HUMA 1210: Chinese Women on Screen

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Time & Classroom:  
Time: 15-17:50pm, Friday, Fall 2019  
Room: LTH

Required Readings:  
• All available online at “Modules,” 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 “Solitary Island” cinema in wartime Shanghai, socialist realism during the Seventeen Years (1949-1966), 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 context)  
• 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
- Mid-term and final exams

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

Technical Issues:
- Reading Materials: All available online at “Modules,” 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 (Sept 6): 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:
- David Bordwell, “Glossary,” *Film Art: An Introduction*

Week 2 (Sept 13): Prostitutes and the Nation in Republican China

Film Screening:
- *The Goddess* (Wu Yonggang, 1934) Shanghai: Lianhua, 74 minutes

Readings:

Week 3 (Sept 20): New Women in Republican China

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

Readings:

**Week 4 (Sept 27): Women, Wartime Nationalism, and Animated Film**

**Film Screening:**
- *Princess Iron Fan* (Wan Brothers, 1941) Shanghai: Xinhua/Lianhe Studio, 73 minutes

**Readings:**

**Week 5 (Oct 4): Female Voice-over and Male Director**

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

**Readings:**
- Jie Li, “Home and Nation Amid the Rubble: Fei Mu’s Spring in a Small Town and Jia Zhangke’s Still Life,” *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 21 no. 2 (Fall 2009): 86-125.

**Week 6 (Oct 11): Women and Machines: Tractor Girls and Socialist Modernity**

**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

- Film Synopsis of *Spark of Life* in PDF format

**Week 7 (Oct 18): Ethnic Girls and Socialism**

**Film Screening:**
- *Five Golden Flowers* (Wang Jiayi, 1959) Changchun: Chuangchun Film Studio, 90 minutes

**Readings:**

**Week 8 (Oct 25): Midterm Exam (Closed Book) in Class**

**Week 9 (Nov 1): Women and Masculinity during the Cultural Revolution**

**Film Screening:**
- *Red Detachment of Women* (Fu Jie and Pan Wenzhan, 1971) Beijing: Beijing Studio, 100 minutes

**Readings:**
**Week 10 (Nov 8): Women Directors**

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

Readings:
- Film Synopsis of *Woman, Demon, Human* in PDF format

**Week 11 (Nov 15): Female Migrant Workers**

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

Readings:

**Week 12 (Nov 22): Gender, Forced Migration, and Independent Filmmaking**

Film Screening:
- *Bingai* (Feng Yan, 2007) 117 minutes

Readings:
Week 13 (Nov 29): Gender, Diaspora and Transnational Feminism

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

Readings: