EADC389

From Swordsman to Wolf
Modern China and Japan in Popular Film and Literature

Fall 2013
MWF: 12:35-1:30pm
HU128

Dr. Minggang Li
HU266
518-442-4117
Office Hours: MTW 3-4PM or by appointment

China and Japan are some of the most fascinating nations in the world. Both have long history and strong traditions. At the same time, since the mid 19th century, both made great efforts to deal with domestic issues and international confrontation in order to survive in a rapidly modernizing world. They eagerly imported ideas from Europe and the United States, and initiated comprehensive reforms in economic, governmental, educational, and military systems. They actively studied Western civilization, and introduced Western philosophy, technology, language, literature and arts to its citizens. Most importantly, the people in these two countries struggled, but managed to establish themselves as “Japan” and “China” as we know today.

In this course we will examine this self-identification of modern China and Japan as modern nation-states from a literary perspective. Rather than the literary canons, we will focus more on popular literature and films in both countries, and discuss issues such as the definition of popular literature, readerships, government propaganda, war collaboration/resistance, environmentalism, history and memory. In so doing, we will achieve a better understanding of Japan and China in terms of history, literature and culture. In addition, many of the texts are very entertaining in nature. We will learn about modern China and Japan, and at the same time, have the joy of reading to our hearts’ content.

REQUIRED TEXT
Films: We will watch 7 films this semester. All showing are scheduled at 7pm on a Thursday night. All will be on reserve at the library one week prior to the scheduled screening for those who can not attend the Thursday screenings.

RECOMMENDED REFERENCE

COURSE ASSESSMENT
Class Contribution: 10%
Group Presentation: 15%
Quiz: 20%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Final Paper: 35%

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND EXTRA CREDIT:
Come to every session of the class on time and sign in on attendance sheets. Come to class with ideas, questions and opinions. Be active in exercises and discussions. Feel free to ask questions, to disagree with me or your classmates, and to express your own opinions. However, no matter how passionately you may disagree, please do so civilly.

QUIZ:
There will be a number of quizzes given, often WITHOUT notice, throughout the semester; the single lowest of these quiz grades will be dropped when I tabulate your course grade. These quizzes are designed to encourage careful reading of the assigned texts, good understanding of the lectures, and reconsideration of your positions on topics that are related to in-class and on-line discussion.

GROUP PRESENTATION:
You will be randomly divided into 6 groups. Starting in Week Three, each group will present on one assigned text. You as a group need to 1) research the historical context and personal background of the text and its creator(s); 2) compile a bibliography; 3) generalize your own understandings of the text in association with topics we cover in class; 4) prepare at least two discussion questions for your classmates. You will lead the discussions of your questions in class. Your presentation (in any form: power point, text, a/v, etc) should be about 10 minutes, and the discussion another 15. The presentations are usually scheduled on Fridays, but you must finish your preparation, and send me your presentation materials and discussion questions for approval at least TWO DAYS PRIOR to your presentation.

MIDTERM EXAM:
One midterm will be given in Week Seven. Similar to the quizzes, it is to test your reading of the materials, understanding of the lectures and thinking of your own positions.
FINAL PAPER:
You will write one final paper (5-8 pages). It should focus on one manageable topic. It can respond either to a research question selected from among those I distribute in in-class discussion and quizzes, or one you develop after consultation with me.

I will gladly help you formulate research questions. However, please act early. Final paper consultation requested after November 8 will NOT be accepted.

The final paper is assumed to be thoughtful, informed responses to research questions. As informed responses I assume that you will consult appropriate secondary sources (scholarly books and journal articles) to develop a more nuanced grasp of your response to your question. Internet sources in English and Japanese literature are RARELY sufficiently complex to be of much help; please avoid using such sources.

