

Film 160: National Cinema
East Asian Cinemas and Their Transnational Contexts
Instructor: Daisuke MIYAO

Meeting Times:

Tuesday (lecture) 3:30-5pm

Wednesday (screening) 3-5pm

Thursday (discussion) 3:30-5pm

Course Description:

This course comparatively examines the histories of cinemas in East Asia in the context of the immense political and cultural transformations in East Asian region over the past century. In addition to local and regional diversity and specificity, thematic, stylistic, and industrial convergences and boundary crossing in these cinemas will be explored. The recent socio-political and economic transformation of these regions has enabled the circulation, mutual influence, appropriation, and translation of popular culture in the form of cinema, music, television, and the celebrity culture among them. The specificity of each cultural sphere is linked to global media culture, with which they form an increasingly cosmopolitan dialogue. How is this reflected in and constructed by motion pictures? Stylistically, many of the films made in East Asia have drawn on the shared cosmopolitan consumer language of cinema (*global*). Despite these stylistic convergences, each regional cinema has often created or sustained local specificity of language and culture (*local*). As the assumption of national identity has been questioned, the viability of the concept of “national cinema,” which has framed work on films from various countries over decades, has come into question. This course questions this concept and examines shifting representations of nationalism and cultural identity in East Asian cinemas in the context of globalization and transnationalism.

Class Assignments & Grade Breakdown:

Participation & Attendance (including 1-2 paragraph weekly response papers)... 30%

Review Essay (1,500 words) [Due: at the beginning of October 21]... 30%

Research Essay (2,500-3,500 words) [Due: at the beginning of December 9]... 40%

Attendance to class lectures, screenings, and discussion is mandatory. Your participation grade includes reading and preparation for the class. You should always come to the class (especially to the discussion section) ready to discuss the assigned films and readings. In the discussion section each week, you are required to submit a 1-2 paragraph response paper to the assigned films and/or readings. The instructor provides a short question/topic after the lecture on Tuesdays. A couple of students will be asked to read their response papers in class to open up discussion.

Please be punctual, as lateness to class will be penalized. In the case of illness or emergencies, you must provide appropriate documentation and get the instructor's approval. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your final grade, and excessive absences may result in FAILURE of the course.

Review Essay:

Pick up one film that is screened by the due date and critically review discussions of the assigned readings on the film, based on the lecture, the classroom discussion, and your own viewing of the film. You should demonstrate that you understand the aims of the essays and the main arguments of the essays. In assessing the essays, consider these issues: Are the essays clearly written? Are the arguments convincingly made and appropriately supported? What are the shortcomings of the arguments? What do you find, other than the arguments in required readings, in the actual film viewing? You don't necessarily have to conduct additional research.

Research Essay:

You may choose topics to examine a broader range of subject matter regarding East Asian Cinemas. Topics may include particular figures (directors, actors, producers, etc.), institutions (studios), or a particular film or group of films (including those seen in class or those seen elsewhere). These might include, but by no means limited to the following:

- What was the political, economic, or cultural conditions when the film that you are interested in was made, and what was the relationship between those conditions and the film? Were there any political limits placed on filmmaking in a given era?
- What was the historical condition of the film industry when the film that you are interested in was made, and what influence did that condition have on the film, technically, aesthetically, financially, etc?
- Does the film that you are interested have any relationship with other contemporaneous, foreign, or past films, in terms of its motif, theme, aesthetic style, technique, etc? Are there any mutual influences (political, economic, or aesthetic) among each national cinema
- Does the film that you are interested in have any relationship with other cultural forms, such as traditional art forms, novels, classical music, etc?
- Representation of race, gender, or class in a group of films from a particular era or director
- The applicability of a particular film theorist's work to a group of films

Think about your topic and consult the instructor ASAP. Start reading texts and conducting research right away, in addition to your preparation for the class. A semester is not so long as you imagine.

Late work will not be accepted and will negatively affect your final grade. Incompletes will be only considered in cases of sickness or other dire circumstances, for which you must provide documented evidence.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and can lead to an F for the course and further disciplinary action. Students should acknowledge all research and reading sources in their assignments (be they from books, magazines, journal articles, Internet sources, DVD commentaries, etc.) with proper footnote and bibliographic citations. Remember to keep a copy of submitted assignments until your final grade is posted.

Required Texts:

-Lu, Sheldon Hsiao-peng, ed., *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1997).

-Course Reader. Available for purchase at Replica Copy (2140 Oxford, between Center & Allston. 510-549-9991).

Schedule:

Week 1 (Aug 31, Sept 1 & 2):

Introduction

Screening: *Fireworks* (Kitano Takeshi, Japan, 1997)

Excerpts: *Rashomon* (Kurosawa Akira, Japan, 1950), *Sansho the Bailiff* (Mizoguchi Kenji, Japan, 1954), *Record of the Sanada Klan* (Kato Tai, Japan, 1963), *Tokyo Drifter* (Suzuki Seijun, Japan, 1966)

Required Reading:

Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, "The Difficulty of Being Radical: The Discipline of Film Studies and the Post Colonial World Order," *Japan in the World*, eds. Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunin (Durham: Duke UP, 1993): 338-53.

