

## EALC 452: Chinese Fiction

### *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Modernity: Literature, Intellectual Culture and Film in Modern China*

Spring 2020



**Monday, Wednesday 3.30-4.50 p.m.  
VKC 204**

**Professor Géraldine Fiss**

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**Office Hours:** Thursdays 1-3 p.m. and by appointment

#### **Scope of the Course**

This course presents an overview of key literary, cultural and cinematic patterns in modern and contemporary China. By engaging in close readings of fiction, poetry, essays and film, we will trace the changes that have occurred in China from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. As we discuss various transformative moments of enlightenment, revolution and modernity in modern Chinese history, we will

discover how the influx of Western ideas merged with persisting classical Chinese aesthetics to mold the form and content of modern Chinese literature, poetry and thought. In addition, we will study a number of Chinese films, so as to gain insight into the evolution of Chinese cinema, and also the ways in which the visual/cinematic is interconnected with historical, political and cultural events. The class will cover the socialist process in China since 1949 by focusing on key cultural-political movements, leading to the emergence of dissident writers. Throughout the course, we will delineate the various modes of modernist innovation and experimentation that are taking place in Chinese literary and cinematic art. We will also examine the nature and evolution of modern Chinese women's consciousness and women's writing. All works are read in English translation and all films will be in Chinese but have English subtitles.

### **Requirements and Grades**

- 1) Attendance and Class Participation – 10%
- 2) 2 Discussion Board Posts (500 words each) – 10%
- 3) Session Opener Talk and Discussion Leading – 10%
- 4) 2 Response Papers (two pages, double-spaced) due on **Friday, February 14** and **Friday, April 24** – 20%
- 5) Midterm Essay (6-7 pages, double-spaced) due on **Friday, March 13** – 25%
- 6) Final Research Paper (12-14 pages, double-spaced) and Presentation due on **Friday, May 8** – 25%

### **Required Texts and Readings**

- 1) Joseph Lau and Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Columbia University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-231-13840-3.
- 2) Tani Barlow, ed. *The Power of Weakness: Ding Ling and Lu Xun: Stories of the Chinese Revolution*. The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-55861-548-9.
- 3) Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution*. Anchor Books, 2007. ISBN 978-0-307-38744-8.
- 4) Readings posted on the Blackboard course web site for each session. It is your responsibility to access, download and read these required assigned texts from Blackboard prior to each class session.

Since we are covering a wide variety of texts and secondary scholarship in this course, **all required readings that are not in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature (CAMCL)* will be uploaded to the Blackboard course web site. It is your responsibility to get each session's assigned readings from Blackboard.** You are not required to print out the readings, but you are required to read them and know the most important points and ideas in each reading. You should bring the readings to lecture either in printed out form or as a pdf file on your computer, so that you can refer to the text during our class discussion.

### **Texts on Course Reserve at Leavey Library (available for check-out for limited periods of time)**

- 1) Joseph Lau and Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Columbia University Press, 2007.
- 2) All books listed in the syllabus from which readings are drawn. A complete list will be posted on Blackboard.

- 3) All films listed in the syllabus, available for viewing. A complete list will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Attendance and Class Participation (10%)**

All students are required to attend all class sessions, do all readings ahead of time and come prepared and ready to participate in class discussion. Active and engaged class participation is an important component of this course.

### **2 Discussion Board Posts (10%)**

As part of your participation grade, you will write and post two discussion board posts. **Choose two lecture topics** on the course syllabus and compose **one discussion question and thoughtful response for each**. Your post should engage a text or topic in the reading assignment for that day and should be analytical, thought-provoking and about 500 words in length. It is your responsibility to upload your discussion board post (consisting of thoughtful question and response) to the discussion thread on the Blackboard web site by noon on the day before class. During class you should share the question, reflections and ideas that you addressed in your discussion board post.

### **Session Opener Talk and Discussion Leading (10%)**

Each student will serve as discussion leader at least once during the semester. Your job is to open the seminar with a 15-20 minute session opener talk and then use that to drive our discussion of the themes that emerged from that day's readings. In addition, the student discussant will also post a set of two to three substantive questions or issues for class discussion which should connect the primary texts and films to the secondary/theoretical readings. **The discussion questions should be posted to the relevant discussion thread on the Blackboard course website by noon on the day before class.** All students are expected to read these questions before class and participate actively in class discussion. To access the course web site, log on using your USC account at [www.blackboard.usc.edu](http://www.blackboard.usc.edu).

### **Two Response Papers (20%)**

You will each write **two response papers**, in which you will be asked to identify relevant themes in the assigned readings, raise questions or critical objections, locate difficulties, and respond or make connections to other readings. Your response paper should be well-organized, have a clear focus and present a well thought-out, structured argument in a concise style. You may choose the specific primary and/or secondary text(s) you would like to discuss. **Your paper may not be longer than two pages, double-spaced**, and you must submit it via Turn-it-in by the deadline.

