HIST 3090 – Studies in Asian History (Summer 2012)

FILM, HISTORY, NATION IN CHINA

Course Dates: April 30-May 23, 2012
Time: 10:45am-12:45pm, Monday to Friday
Location: 237 University College
Final Exam: Saturday, May 26, 9:00am-12:00pm

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Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 1:00-2:00pm

Course Description
This course is an examination of key moments in the history of film technology, dissemination, production, and aesthetics in twentieth-century China. The course focuses on:
(a) the historical relationship in China between film, nationalism, and the nation-state; and
(b) how filmic representations of history produce particular engagements with China’s past, present, and future. Students will be encouraged to think about the social and political operation of film and the ways in which film acts as a site of production of history and cultural citizenship in China.

Class Format:
The class includes lectures, film screenings, and class discussion. Regular attendance is mandatory. Students are encouraged to actively participate in the class by asking questions and discussing readings and viewing assignments. The instructor’s notes are NOT available to students. Students are expected to take notes during class.

Course Readings
A. Required Books (available at the UM Bookstore):
   ISBN 9780199228027
B. On-line and library readings
See assigned readings for specific classes. Journal articles can be accessed through the University of Manitoba Libraries on-line subscriptions or in the library.
Assignments
Written Assignment #1 (due date: Monday, May 7) – 15%
Written Assignment #2 (due date: Monday, May 14) – 15%
Written Assignment #3 (due date: Tuesday, May 22) – 20%
Reading Journal (due: May 23, 2012): 10%
Class Participation: 10%
Final Exam (May 26, 2012, 9am-12pm): 30%

Information for the written assignments is included in the class schedule below. The reading journal will include a short entry for 10 of the assigned articles or chapters for the course. Each entry should be approximately 250 words and include a summary of the key arguments in the article, the main sources and films discussed, and an assessment of how the analysis furthers understanding of the relationship between film, nation, and history in China. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare these entries prior to the discussion sessions for specified readings. Readings from Rana Mitter’s Modern China may NOT be included in the reading journal.

All work is due in class on the date indicated. Exceptions will occur only where major extenuating circumstances are evident. Documentation (i.e. a medical note) may be requested. Late papers may be penalized by 5% per day.

Term work will be returned in class and made available to students during office hours. Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them. Uncollected term work will be retained for 4 months following the end of the course. After this time, it will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and subject to confidential destruction.

Students should acquaint themselves with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty (see section 8 of the 2011-12 University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar). The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism in a written assignment, text, or examination is F on the paper and F(DIS) on the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay or cheating on a test or examination, the penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to 5 years from registration in courses taught in a particular department in Arts or all courses taught in this Faculty. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the voluntary withdrawal deadline of May 16, 2012.

Marking Scale
A+ 88-100%; A 80-87%; B+ 75-79%; B 70-74%; C+ 65-69%; C 60-64%; D 50-59%; F 0-49%
Class Schedule

Week 1: Early Film and Republican China

Monday, April 30
1. Course Introduction and Information
2. Lecture: Republican China: Early History and Issues
   Reading: Mitter, Modern China, pp. 1-39

Tuesday, May 1
Film Screening: The Goddess (神女 Shennü, 1934); dir: Wu Yonggang

Wednesday, May 2
1. Film Discussion
2. Lecture: Early Film Distribution and Production

Thursday, May 3
1. Lecture: Gender, Politics, Nation, and Silent-Film Era
   Reading: Mitter, pp. 74-81; 118-125
2. Discussion of the following readings:

Friday, May 4
Lecture/Film-Clips/Discussion: From Silent-Film to Talkies: Politics, Music, and Nation from the 1920s-1940s
   Readings:

Essay Assignment for Week 1 (Due: Monday, May 7; 1000-1250 words)
To what extent did 1920s and 1930s filmic representations of women and Shanghai participate in debates to imagine a newly gendered modern Chinese citizen? How did the filmic representations address the issues and what impact did they have? Answer these questions by providing a detailed analysis of a specific scene from The Goddess (神女 Shennü) that is contextualized and discussed in relation to the articles by Zhang Zhen and Yingjin Zhang (and other relevant class readings as appropriate).
Week 2: War and the Politics of Film

Monday, May 7
Lecture: Civil War and Chinese History in the 1940s

Tuesday, May 8
1. Lecture: Wartime Film Production and Distribution

Wednesday, May 9

Thursday, May 10
1. Lecture/ Film Clips: Film Work and Wartime Patriotism
2. Discussion of the following reading:

Friday, May 11
Lecture and Discussion: Voices and Visions of the Nation at War
Discussion of the following readings:

Essay Assignment for Week 2 (Due: Monday, May 14, 1000-1250 words)
What is the relationship between patriotism, film, and national crisis in wartime China? Write a short historiographical essay that considers at least two of the articles by Yunxiang
Gao, Poshek Fu, Weihong Bao, and Robert Chi. The essay should also incorporate specific reference to film(s) viewed in class during the week.

**Week 3: Socialist Film, Socialist Nation**

**Monday, May 14**
Lecture: Establishing the People’s Republic of China and the PRC Film Industry  
Reading: A. Mitter, *Modern China*, pp. 50-73; 125-138  

**Tuesday, May 15**
Film Screening: *The White-Haired Girl* (白毛女, Bái Máo Nǚ, 1950), dir: Wang Bin and Shui Hua; OR *Song of Youth* (青春之歌, Qīngchun zī ge, 1959), dir. Cui Wei, Chen Huai’ai.  

**Wednesday, May 16**
1. Film Discussion (including discussion of the article by Zhong Xueping)  
2. Lecture: Technologies, Film, and the International Context  

**Thursday, May 17**
1. Lecture: Model Plays, Model Films, Model Citizens: The Cultural Revolution  
2. Film Screening: *The East is Red* (东方红, dir. Wang Ping, August 1st Film Studio, 1965)  
http://www.morningsun.org/east/index.html

**Friday, May 18**
Film, Censorship, and Political Campaigns in the PRC  
Lecture and Discussion of the following readings:  

**Essay Assignment for Week 3 (Due: Tuesday, May 22, 1500-1750 words)**
What type of revolutionary subject(s) was promoted in 1950s and 1960s China film? How were these representations of revolutionary subjects part of broader projects to build socialism in China? What can we learn about these socialist projects through film of the period? Answer these questions with reference to at least 2 different films and 3 of the assigned readings for the week.
Week 4: From Socialist to Post-Socialist Film and Nation

Monday, May 21 –NO CLASS

Tuesday, May 22
Lecture: Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and New Developments in Film
Readings: Mitter, pp. 85-118

Wednesday, May 23
Film Screening and Discussion: *Ermo* (二嫫, dir. Zhou Xiaowen, 1994)
Readings:

Saturday, May 26 9am-12pm  Final Exam

Viewing Resources:
A. Films Available through the Internet Archive (archive.org)

*The Big Road* (大路,1934), dir. Sun Yu
http://archive.org/details/the_big_road

*Scenes of a City Life* (都市风光 1935), dir. Yuan Muzhi
http://archive.org/details/ScenesOfCityLife-dushifengguang

*Street Angel* (馬路天使，1937), dir. Yuan Muzhi
http://archive.org/details/street_angel

*Spring in a Small Town* (小城之春, 1948), dir: Fei Mu
http://archive.org/details/spring_in_a_small_town