

Course Form for PKU Summer School International 2026

Course Title	Title in English: Modern Chinese Fiction through Film
	Title in Chinese: 中国现当代小说与电影
Teacher	Dr. Ma Naiqiang
First day of classes	July 6, 2026
Last day of classes	July 31, 2026
Course Credit	2 credits
Course Description	
Objective	
<p>The current cross-cultural teaching requires both teaching with and teaching about multimedia. This course integrates the printed text (fiction) and media text (film), teaching Chinese culture through literature and multimedia. The modern Chinese literature starts from the early 1900s, and the course will cover about ten classical short stories, novellas, and novels of modern China as well as the movies adapted from these literary works. The course instruction mainly includes the knowledge of literary background, introduction of authors and their writings, analysis and comment of fictional works, questions and answers of discussion topics, and comparison and appreciation of adapted films. With the help of literary comprehension and multimedia appreciation, the course aims to improve students' intellectual independence, and hence enhance their cultural awareness, literary education and intercultural communicative competence.</p>	
Pre-requisites / Target audience	
<p>The target audience are the international students with various national backgrounds, and the students are supposed to have much interest in modern Chinese fiction and film. The course will be instructed in English, and there are no other pre-requisites for this course.</p>	
Proceeding of the Course	
<p>This course is lecture/seminar-combined, and students' participation and discussion are mandatory. The learning materials will be mostly in English, with the Chinese fiction in English translation and the film in Chinese with English subtitles. Students are expected to</p>	

finish all the class assignments (including both fiction and film) in advance and come to class fully prepared for discussion. Generally, we will focus on one fiction/film for each session. On class days, the instructor will first present some relevant information of literary and cultural background, and then it will be followed by instructor's leading questions, students' discussion, and the comparative study of fiction/film. If possible, we will also cover some non-Chinese fiction/film, such as the literary works of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, etc. We hope that such comparative lens could further enlarge students' horizontal vision and enhance their cross-cultural awareness.

Assignments (essay or other forms)

1. Class assignments (including both fiction and film) for each session;
2. Group presentation I (5 minutes for each student) focusing on a literary/film term;
3. Group presentation II (5 minutes for each student) centering on one fiction/film work;
4. One final paper (1500 words) written on the fiction/film covered throughout the summer.

Evaluation Details

1. Participation and Discussion (15%);
2. Group Presentation I (15%);
3. Group Presentation II (20%);
4. Final Paper of 1500 words (50%).

Text Books and Reading Materials

Primary Texts: Fiction

- Chang, Eileen. *Lust, Caution* (Julia Lovell, trans.) Penguin Books, 2007.
- Lee, Lilian. *Farewell My Concubine* (Andrea Lingenfelter, trans.) Harper Perennial, 1994.
- Lu, Xun. The New Year's Sacrifice in *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun* (Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 1972.
- Mao, Dun. *The Shop of Lin Family* (Sidney Shapiro, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 2015.
- Mo, Yan. *Red Sorghum* (Howard Goldblatt, trans.) Arrow Books, 2003.
- Shen, Congwen. *Border Town* (Jeffrey C. Kinkley, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2009.
- Su, Tong. *Raise the Red Lantern* (Michael S. Duke, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2004.
- Yan, Geling. *The Flowers of War* (Nicky Harman, trans.) Vintage Books, 2012.
- Yu, Hua. *To Live* (Michael Berry, trans.) Anchor Books, 2003.

Primary Texts: Film

Chang Eileen's *Lust, Caution*: directed by Ang Lee, released in 2007.

Lee Lilian's *Farewell My Concubine*: directed by Chen Kaige, released in 1993.

Lu Xun's *The New Year's Sacrifice*: directed by Sang Hu, released in 1956.

Mao Dun's *The Lin Family's Shop*: directed by Shui Hua, released in 1959.

Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1988.

Shen Congwen's *Border Town*: directed by Ling Zifeng, released in 1984.

Su Tong's *Raise the Red Lantern*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1991.

Yan Geling's *The Flowers of War*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 2011.

Yu Hua's *To Live*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1994.

Secondary Texts

Bordwell, David & Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction* (7th edition). McGraw-Hill, 2004.

