

**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA**  
**Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures**  
**Fall Semester 2017**

Time: R 9:30-12:00 pm + TBA  
 Prof. Yun Peng  
 Email: pengy@hawaii.edu

Classroom: Sakamaki B414  
 Office hours: W 2:30-4:30 pm  
 Office: Moore Hall 363

**EALL 611/ASAN 612**

**Topic in Twentieth-Century Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies: Realism**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The focus of this seminar is the question of realism in modern Chinese literature and cinema. The notion of realism seems both outdated and newly urgent. Does realism still mean anything in our so-called "post-fact" age? Is it true that poststructuralism, as some say, has "destroyed" the idea of reality? We will examine these questions by looking at how realism works in modern Chinese literature and cinema. Specifically, we look at how realism is both put into service of official ideologies and deployed as a vital form of resistance. In addition to primary texts (both literary and filmic), we will also examine theoretical questions concerning reality and realism. For example: where do we locate the real in the text? How does one come to discover reality? Topics to be covered include critical realism, socialist realism, post-Mao new realism, documentary realism, and more.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the course, students will

1. be familiar with major issues in modern Chinese realism
2. acquire theoretical tools for thinking about realism and reality
3. learn to analyze literary and filmic texts using the tools learned
4. learn to write effectively about the topic

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Eileen Chang, *Love in a Fallen City*. New York: NYRB Classics, 2006.  
 Joseph S. M. Lau et al(eds.) *Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas, 1919-1949 (Modern Asian Literature)*. New York, Columbia UP, 1981.  
 Mao Dun. *Rainbow*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: U of California Press, 1992.

Additional materials will be made available on Lualima.

## SCHEDULE

### Week 1 (8/24)

*Awakening*

- Lu Xun, "Preface"; "Madman's Diary"; "On Photography"

### Week 2 (8/31)

- Lu Xun, "The True Story of Ah Q"; "New Year's Sacrifice"; "Regret for the Past"
- Lydia Liu, "Lu Xun and Arthur Smith"
- David D. Wang, "Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, and Decapitation"

### Week 3 (9/7)

*Totality*

- Georg Lukács, "Narrate or Describe?"
- Zhou Yang, "Thoughts on Realism"
- Hu Feng, "Realism: A 'Correction'"

### Week 4 (9/14)

- Mao Dun, *Rainbow*; "Literature and Life"
- David Derwei Wang, "Introduction: After Lu Xun"; "Fictive History"; "Plotted Revolution"

—> **screen *Two Stage Sisters***

### Week 5 (9/21)

*Type + melodrama*

- Xie Jin, *Two Stage Sisters*
- Thomas Elsaesser, "Tales of Sound and Fury"
- Gina Marchetti, "Two Stage Sisters: The Blossoming of a Revolutionary Aesthetic"

### Week 6 (9/28)

*Affect*

- Rei Terada, "Thinking for Oneself: Realism and Defiance in Arendt"
- Fredric Jameson, *The Antinomies of Realism* (excerpt)

### Week 7 (10/5)

- Shen Congwen, "Quiet"; "My Education"; "Three Men and a Woman"
- David Derwei Wang, "Critical Lyricism"

**Week 8 (10/12)**

- Eileen Chang, "Sealed Off"; "The Golden Cangue"; "Love in a Fallen City"; "Red Rose, White Rose"; "My Writing"; "Preface"
- Rey Chow, "Modernity and Narration—in Feminine Detail"
- Stanley Cavell, "Introduction: Words for a Conversation"

**Week 9 (10/19)***Cinema*

- André Bazin, "Death Every Afternoon"; "The Ontology of the Photographic Image"
  - Philip Rosen, "History of Image, Image of History: Subject and Ontology in Bazin"
  - Stanley Cavell, "What Photography Calls Thinking"
- > **No class on October 26**
- > **screen: *Springtime in a Small Town***

**Week 10 (11/2)***Approaching real*

- Fei Mu, *Springtime in a Small Town*
- Victor Fan, "Fey Mou: The Presence of an Absence"

**Week 11 (11/9)***Missed encounter*

- Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (excerpts)
- Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (excerpt); *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book II* (excerpts)
- Slavoj Žižek, "Looking Awry"

**Week 12 (11/16)***Unreadable*

- Paul de Man, "Literary History and Literary Modernity"
  - Barbara Johnson, "Rigorous Unreliability"
  - Shoshana Felman, "Postal Survival, or the Question of the Navel"
- > **No class on November 23**

**Week 13 (11/30)***Ideology*

- Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"
  - Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (excerpt)
- > **screen *Platform***

**Week 14 (12/7)**

- Jia Zhangke *Platform*
- Jason McGrath, "The Independent Cinema of Jia Zhangke"
- Chris Berry, "Watching Time Go By"

**Week 15 (?)**

- Fredric Jameson, "On Interpretation"

**EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their overall performance, which includes class participation, presentations, and written assignments.

**GRADING:**

Attendance: 5%

Participation: 10%

2 short (3-5 pages) response papers: 30%

Presentation (20-minute conference style presentation): 25%

Final paper (research paper on a topic of the student's choice developed in consultation with the instructor): 30%