

# CHES2105/CCSS2030 Modern Chinese Literature

Spring 2021, CUHK

Time & Venue:	Lecture:	Thu 8:30-10:15	YIA_LT5
	<b>Discussion Session:</b>	Tue 13:30-14:15	ELB_405
Instructor:	Prof. GAO Yunwen (yunwengao@cuhk.edu.hk)		
Office Hours:	Thu 10:30-12:00 @ Room 1107, 11/F, YIA or by appointment via email		
Teaching Assistant:	TBD		
Office Hours:	TBD		

# **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Critical changes in literature and culture took place across the twentieth century in China. These changes were in response to the self-strengthening demands of young revolutionaries after decades of war and national humiliation. Over several decades, Chinese writers experimented with Western literary genres, including realism, romanticism, imagism, modernism, critical realism, magical realism, postmodernism, and so on. Chinese writers constantly probed the issue of literary modernity and attempted to redefine China and Chineseness by incorporating Western influences into classical Chinese aesthetics.

This class explores Chinese literary tradition in the twentieth century and early twenty first century through fiction (novels, short stories, poetry, etc.) and films from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China. Major themes we will discuss include socio-political reformation, gender relations, urban space, the environment, and individual subjectivity. Creatively engaging with Western influences and classical literary traditions, Chinese writers and filmmakers we examine showcase how the Chinese reconstructed modern literature in relation to China's nation-building process. All readings are available in English translations of Chinese originals. **No prior knowledge of Chinese is assumed or required.** 

# **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1) Demonstrate a basic familiarity with modern Chinese literature and culture;

2) Critically analyze important literary texts and films in relation to their historical contexts;

3) Develop reading, writing, and presentation skills in a professional manner

# COURSE ASSESSMENT

1) **Participation (15%)** Students are required to come to class prepared, having watched the film and completed the required readings. Students are expected to critically engage with the course content and contribute to class discussion. Unexcused absences will result in loss of points, and students with more than **3 unexcused absences** will receive no points for participation. Extreme lateness will be counted as absence. (See grading rubric for details)

2) **Pop Quizzes (3% each - 15% total)** Each of the five (5) quizzes will consist of two (2) multiple-choice questions or short answer questions.

3) **In-class Literary Analysis (10%)** On Week 4, **Feb 2**, students will take an in-class exam in the form of literary analysis. Everyone will receive an excerpt to be analyzed in class. Submit a piece of literary analysis (no less than 500 words, no more than 700 words) at the end of the class. The literary analysis should address specific passages, quotes, or scenes from the assigned excerpt. (See grading rubric for details)

4) Article Review (10%) Students should submit an article review (no less than 400 words, no more than 600 words in 12pt, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margin at all sides, double-spaced, page numbered) to the Blackboard together with a PDF file of the signed Veriguide receipt. Choose a piece of secondary reading from the weekly reading assignment and write a review of the article. Summarize the main argument of the article and layout how the author(s) proved their arguments. Provide your critical assessment of the article in terms of the validity of the argument and how the argument can help your understanding of the works discussed. Due date: 11:59pm, Feb 26. (See grading rubric for details)

5) **Group Presentation (15%)** Each student will be assigned to a group to present a critical reading of assigned materials and external sources for 15-20 minutes with the aid of PowerPoint or other visual materials. Students will be asked to sign up for a group in **Week 2**. Instructions and grading rubric will be posted on the **Blackboard**. (See grading rubric for details)

6) **Term Paper Proposal (5%)** Students will submit a proposal of **300-500 words** to the **Blackboard by 11:59pm, Mar 26**. In the proposal, students should cover the proposed topic, its significance, an outline of the paper, and primary and secondary sources. (See grading rubric for details)

7) **Term Paper (30%)** Students are expected to analyze a piece of literary work or a film that we have read or watched for this course, and write a paper (2,000-2,500 words, 12pt, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margin at all sides, double-spaced, page numbered) by the end of the semester. Term paper should be uploaded to the **Blackboard** together with a **PDF** file of the signed **Veriguide** receipt no later than **11:59pm**, **Apr 23**. No late submission will be accepted. (See grading rubric for details)

# **COURSE READINGS**

1) Joseph Lau and Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, 2nd edition. Columbia University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0231138413 (abbreviated as *Anthology*)

2) All other readings are available in PDF or WebLink from the **Blackboard** website in the "Weekly Readings" folder. All recommended films are reserved at University Library at the circulation desk and will not be screened during class unless otherwise noticed. You must complete each week's reading prior to the lecture.

3) **Recommended readings and films** are listed at the end of each week's required reading with \*. You are encouraged to incorporate recommended readings and films for assignments such as group presentation, discussion board posts, and term paper.

Academic Honesty: Students should submit the papers to the Veriguide system and print out the Veriguide receipt and scan it into a PDF file before submitting to the Blackboard. See the website: https://services.veriguide.org/academic/login\_CUHK.jspx.

Any cases of plagiarism will be severely penalized and reported to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, which could result in failure or expulsion from the University.

# **COURSE SCHEDULE**

## I. The Obsession with China

# Week 1 (Jan 14) Course Overview & The Origins of Modern Chinese Literature

> Hu Shi, "Some Modest Proposal for the Reform of Literature," 123-139. (PDF)

> Sher-shiueh Li, "The Multiple Beginnings of Modern Chinese 'Literature'" in *A New Literary History of Modern China*, 29-34. (PDF)

Discussion Section (Jan 19): Workshop 1 How to Conduct Literary Analysis?

## Week 2 (Jan 21) May Fourth Movement: Literature and the Nation

> Lu Xun, "Preface to the First Collection of Short Stories, Call to Arms," "A Madman's Diary" in *Anthology*, 3-16. (PDF)

> C. T. Hsia. "Lu Hsun," 28-54. (PDF)

≻\* Carlos Rojas, "Of Canons and Cannibalism: A Psycho-Immunological Reading of "Diary of a Madman," 47-76. (PDF)

Discussion Section (Jan 26): Lu Xun and May Fourth Movement; Sign up for tutorial sections and presentation groups

## Week 3 (Jan 28) May Fourth Movement and the Salvation of Women

> Lu Xun, "What Happens after Nora Leaves Home," 84-92. (PDF)

> Lu Xun, "Regret for the Past," 101-127. (PDF)

>\* Christina Gilmartin, "May Fourth and Women's Emancipation," ix-xxv. (PDF)

Discussion Section (Feb 2): In-class literary analysis

#### Week 4 (Feb 4) New Women on Screen

Film Screening in class: Center Stage (Dir. Stanley Kwan, 1992) (UL Reserve 4 hours PN1997.J816 2003)

≫Discussion Section (Feb 9): Discuss the Film

#### Week 5 Lunar New Year, No Class

#### Week 6 (Feb 18) Iconoclasts of Modern China

> Yu Dafu, "Sinking" in Anthology, 31-55.

> Kirk Denton, "The Distant Shore: Nationalism in Yu Dafu's 'Sinking," 107-115. (PDF)

Discussion Sections (Feb 23): Group Presentation on Yu Dafu and Nationalism

## Week 7 (Feb 25) The Lyrical Tradition of Modern Chinese Literature

> Shen Congwen, "Xiaoxiao" in Anthology, 82-94. (PDF)

David Wang, "Critical Realism-The Boundary of the Real in the Fiction of Shen Congwen," 201-45. (PDF)

Discussion Sections (Mar 2): Group Presentation on Shen Congwen and the Lyrical Tradition

Article Review Due by Feb 26

## II. The Lure of the Modern

#### Week 8 (Mar 4) New Sensationism and the Rise of Urban Centers

> Mu Shiying, "Shanghai Foxtrot" in *Mu Shiying: China's Lost Modernist*, 103-118. (PDF)

Andrew David Field, Mu Shiying, An Appreciation of His Life, Times and Works, xv-xlix. (PDF)

Discussion Sections (Mar 9): Group Presentation on Mu Shiying and the Shanghai Modern

#### Week 9 (Mar 11) Constructing the New Woman

> Ding Ling, "Miss Sophia's Diary" in *I Myself Am a Woman*, 49-81. (PDF)

> Tani Barlow, "Introduction" in *The Power of Weakness: Ding Ling and Lu Hsun*, 1-26. (PDF)

Discussion Sections (Mar 16): Group Presentation on Ding Ling and the New Woman

## Week 10 (Mar 18) Women's Writing and the Quotidian

> Eileen Chang, "Sealed Off" in Anthology, 235-252.

> Eileen Chang, "Stale Mate" in Renditions. (PDF)

>\* Film: *Lust, Caution* (Dir. Ang Lee, 2007)

Discussion Sections (Mar 23): Group Presentation on Eileen Chang and the Quotidian

#### III. New China and the Age of Revolution

#### Week 11 (Mar 25) The Beginning of the New Era and Root-Seeking Literature

> Han Shaogong, "Introduction" and "Homecoming?" in *Homecoming And Other Stories*, 1-20. (PDF)

≫\* Mao Zedong, "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art." (1943) (WebLink)

≫\* Film: *In the Heat of the Sun* (Dir. Jiang Wen, 1994)

Term Paper Proposal due by Mar 26

Week 12 Reading Week, No Class

# IV. The Postmodern in Chinese Literature

## Week 13 (Apr 8) Hong Kong and the Post-colonial Identity

> Xi Xi, "A Woman Like Me" in Anthology, 303-13. (PDF)

> Ackbar Abbas, "Introduction: Culture in a Space of Disappearance" in *Hong Kong: Culture* and the Politics of Disappearance, 1-15. (PDF)

Discussion Section (Apr 13): Group Presentation on Han Shaogong and Root-Seeking Literature

## Week 14 (Apr 15) Imagining the Post-human: From Science Fantasy to Science Fiction

> Liu Cixin, *Poetry Cloud*, 87-113. (PDF)

> Mingwei Song, "After 1989: The New Wave of Chinese Science Fiction," *Chinese Perspectives*. 101 (2015): 7-13. (PDF)

Discussion Section (Apr 20): Discuss Chinese Sci-Fi and wrap up the course

<u>Term Paper Due by Apr 23</u>