Cartmell, Deborah & Imelda Whelehan, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Desmond, John M. & Peter Hawkes. *Adaptation: Studying Film and Literature*. McGraw-Hill, 2006.

Duke, Michael S., ed. *Worlds of Modern Chinese Fiction: Short Stories & Novellas from the People's Republic, Taiwan & Hong Kong*. Sharpe, 1991.

Harrison, Stephanie, ed. *Adaptations: From Short Story to Big Screen*. Three Rivers Press, 2005.

Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* (3rd edition). Routledge, 2006.

Lao, Joseph S. M., C. T. Hsia & Leo Ou-fan Lee, eds. *Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas, 1919-1949*. Columbia University Press, 1981.

Lao, Joseph S. M. & Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature* (2nd edition). Columbia University Press, 2007.

Lothe, Jakob. *Narrative in Fiction and Film: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

McDougall, Bonnie S. & Kam Louie, eds. *The Literature of China in the Twentieth*

Century. Columbia University Press, 1999.

McFarlane, Brian. *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Claredon Press, 1996.

Stam, Robert & Alessandra Raengo, eds. *A Companion to Literature and Film*. Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Stam, Robert & Alessandra Raengo, eds. *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*. Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

Zhang, Yingjin. *Chinese National Cinema*. Routledge, 2004.

Academic Integrity (If necessary)

Participation in this course commits the students and instructor to abide by a general norm of equal opportunity and academic integrity. Any explicit indebtedness to the words or ideas of other than yours should be acknowledged with reference in your group presentation and final paper.

CLASS SCHEDULE

(Subject to adjustment)

Session 1: Introduction

Date: 06/07/2026

【Description of the Session】

This session starts with a brief introduction to the course and the syllabus, and we will familiarize the students with a chronology of Chinese modern fiction and film, from the year 1918 and 1905 respectively to the 21st century. We will further touch slightly a brief history of the film adaptation from fictional works, and hence introduce the most representative voices of modern Chinese literature in a larger sense.

【Questions】

1. When and how does the modern fiction originate in China? And how does modern Chinese fiction fall into different literary periods?
2. What are the distinctive characteristics of Chinese modern film by different generations of directors? And how are these directors classified?
3. The film adaptation of fictional works has a long history. Could you illustrate some representative ones from modern Chinese fiction, and from modern world literature?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Lao, Joseph S. M. & Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese*

Literature (2nd edition). Columbia University Press, 2007.

Zhang, Yingjin. *Chinese National Cinema*. Routledge, 2004.

Further Readings:

McDougall, Bonnie S. & Kam Louie, eds. *The Literature of China in the Twentieth Century*. Columbia University Press, 1999.

Desmond, John M. & Peter Hawkes. *Adaptation: Studying Film and Literature*. McGraw-Hill, 2006.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Lu, Xun. The New Year's Sacrifice in *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun* (Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 1972.

Lu Xun's *The New Year's Sacrifice*: directed by Sang Hu, released in 1956.

Session 2: Lu Xun's *The New Year's Sacrifice* (1924)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

In this session we will introduce about Lu Xun (Lu Hsun), the most famous and influential of modern Chinese writers, and then we will read one of his best short stories, "The New Year's Sacrifice" (1924), which depicts the miserable life of a rural woman, Xiang Lin (Hsiang Lin)'s Wife, in the old feudal society. Compared with the same-title film (1956) directed by Sang Hu and starring Bai Yang, we will further discuss what leads to the tragic fate of this female character, who has become a classical image in modern China.

【Questions】

1. What's the position of Lu Xun in modern Chinese literature? What could we learn from his "Preface to *Call to Arms*"?
2. What's the narrative style of the story "The New Year's Sacrifice"? How is the film *The New Year's Sacrifice* narrated differently?
3. Hsiang Lin's Wife died just before the new year's sacrifice. What are the factors that finally lead to the tragic death of this miserable woman?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Lu, Xun. The New Year's Sacrifice in *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun* (Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 1972.

Lu Xun's *The New Year's Sacrifice*: directed by Sang Hu, released in 1956.

Further Readings:

Foley, Todd. Between Human and Animal: A Study of *New Year's Sacrifice*, *Kong Yiji*, and *Diary of a Madman*. *Frontiers of Literary Studies in China* 6 (3): 374-392, 2012.

