

HUMA4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China

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**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.

**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

**Assessment Scheme:**

• Attendance and Performance	20%
• Pop-quiz	10%
• Oral Presentation	20%
• Written Test	20%
• Final paper	30%

**Class Requirements:**

**Attendance and in-class participation** are weighed heavily in this course. Students

are

expected to complete

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.

## 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: 6-8 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

## HUMA 4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China Summer 2016

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.

**Written Test** will be based on what we have learned during this semester. It will contain multiple choices and essay-like questions.

WK 1 (Monday)

### **Introduction and Organization**

 Film: David Henry Huang, *M. Butterfly*

WK 1 (Wednesday)

### **Being Chinese in the Multicultural World**

## HUMA 4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China Summer 2016

- 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.
- 🌈 Film: Film: Ang Lee 李安, *Pushing Hands* [推手] (1992)

WK 1 (Friday)

### 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

WK 2 (Monday)

### 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*

WK 2 (Wednesday)

### 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)

WK2 (Friday)

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*

WK 3 (Monday)

**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: *The Mysterious Dr. Fu Manchu*

WK3 (Wednesday)

**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*

WK3 (Friday)

**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

WK 4 (Monday)

**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*”

*Play: Snow in August* 八月雪

WK 4 (Wednesday)

**Fictional China: Mo Yan**

Reading: Yumi Braester: “Mo Yan”

Zhou Yingxiong: “Romance of the Red Sorghum Family”

**HUMA 4220 Verbal and Visual Representation of China Summer 2016**

Film: *Red Sorghum* 紅高粱

WK 4 (Friday) Individual Presentations

WK 5 Individual Presentations and Written Test

Final Paper Due