

HUMA4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China

Instructor: Liu Jianmei
Office: Academic Building, Room3338
Email: hmjmliu@ust.hk or Liu_Jianmei@yahoo.com

Course Description:

This course studies diverse cultural expressions of Chinese identities and cultures in Hong Kong cinema, Hollywood movies, and Chinese diaspora cinema, as well as examining the differing representations between fictional and filmic texts. The course will broaden our views on the place of being Chinese in a multicultural and global context, and on the sensibilities of identity and culture in the differing situations of homeland, coloniality, and diaspora.

The course is designed as a seminar, in which students will be actively involved in reading and discussing individual literary and filmic texts concerned. While some of the literary texts are in English translation, local Chinese students, who are eligible bilingual readers in the global Chinese communities, are invited to read them alongside the Chinese originals to look for linguistic and cultural variants in translation and expression.

Supplementary readings will be assigned during the course. In addition to writing critical essays about verbal and visual representations of China, students will also learn cinematography and be able to produce a 3-5 min short film at the end of the class.

Intended Learning Outcome:

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

- track the development of verbal and visual representation of Chinese around the world;
- be familiar with major representative works related to this topic and the socio-historical context in which they emerged;
- be able to sharpen critical thinking, analyze particular literary or filmic works, and enhance academic writing skills in novel and film studies
- be able to make a 3-5 mins short film as a team production

Assessment Scheme:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| • Attendance and class discussion | 20% |
| • Pop-quiz | 10% |
| • Oral Presentation | 20% |
| • Final paper | 30% |

HUMA 4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China Spring 2019

•Final film

20%

Class Requirements:

Attendance and in-class participation are weighed heavily in this course. Students are expected to complete the reading assignment PRIOR to coming to class and be ready to discuss and engage in class. If no participation effort is made in class, attendance alone cannot guarantee a high mark for this portion of your grade.

Class participation is expected since talking with fellow students is the best way to learn. So earn your good grade the fun way—start and keep talking in class! Don't be afraid to make mistakes, but you do need to show that you are familiar with the readings and that you have seriously thought about the texts. **Be prepared and read before class.**

Pop quizzes will be given from time to time in class without prior notice. The quiz usually consists of 5-10 questions only and would not take more than 20 minutes to complete.

Viewing and discussing the films: We will view 4-5 films inside the class and require you to view some other films outside the class. Since this class is designed as a seminar, you need to actively join the discussion of those films in the class. Each group will lead the class discussion in turns.

Group Presentation

Each group is comprised of 3-5 students. Your group presentation will be about 10-15 minutes. You are encouraged to do a PPT presentation.

Your group can focus on one important theme/concept (such as the urban space, gender, sexuality, cultural production, high versus low, modernity, etc.) and see how it is being represented or constructed in the text. Or analyze one character, or compare different characters. You need to make a clear argument/present a reasonable opinion, supported by details from the text and/or your research.

You can NOT just summarize the text(s), except when you are presenting the criticisms. But you are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions.

Individual paper must include critical analysis

* Individual paper: 5 pages in English, double-spaced

Things to pay attention to when you write an analysis:

1. Critical analysis means that you must apply thoughtful reasoning to the arguments presented in this course through readings and discussion. It means not only finding what is right with something, but also what is wrong with the argument, and why.
2. You must always have a thesis statement, which must be supported throughout your writing, with reasons or examples. That is, everything in your analysis must be related to your major argument—the thesis statement.
3. You need to keep your reader in mind. Are you giving the reader enough information? Therefore, you will need to pay attention to details so that you will support yourself with detailed and specific examples from the text. And you must explain your examples in a way that makes them related to your arguments.

Remember **Critical analysis is NOT:**

1. A summary.
2. Broad generalizations without further support and analysis
3. Citing long quotes from the readings without analyzing them or explaining their importance to you or to us

Class Rules:

NO plagiarism!!! – This is taken VERY seriously. Violations (including using online device such as Google translation) will result in a ZERO on your grade.

No use of mobile phone – i.e. no talking, texting, emailing, or web browsing on your mobile phone. Please put your phone on silent mode in class. If constant usage is found or a message/ring tone is heard, your phone will be taken away until the class ends.

3-5 short film: Each group is comprised of 3-5 students, responsible for different roles in short film production. We will organize a small film festival at the end of the semester.

Class Schedule (subject to changes during the semester)

HUMA 4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China Spring 2019

The young director Ms Li Wanqi will be a guest speaker teaching the film production part in the class.

WK 1

Introduction and Organization

🚩 Film: David Henry Huang, *M. Butterfly*

Pre-production

Crew members and their responsibilities

Production

Features of cameras and video cameras/Frame Rates/Aperture, Shutter speed and ISO Settings/White Balance/Memory cards

WK 2

Being Chinese in the Multicultural World

- Wei-ming Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as Center," *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, 1-34.
- Ien Ang, "Can One Say No to Chineseness? Pushing the Limits of the Diasporic Paradigm," *Boundary 2* 25.3 (1998): 223-42.
- Chun, Allen, "Fuck Chineseness: On the Ambiguities of Ethnicity as Culture as Identity," *Boundary 2* 23.2 (1996):111-138.
- Leo Ou-fan Lee, "On the Margins of Chinese Discourse"
- 🚩 Film: Ang Lee 李安, *Pushing Hands* [推手] (1992)

Production

Types of Lenses/Focus/Focal Length/Field of view/Angle of View/
Framing techniques

WK 3

Cultural Nostalgia and the Chinese Diaspora

- Yu Dafu, *Sinking* 沈淪
- Bai Xianyong (Pai Hsien-yung), "Death in Chicago" [芝加哥之死] (1964)
- Bai, "Li T'ung: A Chinese Girl in New York" [謫仙記] (1965)

🚩 Film: 少女小魚

Production

Introduction to tripods and dollies/Camera movements/

WK 4

Chinese American: The Second-Generation Immigrants

- R. Arkush and Leo Lee eds., *Land Without Ghosts: Chinese Impressions of America from the Mid-nineteenth Century to the Present* (“Introduction” 1-13; “Menacing America” 57-95; “America Rediscovered” 241-98)
 - Louis Chu, *Eat a Bowl of Tea* (1961), excerpts in *The Big Aiiieeeee!: an Anthology of Chinese American and Japanese American Literature*, pp.507-28.
- 🚩 Film: *The Joy Luck Club*

Production

Introduction to lighting equipment/Basic lighting skills

WK 5

Spectacles of the Oriental / Colonial in Hollywood

- Gina Marchetti, “White Knights in Hong Kong: *Love Is a Many Splendored Thing* and *The World of Suzie Wong*,” *Romance and the “Yellow Peril”: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction*, pp.108-24.
- 🚩 Film: Richard Quine, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960)

Production

Sound recording

Post-production

Introduction to editing software

WK6

Wei Ming Dariotis and Eileen Fung, “Breaking the Soy Source Jar: Diaspora and Displacement in the Films of Ang Lee, in Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu edited, *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender*, pp. 187-220.
Film: *The Wedding Banquet*

Film Workshop1

Post-production

Editing (Part1)

WK 7

American Images of China

Naomi Greene: *From Fu Manchu to Kung Fu Panda: Images of China in American films*, Introduction

T. Christopher Jespersion, *American Images of China: 1931-1949*, introduction

🚩 Film: *The Inn of the Six Happiness*

Film Workshop2

Post-production

Editing (Part2)

WK 8

Chinese National Character and Representing Modern Chinese History

- Lu Xun: *The True Story of Ah Q*
- Chen Xiaomei, "Occidentalism as Counter-Discourse: "He Shang" in Post-Mao China," *Occidentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Film: *To Live*

Film Workshop3

Post-production

Basic sound mixing and music composition for film

WK9

Colonial China: Hong Kong

- Daisy S.Y. Ng, "Xi Xi and Tales of Hong Kong"
- Xi Xi: "Marvels of a Floating City"
- Ye Si's Selected Poetry
- Film: *Rouge* 胭脂扣

Film Workshop4

Post-production

Colors of the films

How to give your video that cinematic look

WK10

Fictional China: Gao Xingjian

Reading: Alexander C.Y. Huang: "The Theatricality of Religious Rhetoric: Gao Xingjian and the Meaning of Exile."

Gilbert Fong: "Introduction to *Snow in August*"

Reading: Yumi Braester: "Mo Yan"

Zhou Yingxiong: "Romance of the Red Sorghum Family"

Film: *Red Sorghum* 紅高粱

Film Workshop5

Post-production

Basic special effects/Exporting films

WK 11 film shooting

WK 12 film shooting

WK 13 film presentation

Final Paper Due