Lu, Xun. Preface to *Call to Arms* in *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun* (Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 1972.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Mao, Dun. *The Shop of Lin Family* (Sidney Shapiro, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 2015.

Mao Dun's *The Lin Family's Shop*: directed by Shui Hua, released in 1959.

Session 3: Mao Dun's *The Shop of Lin Family* (1932)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

This session starts with an introduction about Mao Dun, one of modern China's top novelists, and we will read one of his best short stories, "The Shop of Lin Family" (1932), which describes how a small shop of the Lin Family in an ancient town near Shanghai was closed down under the background of January 28 Incident in 1932. Compared with the film *The Lin Family's Shop* (1959) directed by Shui Hua and starring Xie Tian, we will further illustrate the confused society of China in the early 1930s, which was faced with military aggression from Japanese, blackmail from Chinese Nationalist Party and exploitation from the landlord class.

【Questions】

1. What's the difference of Mao Dun's literary career before and after the foundation of the People's Republic of China?
2. Mao Dun himself also writes about the adaptation of "The Shop of Lin Family". How do you think his theory is applied into the making of this film?
3. What leads to the final collapse of the Lin Family's Shop? What could we learn about the fate of rural economy and individual effort in competing for survival with foreign industry?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Mao, Dun. *The Shop of Lin Family* (Sidney Shapiro, trans.) Foreign Languages Press, 2015.

Mao Dun's *The Lin Family's Shop*: directed by Shui Hua, released in 1959.

Further Readings:

Qin, Liyan. Film Adaptation as Political Orthodoxy and its Dilemmas: The Case of Xia Yan in the 1950s and 1960s. *Frontiers of Literary Studies in China* 5 (3): 301-320, 2011.

Teo, Stephen. *The Lin Family Shop: A Chinese Melodrama of Capitalist Existentialism*.

<i>Senses of Cinema</i> 28, 2003.	
【Assignments for this session (if any)】 Shen, Congwen. <i>Border Town</i> (Jeffrey C. Kinkley, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2009. Shen Congwen's <i>Border Town</i> : directed by Ling Zifeng, released in 1984.	
Session 4: Shen Congwen's <i>Border Town</i> (1934)	Date:
【Description of the Session】 In this session we will introduce about Shen Congwen, one of the most influential writers in China's modern history, and then we will read his masterpiece, "Border Town" (1934), which brings to life the story of Cuicui, a young country girl coming of age during a time of national turmoil. Compared with the same-title film (1984) directed by Ling Zifeng and starring Feng Hanyuan & Dai Na, we will further appreciate this bittersweet and nostalgic tale of southern Chinese town, pulled apart by civil war and revolution in the early twentieth century.	
【Questions】 1. Shen Congwen was called the representative writer (even the founder) of the "native-soil" literature. What could we learn from his brilliant portrayal of Chinese rural life? 2. Cuicui is spellbound by the local custom of nighttime serenades, and she is deftly pursued by two eligible brothers. What choices could she make? 3. Like any teenager, Cuicui dreams of romance and finding true love. As she grows up, what would Cuicui discover about life and her destiny?	
【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】 Shen, Congwen. <i>Border Town</i> (Jeffrey C. Kinkley, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2009. Shen Congwen's <i>Border Town</i> : directed by Ling Zifeng, released in 1984. Further Readings: Kinkley, Jeffrey C. <i>The Odyssey of Shen Congwen</i> . Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987. Liu, Yubin. A Comparative Analysis of <i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i> and <i>The Border Town</i> Based on Ecological Feminism Theory. <i>Overseas English</i> 22 (2): 143-144, 2016.	
【Assignments for this session (if any)】 Chang, Eileen. <i>Lust, Caution</i> (Julia Lovell, trans.) Penguin Books, 2007. Chang Eileen's <i>Lust, Caution</i> : directed by Ang Lee, released in 2007.	

