

HUMA 1210: Chinese Women on Screen

Instructor: Daisy Yan Du
Associate Professor
Division of Humanities
Office: Room 2369 (Lift 13-15), Academic Bldg
Office phone: (852) 2358-7792
E-mail: daisyandu@ust.hk
Office hours: by appointment only

Teaching Assistant: Song HAN
E-mail: song.han@connect.ust.hk
Office: Room 3001 (Lift 4), Academic Bldg
Office hours: by appointment only

Time & Classroom:
Time: 12-14:50pm, Friday, Spring 2019
Room: LTH

Required Readings:

- All available online at “Files,” Canvas

Course Description:
This course examines Chinese women as both historical and fictional figures to unravel the convoluted relationship between history and visual representations. It follows a chronological order, beginning with women in Republican China and ending with contemporary female immigrants in the age of globalization. The changing images of women on screen go hand in hand with major cinematic movements in history, including the leftist turn in the 1930s, the rise of animation in wartime Shanghai, socialist filmmaking during the Seventeen Years (1949-1966), the birth of model opera film during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), post-1989 underground/independent filmmaking, and the globalization of cinema in contemporary China. Approaches of film analyses and gender/sexuality theories will be introduced throughout the course. All reading materials, lectures, classroom discussions, and exams are in English.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this semester students should be able to:

- track the changing images of women in history
- track the changing images of women on screen
- summarize major cinematic movements in film history
- explore the nuanced relationship between women on and off screen (women as representations on film and women as real people in socio-historical reality)
- sharpen critical thinking and use gender/sexuality theories to analyze women on

screen

- analyze films with a professional film vocabulary

Assignments:

- Watch all required films every week
- Read all required articles and/or book chapters every week
- Quiz about required films every week
- Film analysis, due in class on March 1
- Mid-term and final exams

Grading Criteria:

- Attendance: 10% or F
- Participation: 5%
- Weekly quiz: 5%
- Film analysis: 3%
- Mid-term Exam (closed book): 30%
- Final Exam (closed book): 50%

Technical Issues:

- **Reading Materials:** All available online at “Files,” Canvas.
- **Audiovisual Materials:** Films for this course are available at the Library Circulation Counter on G/F. You can also find some films online through youtube and youku.
- **Discussions Forum:** Students can post questions and comments about the contents of this course for open discussion at “Discussions,” Canvas. The instructor will check the forum on a regular basis to address your postings. Your postings will be counted as classroom participation.
- **E-mail:** E-mail will be used frequently in this course. The instructor will use it to make announcements relevant to the course. You can also use it to ask questions or express your concerns to the instructor. The instructor will reply your emails within 48 hours. Please check your campus email account on a daily basis.
- **Contact:**
Canvas: cei@ust.hk Hotline: 2358-6318
Library Reserve: lbreserv@ust.hk Hotline: 2358-6776
Classroom Facility: Hotline: 2358-6815

Classroom Etiquette

- **Attendance** is mandatory. It is your responsibility to sign up and track your attendance. If you forget to sign up an attendance, your TA will not make up for it. If you have to miss a class for a legitimate reason, please inform your TA at least three days in advance and present relevant documents to your TA within one week after the absence. Being 5 minutes late for class three times will count as one unexcused absence. One unexcused absence means 5 points off your final score. Four or more unexcused absences will automatically lower your final grade to F.
- **No Make-up Exams** are allowed. The instructor will grant a make-up exam only for

absolute necessities (e.g., medical reason, family crisis) and not because you have too much work and have run out of time. Please inform the instructor in advance if you believe you have a legitimate reason for a make-up exam. You are expected to present convincing documents to the instructor. The make-up exam will be completely different from the regular one and will be more difficult.

