EAST 352  Critical Approaches to Chinese Literature  
Class: Tuesday/Thursday 2:35 -3:55 PM

Instructor: Prof. LIU, Xiao  
Email: xiao.liu6@mcgill.ca  
Online Office hours: T/Th 4-5pm by appointment on Zoom

Course Description: 
This course explores modern and contemporary Chinese literature from the early 20th century to most recent works. Literary works will be examined not only in the context of sociopolitical changes in the last one hundred years, but also in relation to the transformations of media technologies, from slide shows and phonograph to film, radio and digital media. We shall ask: how has writing changed in the age of mechanical reproduction and the digital era? How are these changes reflected in the literary form, literature production and readership? Materials cover from works of iconic figures such as Lu Xun and Zhang Ailing, to contemporary science fiction and popular writings from the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan. As the relationship between literature and the screen is an important focus of this course, in-class film screenings are incorporated into the class schedule.

Objectives:  
Students will be acquainted with skills of close reading and methods of literary analysis. Students will learn to think about the materiality of literature and writing, as well as the intersections and intertextuality between writing and other audio-visual media. Students are also expected to obtain a good knowledge of sociopolitical history and cultural politics of modern and contemporary China.

Readings and Course Texts:  
Books Required:

*Love in a Fallen City*. Eileen Chang. NYRB Classics. (ebook from library: https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/70199904, may have limits on the copies to check out; available on amazon: https://rb.gy/ydmmd)


Other readings will be made available in.pdf form. Please make sure to bring your copy of readings to the class each time.

Course Requirements:  
1) Regular attendance at all classes and active participation in class discussion.

2) Presentation/Discussion: Starting Sept 22th, each student is responsible for one oral presentation at class. Your presentation (up to 15 minutes) should focus on close reading of the texts – modes of narration, figuration, characterization, etc. You can choose one or two
paragraphs, do an in-depth analysis, and raise one or two questions for discussion. You should avoid plot summary or merely information presentation. If you cannot participate in the live class sessions, you can make a recording of your presentation and share on the course website.

3) Writing Assignment. You will be divided into three groups. Each individual of the assigned group will be asked to write a short essay of 4-6 pages. Another group will review this assignment with the whole class. Your final grade of this item will be the add-up of the group-review grade and a grade given by Professor Liu. Prompts for essays and group review will be distributed in class.

4) Group/Peer Review. Each group is responsible for reviewing the writing assignments of another group’s essays. The group is also responsible for leading a discussion session in class to develop best practices for writing essays.

4) Final Paper (8-10 pages): due midnight, Dec 8.

The paper must be submitted in the following format: double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font, 1” margins, numbered pages. Follow MLA format for citation.

**Evaluation:**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment</td>
<td>20% (10% from group review, 10% from Prof. Liu)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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**Delivery Method:**

Live class sessions will be delivered on Zoom, supplemented with some pre-recorded lectures, in-class activities, and off-line assignments. Contingent on class consent, recordings of live sessions can be shared with enrolled students who cannot participate in the live sessions. For students who cannot participate in the live session, their oral presentations can be pre-recorded and shared with the class.

**Course Policies:**

**Academic Honesty:**

*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/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information).*

*L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest)).*
Disability Accommodation:
Students who require disability accommodations should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at McGill, to discuss the OSD Student Services may provide assistance: http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/. The OSD will then contact Professor Liu, to discuss disability accommodations.

* 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.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maitrise d’une langue).

