



## GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2022

### 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, the 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 analyzing 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 to other fields - 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 a site of historical-cultural discourse and social interpretation.

**C. PREREQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSES (IF ANY)**

This course does not have any prerequisites.

**D. ASSESSMENT METHODS / GRADING DETAILS**

<b>Class Participation</b> You are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions and activities that take place in physical class. Good class participation involves actively listening to your instructor and other students during class, joining class discussions, asking questions which are thoughtful and helpful, and being a good team member during classroom group work, if any. Merely speaking in class or attending the online sessions will not earn you full marks for class participation. Moreover, failing to watch the pre-recorded lecture, reading the required readings, and sharing your insights about the course materials will negatively affect your class participation.	<b>20%</b>
<b>In-class Quizzes</b> Scheduled quizzes will be done in class on Lessons 4, 8, and 12. The quizzes will cover specific sections of the course.	<b>20%</b>
<b>Film Response</b> 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. This can be done asynchronously.	<b>30%</b>
<b>Final Individual Paper</b> You will write a 2000-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.	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*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 welcomed to contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions: [included@smu.edu.sg](mailto: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 is divided into three parts:

[1] The instructor will first give a 45-minute baseline lecture to provide an overarching theme for the week and provide the context to the session's topic [2] two-hour class discussion where students are expected to discuss and critically analyse a film and link it to the reading assignment, students are expected to ask questions, share key takeaways, and provide critical responses on both the film and the readings; and [3] conclusion/wrap up to be facilitated by the instructor.

Evaluation methods will be as follow:

**Class participation:** You are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions and activities that take place in class. Good class participation involves actively listening to your instructor and other students during class, joining class discussions, asking questions which are thoughtful and helpful, and being a good team member during classroom group work, if any. Merely speaking in class will not earn you full marks for class participation. Moreover, failing to watch the pre-recorded lecture, reading the required readings, and sharing your insights about the course materials will negatively affect your class participation.

**In-class quizzes:** Scheduled quizzes will be done in class on Lessons 4, 8, and 12. 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. This can be done asynchronously.

**Final individual paper:** You will write a 2000-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. Each session is divided into three distinct parts:
  - a) Baseline lecture 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.
2. Face to face lectures/discussions (approximately 3 hours) will take place.
3. Your attendance and active participation in class will contribute significantly towards your class participation marks.
4. You will refrain from talking over your classmates. You will make use of the different tools and platforms to participate in class.
5. There will be no make-up quizzes unless a valid reason is determined by the instructor.
6. 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 12
4.	Final Individual Paper:	To be advised

## J. CONSULTATIONS

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

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

**NOTE:** This syllabus may change slightly over the course of the term; when in doubt, please approach the instructor for the most updated version.

LESSON PLAN		
LESSONS	TOPICS	RECOMMENDED TEXT / READING LIST / CASE STUDIES LIST
Lesson 1  Tuesday 28 June	<b>INTRODUCTION PART ONE:            FILM AS METHOD</b>  Film as Mirror, Critique, Ideology, and Dream Factory  How to read film as a source  How to use film as a method	Required Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hughes-warrington, Marnie. <i>History Goes to the Movies: Studying History on Film</i>. Hoboken: Taylor &amp; Francis Group, 2006. Chapter 1, Word and Images, Images and Words.</li> <li>● Harman, S. (2019). "Why Film"? In <i>Seeing Politics: Film, Visual Method, and International Relations</i> (pp. 19-54). Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.smu.edu.sg/stable/j.ctvkjb2b1.7">http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.smu.edu.sg/stable/j.ctvkjb2b1.7</a></li> </ul> Optional Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rosenstone, Robert A. "History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History into Film." <i>The American Historical Review</i> 93, no. 5 (1988): 1173-185.</li> <li>● 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" <i>Southeast Asian Independent Cinema</i>.</li> <li>● Monaco, James. <i>How to Read a Film: Movies, Media, and Beyond: Art, Technology, Language, History, Theory</i>. 4th ed., completely rev. and expanded. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.</li> </ul>
Lesson 2  Wednesday 29 June	<b>INTRODUCTION PART TWO: HISTORY, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN FILMS</b>  History of Films in Asia  Films as Lens to Asian politics, cultures, history, and societies	Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deocampo, Nick. "Introduction: The Beginnings of Cinema in Asia." In <i>Early Cinema in Asia</i>. Indiana University Press.</li> <li>● Pugsley, Peter C. 2013. <i>Tradition, Culture and Aesthetics in Contemporary Asian Cinema</i>. London: Taylor &amp; Francis Group. Chapter 4. The Emerging Consciousness of Asia. Accessed June 7, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.</li> </ul> Optional Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Barber, Sian. "Introduction" and "Film and History" in <i>Using Film as a Source</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015.</li> <li>● Ciecko, Anne Tereska. <i>Contemporary Asian Cinema: Popular Culture in a Global Frame</i>. English ed. Oxford: Berg, 2006.</li> <li>● Stephen Teo. <i>The Asian Cinema Experience: Styles, Spaces, Theory</i>. Taylor and Francis, 2013. doi:10.4324/9780203115657.</li> </ul>

