

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. In addition to writing critical essays about verbal and visual representations of China, students will also learn cinematography and be able to produce a 3-5 min short film at the end of the class.

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	10%
•class discussion	20%
•Pop-quiz	10%
•Oral Presentation	25%
•Final paper	35%

Class Requirements:

Attendance and in-class participation are weighed heavily in this course. Students are expected to complete the reading assignment PRIOR to coming to class and be 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.

Viewing and discussing the films: We will view 6-7 films inside the class and require you to view some other films outside the class. Since this class is designed as a seminar, you need to actively join the discussion of those films in the class. Each group will lead the class discussion in turns.

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 will lead the class discussion.

Each group will be in charge of one week's discussion. 1. You should prepare at least 5 questions based on the movies we watched and the reading material. (Eg., group one should raise questions on the movie *M. Butterfly* as well as required readings. You should raise thought-provoking questions and try your best to challenge your classmates. 2. You will have authority when you are in charge of the discussion, and you can ask anyone in our class to offer their opinions. In the meantime, you may share your answers with your classmates. 3. Other students should read the materials carefully and actively answer the questions. We encourage students to create some debating tension in class, so you should also try your best to argue against each other if you have different opinions. 4. Group members may prepare a PPT or print out the question sheet for other students.

While you are leading the discussion, you can focus on one important theme/concept

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(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 and 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: **2000 words** 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 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.

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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.

Class Schedule (subject to changes during the semester)

WK 1

Introduction and Organization

📺 Film: David Henry Huang, *M. Butterfly*

WK 2

Being Chinese in the Multicultural World

- 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.
- Leo Ou-fan Lee, “On the Margins of Chinese Discourse”
- 📺 Film: Ang Lee 李安, *Pushing Hands* [推手] (1992)

WK 3

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 4

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 5

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)

WK6

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 7

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*

WK 8

Hollywood Gongfu Movies

- Lu Xun: *The True Story of Ah Q*

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- Chen Xiaomei, “Occidentalism as Counter-Discourse: “He Shang” in Post-Mao China,” *Occidentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Film: *Mulan*

WK9

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

WK10

Multi-dimensional Representation of Chineseness

Film: *Everything Everywhere All At Once*

WK 11 Louisa Wei’s film screening and public talk

WK 12 Conclusion

Covid 19 in the Western and Chinese contexts

Fang Fang: *The Diary of Wuhan*

Final Paper Due