HUMA 2440
Twentieth Century China in Documentary Films

Spring 2014
Lecture: M 1:30-3:20 p.m., Room 3008
Tutorial: M 6:00-6:50 p.m., Room 2465

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course presents the turbulent history of twentieth century China through texts and documentary films. In addition to reading historical texts, we will closely study several films made by journalists and filmmakers of the time and in recent years. Major themes include the 1911 Revolution, China’s role in WWII, the Communist Revolution, the Korean War, the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, reform and opening up, and the Tiananmen Incident in 1989. Most of the films are in English and some in Chinese with English subtitles.

Each student is required to carry out an oral history interview project on one topic of your choice. In addition, each student will be assigned to a three-person team to produce a 5 to 8-minute documentary film, based on one team member’s oral history interview.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
- The newest edition is available for purchase at the university bookstore.
- Multiple copies of the textbook have been placed in the library on 2-hour reserve.

RECOMMENDED TEXT
- One copy has been placed in the library on 2-hour reserve.

* Additional readings are available in PDF under “course content” on LMES.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Lecture and tutorial/film screening attendance is required, as the lectures and tutorials include materials not provided in textbook. Students are expected to have completed all readings assigned for that day prior to the class meeting.

ASSESSMENTS

1. Attendance/Pop quizzes 10% (PRS clicker is required in ALL sessions)
2. Timeline/Chronology 10%
3. Film reviews (x 1) 5%
4. 5 to 8-minute documentary film (team) 15%
5. Oral history interview report 20%
6. Mid-term exam (50-min) 20%
7. Final exam (50-min) 20%

1. Attendance and Pop quizzes. Instead of taking attendance, several pop quizzes will be given in the first five minutes of randomly chosen sessions. They will be straightforward, designed to motivate you to keep up with the readings of the day and the film of the prior week. PRS clicker is required in ALL sessions.
2. Timeline/Chronology. You are expected to build a timeline of major events drawn from readings, lectures, and films. The timeline can help bring some order to the complex sequence...
of events we will be studying. It is due on the final day of our class, May 5. Format and length: 5 to 8 pages, single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point.

3. **Film Review.** Choose one film shown in the course and write a short review (2 to 3 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, with original title). You should summarize the main message of the film, analyze the background and process of the production, and offer your critique.

4. **One team-produced five to eight-minute documentary film.** Each student will be assigned to a three-person team to produce a 5 to 8-minute film, based on one team member’s oral history interview. Video recording and editing tutorial will be provided in class by the Publishing Technology Center (PTC). A final presentation and competition of all team-produced films will be held during the 3-hour final exam period.

5. **Oral history interview project.**
   a) Each student is required to conduct an oral history interview on one topic of your choice. You are responsible for locating the interviewee and conducting the interview.
   b) Audio or video-record the interview with the interviewee’s consent, as you may need the video recording for film production.
   c) The final oral history interview report should situate your interviewee’s story into a larger historical context, and you should explain how it will shed light on the history of twentieth century China or the broader world.
   d) For the final report, while you will draw upon the oral history account as the primary source, you should cite at least one scholarly monograph, one article from a scholarly journal, and one film as secondary sources, in addition to the Spence book.
   e) Format and length: 8 to 10 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point.

6. **Mid-term and final exams** will be relatively short (50 minutes) and simple. They contain map, photo, and video clip identifications, multiple-choice questions, and a short essay. A study guide will be provided before the exams.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This course enforces a zero-tolerance policy on cheating. The discovery of cheating on an exam or paper will result in an automatic F grade in the course, and the case will be reported to university administration.

**LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE**

**Week 1.** No class

**Week 2.**
2/10
Lecture: Introduction and Organizational Meeting
Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 3**
2/17 (Add/drop deadline)
Lecture: The End of the Empire and the 1911 Revolution
  - Readings: Spence, Chapters 11-14.
Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 4**
2/24
Lecture: The Rise of Chinese Nationalism and Communism
  - Readings: Spence, Chapters 15-16.
Tutorial/Film Screening:
  - Joris Ivens with Robert Capa, *The 400 Million* (1939)

**Week 5**
3/3
Lecture: The War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45), China as America’s Ally (1941-45)
  - Readings: Spence, Chapter 17.
Tutorial/Film Screening:
• Frank Capra (Office of War Information), *Why We Fight: The Battle of China* (1944)

**Week 6**
3/10
Lecture: The Civil War, the Communist victory, and the Korean War
• Readings: Spence, Chapters 18-19.

Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 7**
3/17
Lecture:
• **MIDTERM EXAM** (50-min)
• Video-recording/editing workshop I (1-hour)

Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 8**
3/24
Lecture: 1950s: The Anti-Rightist Campaign, the Great Leap Forward, and the Great Famine
• Readings:
  • Spence, Chapters 20-21.
  • La Frances Hui, China Through An Independent Lens: Six Experts Recommend Their Favorite Chinese Documentary Films [http://www.chinafile.com/china-through-independent-lens]

Tutorial/Film Screening:
• Hu Jie 胡杰, *Searching for Lin Zhao’s Soul* 寻找林昭的灵魂 (2004)

**Week 9**
3/31
Lecture: The Cultural Revolution
• Readings:
  • Spence, Chapter 22.

Tutorial/Film Screening:
• Hu Jie 胡杰, *Though I am Gone* 我虽死去 (2007)

**Week 10**
4/7
Lecture: The Cultural Revolution and its aftermath
• Readings: Spence, Chapters 23-24.

Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 11**
4/14
Lecture:
• **FINAL EXAM** (50-min)
• Video-recording/editing workshop II (1-hour)

Tutorial/Film Screening:
Easter Break

**Week 12** 4/28
Lecture: 1980s: “Reform and Opening Up”
  • Readings: Spence, Chapter 25.
Tutorial/Film Screening:

**Week 13** 5/5
Lecture: Crisis and the Tiananmen Incident in 1989
  • Readings: Spence, Chapter 26.
Tutorial/Film Screening:

**TIMELINE DUE**
**Draft of Individual Oral History Report DUE**

**5/15** Individual Oral History Report Due

**5/TBA** (final exam time)
**Final Competition of team-produced 5 to 8-minute documentary films**