Course Overview

The course is designed to explore the various forms and styles of contemporary world cinema. We will discuss storytelling in terms of style, approach, ethics, and cultural context. The objective of the class is to familiarize students with international narratives dealing with diverse subject matter, issues, and conflicts. The development of geographically specific cinema will be discussed, in a historical context through to present day. The class will also elaborate on the political and social history of the subjects portrayed in each film. The emphasis during class sessions will be on screenings. Students will be expected to be involved in researching areas of interest outside of the class. For the most part, class sessions will be devoted to watching and discussing the films shown in class.

SPECIAL NOTE:

In this class, we will be discussing various issues concerning gender, race and politics. If you feel you will have any problems participating in such discussions, I seriously suggest you pick a different course.

Required Reading:


Other materials distributed in class become part of the required readings.

Recommended Reading:


Attendance Policy:

Since this class only meets once a week, one session is the equivalent of 2 normal class meetings. For each unexcused absence beyond one, three points will be deducted from the final grade. Arriving 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time for the class will be considered a late arrival. Two late arrivals will result in one absence. Do not leave after the break; we will be taking attendance after the break as well.

For each day, a paper is turned in late; 4 points will be deducted from the grade.
Students not attending the first day of class will be dropped to make room for other students who are present and want to enroll in this class. If you decide to drop this class during the semester, make sure you look at the university’s policies regarding specific deadlines.

**Assignments:**

1. Five response papers covering documentaries screened in class.

2. One take home midterm examination covering the screenings, readings and lectures from September 10 (Due October 29).

3. One take home final examination covering the screenings, readings and lectures from October 15 (Due December 10).

   Details for those assignments will follow in a separate handout.

**Grade Breakdown:**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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**Note:** RTVF Classes work with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you have special needs, please register with the ODA and present me with a written copy of your Accommodation Request as soon as possible.
The schedule for screenings, lectures and due dates is subject to revision

Week 1 (September 3)

• Labor Day – No class

Week 2 (September 10)

Introduction to the course

Screening:
Amreeka
by Cherien Dabis

Week 3 (September 17)

IRANIAN CINEMA

Screening:
Children of Heaven
by Majid Majidi

Readings:
Contemporary World Cinema by Shohini Chaudhuri
• Introduction p.1- p.13
• Chapter 4: Iranian Cinema p.71 – p.92

New Iranian Cinema : Politics, Representation and Identity edited by Richard Tapper
• Chapter 1: Introduction – Richard Tapper
• Chapter 10: Location (Physical Space) and Cultural Identity in Iranian Films - Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa
• Chapter 12: Children in Contemporary Iranian Cinema: When we were Children - Hamid Reza Sadr

Iranian cinema and philosophy: shooting truth by Erfani Farhang
• Introduction
• Chapter 1: How Orphans Believe: Deleuze, National Cinema, and Majidi's The Color of Paradise
• Chapter 3: Committed Perception: Merleau-Ponty and Children of Heaven
Week 4 (September 24)

IRANIAN CINEMA

Screening:
*Turtles Can Fly*
by Bahman Ghobadi

Readings:
Iranian cinema and philosophy: shooting truth by Erfani Farhang
• Chapter 6: Deafening Silence: Bahman Ghobadi’s Turtles Can Fly and Marginal Politics

Contemporary Approaches to Film and Media Series: Film and Risk edited by Mette Hjort
• Chapter 7: Accented Filmmaking and Risk Taking in the Age of Postcolonial Militancy, Terrorism, Globalization, Wars, Oppression, and Occupation

Week 5 (October 1)

CHINESE CINEMA

Graduate Student Presentation – Tingting Li

Screening:
*Farewell My Concubine*
By Kaige Chen

Reading:
*China Information 1994 8: 42*
• Cross-Dressing and the Disappearing Woman in Modern Chinese Fiction, Drama and Film Reflections on Chen Kaige's Farewell My Concubine - Bonnie S. McDougall

*Film Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 16-27*
• "Farewell My Concubine": History, Melodrama, and Ideology in Contemporary Pan-Chinese Cinema - Jenny Kwok Wah Lau

*Women Through the Lens : Gender and Nation in a Century of Chinese Cinema by Shugin Cui*
• Chapter 7: Subjected Body and Gendered Identity: Female Impersonation in Chen Kaige’s Farewell My Concubine

*Transnational Chinese Cinemas : Identity, Nationhood, Gender edited by Hsiao-peng Lu*
• Chapter 10: Reading Formations and Chen Kaige's Farewell My Concubine - E. Ann Kaplan
• Chapter 13: The Concubine and the Figure of History: Chen Kaige’s Farewell My Concubine - Wendy Larson
Week 6 (October 8)

JAPANESE CINEMA

Graduate Student Presentation – Tingting Li

Screening:
*Castle in the Sky*
by Hayao Miyazaki

Reading:
- *Utopy and comics’ imaginary cities* - Michela De Domenico
- *The City Ascends Laputa: Castle in the Sky as Critical Ecotopia* - Anthony Lioi

Week 7 (October 15)

SOUTH KOREAN CINEMA

Screening:
*Madō/Mother*
by Joon-ho Bong

Reading:
*Contemporary World Cinema by Shohini Chaudhuri*
- Chapter 5: *East Asian Cinema* p.93 – p.114

- Distribution of the Midterm -

Week 8 (October 22)

PALESTINIAN CINEMA

Screening:
*The Times That Remain*
by Elia Suleiman

Reading:
*Contemporary World Cinema by Shohini Chaudhuri*
- Chapter 3: *Middle Eastern Cinema* p.54 – p.70

*Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Winter, 2000), pp. 95-101*
_A Cinema of Nowhere: An Interview with Elia Suleiman_

*Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Winter 2003), pp. 63-73*
_The Occupation (and Life) through an Absurdist Lens: An Interview with Elia Suleiman_

*Film Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Fall 2010), pp. 38-45*
_Sad Times: An Interview with Elia Suleiman_ - Rob White
Week 9 (October 29)

Screening:
*Paradise Now*
by Hany Abu-Assad

Reading:
*Contemporary World Cinema by Shohini Chaudhuri*
- Chapter 3: *Middle Eastern Cinema* p.54 – p.70

Midterm Paper Due at the beginning of class

Week 10 (November 5)

LEBANESE CINEMA

Screening:
*Where Do We Go Now?*
by Nadine Labaki

Reading:
*Arab Cinema: History and Cultural Identity by Viola Shafik*
- 5 Arab Cinema today: a postscript

Week 11 (November 12)

RUSSIAN CINEMA

Screening:
*Rusalka/Mermaid*
by Anna Melikyan

Reading:
*Contemporary World Cinema by Shohini Chaudhuri*
- Chapter 1: *European Cinema* p.14 – p.33

Week 12 (November 19)

MOROCCON CINEMA

Screening:
*Ali Zaoua: Prince of the Streets*
by Nabil Ayouch
Week 13 (November 26)

TAJIK CINEMA

Screening:
Luna Papa
by Bakhtyar Khudojnazarov

- Distribution of the Final Examination -

Week 14 (December 3)

SOUTH AFRICAN CINEMA

Screening:
Tsotsi
by Gavin Hood

Life, Above All
by Oliver Schmitz

Week 15 (December 10)

Final Examination Due at 1:30pm in RTVF Office