GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2020

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, 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 analysing 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 in this class to other fields such as 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 site of historical-cultural discourse and social interpretation.

C. PRE-REQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSES (IF ANY)

This course does not require any pre-requisite.

D. ASSESSMENT METHODS / GRADING DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Response</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Individual Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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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 welcome 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 will be delivered in three parts. The instructor will first give a 45-minute baseline lecture to provide an overarching theme and context to the week’s topic. Second, small group discussions where students are expected to discuss and analyze a film and link it to the reading assignment - this section will take about 60-90 minutes. Third, conclusion to be facilitated by the instructor.

Evaluation methods include individual class participation, in-class quizzes, film response and final individual paper.
**Class participation:** You are expected to ask questions, share your thoughts and comments, and actively participate in class/small-group discussions.

**In-class quizzes:** Scheduled quizzes will be done in class using the eLearn platform. The quizzes will cover specific sections of the course.

**Film response:** The instructor will create a Discussion Topic (eLearn) and students are required to post, comment, or share about what they learned from the films covered in class.

**Final individual paper:** You will write a 1500-word exposition paper on any topic about Asia using any Asian film(s) of your choosing (provided it was not screened in class). Topics must be approved by the instructor. Final submission date to be advised.

### H. CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. Face to face lectures/discussions (approximately 3 hours) will take place

2. Your attendance and active participation at these lectures/discussions will contribute significantly towards your class participation marks.

3. Each session is divided into three distinct parts:
   a) baseline lecture of about 45 minutes to be delivered by the instructor that aims to provide a structured approach to literature and conceptual parameters for the week’s theme;
   
   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.

4. You should feel free to ask questions at any point of the session.

### I. IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT DATES

1. Quiz 1: Lesson 4
2. Quiz 2: Lesson 8
3. Quiz 3: Lesson 11
4. Final Individual Paper: Lesson 12

### J. CONSULTATIONS

Time: Thursdays, 12:00-4:00pm (set up an appointment by email)
Venue: SOL 04-14

### K. RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST

Please refer to the lesson plan.
## LESSON PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSONS</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| LESSON 1    | INTRODUCTION    | **REQUIRED READING:**  
  **Optional Readings:**  
  - Baumgartel, Tim. “I make films for myself” and “I want the people of Indonesia to see a different point of view, whether they agree with it or not” Southeast Asian Independent Cinema.  
| (Tue, 30 June) |                 | **REQUIRED READING:**  
  - History of Films in Asia  
  - Films as Lens to Asian politics, cultures, history, and societies |
| LESSON 2    | FILM AS METHOD  | **REQUIRED READING:**  
  **Optional Readings:**  
| (Wed, 1 July) |                 | **REQUIRED READING:**  
  - In-class Screening: The Blue Kite (China, 1993) |
| LESSON 3    | HISTORY: COLD WAR AND NATION-BUILDING | **REQUIRED READING:**  
| (Thu, 2 July) |                 | **REQUIRED READING:**  
  - Origins of the Cold War in Asia |
### LESSON 4 (Tue, 7 July)

**HISTORY: MEMORIES OF THE COLD WAR AND NATION-BUILDING**
- S21: Khmer Rouge Killer Machine
  (Cambodia, 2003)

**QUIZ 1**

**Optional Readings:**

### LESSON 5 (Wed, 8 July)

**FIELD TRIP:**
**OUB SOUTHEAST ASIAN GALLERY: NATIONAL GALLERY OF SINGAPORE**

### LESSON 6 (Thu, 9 July)

**IDENTITIES: RELIGION**
- Ayat-ayat Cinta
  (Verses of Love, Indonesia, 2008)

**REQUIRED READING:**

**Optional Readings:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON 7</th>
<th>IDENTITIES: RACE</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING:</th>
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</table>
Optional Readings:  

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<tr>
<th>LESSON 8</th>
<th>IDENTITIES: GENDER</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING:</th>
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Optional Readings:  

| LESSON 9  | FIELD TRIP: MEET THE FILMMAKER/Screens at the Oldham Theater |

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<th>LESSON 10</th>
<th>ASIAN POWERS: INDIA AND CHINA</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING:</th>
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</thead>
</table>
Optional Readings:  
| Lesson 11 (Wed, 22 July) | **Asian Powers: Singapore**  
- A Land Imagined  
  (Singapore, 2018) | **Required Reading:**  
  **Optional Readings:**  
| Lesson 12 (Thu, 23 July) | **Conclusion**  
- Final Individual Paper |