

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 210

## *SPECIAL TOPIC: WORLD CINEMA*

UC Davis, Fall 2014

**Thursday, 2:10-5:00 pm, Wellman 201**

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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," "global cinema," "third cinema," "third-world cinema," and postcolonial cinema. Comparative case studies will be drawn from countries and regions from around the world: Africa, Russia, Germany, France, China, and Hong Kong. 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. Students will examine the ideas, practices, and styles of a variety of filmmakers such as Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, R. W. Fassbinder, Jean-Luc Godard, Yasujiro Ozu, Gillo Pontecorvo, Wong Kar-wai, Jia Zhangke, Zhang Yimou, Ousmane Sembene, Claire Denis, and many others. Students will also read the theoretical and critical writings of Walter Benjamin, Dudley Andrew, Miriam Hansen, Hamid Naficy, Svetlana Boym, Anton Kaes, and so on.

### **Course Requirements**

Each student is required to present an oral report in class (about 25 minutes), and write a research paper 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.

# SYLLABUS

## Week 1

10/2

### Introduction. Setting the Key Terms.

### 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." *Film Quarterly* 54.1 (2000): 10-22. (Available online)

Films:

- *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, Germany, 1927)
- *City Lights* (Charlie Chaplin, USA, 1931)
- *Goddess* (Wu Yonggang, China, 1934)
- *Irma Vep* (Olivier Assayas, France/Hong Kong, 1996)

## Week 2

10/9

### National Cinema, Nation-Building, Nationalism

Reading:

- Walter Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."
- Andrew Higson. "The Concept of National Cinema." *Screen* 30.4 (1989): 36-47. (Available online)
- Stephen Crofts. "Concepts of National Cinema."

Films:

- *The Birth of a Nation* (D. W. Griffith, USA, 1915).
- *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, Germany, 1935).
- *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, Algeria, 1966)

## Week 3

10/16

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

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.*” *Cinema Journal* 33.1 (Fall 1993): 35-54. (Available online)

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 4**

**10/23**

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

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?”
- Will Higbee & Song Hwee Lim. “Concepts of Transnational Cinema: Towards a Critical Transnationalism in Film Studies.” *Transnational Cinemas* 1. 1 (2010): 7-21. (Available online)

Films:

- *The Hour of the Furnaces* (Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino, Argentina, 1968)
- *Xala* (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal, 1975)
- The influence of Neo-realism on Third-World Cinema, *The Bicycle Thief* (Vittorio De Sica, Italy, 1948)

**Week 5**

**10/30**

**Case Study: New 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!*” *The Germanic Review* 82.1 (Winter 2007): 78-100. (Available online)

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 6**

**11/6**

### **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 7**

**11/13**

### **Case Studies: French New Wave, Francophone Cinema, African Cinema, Postcolonial Cinema**

Reading:

- Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover. "Introduction: The Impurity of Art Cinema."
- David Murphy. "Africans Filming Africa: Questioning Theories of an Authentic African Cinema."
- Wimal Dissanayake. "Issues in World Cinema."

Films:

- *La Chinoise* (Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1969)
- *Touki Bouki* (Djibril Diop Mambety, Senegal, 1973)
- *Chocolat* (Claire Denis, France, 1984)

## **Week 8**

**11/20**

### **Case Studies: Asian Cinema, Japanese Cinema, Cinema at the Periphery**

Reading:

- Anne T. Ciecko. "Theorizing Asian Cinema(s)."
- Freda Freiberg. "Japanese Cinema."
- Dina Iordanova. "Rise of the Fringe: Global Cinema's Long Tail."

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)

**11/27 Thanksgiving Day, no class**

## **Week 9**

**12/4**

### **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>.
- Sheldon Lu. "Notes on Four Major Paradigms in Chinese-language Film Studies." *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 6.1 (2010): 7-21. (Available online)

Films:

- Selected films of Zhang Yimou and Jia Zhangke

## Course Reader

- Stephanie Dennison and Song Hwee Lim. "Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem." In *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." In *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.
- Walter Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." From *Film Theory and Criticism*, ed. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. 848-870.
- Stephen Crofts. "Concepts of National Cinema." In *World Cinema: Critical Approaches*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000). 1-10.
- Sergei Eisenstein. "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram." In *Film Theory and Criticism*, pp. 85-100.
- Sergei Eisenstein. "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form." In *Film Theory and Criticism*, pp. 101-122.
- David Gillespie. "Dziga Vertov and Life 'Caught Unawares.'" In David Gillespie, *Early Russian Cinema*. London: Wallflower, 2000. 67-78.
- Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino. "Towards a Third Cinema." In *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.
- 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.
- Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover. "Introduction: The Impurity of Art Cinema." In *Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories*, ed. Rosalind and Karl Schoonover. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010. 3-27.
- 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.
- 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.
- Dina Iordanova. "Rise of the Fringe: Global Cinema's Long Tail." In *Cinema at the Periphery*, ed. Dina Iordanova, David Martin-Jones, and Belén Vidal. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010. 23-45.
- 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.

