



GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2023

COR2613 SCREENING ASIA: HISTORY, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN FILMS

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A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Films are more than just entertainment products. As cultural materials, they provide insights to the historical narratives, politics, economy, and ideological complexities of societies. This course is designed to provide an interdisciplinary and visual approach to understanding Asia using films about Asia produced by Asians themselves as well as those films about Asia produced by non-Asian filmmakers.

First, we will briefly explore the history of film in the Asian region and discuss various methods of reading films as texts. Second, we will critically examine what films reveal about the history of Asia - the period of colonialism, decolonization and nation-building, the Cold War, and globalization in the Asian region. Next, we will explore the various aspects of Asian identities and examine how films construct and interrogate race, religion, and gender in Asia. Finally, we will explore the contemporary role and significance of films against the rapid technological disruptions taking place within Asia and beyond.

B. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course aims to improve students' knowledge and understanding about Asian history, economy, politics, and society through analyzing films; cultivate in them a deeper appreciation and critical understanding of films as lens to Asian narratives and social transformations; equip them with the necessary skills to formulate their own evaluation and interpretation of Asian films; and challenge students' perception about films and Asia as well as propel them to see the connections among culture, politics, history, and economy.

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Disciplinary and Multidisciplinary Knowledge

- Explain how the films discussed in class reflect the history, politics, and society in Asia.

2. Intellectual and Creative Skills

- Apply the lessons learned to other fields - business, public policy, social history, and economics.

3. Global Citizenship

- Describe and interrogate the power and significance of films within the historical, political, social, and economic context of Asia.
- Critically examine Asian films as a site of historical-cultural discourse and social interpretation.

C. PREREQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSES (IF ANY)

This course does not have any prerequisites.

D. ASSESSMENT METHODS / GRADING DETAILS

<p>Class Participation You are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions and activities that take place in physical class. Good class participation involves actively listening to your instructor and other students during class, joining class discussions, asking questions which are thoughtful and helpful, and being a good team member during classroom group work, if any. Merely speaking in class or attending the online sessions will not earn you full marks for class participation. Moreover, failing to watch the pre-recorded lecture, reading the required readings, and sharing your insights about the course materials will negatively affect your class participation.</p>	20%
<p>Group Presentation As part of a group, you will deliver a 30-min presentation on an assigned film and theme of the session. In this presentation, you will provide the context of the film, how it relates to the readings, and your group's analysis of the theme as portrayed and screened in the film.</p>	20%
<p>Film Response The instructor will create a Discussion Topic (posted on Slack) and students are required to post, comment, or share about what they learned from the films covered in class. This can be done asynchronously.</p>	30%
<p>Final Individual Paper You have two options:</p> <p>Exposition Paper: You will write a 1500-2000 word exposition paper on any topic about Asia using any Asian film(s) of your choosing (<u>provided it was not screened in class</u>). Topics must be approved by the instructor.</p> <p>Reflection Paper: You will write a 1500-2000 word reflecting on how this course shaped your understanding of your own identity, your place in the world, and the power (and dangers) of film as a lens in understanding the intricacies, dynamics, and narratives of societies (in particular, Asia).</p> <p>The rubric can be found below. For brevity, please keep in mind that your midterm exam will be evaluated based on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarity of argument 2. Coherence and logic of structure 3. Clear understanding, integration, and synthesis of the readings and topics discussed in class 4. Self-reflection and connection to experience 5. Originality and provocation 	30%
<p>Total</p>	100%

Important Note: No questions verbatim from past year papers or published test banks will be used for the graded continuous assessments and examinations in this course.

E. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <http://www.smuscd.org/resources.html>.

F. ACCESSIBILITY

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If students anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let the instructor know immediately. Students are also welcomed to contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions: included@smu.edu.sg.

Please be aware that the accessible tables in the seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

Each session is divided into three parts:

- [1] pre-recorded lecture which will serve as a baseline lecture for the theme of the week and provide the context to the session's topic;
- [2] two-hour online/class discussion where students are expected to discuss and critically analyse a film and link it to the reading assignment, students are expected to ask questions, share key takeaways, and provide critical responses on both the film and the readings; and
- [3] conclusion/wrap up to be facilitated by the instructor.

Evaluation methods include individual class participation, in-class quizzes, film response and final individual paper.

H. CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. Each session is divided into three distinct parts:
 - a) Pre-recorded baseline lecture to be uploaded by the instructor on eLearn every Monday, 9am (for the week's sessions) that aims to provide a structured approach to literature and conceptual parameters for the week's themes (this excludes Lessons 1, 2, 7, and 12).
 - b) Student-led discussions about the film and the main questions of the week where you are encouraged to share your comments, questions, and thoughts on the readings, lecture, and the broader theme of the week;
 - c) Conclusion to be facilitated by the instructor – this serves as an opportunity to reiterate the main points, clarify concepts, identify persistent questions, and offer further points to ponder on.
2. You are required to watch the pre-recorded lecture before class. Face to face lectures/discussions (approximately 3 hours) will take place.
3. Your attendance and active participation in class will contribute significantly towards your class participation marks.
4. You will refrain from talking over your classmates. You will make use of the different tools and platforms to participate in class (Slack, Kahoot, Slido, Mentimeter, etc.).
5. There will be no make-up quizzes unless a valid reason is determined by the instructor.
6. You should feel free to ask questions at any point of the session.

I. IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT DATES

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| 1. | Final Individual Paper: | To be advised |
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J. CONSULTATIONS

Time: Tuesdays, 9:00-11:00pm (set up an appointment by email)
 Venue: YPHSL 04-14

K. RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST

NOTE: *This syllabus may change slightly over the course of the term; when in doubt, please approach the instructor for the most updated version.*

LESSON PLAN		
LESSONS	TOPICS	RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST
Lesson 1 Tuesday 27 June	INTRODUCTION What is Screening Asia? Film as Method	Rosenstone, Robert A. "History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History into Film." <i>The American Historical Review</i> 93, no. 5 (1988): 1173-185.
Lesson 2 Wednesday 28 June	HISTORY: Displaced Memories IN CLASS SCREENING Film: Forbidden Memory, 2016, Dir. Gutierrez Mangansakan III (Philippines)	Castillo. (2015). The Emotional, Political, and Analytical Labor of Engaged Anthropology Amidst Violent Political Conflict. <i>Medical Anthropology</i> , 34(1), 70–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2014.960564
LESSON 3 Thursday 29 June	HISTORY: Decolonization and Nation-Building Film to Watch: The Rose of Bokor, 1969, Dir. Norodom Sihanouk (Cambodia)	Anderson. (2006). <i>Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism</i> (Rev. ed.). Verso, Introduction and Chapter 3: Origins of National Consciousness
LESSON 4 Tuesday 4 July	HISTORY: Cold War Film to Watch: The Blue Kite, 1993, Dir. Tian Zhuangzhuang (China) Group 1: 30 mins	Zhang, Xudong. "National Trauma, Global Allegory: Reconstruction of Collective Memory in Tian Zhuangzhuang's <i>The Blue Kite</i> ." <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i> 12, no. 37 (2003): 623-38.
LESSON 5 Wednesday 5 July	SOCIETY: Tradition and Culture Film to Watch: Tsukiji Wonderland, 2016, Dir. Naotaro Enao (Japan) Group 2: 30 mins	Bestor. (2019). Tokyo's Pantry. In Tsukiji (Vol.11, pp. 1–49). University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520923584-006
LESSON 6 Thursday 6 July	SOCIETY: Gender Film to Watch: Writing With Fire, 2021, Dir. Sushmit Ghosh & Rintu Thomas, (India) Group 3: 30 mins	Datta, Sangeeta. "Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema." <i>Social Scientist</i> 28, no. 3/4 (2000): 71-82.

Lesson 7 Tuesday 11 July	FIELD TRIP: Film Viewing at Asian Film Archive <i>(Tickets will be purchased for you, please let the instructor know if you will not be able to make it to the screening)</i>	
LESSON 8 Wednesday 12 July	SOCIETY: Race Film to Watch: Sepet (Malaysia, 2005) Group 4: 30 mins	Sim, Gerald. "Yasmin Ahmad's "Orked" Trilogy." <i>Film Quarterly</i> 62, no. 3 (2009): 48-53.
LESSON 9 Thursday 13 July	SOCIETY: Religion Film to Watch: Where Do We Go Now? 2011, (Lebanon) Group 5: 30 mins	Sinno, Nadine. 2017. "'May the War be Remembered but Not Repeated': Engendering Peace in Nadine Labaki's <i>Where do we Go Now?</i> " <i>College Literature</i> 44 (4) (Fall): 615-643.
LESSON 10 Tuesday 18 July	ASIA TODAY: Pandemic in Asia Film to Watch: All of Us Are Dead, 2022 (South Korea) Group 6: 30 mins	Reis Filho. (2020). No Safe Space: Zombie Film Tropes during the COVID-19 Pandemic. <i>Space and Culture</i> , 23(3), 253–258. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331220938642
LESSON 11 Wednesday 19 July	ASIA TODAY: Poverty in Asia Film to Watch: Parasite, 2019, Dir. Bong Joon-Ho (South Korea) Group 7: 30 mins	Jo, Yongmie Nicola. "Disclosing the Poverty–Shame Nexus within Popular Films in South Korea (1975–2010)." <i>Poverty and Shame: Global Experiences</i> : Oxford University Press, December 18, 2014. Oxford Scholarship Online.
LESSON 12 Thursday 20 July	ASIA TODAY: Migration in Asia Film to Watch: A Land Imagined, 2018, Dir. Siew Hua Yeo (Singapore)	Baey, G., & Yeoh, B. (2018). "The lottery of my life": Migration trajectories and the production of precarity among Bangladeshi migrant workers in Singapore's construction industry. <i>Asian and Pacific Migration Journal</i> , 27(3), 249–272.
Final Individual Paper Due	Submission through eLearn - no late submissions allowed.	