### **Midterm Essay (25%)**

For the midterm, you will write a well-crafted, clearly-argued response to a specific exam essay prompt. The paper should present a clear thesis and a well-organized critical reading of one or two primary sources to substantiate your argument. You may engage theoretical readings if they are relevant for your analysis. The paper should be about **6-7 pages long (double-spaced)**, written in correct format and contain a title page, footnotes (or endnotes) and a complete bibliography according to the MLA Style or Chicago Manual of Style.

## **Final Research Paper (25%)**

For this assignment, you will choose one or two modern Chinese primary texts and/or films, research the text(s) thoroughly and present a concise, clearly-written, **original 12-14 page paper** that proves a central argument by means of textual analysis and evidence. Your critical essay must critically engage at least one or more of the secondary and/or theoretical readings we have discussed in the course. You may choose primary texts from our list of readings, or you may choose another text of any genre (literature, film, critical essay, poetry, theater) that interests you. The text(s) you choose must either be written by a Chinese woman writer or be concerned with issues pertaining to women's realities, feminism and/or femininity. Your paper should include a title page, footnotes (or endnotes) and a complete bibliography according to the MLA Style or Chicago Manual of Style. **A one-page proposal for the paper should be written and submitted to me via e-mail by Friday, March 27.** I strongly encourage you to come see me during my office hours to discuss your paper proposal, research plan, argument and plans for the final presentation. You will be paired with another student to participate in a peer-review process. **The final research paper will be due on Friday, May 8. Please submit it to Blackboard via Turn-It-In.**

## **Final Project Presentation**

At the end of the semester, each student will give a brief presentation to convey the findings and unresolved issues of the final research project. **These presentations will take place during our last class sessions on April 27 and April 29.** You should use this opportunity to 1) introduce your work to your classmates in a well-organized, effective and engaging manner and 2) receive and reflect upon the critique others may have about your work.

## **Blackboard as a Resource / Course Reserve List**

In this course, Blackboard will be a vital means of communication and an important research tool. Required journal articles and book chapters listed in the syllabus will be made available on the Blackboard course web site, for you to download and read before our class meetings. For every class session, I will also upload PowerPoint slides, information about the topic at hand, additional suggested primary texts and secondary readings, as well as a list of important concepts to know. The books from which the required readings are taken and all films listed on the syllabus will be available on course reserve at Leavey Library. Other useful books will also be available on course reserve, and a complete list of all reserve materials will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Note on Readings and Films**

When a film is assigned, it is your responsibility to view the film prior to the class meeting. Some films will be made available via a link on Blackboard. Others will be available at Leavey Library course reserves. We may view only brief excerpts of the films during our in-class discussions. You should approach films the same way as you would a literary text. Take your time to view a film and jot down any ideas or questions that may come to mind.

## **Academic Conduct and Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with USC's plagiarism policy in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Discrimination,

sexual assault and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 offers confidential support and the Sexual Assault Resource Center web page [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. The Office of Disability Services and Program [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus not feasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued.

## Topics and Readings

Monday, January 13: **Introduction to the Course**

### I. The Origins of Modern Chinese Literature: Late Qing “New Fiction”

Wednesday, January 15: **Cultural Crisis, The Quest for Modernity and A New Way of Writing**

Leo Ou-fan Lee, “Literary Trends I: The Quest for Modernity” in *An Intellectual History of Modern China* 142-152.

Liang Qichao, “Foreword to the Publication of Political Novels in Translation” and “On the Relationship between Fiction and the Government of the People” in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought* 71-81.

**\*\*\* Monday, January 20: Martin Luther King Day! No Class! \*\*\***

Wednesday, January 22: **Repressed Modernities: Late Qing Literary Innovation and Experimentation**

David Wang, “Repressed Modernities” in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor* 13-30.

Wu Jianren, *The New Story of the Stone*. Chapters 1, 2, and 22, 32 and 39.

Monday, January 27: **From Classical Tale to Science Fiction: Fantastic Discourses and Dreams of Utopia in Late Qing China**

David Wang, “Confused Horizons: Science Fantasy” in *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor* 252-258; 269-277 and 295-301.

Lu Xun, “The Art of Creating Humanity.” 1-9.

Xu Nianci, “New Tales of Mr. Braggadocio.” 1-27.

Wednesday, January 29: **Women's Literary Feminism at the Turn of the Century: Male and Female Perspectives**

Amy Dooling, "National Imaginaries: Feminist Fantasies at the Turn of the Century" in *Women's Literary Feminism in Twentieth-Century China* 35-44.

Liang Qichao, "On Women's Education" in *The Birth of Chinese Feminism*. 186-204.