Session 5: Chang Eileen's <i>Lust, Caution</i> (1978)	Date:
<p>【Description of the Session】</p> <p>In this session we will start with an introduction about Chang Eileen (Zhang Ailing), “the most gifted Chinese writer to emerge in the forties,” and then we will read one of her most popular short stories, “Lust, Caution” (1978), which depicts a patriotic student radical, the beautiful young Jiazhi, and her mission to seduce a powerful official of the occupying government, Mr. Yi. Compared with the same-title film (2007) directed by Ang Lee and starring Tony Leung Chiu Wai & Tang Wei, we will further appreciate this passionate tale of espionage, deception and love set in Hong Kong/Shanghai of the 1940s.</p>	
<p>【Questions】</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chang Eileen started writing “Lust, Caution” in the early 1950s, and finally got it published in 1978. What could we learn from this long process of creation? 2. As she waits for Mr. Yi to arrive at their liaison, Jiazhi wonders if she is cut out to be a femme fatale and coldly takes Mr. Yi to his death. Is she beginning to fall in love with him? 3. What do you think of the erotic scenes in the film, while it is only one sentence in the story, “In truth, every time she was with Yi she felt cleansed, as if by a scalding hot bath”? 	
<p>【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】</p> <p>Chang, Eileen. <i>Lust, Caution</i> (Julia Lovell, trans.) Penguin Books, 2007.</p> <p>Chang Eileen's <i>Lust, Caution</i>: directed by Ang Lee, released in 2007.</p> <p>Further Readings:</p> <p>Chang, Eileen. The Spying, in <i>Muse</i> March, 2008.</p> <p>Chi, Robert. Exhibitionism: <i>Lust, Caution</i>. <i>Journal of Chinese Cinemas</i> 3 (2): 177-187, 2009.</p> <p>Shen, Vivian. History, Fiction, and Film <i>Lust, Caution</i> Revisited. <i>Asian Cinema</i> 22 (2): 305-321, 2011.</p>	
<p>【Assignments for this session (if any)】</p> <p>Preparation of Group Presentation I</p>	
Session 6: Group Presentation I	Date:
<p>【Description of the Session】</p> <p>We will arrange group presentations for this session. The class falls into 6 groups, with each group 3 to 5 students (based on class size), and the students' presentations will focus</p>	

on a specific literary/film term. Here are the guidelines for group presentations:

1. The presentation topics are pre-assigned, which we have talked about in class.
2. The presentation should cover, but not limited to the definition of the literary/film term, some general examples, and some detailed analysis.
3. The form of presentation is free to choose as long as it is concerned with the topic. Try to be active, creative, and imaginative.
4. Teamwork is highly encouraged. Each member should contribute roughly the same in discussing, preparing, and giving the presentation.
5. The presentation lasts about 30 minutes (questions & answers included), 5 minutes for each student.
6. A handout or PowerPoint is recommended for better comprehension.

【Questions】

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Lee, Lilian. *Farewell My Concubine* (Andrea Lingenfelter, trans.) Harper Perennial, 1994.
 Lee Lilian's *Farewell My Concubine*: directed by Chen Kaige, released in 1993.

Session 7: Lee Lilian's *Farewell My Concubine* (1985)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

This session starts with an introduction about Lee Lilian (Li Bihua), one of the leading writers in Hong Kong, and we will read her most popular novel, *Farewell My Concubine* (1985). The work remains endearing and sensitive in its portrayal of the delicate relationships of the protagonists Cheng Dieyi and Duan Xiaolou while scathingly indicating the revolution and its effect on the art and culture of China. Compared with the excellent same-title film (1993) directed by Chen Kaige and starring Leslie Cheung, Gong Li & Zhang Fengyi, we will further appreciate this compelling story set in the amazing world of traditional Peking opera.

【Questions】

1. Shakespeare says that "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players". Could we understand Cheng Dieyi better from such a perspective?

2. Some critics say that the film *Farewell My Concubine* has exhausted the talent of Director Chen. How do you like such a comment?

3. What do you know about Peking opera? And what kind of influence could the revolution have on the Chinese art and culture?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Lee, Lilian. *Farewell My Concubine* (Andrea Lingenfelter, trans.) Harper Perennial, 1994.

Lee Lilian's *Farewell My Concubine*: directed by Chen Kaige, released in 1993.

Further Readings:

Lau, Jenny Kwok Wah. *Farewell My Concubine—History, Melodrama, and Ideology in Contemporary Pan-Chinese Cinema. Film Quarterly* 49 (1): 16-27, 1995.

