

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 210

## *SPECIAL TOPIC: WORLD CINEMA*

UC Davis, Fall 2010

CRN: 56633

**Time and location:**

**Wednesday 4:10-7:00 pm, 203 Wellman**

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### **Course Description**

This course examines "world cinema" as a concept, as a critical discourse, and above all as the practices of diverse cinematic traditions of the world. We will also tackle related categories of contemporary film studies such as "national cinema," "transnational cinema," "third cinema," and "third-world cinema." Comparative case studies will be drawn from countries and regions from around the world: Africa, Russia, Germany, China, Hong Kong, as well as the postcolonial Francophone world. As we look at some pivotal moments in world film history, we will also raise broad issues in current film studies such as globalization, diaspora, cinematic style, national identity, visual culture, and film industry.

### **Course Requirements**

Each student is required to present an oral report in class (about 25 minutes), and write a research paper (minimum 12 pages) at the end of the quarter. For the in-class presentation, the student is expected to hand out useful information to fellow classmates about the subject (filmography, bibliography, brief notes about a film, a film artist, a critic, a book, a theoretical issue, etc.), and hand in a written 2-page summary to the instructor at the end of the presentation. Students should maintain steady class attendance, have the assigned materials read for each meeting, and be prepared for class discussion.

### **Textbook**

A Course Reader to be purchased at Davis Copy Shop.

### **Related Event**

An international conference "Space and Time in Chinese-Language Cinema" will be held at UC Davis, Nov. 5 & 6 (Friday-Saturday), 2010, in Olson 6 and 53A. It is free and open to the public. Please attend if you are interested.

# SYLLABUS

## Week 1

9/29

### Introduction. Setting the Key Terms

Film:

- *Irma Vep* (Olivier Assayas, France/Hong Kong, 1996)

## Week 2

10/6

### Theories and Phases of World Cinema. Vernacular Modernism on a Global Scale

Reading:

- Stephanie Dennison and Song-hwee Lim. "Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem."
- Dudley Andrew. "An Atlas of World Cinema."
- Dudley Andrew. "Time Zones and Jetlag: The Flows and Phases of World Cinema."
- Miriam Hansen. "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism."

Films:

- *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, Germany, 1927)
- *City Lights* (Charlie Chaplin, USA, 1931)
- *Goddess* (Wu Yonggang, China, 1934)

## Week 3

10/13

### National Cinema, Nation-Building, Nationalism

Reading:

- Andrew Higson. "The Concept of National Cinema."
- Stephen Crofts. "Concepts of National Cinema."
- Walter Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."

Films:

- *The Birth of a Nation* (D. W. Griffith, 1915).
- *Broken Blossoms* (D. W. Griffith, 1919).
- *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, Algeria, 1966)

## Week 4

10/20

### International Film Aesthetics: Montage, Documentary Realism, Long Take, Brechtian Self-Reflexivity, Classical Hollywood Continuity Editing, and Others

Reading:

- Sergei Eisenstein. "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram."
- Sergei Eisenstein. "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form."
- David Gillespie. "Dziga Vertov and Life 'Caught Unawares.'"
- Jane Shattuc. "Contra Brecht: R. W. Fassbinder and Pop Culture in the Sixties."

Films:

- *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, Soviet Union, 1926)
- *The Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, Soviet Union, 1929)
- *Katzelmacher* (R. W. Fassbinder, West Germany, 1969)
- *Still Life* (Jia Zhangke, China, 2006)

**Week 5**

**10/27**

**Third Cinema, Third-World Cinema, Accented Cinema, Transnational Cinema**

Reading:

- Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino. "Towards a Third Cinema."
- Hamid Naficy. "Situating Accented Cinema."
- Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden. "General Introduction: What is Transnational Cinema?"

Films:

- *The Hour of the Furnaces* (Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino, Argentina, 1968)
- *Do the Right Thing* (Spike Lee, USA, 1989)

**Week 6**

**11/3**

**Case Study: German Cinema, Postsocialism, "Ostalgie"**

Reading:

- Ulrike Sieglöhr. "New German Cinema."
- Anton Kaes. "History, Fiction, Memory: Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979)."
- Jennifer M. Kapczynski. "Negotiating Nostalgia: The GDR Past in *Berlin Is in Germany* and *Good Bye, Lenin!*"

Films:

- *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (R. W. Fassbinder, West Germany, 1973)
- *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (R. W. Fassbinder, West Germany, 1979)
- *Goodbye Lenin* (Wolfgang Becker, Germany, 2002)

**Week 7**

**11/10**

**Case Study: Contemporary Russian Cinema, Post-Soviet Cinema**

- Svetlana Boym. "Introduction."

- Svetlana Boym. “Chapter 6, Nostalgia and Post-Communist Memory.”
- David Gillespie. “The Course and Curse of History.”

Films:

- *Burnt by the Sun* (Nikita Mikhalkov, 1994)
- *Brother* (Aleksei Balabanov, Russia, 1997)
- *Thief* (Pavel Chukhrai, Russia, 1997)

## Week 8

11/17

### Case Study: African Cinema, Postcolonial Cinema, Francophone Cinema, French Cinema

Reading:

- David Murphy. “Africans Filming Africa: Questioning Theories of an Authentic African Cinema.”
- Wimal Dissanayake. “Issues in World Cinema.”
- Rosanna Maule. “The Dialectics of Transnational Identity and Female Desire in Four Films of Claire Denis.”

