

EAST 503
Advanced Topics in Chinese Studies: Cinematic Cities

Winter 2021
Tuesday 2:35-5:25pm
Remote Delivery

Instructor: Professor Xinyu Dong (xinyu.dong@mcgill.ca)
Office Hours: Tuesday 4:00-4:30pm by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

Since its beginnings, the cinematic medium has shown an affinity with the modern city as a dynamic audio-visual ensemble, whose historical transformations in turn provided constant inspiration for cinematic experimentations. Joining the ongoing discussions of urban cinema, this course examines the cinematic representation of cities in Chinese-language films. From the divided landscape of semi-colonial Shanghai to the “forbidden city” of imperial Beijing, from the economic miracle of Taipei to the cultural hybridity of Hong Kong, and from the small inland city to global Chinatowns, these cinematic cities register local experiences and cultural memories while raising questions about migrant, immigrant, and cosmopolitan identities. The course familiarizes the students with relevant cultural and film theories and trains the student to develop skills in historical and comparative film analyses. All film subtitles and readings in English.

Course Materials

All readings will be available in weekly folders on MyCourses (“Content”).

Links will be provided for viewing the required films at home; certain titles may be available only via rental streaming services. You are responsible for making sure that you can access all the required films.

Please bookmark the Film Analysis Website: <https://filmanalysis.yale.edu/>, which hosts some of the required readings.

Students are expected to come to class having watched the film, completed the reading(s), and participated in the online discussion (see below).

Remote Delivery Guide

Zoom class meetings: The class will meet through **live Zoom sessions** on Tuesdays @2:35-4:00pm. We will use the shorter Zoom meeting to simulate as much as possible a real classroom experience, which includes discussion, PowerPoint presentation, and in-class sequence analysis exercise. You may be asked to share your thoughts and observations anytime during the class meeting. You can raise your hand using the Zoom interface or simply unmute yourself, and you will be called on to speak in a randomized order like in a real class. We will use Zoom Chat for designated purposes and during certain class activities.

Office hours: I will hold office hours right after class on Tuesdays, 4:00-4:30pm, using the same Zoom link. You can stay around after class (there will be breakout/wait rooms) or email in advance to schedule an appointment.

Discussion board activities: We will make up for the remaining class time with discussion board activities. Weekly forums will be set up under the “Discussions” domain on MyCourses. Starting from Week 2, you are expected to participate in a **two-part online discussion** in preparation for each upcoming Tuesday class.

The **first part** is to write a 200-250 words reading-screening response by **Sunday @11:59pm**, where you identify the main thesis of the reading(s) and the ways the reading(s) allow you to better understand the film. The **second part**, due **Monday @11:59pm**, is to read your classmates’ postings and briefly respond to one of them in about 100 words.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance	10%
2. Participation	10%
3. Discussion Board Posts	30%
4. Presentation I	10%
5. Presentation II	10%
6. Final Project	30%

NOTE: (1) McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (2) In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. (3) In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change. (4) If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) at 514-398-6009 before you do this.