Liang, Ying. Making the Familiar Strange and the Strange Familiar—*Farewell My Concubine* and its Crossing National Borders. *US-China Foreign Language* 9 (8): 530-538, 2011.

Zhang, Benzi. Figures of Violence and Tropes of Homophobia: Reading *Farewell My Concubine* between East and West. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 33 (2): 101-109, 1999.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Mo, Yan. *Red Sorghum* (Howard Goldblatt, trans.) Arrow Books, 2003.

Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1988.

Session 8: Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* (1986)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

In this session we will introduce about the Nobel Literature Prize winner Mo Yan, and then we will read the first novel he wrote in the mid-1980s, *Red Sorghum* (1986), which established his international reputation. Spanning three generations, *Red Sorghum* is a novel of family and myth, and it is told through a series of flashbacks that depict events of staggering horror set against a landscape of gemlike beauty, as the Chinese battle both Japanese invaders and each other in the turbulent war years of the 1930s. The movie version (1988) of this work, directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Gong Li & Jiang Wen, was named best film at the Berlin Film Festival in 1988, and we could further experience the astounding, sensual and visceral imagery of gunpowder, blood and death.

【Questions】

1. Some critics say that Mo Yan's writing was influenced by William Faulkner and Gabriel García Márquez. Could you identify some elements of magic realism in his fiction?
2. What makes a hero? How is Grandpa, Yu Zhan'ao, different from the traditional image of a war hero? And what do you think of the death of Grandma?
3. Mo Yan's language is peculiar and powerful, so is it in the film. Could you feel his deep love for his land and fellow people through those astounding and even bloody scenes?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Mo, Yan. *Red Sorghum* (Howard Goldblatt, trans.) Arrow Books, 2003.

Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1988.

Further Readings:

Chan, Shelly W. From Fatherland to Motherland: On Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* & *Big Breasts and Full Hips*. *World Literature Today* 74 (3): 495-500, 2000.

Ng, Yvonne. Imagery and Sound in *Red Sorghum*. *Kinema* 3: 20-29, 1995.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Su, Tong. *Raise the Red Lantern* (Michael S. Duke, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2004.

Su Tong's *Raise the Red Lantern*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1991.

Session 9: Su Tong's *Raise the Red Lantern* (1990)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

This session starts with an introduction about the Mao Dun Literature Award winner Su Tong, and we will read one of his novellas, *Raise the Red Lantern* (originally published as *Wives and Concubines* in 1990), which tells the story of Lotus, a young woman whose father's suicide forces her to become the concubine of a wealthy merchant, with a setting in the provincial China of the 1930s. Compared with the critically acclaimed film *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991), directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Gong Li, we will further illustrate the loneliness, despair, and cruel treatment of Lotus and her final descent into insanity both as a weapon and a refuge.

【Questions】

1. Su Tong's novella was originally titled *Wives and Concubines*, but the film title changed to *Raise the Red Lantern*. How do you like the change? Please explain.
2. The names of female characters in the story are often thematically important. What does the name of the protagonist, Lotus, imply?

3. The story ends in the brutal realities of dark places. What do you think of the final insanity of Lotus? Is it a weapon, a refuge, or both?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Su, Tong. *Raise the Red Lantern* (Michael S. Duke, trans.) Harper Perennial, 2004.

Su Tong's *Raise the Red Lantern*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1991.

Further Readings:

Cui, Shuqin. *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991): The Cinematic Orient and Female Conflict, in *Film Analysis: A Norton Reader* (pp. 830-849). Norton, 2005.

Ng, Andrew Hock Soon. Haunting Concubines: Reading Su Tong's *Raise the Red Lantern* as a Story about Ghosts Seeking Substitutes, in *Ghosts, Stories, Histories: Ghost Stories and Alternative Histories* (pp. 41-57). Cambridge Scholars, 2007.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Yu, Hua. *To Live* (Michael Berry, trans.) Anchor Books, 2003.

Yu Hua's *To Live*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1994.