- **No Late Submission** will be accepted. Please be on time.
- **Preparation:** You are expected to be well prepared before each class begins. Please read related course materials and watch the required films of the week before you come to class. In this way, you can better make the most of classroom discussions.
- **Electronic Devices:** Please turn off your cell phones in class. Laptops, iPad, and other electronic devices are allowed only for taking notes in class. Please do not use them to check emails and browse irrelevant websites. If a student is found violating the rules, it means 5 points off his/her final score.
- **Notification in Advance:** Always inform the instructor at least three days in advance for absence and other issues that need special attention and accommodation.
- **Religious Holiday Accommodation:** If you wish to claim accommodation for a religious holiday, you should talk to your instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. You need to provide supporting documents.
- **Learning Disability Accommodation:** If you wish to claim accommodation for any kind of learning disability, you should talk to your instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. Please provide supporting documents.
- **Academic Integrity:** Any academic dishonesty of any kind will be officially processed in accordance with the policies of the university.

Week 1 (Feb 1): Introduction: Chinese Women on and off Screen

Film Screening:

- *Chinese Women: The Great Step Forward—From Confucius to Mao* (Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2001) (54 minutes)
- *From Mao Towards Full Equality* (Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2001) (55 minutes)

Readings:

- Tani Barlow, “Theorizing Woman: Funü, Guojia, Jiating (Chinese Women, Chinese State, Chinese Family),” *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, 173-196.
- Zhang Zhen, “Introduction,” *An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: Shanghai Cinema*, xiii-xxxiii
- “History of China,” MCLC Resource Center, <<http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/toc.html>>

Week 2 (Feb 8): Prostitutes and the Nation in Republican China

Film Screening:

- *The Goddess* (Wu Yonggang, 1934) Shanghai: Lianhua, 74 minutes
- *The Flowers of War* (Zhang Yimou, 2011). Recommended.

Readings:

- Rey Chow, “Visuality, Modernity, and Primitive Passions,” *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*, 4-26.
- Zhang Yingjing, “Prostitution and Urban Imagination: Negotiating the Public and the Private in Chinese Films of the 1930s” in *Cinema and Urban Culture*, 160-182.
- Film Synopsis of *The Goddess*:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Goddess_%281934_film%29

Week 3 (Feb 15): New Women in Republican China

Film Screening:

- *New Women* (Cai Chusheng, 1934) Shanghai: Lianhua, 114 minutes
- *Center Stage* (Stanley Kwan, 1992). Recommended.

Readings:

- Kristine Harris, “The New Woman Incident: Cinema, Scandal, and Spectacle in 1935 Shanghai,” *Transnational Chinese Cinemas* (University of Hawaii press, Honolulu, 1997), 277-302.
- Laikwan Pang, “The Left-wing Cinema Movement,” *Building a New China in*

Cinema: The Chinese Left-Wing Cinema Movement, 1932-1937, 37-72.

- Film Synopsis of *New Women*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Women
- Nora in *A Doll's House* (Ibsen): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Doll%27s_House

Week 4 (Feb 22): Women, War, and Animated Film

Film Screening:

- *Princess Iron Fan* (Wan Brothers, 1941) Shanghai: Xinhua/Lianhe Studio, 73 minutes
- *Havoc in Heaven* (Wan Laiming, 1961-1964). Recommended.
- *Mulan* (Disney, 1998). Recommended.

Readings:

- Poshek Fu, "The Ambiguity of Entertainment: Chinese Cinema in Japanese-Occupied Shanghai, 1941-1945," *Cinema Journal* No. 1 (Autumn 1997): 66-84.
- Hung Chang-tai, "Female Symbols of Resistance in Chinese Wartime Spoken Drama," *Modern China* 15:2 (April 1989): 149-177.
- *Journey to the West*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Journey_to_the_West
- Film Synopsis of *Princess Iron Fan*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princess_Iron_Fan_%281941_film%29
- Hua Mulan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hua_Mulan

Week 5 (March 1): Film Analysis Exercise (300 words written on paper)

Film Screening:

- *Spring in a Small Town* (Fei Mu, 1948) Xi'an: Xi'an Studio, 91 minutes

Week 6 (March 8): Women and Machines: Tractor Girls in Socialist China

Film Screening:

- *Spark of Life* (Dong Fang, 1962) Xi'an: Xi'an Studio, 91 minutes

Readings:

- Daisy Yan Du, "Socialist Modernity in the Wasteland: Changing Representations of the Female Tractor Driver in China, 1949-1964," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* (Spring 2017): 55-94.
- Tina Mai Chen, "Female Icons, Feminist Iconography? Socialist Rhetoric and Women's Agency in 1950s China," *Gender & History* 15 (2), 2003: 268-95.
- Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), 149-181.
- Film Synopsis of *Spark of Life* in PDF format