Films:

- *Xala* (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal, 1975)
- *Touki Bouki* (Djibril Diop Mambety, Senegal, 1973)
- *Chocolat* (Claire Denis, France, 1984)

## Week 9

11/24

### Case Study: Asian Cinema, Chinese Cinema, Hong Kong Cinema

Reading:

- Anne T. Ciecko. “Theorizing Asian Cinema(s).”
- Freda Freiberg. “Japanese Cinema.”
- Sheldon Lu. “Historical Introduction: Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies”

Films:

- *Tokyo Story* (Yasujiro Ozu, Japan, 1953)
- *In the Mood for Love* (Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong, 2000)
- *Rumble in the Bronx* (Stanley Tong/Jackie Chan, Hong Kong, 1995)

## Week 10

12/1

### Chinese-Language Cinema in a Global Frame; Course Review

Reading:

- Sheldon Lu and Emilie Yeh. “Mapping the Field of Chinese-Language Cinema.”
- Sheldon Lu. “Dialect and Modernity in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sinophone Cinema.” *Jump Cut* no. 49 (Spring 2007) (online journal). Website: <http://www.ejumpcut.org>.

Films:

- *The World* (Jia Zhangke, China, 2004)

## Course Reader

### Contents

- Stephanie Dennison and Song Hwee Lim. "Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem." From *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics in Film*, ed. S. Dennison and S. H. Song (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2006), pp. 1-15.
- Dudley Andrew. "An Atlas of World Cinema." From *Remapping World Cinema*, ed. Dennison and Lim.
- Dudley Andrew. "Time Zones and Jetlag: The Flows and Phases of World Cinema." In *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*. Ed. Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman. New York: Routledge, 2010. 59-89.
- Miriam Hansen. "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism." *Film Quarterly* 54.1 (2000): 10-22.
- Andrew Higson. "The Concept of National Cinema." From *Film and Nationalism*, ed. William Alan (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002), pp. 52-67.
- Stephen Crofts. "Concepts of National Cinema." In *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 1-10.
- Walter Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." From *Film Theory and Criticism*, eds. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. 848-870.
- Sergei Eisenstein. "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram." From *Film Theory and Criticism*, pp. 85-100.
- Sergei Eisenstein. "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form." From *Film Theory and Criticism*, pp. 101-122.
- David Gillespie. "Dziga Vertov and Life 'Caught Unawares.'" From David Gillespie, *Early Russian Cinema*. London: Wallflower, 2000. 67-78;
- Jane Shattuc. "Contra Brecht: R. W. Fassbinder and Pop Culture in the Sixties." *Cinema Journal* 33.1 (Fall 1993): 35-54.

- Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino. "Towards a Third Cinema." From *Movies and Methods*, ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. 44-64.
- Hamid Naficy. "Situating Accented Cinema." From *Transnational Cinema, the Film Reader*, ed. Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden. London and New York: Routledge, 2006. 111-129.
- Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden. "General Introduction: What is Transnational Cinema?" In *Transnational Cinema*, ed. Ezra and Rowden, pp. 1-12.
- Ulrike Sieglöhr. "New German Cinema." In *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 82-86.
- Anton Kaes, "History, Fiction, Memory: Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979)," in *German Film and Literature: Adaptations and Transformations*, ed. Eric Rentschler (New York and London: Methuen, 1986), pp. 277-88.
- Jennifer M. Kapczynski. "Negotiating Nostalgia: The GDR Past in *Berlin Is in Germany* and *Good Bye, Lenin!*" *The Germanic Review* 82.1 (Winter 2007): 78-100.
- Svetlana Boym. "Introduction." In Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), pp. xiii-xix.
- Svetlana Boym. "Chapter 6: Nostalgia and Post-Communist Memory." In *The Future of Nostalgia*, pp. 57-71.
- David Gillespie. "The Course and Curse of History." From David Gillespie, *Russian Cinema*, Chapter 4 (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited: 2003), pp. 59-81.
- David Murphy. "Africans Filming Africa: Questioning Theories of an Authentic African Cinema." In *Transnational Cinema*, ed. Ezra and Rowden. 27-37.
- Wimal Dissanayake. "Issues in World Cinema." In *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 143-150.
- Rosanna Maule. "The Dialectics of Transnational Identity and Female Desire in Four Films of Claire Denis." From *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture, and Politics in Film*, ed. S. Dennison and S. H. Song (London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2006), pp. 73-85.

- Anne T. Ciecko. "Theorizing Asian Cinema(s)," *Contemporary Asian Cinema: Popular Culture in a Global Frame*, ed. Anne T. Ciecko (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2006), pp. 13-31.
- Freda Freiberg. "Japanese Cinema." In *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 178-184.
- Sheldon Lu. "Historical Introduction: Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies." From *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender*, ed. Sheldon H. Lu (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 1-31.
- Sheldon Lu and Emilie Yeh. "Introduction: Mapping the Field of Chinese-Language Cinema." In *Chinese-Language Film: Historiography, Poetics, Politics*, ed. Sheldon Lu and Emilie Yeh (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), pp. 1-24.
- Sheldon Lu. "Dialect and Modernity in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sinophone Cinema." *Jump Cut* no. 49 (Spring 2007) (online journal). Website: <http://www.ejumpcut.org>. Please read this essay online.