Section 1: What Is National Cinema?

Week 2 (Sept 7, 8 & 9):

The Concept of National Cinema

Screening: *Once Upon a Time in China* (Tsui Hark, Hong Kong, 1991)

Excerpt: *Gate of Hell* (Kinugasa Teinosuke, Japan, 1953)

Required Readings:

Stephen Crofts, "Reconceptualizing National Cinema(s)," *Film and Nationalism*, ed. Alan Williams (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2002): 25-51.

Andrew Higson, "The Concept of National Cinema," *Film and Nationalism*, 52-67.

Harry Harding, "The Concept of 'Greater China': Themes, Variations and Reservations," *Greater China: The Next Superpower?*, ed. David Shambaugh (New York: Oxford UP, 1995): 8-34.

Week 3 (Sept 14, 15 & 16):

Local Cinemas and Global Consumption

Screening: *JSA* (Park Chan-wook, South Korea, 2000)

Required Readings:

Isolde Standish, "Korean Cinema and the New Realism: Text and Context," *Colonialism and Nationalism in Asian Cinema*, ed. Wismal Dissanayake (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994): 65-89.

Frances Gateward, "Youth in Crisis: National and Cultural Identity in New South Korean Cinema," *Multiple Modernities: Cinemas and Popular Media in Transcultural East Asia*, ed. Jenny Kwok Wah Lau (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2003): 114-27.

Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State," *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*, eds., Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake (Durham: Duke UP, 1996): 78-106.

Week 4 (Sept 21, 22 & 23):

Authenticity and Stereotype

Screening: *Ju Dou* (Zhang Yimou, China, 1990)

Excerpts: *Yellow Earth* (Chen Kaige, China, 1984); *Hero* (Zhang Yimou, China, 2002)

Required Readings:

Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, "National Cinema, Cultural Critique, Transnational Capital: The Films of Zhang Yimou," *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender*, ed. Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1997): 105-36.

Rey Chow, *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema* (New York: Columbia UP, 1995): 142-72, 230-38.

Esther Yau, "Yellow Earth: Western Analysis and Non-Western Text," *Perspectives on Chinese Cinema*, ed. Chris Berry (London: BFI, 1991): 62-79.

Week 5 (Sept 28, 29 & 30):

Cosmopolitanism and Orientalism

Screening: *Street Angel* (Yuan Muzhi, China, 1937)

Excerpts: *Shanghai Express* (Josef von Sternberg, USA, 1932), *The Shanghai Gesture* (Josef von Sternberg, USA, 1941), *Flowers of Shanghai* (Hou Hsiao-hsien, Taiwan, 1998)

Required Readings:

Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, "Historical Introduction: Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies," *Transnational Chinese Cinemas*: 1-31.

Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Urban Milieu of Shanghai Cinema, 1930-40: Some Explorations of Film Audience, Film Culture, and Narrative Conventions," *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943*, ed. Yingjin Zhang (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999): 74-96.

Andrew D. Field, "Selling Souls in Sin City: Shanghai Singing and Dancing Hostesses in Print, Film, and Politics 1920-49," *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai*: 99-127.

Section 2: Transnational Auteur

Week 6 (Oct 5, 6 & 7):

Yasujiro Ozu, Modernity, Americanization

Screening: *I Was Born, But...* (Ozu Yasujiro, Japan, 1932)

Excerpts: *The Marriage Circle* (Ernst Lubitsch, USA, 1924); *Late Spring* (Ozu, Japan, 1949)

Required Readings:

David Bordwell and Kristine Thompson, "Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu," *Screen* 17.2 (1976): 41-73.

Donald Kirihaara, *Patterns of Time: Mizoguchi and the 1930s* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1992): 30-57.

Ben Singer, "Modernity, Hyperstimulus, and the Rise of Popular Sensationalism," *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, eds. Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995): 72-99.

Optional Reading:

Paul Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1972): 3-55.

Week 7 (Oct 12, 13 & 14):

Hou Hsiao-hsien and Taiwanese Nationalism

Screening: *The Puppetmaster* (Hou Hsiao-hsien, Taiwan, 1993)

Required Readings:

June Yip, "Constructing a Nation: Taiwanese History and the Films of Hou Hsiao-hsien," *Transnational Chinese Cinemas*: 139-68.

Chiao Hsiung-Ping, "The District Taiwanese and Hong Kong Cinemas," *Perspectives on Chinese Cinema*: 155-65.

Chris Berry, "A Nation T(w/o)o: Chinese Cinema(s) and Nationhood(s)," *Colonialism and Nationalism in Asian Cinema*: 42-64.

Week 8 (Oct 19, 20 & 21):

Wong Karwai, Hong Kong Handover, and Transnationalism

Screening: *Happy Together* (Wong Karwai, Hong Kong, 1997)

Required Readings:

Kwai-cheung Lo, "Transnationalization of the Local in Hong Kong Cinema of the 1990s," *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World*, ed. Esther Yau (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001): 261-76.