<p>LESSON 3</p> <p>Thursday 30 June</p>	<p><b>HISTORY:</b> <b>Decolonization and Nation-Building</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: Sarjan Hassan, 1958, Dir. P. Ramlee/L. Avellana (Malaya/Singapore)</p> <p>Access film from Youtube/eLearn</p>	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Barnard, Timothy. "Decolonization and the nation in Malay film, 1955-1965." <i>Southeast Asia Research</i>, Vol. 17, No. 1 March 2009, pp. 65-86.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anderson, Benedict. <i>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i>. New York: Verso, 1991.</li> <li>● Tarling, Nicholas. <i>Nationalism in Southeast Asia: If the people are with us</i>. London: Routledge, 2004.</li> <li>● Cheah Boon Keng. <i>The Making of a Nation</i>. Singapore, ISEAS, 2002.</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 4</p> <p>Tuesday 5 July</p>	<p><b>HISTORY:</b> <b>Cold War in Asia</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: <i>The Blue Kite</i>, 1993, Dir. Tian Zhuangzhuang (China)</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn</p> <p><b>QUIZ 1 - beginning of the session (covering sessions 1-3)</b></p>	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Zhang, Xudong. "National Trauma, Global Allegory: Reconstruction of Collective Memory in Tian Zhuangzhuang's <i>The Blue Kite</i>." <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i> 12, no. 37 (2003): 623-38.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Osborne, Milton. "Revolution and Revolt: Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaya and the Philippines" in <i>Southeast Asia: An Introductory History</i>.</li> <li>● Acharya, Amitav. <i>The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region</i>. Singapore: ISEAS, 2012.</li> <li>● Christie, Clive. <i>Ideology and Revolution in Southeast Asia, 1900-1980</i>. Richmond: Curzon, 2001.</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 5</p> <p>Wednesday 6 July</p>	<p><b>HISTORY:</b> <b>Rise of China</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: <i>Kung Fu Yoga</i>, 2017, Stanley Tong</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn/iTunes/Netflix</p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yang, Yanling. "The Emergence of China-India Film Co-Production: Policy and Practice." <i>Transnational Screens</i> 11, no. 3 (2020): 202-17. doi:10.1080/25785273.2020.1823074.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nielsen, Hanna Bøje. "The Three Father Figures in Tian Zhuangzhuang's Film <i>The Blue Kite</i>: The Emasculation of Males by the Communist Party." <i>China Information</i> 13, no. 4 (1999): 83-96.</li> </ul>

