

Lit 301

Women, Peasants, urbanites and intelligentsia in 20th century Chinese literature and film

Meeting: Thursday 1:30 pm - 4:20 pm

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Course Description

The figures of woman, peasant, urbanite and intelligentsia locate in the nexus of history and politics of China, covering the hundred-year course of radical transitions from the turn of the 20th century to the contemporary. Through these key figures across the line of gender and social class, this survey inspects 20th century Chinese literature/film in its historical context of nation-building and revolution. All readings are in English.

Course Readings

Besides the weekly reading, the supplementary reference includes Edwin Moise's *Modern China* (3rd edition).

Course Requirements

Weekly responses 30% (due by midnight every Wed.)

Midterm paper 20% (3-5 pages, due on March 19th)

Final paper 30% (7-10 pages, due on April 30th)

Attendance and participation 20%

Weekly Schedule

Week one Why Modern Chinese Literature is "Third World"

- the Initiative Case of Lu Xun

- Lu Xun (1881-1936), "Preface to Call to Arms" (1922), "A Madman's Diary" (1918) *Selected Works*, vol.1, 1-7, 8-21.

Frederick Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (1986). *The Jameson Reader*, 315 -339.

Week two The May Fourth Intellectual and the Downtrodden (the 1920s)

- Lu Xun, "The New Year's Sacrifice" (1924), "My Old Home" (1921). *Selected Works*, vol.1. 150-173; 63-75.
- "Ancestral Rites." *Chinese Civilizations: a Sourcebook*, 157-163.
- Lee, Ou-fan Leo, "Family and Education." *Voices from the Iron House*, 1-24.

Week three The May Fourth intellectual "in love" (the Romanticists, the 1920s)

- Yu Dafu, "Sinking" (1921). *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, 44-69.
- Yu Dafu, "Early Autobiographical Fragments" (1936). *Modern Chinese Writers*, 307-312
- Lu Xun, "Regret for the Past" (1925). *Selected Works*, vol.1, 238-261.

Selective Reading

- Kirk Denton, "The Distant Shore: Nationalism in Yu Dafu's "Sinking." *Chinese Literature; Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*. vol.14 (Dec., 1992), 107-123.

Week four "New Woman" versus Traditional Womanhood - the 1920s

- Ding Ling (1904-1986), "Miss Sophia's Diary" (1928). *I Myself a Woman*, 49-81
- Feng Yuanjun (1900-1974), "Separation" (1923). *Writing women in Modern China*, 101-113
- Chen Xuezhao (1906-1991), "Woes of Modern Women" (1927). *Writing women in Modern China*, 165-173.
- "Women's Virtues and Vices." *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 72-76.
- "Women and the Problems They Created." *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 164-168
- "Concubines." *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 245-252
- "Widows Loyal unto Death." *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*. 253-255

Selective Reading

- Lu Xun, "My View on Chastity." *Selected Works*, vol.1, 11-24.
- Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, "Introduction." *Ding Ling's Fiction*, 1-18.

Week five The Prostitute in Leftist Film and Literature (the 1930s)

- Film, *Goddess* (dir. Wu Yonggang, 1934)
- Ding Ling, "A House in Qingyun Lane" (1929). *Chinese Women Writers*, 4-12
- Lao She (1899-1966), "Crescent Moon" (1931). *Crescent Moon and Other Stories*, 190-231.
- Shen Congwen (1902-1988), "The Husband" (1930). *Imperfect Paradise*, 29-53.

Selective Reading

- Zhang Yingjin. "Prostitution and Urban Imagination: Negotiating the Public and the Private in Chinese Films of the 1930s." *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai*, 128-180.

Week six The People in Leftist Literature of the 1930s

- Mao Dun (1896-1981), "Spring Silkworm" (1932). *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, 70-88.
- Rou Shi (1902-1931), "Slave Mother" (1929). *Living China*, 99-126.
- "Family Instruction." *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 238-244

Selective Reading

- Lu Xun, "Literature and Perspiration." *Selected Works*, vol.2. 353-354.
- Irene Eber, "Images of Oppressed People and Modern Chinese Literature." *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era*, 127-141.

Week seven The Shanghai Thrills – Urbanites in the Popular Literature of the 1930s.

- Zhang Henshui (1897-1967), *Shanghai Express* (1935)
- W.H. Auden (1907-1973), *Journey to a War* (1938), chapter 10.

Selective Reading

- Andrew Field, “Selling Souls in Sin City: Shanghai Singing and Dancing Hostesses in Print, Film, and Politics, 1920-1949.” *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai*, 99-127

Week eight The People in the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

Ding Ling, “When I was in Xia Village” (1941), “New Faith” (1938). *I Myself a Woman*, 298-315, 316- 333.

- Eileen Chang, “Sealed Off.” *Love in a Fallen City*, 235-252.
- Eileen Chang, “From the Ashes.” *Written on Water*, 38-52.
- Eileen Chang, “International Shanghai, 1941.” *Modern Chinese Writers*, 296-301.
- Eileen Chang, “Writing of one’s Own.” *Written on Water* 15-22.

Selective Reading

- Karen Kingsbury, “Introduction.” *Love in a Fallen City*, ix –xvii
- Leo Ou-fan Lee, “Remapping Shanghai.” *Shanghai Modern*, 3-42.

Week nine April 5th Women and Revolution in Socialist Literature and Film (1950s and 1960s)

- Film, *Red Detachment of Women* (dir. Xie Jin, 1960)
- Zhong Pu, “Red Beans” (1957). *Writing Women in Modern China* (2005), 247-274.

Selective Reading

- Robert Chi, “The Red Detachment of Women: Resenting, Regendering, Remembering.” *Chinese Films in Focus II*, 189-196
- Mao Zedong, “Talks at the Yan’an Forum.” *Literary Thoughts of Modern China*, 458-484

Week ten The Intellectual after the Divide (1949)-the 1980s

- Wang Meng (1930-), “Banished to Xinjiang” (1980). *Modern Chinese Writers: Self-Portrayals*. 54-60.
- Bai Xianyong (1937-), “The Chinese Student Movement Abroad: Exiled Writes in the New World” (1981). *Modern Chinese Writers: Self-Portrayals*, 182-185.
- Wang Meng, “Voices of Spring.” *The Butterfly and Other Stories*, 138-154.
- Liu Daren (1930-), “Azaleas Crying Blood.” *Death in a Cornfield and Other Stories*, 23-47

Week eleven Review and Presentation