Week 7 (March 15): Ethnic Girls, Animals, and Revolution

Film Screening:

- *Heroic Little Sisters of the Grassland* (Qian Yunda, 1965) Shanghai: Shanghai Animation Film Studio, 40 minutes
- *Sons and Daughters of the Grassland* (Fu Jie 1975) Beijing: Beijing Studio, 71 minutes

Readings:

- Paul Clark, "Ethnic Minorities in Chinese Films: Cinema and the Exotic," *East-West Film Journal* 1.2 (1987): 15-32.
- Hélène Cixous, "Birds, Women and Writing," *Animal Philosophy*, 167-173
- Film Synopsis of *Heroic Little Sisters of the Grassland* in PDF format

Week 8 (March 22): Midterm Exam (Closed Book) in Class

Week 9 (March 29): Women during the Cultural Revolution

Film Screening:

- *Red Detachment of Women* (Fu Jie and Pan Wenzhan, 1971) Beijing: Beijing Studio, 100 minutes
- *Morning Sun* (Carma Hinton and Geremie Barmae, 2003). Recommended.

Readings:

- Kristine Harris, "Re-makes/Re-models: The Red Detachment of Women between Stage and Screen," *Opera Quarterly* 26 (2010): 316-342.
- Paul Clark, "Introduction: A Revolution in Culture," *The Chinese Cultural Revolution: A History*, 1-9.
- Cultural Revolution: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_Revolution
- Film Synopsis of *Red Detachment of Women*
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Detachment_of_Women_%28ballet%29

Week 10 (April 5): Women Filmmakers

Film Screening:

- *Woman, Demon, Human* (Huang Shuqin, 1987) Shanghai: Shanghai Studio, 102 minutes

Readings:

- Haiyan Lee, “*Woman, Demon, Human: The Spectral Journey Home*,” *Chinese Films in Focus II*, edited by Chris Berry. 2nd edition, 243-249.
- Dai Jinhua, “Invisible Women: Contemporary Chinese Cinema and Women’s Film,” *Positions* 3:1 (Spring 1995): 255-280.
- Film Synopsis of *Woman, Demon, Human* in PDF format

Week 11 (April 12): Female Migrant Workers

Film Screening:

- *Ermo* (Zhou Xiaowen, 1994) Shanghai: Shanghai Studio, 95 minutes

Readings:

- Judith Farquhar, “Technologies of Everyday Life: The Economy of Impotence in Reform China,” *Cultural Anthropology* 14:2 (May, 1999): 155-179.
- Janet Wolff, “On the Road Again: Metaphors of Travel in Cultural Criticism,” *Cultural Studies* 7.2 (1993): 224–39.
- Film Synopsis: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ermo>

Week 12 (April 19): Midterm Break

Week 13 (April 26): Gender, Forced Migration, and Independent Filmmaking

Film Screening:

- *Bingai* (Feng Yan, 2007) 117 minutes
- *Bumming in Beijing: The Last Dreamers*, 1990. Recommended.

Readings:

- Paul Pickowicz, “Social and Political Dynamics of Underground Filmmaking in China,” *From Underground to Independent: Alternative Film Culture in Contemporary China*, 1-21.
- Chris Berry, “Getting Real: Chinese Documentary, Chinese Postsocialism,” *The Urban Generation: Chinese Cinema and Society at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*, 115-134.
- Three Gorges Dam: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Gorges_Dam

Week 14 (May 3): Gender, Diaspora and Transnational Feminism

Film Screening:

- *Farewell China* (Clara Law, 1990) Hong Kong: Youhe Film, 111 minutes

Readings:

- Gina Marchetti, "Gender and Generation in Clara Law's Migration Trilogy: Farewell China, Autumn Moon, and Floating Life," *From Tiananmen to Times Square: Transnational China and the Chinese Diaspora on Global Screens: 1989-1997*.
- Rosi Braidotti, "The Exile, the Nomad, and the Migrant: Reflections on International Feminism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 15 (1992): 7–10.