<p>LESSON 6</p> <p>Thursday 7 July</p>	<p><b>SOCIETY:</b> <b>Gender</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: Dangal, 2016, Dir. Nitesh Tiwari (India)</p> <p>Access from iTunes/Netflix</p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oza, Rupal. "Wrestling Women: Caste and Neoliberalism in Rural Haryana." <i>Gender, Place &amp; Culture</i> 26, no. 4 (2018): 1-21.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Datta, Sangeeta. "Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema." <i>Social Scientist</i> 28, no. 3/4 (2000): 71-82.</li> <li>● Rao, Leela. "Woman in Indian Films — a Paradigm of Continuity and Change." <i>Media, Culture &amp; Society</i> 11, no. 4 (1989): 443-58.</li> <li>● Metro (Melbourne, Vic: 1974), no. 155 (2007):52-57.</li> </ul>
<p>Lesson 7</p> <p>Tuesday 12 July</p>	<p><b>SOCIETY:</b> <b>Race</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: Sepet (Malaysia, 2005)</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn/iTunes/Netflix</p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sim, Gerald. "Yasmin Ahmad's "Orked" Trilogy." <i>Film Quarterly</i> 62, no. 3 (2009): 48-53.</li> <li>● Khoo, Gaik Cheng. "The Politics of Love: Malaysia's Yasmin Ahmad. [The Cosmopolitan Sensibility of an Internationally Celebrated Malaysian Filmmaker.]." <i>Metro</i> (Melbourne, Vic: 1974), no. 155 (2007): 52-57.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gabriel, Sharmani Patricia. "Translating Bangsa Malaysia: Toward a New Cultural Politics of Malaysian-ness." <i>Critical Asian Studies</i> 43, no. 3 (2011): 349-72.</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 8</p> <p>Wednesday 13 July</p>	<p><b>SOCIETY:</b> <b>Religion</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: Where Do We Go Now? 2011, Lebanon</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn/iTunes/Netflix</p> <p>QUIZ 2 - beginning of the session (covering sessions 4-7)</p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sinno, Nadine. 2017. "'May the War be Remembered but Not Repeated': Engendering Peace in Nadine Labaki's Where do we Go Now?'" <i>College Literature</i> 44 (4) (Fall): 615-643.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lukman Hakim. "Conservative Islam Turn or Popular Islam? an Analysis of the Film Ayat-ayat Cinta." <i>Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies</i> 48, no. 1 (2010): 101-28.</li> <li>● Rani, Mohd. Zariat Abdul. "Islam, Romance and Popular Taste In Indonesia: A Textual Analysis of Ayat Ayat Cinta by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy and Syahadat Cinta by Taufiqurrahman Al-Azizy." <i>Indonesia and the Malay World</i> 40, no. 116 (2012): 59-73.</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 9</p> <p>Thursday 14 July</p>	<p><b>FIELD TRIP:</b> Museum Visit (details to be confirmed later)</p>	

<p>LESSON 10</p> <p>Tuesday 19 July</p>	<p><b>ASIA TODAY: Migration in Asia</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: A Land Imagined, 2018, Dir. Siew Hua Yeo (Singapore)</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn/iTunes/Netflix</p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baey, G., &amp; Yeoh, B. (2018). "The lottery of my life": Migration trajectories and the production of precarity among Bangladeshi migrant workers in Singapore's construction industry. <i>Asian and Pacific Migration Journal</i>, 27(3), 249–272.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ho, Michelle H. S. "Desiring the Singapore Story: Affective Attachments and National Identities in Anthony Chen's Ilo Ilo." <i>Journal of Chinese Cinemas</i> 9, no. 2 (2015): 1-14.</li> <li>Gomes, Catherine. "Maid-in-Singapore: Representing and Consuming Foreign Domestic Workers in Singapore Cinema." <i>Asian Ethnicity</i> 12, no. 2 (2011): 141-54.</li> <li>Wilson, Flannery., and Jane Ramey. Correia. <i>Intermingled Fascinations Migration, Displacement, and Translation in World Cinema</i>, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011.</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 11</p> <p>Wednesday 20 July</p>	<p><b>ASIA TODAY: Poverty in Asia</b></p> <p>Film to Watch: Parasite, 2019, Dir. Bong Joon-Ho (South Korea)</p> <p>Access from Youtube/eLearn/iTunes/Netflix</p>	<p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jo, Yongmie Nicola. "Disclosing the Poverty–Shame Nexus within Popular Films in South Korea (1975–2010)." <i>Poverty and Shame: Global Experiences</i>: Oxford University Press, December 18, 2014. Oxford Scholarship Online.</li> </ul> <p>Optional Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Richard Robinson and David Goodman. "The New Rich in Asia: Economic Development, Social Status and Political Consciousness" in <i>The New Rich in Asia: Mobile Phones, McDonald's, and the Middle-Class Revolution</i>, 1996.</li> <li>Shiraishi, Takashi. <i>The Rise of Middle Classes in Southeast Asia</i>. Japan: Kyoto University Press, 2008</li> </ul>
<p>LESSON 12</p> <p>Thursday 21 July</p>	<p><b>ASIA TODAY: Pandemic in Asia</b></p> <p>Shorts on/about Covid-19 in Asia</p> <p><b>QUIZ 3 - beginning of the session (covering sessions 10-11)</b></p>	<p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not applicable</li> </ul>
<p>Paper due (TBA)</p>	<p><b>Final Individual Submission through eLearn - no late submissions allowed.</b></p>	