**In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

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**SCHEDULE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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| Sept. 8| **Visuality and Modern Chinese Literature (1)**  
Lu Xun, “Preface to Call to Arms” “Medicine”  
Patrick Hanan, “The Techniques of Lu Hsun’s Fiction.” |
| Sept. 10| **Visuality and Modern Chinese Literature (2)**  
Lu Xun, “Kong Yiji”  
Rey Chow, “One Newsreel Helped to Change Modern Chinese History” |
| Sept. 15| **New Women, A Doll’s House, and Robot Wife (1)**  
Film: Two-Stars (1931)  
Feng Jin, “Texts and Contexts of New Woman” |
| Sept. 17| **New Women, A Doll’s House, and Robot Wife (2)**  
Lu Xun, “Regret for the Past”  
Eileen Cheng, “Recycling the Scholar-Beauty Narrative: Lu Xun on Love in an Age of Mechanical Reproductions” |
| Sept. 22| **New Women, A Doll’s House, and Robot Wife (3)**  
Mao Dun, “Creation”  
Wei Yahua, “Conjugal Happiness in the Arms of Morpheus” |
| Sept. 24| **She has a pen too**  
Ding Ling, “Shanghai, Spring 1930”  
Amy Dooling, “Love and/or Revolution”  
Lee Haiyan, “Revolution of the Heart” |
Sept. 29 **Modernity and Sound**
Andrew Jones, “The Gramophone in China”  
Zhou Shoujuan, “The Phonograph Record”

Oct. 1 **Wartime Shanghai (1)**
Eileen Chang, “From the Ashes”  
“Sealed off”  
Gunn, Edward. *Unwelcome Muse.* (pp. 200-231)

**First Writing Assignment Due for Group A**
**Group B Starting Review of first Assignment**

Oct. 6 **Wartime Shanghai (2)**
Eileen Chang: “Love in a Fallen City”  
Lee, Leo Ou-fan. “Eileen Chang: Romances of a Fallen City.”

**Group B present review of first writing assignment**

Oct. 8 **Hong Kong: A Floating City**
Xi Xi, “The Floating City” and others  
Chan, Stephen C. K. “The Cultural Imaginary of a City: Reading Hong Kong Through Xi Xi.”

Oct. 13 **Portable Media and the Little Red Book (1)**
Browse this website  
Huang Ziping, “Practical Linguistics of the 1970s”  
Bei Dao, “Out of Context”

Oct. 15 **Portable Media and the Little Red Book (2)**
Supplementary: Film: *Morning Sun* (2005)

Oct. 20 **Experimental Writing and Yu Hua (1)**
Yu Hua, “On the Road at Eighteen”  

Oct. 22 **Experimental Writing and Yu Hua (2)**
Yu Hua, "Classical Love" “Blood and Plum Blossoms”

Oct. 27 **Science Fiction and Communication Technology**
Liu Cixin, “The Poetry Cloud”  
La La, “The Radio Waves That Never Die”  
Yan Wu, “Great Wall Planet:” Introducing Chinese Science Fiction  
[http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/abstracts/a119.html#yan](http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/abstracts/a119.html#yan)
Second Writing Assignment Due for Group B
Group C Starting Review of second Assignment

Oct. 29  The Three-Body Problem (1)
    Jia, Liyuan [Fei Dao]. “Chinese People Not Only Live in the World, They Grow in
the Universe: Liu Cixin and Chinese Science Fiction”
    Liu Cixin, The Three-Body Problem (part 1)

Nov.3  The Three-Body Problem (2)
    Liu Cixin, The Three-Body Problem (part 2)

Nov.5  Writing Review and Best Practices exercise
    Group C present review of assignment 2

Nov. 10 Television, Advertisement and Wang Meng
    Wang Meng, “To Alice” “Thrilling” “Tuning”

Nov.12 Shanghai Nostalgia
    Wang Anyi, “Fuping”(selections)
    Wang Ban, “History in a Mythical Key: Temporality, Memory, and Tradition in
Wang Anyi’s Fiction.”

Nov.17 Fin de Siecle Splendor of Taibei
    Zhu Tianwen, “Fin de Siecle Splendor.”
    Lovin, C. Laura. “Interconnectivities and Material Agencies: Consumption, Fashion,
and Intimacy in Zhu Tianwen’s ‘Fin-de-Siècle Splendor.’”

Third Writing Assignment Due for Group C
Group A Starting Review of Third Assignment

Nov.19 Internet Literature and Transmedia Production (1)
    Michel Hockx, “Internet Literature in China: History, Technology, and
Conventions”
    Selected writings of Han Han

Nov. 24 Group A presents review of third assignment

Nov. 26 Review and Reflection: literature, media, and the time of pandemic

Dec. 1 Class Presentation of Your Paper Proposal and Wrap-up