Session 10: Yu Hua's *To Live* (1993)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

In this session we will introduce about Yu Hua, the first Chinese writer who won the prestigious James Joyce Foundation Award, and then we will read his award-winning and internationally acclaimed Chinese bestseller, *To Live* (1993), which portrays the epic transformation of one man, Fugui. Left with an ox as the companion of his final years, the protagonist stands as a model of flinty authenticity, buoyed by his appreciation for life—sheer life. Compared with the same-title film (1994) directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Gong Li & Ge You, we will further appreciate the profound voice reaching into the blood and bones core of what it means to be a human being.

【Questions】

1. Yu Hua once wrote that the American folk song “Old Black Joe” was the starting point of writing *To Live*. What are the similarities and differences between Old Joe and Fugui?
2. Some critics say that Yu Hua “writes with a cold eye but a warm heart”. What are the cold and warm elements respectively in the story?
3. The novel is mainly set in a rural village, while the film setting changes to an urban town. How do you like this adaptation of settings?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Yu, Hua. *To Live* (Michael Berry, trans.) Anchor Books, 2003.

Yu Hua's *To Live*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 1994.

Further Readings:

Chow, Rey. We Endure, Therefore We Are: Survival, Governance, and Zhang Yimou's *To Live*. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 95 (4): 1039-1064, 1996.

Liu, Kang. The Short-Lived Avant-Garde: The Transformation of Yu Hua. *Modern Language Quarterly* 63 (1): 89-118, 2002.

Shi, Liang. The Daoist Cosmic Discourse in Zhang Yimou's *To Live*. *Film Criticism* 24 (2): 2-16, 2000.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Yan, Geling. *The Flowers of War* (Nicky Harman, trans.) Vintage Books, 2012.

Yan Geling's *The Flowers of War*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 2011.

Session 11: Yan Geling's *The Flowers of War* (2007)

Date:

【Description of the Session】

This session starts with an introduction about Yan Geling, one of the most acclaimed contemporary novelists and screenwriters in the Chinese language today, and we will read her latest work, *The Flowers of War* (2007). The story is set in December, 1937, and the Japanese army have taken Nanking. The novel describes a group of terrified schoolgirls and thirteen Chinese prostitutes who are seeking their refuge. It becomes clear that the Japanese are not obeying international rules of engagement, and these girls and women are in great danger. Compared with the same-title film (2011) directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Christian Bale & Ni Ni, we will further experience the testament to the bravery of women in the most horrifying of circumstances.

【Questions】

1. The background of the story is the Rape of Nanking. What could we know about the brutality of the Japanese army through the fiction/film?
2. Father Engelmann tries in vain to provide refuge for the civilian. How limited are the functions of mission in front of the brutal war?
3. The story tells the bravery of women from the female perspective. Where has the bravery of men gone? And what factors lead to the notorious Nanking Massacre?

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

Yan, Geling. *The Flowers of War* (Nicky Harman, trans.) Vintage Books, 2012.

Yan Geling's *The Flowers of War*: directed by Zhang Yimou, released in 2011.

Further Readings:

Yang, Jing. Rewriting the Chinese National Epic in an Age of Global Consumerism: *City of Life and Death* and *The Flowers of War*. *New Global Studies* 8 (3): 245-258, 2014.

Yang, Jing. The Reinvention of Hollywood's Classic White Savior Tale in Contemporary Chinese Cinema: *Pavilion of Women* and *The Flowers of War*. *Critical Arts* 28 (2): 247-263, 2014.

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Preparation of Group Presentation II

Session 12: Group Presentation II

Date:

【Description of the Session】

We will arrange group presentations for this session. The class falls into 6 groups, with each group 3 to 5 students (based on class size), and the students' presentations will center on one specific fiction/film work. Here are the guidelines for group presentations:

1. The presentation topics are pre-assigned, which we have covered throughout the summer school.
2. The presentation should cover, but not limited to the comparison of the fiction/film work, some general examples, and some detailed analysis.
3. The form of presentation is free to choose as long as it is concerned with the topic. Try to be active, creative, and imaginative.
4. Teamwork is highly encouraged. Each member should contribute roughly the same in discussing, preparing, and giving the presentation.
5. The presentation lasts about 30 minutes (questions & answers included), 5 minutes for each student.
6. A handout or PowerPoint is recommended for better comprehension.

【Questions】

【Readings, Websites or Video Clips】

【Assignments for this session (if any)】

Preparation of Final Paper