduction & Chapter 1 (pp. 1-33)

Th. 08/25: Lecture/Discussion on Reading
Screening: Clips from The One Armed Swordsman (Zhang Che/Chang Cheh, 1967) 110 min.

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Watch one of the following two films by Chang Cheh or any of his other martial arts films
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI8EsRd66g&list=PLGkAcQwNDDBuFwvlM4ZcOdvkBUno2y6w3
   The New One-Armed Swordsman (1971)
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLh5G04djHY&list=PL3lK1DkXhQID0jflsExOhwEqJycW1eCg
   Blood of Dragon (1971)

2) Read Stephen Teo, Chapter 4 “The Rise of New School Wuxia” pp. 86-114.

Week 2 The Wuxia Film
Tu. 08/30: Lecture/Discussion on film, readings, and representation of masculinity in the Martial Arts Film

Th. 09/01: Screening: Come Drink With Me (King Hu, 1966) 91min.

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Watch the following film by King Hu or any of his other martial arts films
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcBlt-nFECY
   Fate of Lee Khan (King Hu, 1973)

2) Read Stephen Teo, Chapter 5 (pp. 115-140)

Week 3 Contemporary Wuxia Films
Tu. 09/06: Lecture/Discussion on film, readings, and representation of female warriors in the Martial Arts film

Th. 09/08: Screening: Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (Ang Lee, 2000), 120 min.

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Monday
1) Response Essay #1: Compare Chang Cheh & King Hu (submitted on ReggieNet)
2) Read Stephen Teo, Chapter 7 “Wuxia between Nationalism and Transnationalism” p. 172-192.

Week 4 From Wuxia to Kung Fu Films
Tu. 09/13: Lecture/Discussion on film, readings & Transnational Production & impact on the Wuxia genre
**Th. 09/15:** Screening: *Bruce Lee’s Enter the Dragon* (Robert Clouse with Bruce Lee; prod. by Warner Bros., Lee, and Raymond Chow of Golden Harvest, 1973), 102 min.

*Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Monday*
1) Read Stephen Teo, Chapter 3 “The rise of Kung Fu from Wong Fei-hung to Bruce Lee” p. 58-81.
2) Read Mark Gallagher, “Masculinity in Translation: Jackie Chan’s Transcultural Star Text.”
3) Watch one of Jackie Chan’s Films & prepare to share your thoughts on the difference between Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan

**Week 5 From Hong Kong Kungfu to Thai Action**
**Tu. 09/20:** Lecture/Discussion on film, readings, and Bruce Lee & Jackie Chan

**Th. 09/22:** Screening: *Ong-Bak: The Thai Warrior* (Prachya Pinkaew, 2003), 105 min.

*Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday*

**Week 6 Asian Action Stars in the Global Market**
**Tu. 09/27:** Lecture & Discussion on Reading, Film, and Transnational market

**Th. 09/29:** Screening: *The Bind Swordsman: Zatoichi* (Takeshi Kitano, 2003), 116 min.

*Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday*
1) Read Donald Richie, Introduction from 100 Years of Japanese Film & Darrell William Davis, “Japan: Cause for (Cautious) Optimism.”
3) Watch The Tale of Zatoichi (1962) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXv5DRDbQu4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXv5DRDbQu4)

**Week 7 Japanese Samurai Films**
**Tu. 10/04:** Lecture-discussion of film, lead character, and historical setting in context of earlier Zatoichi productions (26 films 1962-89; 100 tv episodes 1974-79) & mid-to-late 20th century Japanese society

**Th. 10/06:** Summary of Unit I; **Group Presentation Group 1 & 2**

**Unit 2 Asian Horror Films**

**Week 8 Asian Horror Introduction**
**Tu. 10/11:** **Group Presentation Group 3; Introducing Asian Horror Film Genre**

**Th. 10/13:** Screening: *Ringu* (Hideo Nakata, 1998), 101 min. [Japan]

*Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday*
2) Read Gary G. Xu, “Remaking East Asia, Outsourcing Hollywood.”
3) Watch Dark Water (Hideo Nakata, 2002) [Japanese version]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZQxY3jiJ0I

Week 9 J-Horror
Tu. 10/18: Lecture/ discussion of film, reading, and the representation of Mother in horror
Th. 10/20: Screening: Nang Nak (Nonzee Nimibutr, 1999), 100 min. [Thailand]

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Read Adam Knee, “‘Reincarnating Mae Nak: The Contemporary Cinematic History of a Thai Icon.”
2) Watch The Dorm (Songyos Sugmakanan, 2006), 110 min
or Pee Mak (Banjong Pisanthanakun, 2013) 115 min. (a comedy horror)
3) Response Essay #2: Compare J-horror with American Remakes, focusing on one aspect, such as gender, visual elements, etc.

Week 10 Thai Horror
Tu. 10/25: Lecture/Discussion of the film & reading
Th. 10/27: Screening: Death Bell (Chang, Mirovision, 2008), 86 min. [South Korea]

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
2) Watch a Korean ghost horror film from the Whispering Corridors series (beginning with 1998 Whispering Corridors, series set in girls’ high schools).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urF3pJVvRvs

Week 11 Korean Horror
Tu. 11/01: Lecture/Discussion of the film & reading
Th. 11/03: Screening: Feng Shui (Chito S. Roño, 2004) 117 min. [Philippine]

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Response Essay #3: Discuss the similarities of Feng Shui and one other Asian horror films we watched in class

Unit 3 Asian Musical
Week 12 Introduction to Asian Musicals
Tu. 11/08: Group Presentation #4 & Lecture on Asian Musical
Th. 11/10: No Classroom Screening; Watch Two Indian Musicals on your own:
Shree 420 (Raj Kapoor, 1955) 170min. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qu8ShpSIFX0
Dil se (Mani Ratnam, 1998) 158 min. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-XvPs8e_Qc
Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Read Jyotika Virdi and Corey K. Creekmur, “India: Bollywood’s Global Coming of Age”

Week 13 Bollywood
Tu. 11/15: Lecture/Discussion of the films & reading, Bollywood international reception

Th. 11/17: Screening: Perhaps Love (Peter Chan, Pan Asian production, 2006) 108 min.
Handout of Final Project

Assignment to be completed during Thanksgiving Break
1) Watch Lady General Hua Mulan (Yueh Feng, Shaw Brothers, 1964), 106 min. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tglm3anmue8
On youtube this movie is shown in 7 parts; the link is to part 1, and you should see the links to the other parts on the page
2) Work on outline for final paper

Week 14 Thanksgiving Break (11/19-11/27)

Week 15 Pan-Asian Musical
Tu. 11/29: Summary of Unit 3 (Lecture & Clips)

Th. 12/01: Screening: The Happiness of the Katakuris (Takashi Miike, 2001), 113 min.

Assignment to be completed by 11:55pm Next Monday
1) Submit final paper outline on ReggieNet

Week 16 Course summary and review for final
Tu 12/06 Course Review
Individual Session Sign Up

Th 12/08 No Class/ Individual Session

Final Paper Due 11:55pm Dec. 14 Wednesday