Revision is an important part of thoughtful writing. The paper must be polished: correct spelling, coherent grammar, clear argument, and logical reasoning. It should be double-spaced and in 12 point Time New Roman font. It must include footnotes and a bibliography. For further information on proper format, particularly on citing sources and other people’s ideas, refer to the East Asian Studies Style Guide posted at http://www.albany.edu/eas/writing%20papers%20in%20east%20asian%20studies.pdf

I will NOT read your draft.

The final paper will be submitted by email.

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BELOW 60 = FAILURE

BLACKBOARD
The syllabus and other information are posted at Blackboard. Through the semester, we will use Blackboard to post announcements, questions and issues, comments, etc.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
**Turn off all electronic devices** in classroom. You can use a computer ONLY for the purpose of taking notes. Any violators will be asked to turn off the device or to leave the classroom.
Week One  What is “literature”?
8/26 (M) Introduction of the course.
8/28 (W) Ihara Saikaku, “Five women who chose love.” (Handout)
8/30 (F) Chikamatsu Monzaemon, “Love suicide at Sonezaki.” (Handout)

Week Two  What is “popular literature”?
9/2 (M) No class. Labor Day observed.
9/4 (W) Excerpt from Dream of Red Chamber. (Handout)
9/5 (R) Film: The Goddess
9/6 (F) Edogawa Rampo, “The traveler with the pasted rage picture.”

Week Three  Scientific Pursuit and National Glory
9/13 (F) Group #1 Presentation and Discussion.

Week Four  New Women, New Love, New Nation
9/16 (M) Zhang Henshui, Shanghai Express, Chapter 1-4.
9/18 (W) Zhang Henshui, Shanghai Express, Chapter 5-8.
9/19 (R) Film: Osaka Elegy
9/20 (F) Zhang Henshui, Shanghai Express, Chapter 9-12.

Week Five  New Women, New Love, New Nation
9/23 (M) Zhang Henshui, Shanghai Express, Chapter 13-14. and Translator’s Afterword.
9/25 (W) Yoshikawa Eiji, Musashi, “Foreword” and Book I, Chapter 1-4.
9/27 (F) Group #2 Presentation and Discussion

Week Six  Swordsmen, War Propaganda and National Spirit
9/30 (M) Yoshikawa Eiji, Musashi, Book I, Chapter 5-8.
10/2 (W) Yoshikawa Eiji, Musashi, Book II, Chapter 1-6.
10/3 (R) Film: Sugata Sanshiro
10/4 (F) Yoshikawa Eiji, Musashi, Book II, Chapter 7-12.

Week Seven  Love Story Amid the War
10/7 (M) Eileen Chang, “Love in a fallen city,” pp109-136 (Handout)
10/11 (F) Midterm

Week Eight  Detectives, Young Fighters and Hooligans
10/14 (M) No class. Columbus Day observed.
10/16 (W) Matsumoto Seicho, “The face.” (Handout)
10/18 (F) Group #3 Presentation and Discussion

Week Nine  Wang Shuo, Playing for Thrills, Chapter 1-6

**Week Ten**
11/1 (F)     Group#4 Presentation and Discussion

**Week Eleven  Love in a Post-Modern Age**
11/7 (R)     Film: *Hero*

**Week Twelve**
11/15 (F)    Group #5 Presentation and Discussion

**Week Thirteen  Good Wolf**
11/21 (R)    Film: *Princess Mononoke*

**Week Fourteen**
11/27 (W)    No class. Thanksgiving.
11/29 (F)    No class.  Thanksgiving

**Week Fifteen**
12/2 (M)     Jian Rong, *Wolf Totem*, Chapter 11-16
12/4 (W)     Jian Rong, *Wolf Totem*, Chapter 35 (Optional) and “Epilogue.”
12/5 (R)     Film: *Let the Bullet Fly*
12/6 (F)     Group #6 Presentation and Discussion

**WEEK SIXTEEN**
12/9 (M)     Final Paper introduction and wrap-up.

**Final Paper Due: Dec 18\textsuperscript{th} (Wed) at 10am.**