COLI 3585/FITV 3585
Transnational Asian Cinema
Summer I

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Course Description
With its over-the-top action movies, riveting crime thrillers, sweeping historical romances, and unabashed melodramas, Asian cinema is one of the most exciting sites of cultural production in the world today. This capstone course will draw on theories and methods from film studies, literary studies, and sociology in an effort to develop an interdisciplinary model for analyzing Asian cinemas in a global context. The remainder of the course will focus on a specific Asian cinema as a way of testing “the transnational cinema” hypothesis: the proposition that, thanks to the machinations of global capitalism, even seemingly “national cinemas” must now be understood in “post-national” terms. The course will culminate in a series of screenings at the annual New York Asian Film Festival at the Film Society of Lincoln Center. Fulfills the globalism and ICC requirements.

Films on Reserve
- Joint Security Area (2000)
- My Sassy Girl (2001)
- Memories of Murder (2003)
- Oldboy (2003)
- The Host (2006)
- Poetry (2010)

Readings
—. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act.* Cornell UP, 1981. 9-14, 74-102. [Blackboard]
Course Requirements

Close Readings (25%): A series of five short writing assignments designed to teach you the basics of close reading a film.

Final Paper (25%): A 10-12 page paper analyzing one of the films discussed in class.

Final Exam (25%): A cumulative exam asking you to define key terms, identify key passages from our readings (and key scenes from our viewing), and to synthesize your learning through short essays.

Group Presentation (15%): You and a small group of your classmates will be asked to report and lead class discussion on the day’s secondary reading.

Class Participation (10%): You will be expected to contribute actively and intelligently to class discussion. (For guidelines on your class participation grade, see the sheet attached.)

Policies

Attendance: You will be expected to attend all class meetings. If you must miss class due to a medical issue, family emergency, religious holiday, or university-sponsored activity, you must provide appropriate documentation by the beginning of the next class period. Otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. Each unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by 1/3 of a letter. You will be counted absent if you come to class more than 15 minutes late, come to class late on a regular basis, come to class unprepared, or miss a scheduled appointment with the instructor.

Late Work: You will be expected to submit all homework by the beginning of the class period on the day the assignment is due. If you turn in your homework late, your assignment grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter for each class period that your work was overdue. Homework submissions will not be accepted over email.
**Classroom Etiquette:** You will be expected to behave respectfully toward your instructor, your classmates, the course materials, and the learning environment. That means, among other things, no side conversations, no passing notes, no sleeping in class, and no disrupting the learning environment. If you behave disrespectfully on a consistent basis or in a particularly disruptive way, you will be subject to penalties determined solely by the instructor’s discretion.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is any act, deliberate or not, that misleads a reader about the source of ideas, language, or data in a piece of written work. The deception may be deliberate, in which case the plagiarism is a reflection of the personal integrity of the writer, or it may be accidental and a result of carelessness or ignorance of rules of attribution. In either case, the result is plagiarism and constitutes an act of academic dishonesty. If you plagiarize, you will be subject to severe disciplinary sanctions, including automatic failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the University.

**Paper Consultations:** If you would like feedback on your written work, you are welcome to visit my office hours at any point during the writing process. You are also welcome to visit the tutors at the Writing Center. I do ask, however, that you refrain from soliciting feedback via email. As a medium, email is inherently unsuited to the Socratic forms of conversations necessary for effective writing instruction. If you’d like feedback on your work, then, get it the old-fashioned way; talk to someone face-to-face.

**Accommodations:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282).
Criteria for Class Participation
Your class participation will be graded on a scale from zero-to-four, four being the highest. Please note that, although I will make every effort to include as many voices as possible in discussion, it is ultimately up to you to participate in class.

Preparation
• Absent or disruptive. (0 points)
• Present, not disruptive. (1 point)
• Adequate: knows basic reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. (2 points)
• Good: knows reading facts well, has thought through their implications. (3 points)
• Excellent: has analyzed reading exceptionally well and related it to other course material (e.g., other primary and secondary readings, other discussions, other courses, etc.). (4 points)

Frequency
• Does not participate. (0 points)
• Minimal. Tries to respond when called upon but does not offer much. (1 point)
• Adequate. Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called upon. (2 points)
• Good. Offers to contribute in a consistent and ongoing way. (3 points)
• Excellent. Contributes well in a very significant, active, and ongoing way. (4 points)

Sophistication
• Does not participate. (0 points)
• Minimal. Contributions may be brief, showing little engagement with the conversation. Contributions may be digressive, leading the class away from the main topics of conversation. Or contributions may be unfocused and incoherent. (1 point)
• Adequate. Offers straightforward, unelaborated information (e.g., plot summaries straight from the reading). (2 points)
• Good. Offers interpretations and analysis of course material (i.e., more than just facts) to class. Responds to other students’ points; thinks through own points; questions others in a constructive way; offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. (3 points)
• Excellent. Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings: puts together discussion threads to develop new questions that take the class further into the material. Keeps analysis focused; responds very thoughtfully to other students’ comments; contributes to cooperative argument-building; suggests alternative ways of approaching material; and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate. (4 points)
Session 1
- Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden, “What Is Transnational Cinema?”
- Andrew Higson, “The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema”

Session 2
- Response paper (3-5 pages). Compare film studies scholars Ezra and Rowden’s characterization of globalization with either that of sociologist Saskia Sassen or that of Marxist literary theorist Frederic Jameson. Why might these different disciplines view globalization in such starkly different terms?

Session 3
- Screening and preliminary discussion of *Joint Security Area* (2000)

Session 4
- Michael E. Robinson, *Korea’s Twentieth-Century Odyssey*, pp. 100-120

Session 5
- Screening and preliminary discussion of *My Sassy Girl* (2001)

Session 6

Session 7
- Screening and preliminary discussion of *Memories of Murder* (2003)

Session 8
- Joseph Jeon, “Memories of Memories: Historicity, Nostalgia, and Archive in Bong Joon-ho’s *Memories of Murder*”

Session 9
- Screening and preliminary discussion of *The Host* (2006)

Session 10

Session 11
- Screening and preliminary discussion of *Poetry* (2010)
Session 12

Session 13
• Screening and preliminary discussion of *Oldboy* (2003)

Session 14

Session 15
• Screening and discussion at NYAFF

Session 16
• Screening and discussion at NYAFF

Session 17
• Screening and discussion at NYAFF

Session 18
• Screening and discussion at NYAFF

Session 19
Final Exam

**Note:** In order to coincide with the New York Asian Film Festival, this course will be primarily taught during the first summer session. Consequently, this syllabus was written to fit the parameters of the condensed summer schedule.