Marc Siegel, "The Intimate Spaces of Wong Karwai," *At Full Speed*: 277-94.

!!!Review Essay Due: Oct 21!!!

Section 3: Transnational Genre

Week 9 (Oct 26, 27 & 28):

Melodrama: East and West

Screening: *Chunhyang* (Im Kweon-taek, South Korea, 2000)

Required Readings:

Rob Wilson, "Melodramas of Korean National Identity: From *Mandala* to *Black Republic*," *Colonialism and Nationalism in Asian Cinema*: 90-104.

Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, "Melodrama, Post Modernism, and the Japanese Cinema," *East-West Film Journal* 5.1 (Jan. 1991): 28-55.

Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1976/1995): 1-55.

Optional Reading:

Hyangjin Lee, "Gender and Cinematic Adaptations of Ch'unhyangjon," *Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture, Politics* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000): 67-101.

Week 10 (Nov 2, 3 & 4):

Swords vs Guns: Jidaigeki & Western

Screening: *Yojimbo* (Kurosawa Akira, Japan, 1961)

Excerpts: *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone, Italy, 1964), *Star Wars* (George Lucas, USA, 1977)

Hidden Fortress (Kurosawa, Japan, 1958)

Required Readings:

Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (Durham: Duke UP, 2000): 205-45, 289-92, 412-418, 423.

Douglas Pye, "The Western (Genre and Movies)," *Film Genre Reader II*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (Austin: U of Texas P, 1995): 187-202.

Week 11 (Nov 9 & 10):

Hong Kong Noir & Japanese Noir

(Nov 11 Veterans' Day Holiday. Discussion on Noir will be done in the following Tuesday, Nov 16)

Screening: *The Killer* (John Woo, Hong Kong, 1991)

Excerpts: *The Killers* (Robert Siodmak, USA, 1946), *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, USA, 1944), *Branded to Kill* (Suzuki Seijun, Japan, 1968)

Required Readings:

Steve Neale, "Film Noir," *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000): 151-77.

Anne T. Ciecko, "Transnational Action: John Woo, Hong Kong, Hollywood," *Transnational Chinese Cinemas*: 221-237.

Jinsoo An, "The Killer: Cult Film and Transcultural (Mis)Reading," *At Full Speed*: 95-114.

Week 12 (Nov 16, 17 & 18):

Anime and Techno-Orientalism

(Nov 16 Discussion on Noir; Nov 17 Screening *Ghost in the Shell*; Nov 18 Lecture on anime):

Screening: *Ghost in the Shell* (Oshii Mamoru, Japan, 1995)

Excerpts: *Momotaro* (Seo Mitsuyo, Japan, 1942), *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Anno Hideaki, Japan, 1996)

Required Readings:

Susan Napier, *Anime: From Akira to Princess Monnoke* (New York: Palgrave, 2001): 103-16.

Livia Monnet, "Towards the Feminine Sublime, or the Story of 'a Twinkling Monad, Shape-shifting across Dimension': Intermediality, Fantasy and Special Effects in Cyberpunk Film and Animation," *Japan Forum* 14.2 (2002): 225-68.

Week 13 (Nov 23):

Anime and Techno-Orientalism Continues

(Nov 24 No Screening; Nov 25 Thanksgiving Holiday)

Discussion on anime.

Section 4: Transnational Stars

Week 14 (Nov 30, Dec 1 & 2):

Sessue Hayakawa: Americanization and Modernization

Screening: *The Cheat* (Cecil B. DeMille, USA, 1915)

Excerpts: *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (David Lean, USA, 1957), *His Birthright* (William Worthington, USA, 1918)

Required Readings:

Miriam Bratu Hansen, "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism," *Film Quarterly* 54.1 (2000): 10-22.

Sumiko Higashi, "Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Film: DeMille's *The Cheat*,"

Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema, ed. Lester D. Friedman (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1991): 112-39.
Daisuke Miyao, "Triple Consciousness: Sessue Hayakawa at Haworth Pictures Corporation," *Pacific and American Studies* 2 (March 2002): 129-45.

Week 15 (December 7, 8 & 9):

Around the World with Jackie Chan

Screening: *Jackie Chan's Project A* (Jackie Chan, Hong Kong, 1984)

Excerpt: *Enter the Dragon* (Robert Clouse, Hong Kong, 1973)

Required Readings:

Mark Gallagher, "Masculinity in Translation: Jackie Chan's Transcultural Star Text," *Velvet Light Trap* 39 (Spring 1997): 23-41.

Yvonne Tasker, "Fists of Fury: Discourse of Race and Masculinity in the Martial Arts Cinema," *Race and the Subject of Masculinities*, eds. Harry Stecopoulos and Michael Uebel (Durham: Duke UP, 1997): 315-36.

Steve Fore, "Jackie Chan and the Cultural Dynamics of Global Entertainment," in *Transnational Chinese Cinemas*: 239-262.

!!!Research Essay Due: Dec 9!!!