Chen Xiefen, "Crisis in the Women's World" in *Writing Women in Modern China*. 79-87.

Qiu Jin, Preface to *Stones of the Jingwei Bird* in *Writing Women in Modern China*. 39-46.

Yan Haiping, "Qiu Jin and Her Imaginary," 33-68.

**Film:** *Autumn Gem: The True Story of China's First Feminist* by Rae Chang and Adam Tow (2009, 56 minutes)

## II. May Fourth: The Chinese Enlightenment

Monday, February 3: **Toward a New Culture: Proposals for the Reform of Literature**

Kirk Denton, "The May Fourth Period: Introduction" in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought* 111-122.

Hu Shi, "Some Modest Proposals for the Reform of Literature" in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought* 123-139.

Chen Duxiu, "On Literary Revolution" in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought* 140-145.

Wednesday, February 5: **The First Modern Chinese Short Story: Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman"**

Xiaobing Tang, "Lu Xun's 'Diary of a Madman' and a Chinese Modernism" 1222-1234.

Lu Xun, "Preface to the First Collection of Short Stories, *Call to Arms*" and "A Madman's Diary" in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature* (henceforth abbreviated to *CAMCL*) 3-16.

Monday, February 10: **Voices From the Iron House: The Stories of Lu Xun**

C.T. Hsia, "Lu Hsun (1881-1936)" in *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction* 28-54.

Lu Xun, "On Photography" in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought*, 196-203.

Lu Xun, "Soap."

Lu Xun, "Medicine" in William Lyell, *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories* 49-58.

Wednesday, February 12: **Wild Grass: The Prose Poetry of Lu Xun**

David Pollard, "Introduction" in *Wild Grass* xxx-xlii.

Lu Xun, "Foreword," "Autumn Night," "The Shadow's Leave-Taking," "Revenge,"

"Revenge II," "Hope," "Dead Fire," "After Death," "The Awakening" 2-15; 24-37; 68-73; 94-96.

**\*\*\* First Response Paper Due on Friday, February 14! Submit on Blackboard via Turn-it-in.\*\*\***

**\*\*\* Monday, February 17: President's Day! No Class! \*\*\***

### III. Constructing the “New Woman” in May Fourth

Wednesday, February 19: **Constructing the “New Woman” in May Fourth I: Lu Xun**

Christina Gilmartin, “Introduction: May Fourth and Women’s Emancipation” in Lan and Fong, eds. *Women in Republican China: A Sourcebook*. ix-xxv.

Tani E. Barlow, “Introduction” in *The Power of Weakness: Stories of the Chinese Revolution*” 1-26.

Lu Xun, “The Evolution of Men” in *Jottings Under Lamplight: Lu Xun*. 177-179.

Lu Xun, “New Year’s Sacrifice” and “What Happens After Nora Leaves Home” in *The Power of Weakness*. 27-53 and 84-92.

**Film:** *New Year’s Sacrifice* by Sang Hu (1956, 94 minutes).

Monday, February 24: **Constructing the “New Woman” in May Fourth II: Ding Ling**

Yi-tsi Feuerwerker, “Introduction: The Survival of a Writer” in *Ding Ling’s Fiction: Ideology and Narrative in Modern Chinese Literature* 1-18.

Tani Barlow, “Introduction” in Barlow, ed. *I, Myself Am a Woman*. 1-45.

Ding Ling, “The Diary of Miss Sophia” in *I, Myself Am a Woman*. 49-81.

Ding Ling, “Thoughts on March 8” in *The Power of Weakness*. 93-100.

Wednesday, February 26: **The New Woman on Screen: 1930’s Chinese Cinema and Ruan Lingyu**

Kristine Harris, “The New Woman: Image, Subject and Dissent in 1930’s Shanghai Film Culture” in *Republican China* 20:2 (1995). 55-79.

Kristine Harris, “*The Goddess*: Fallen Woman of Shanghai” in Chris Berry, ed. *Chinese Films in Focus II*. 128-136.

**Films:** *The Goddess* by Wu Yonggang (1934, 85 minutes) and *New Women* by Cai Chusheng (1935, 106 minutes).

### IV. Iconoclasts of Modern China: The Power of Realism and the Leftist Ideological Turn

Monday, March 2: **Fictional Realism as Modern Writing**

David Wang, “Fictive History: Mao Dun’s Historical Fiction (The Historical, The Fictional, and the Real)” in *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China* 25-35.

Mao Dun, “Spring Silkworms” in *CAMCL* 56-73.

Ba Jin, “Dog” in *CAMCL* 110-115.

Zhang Tianyi, “Mid-Autumn Festival” in *CAMCL* 125-131.

**Optional Film Viewing:** *Spring Silkworms* by Chen Bugao (1933, 96 minutes).

Wednesday, March 4: **Women, the Literary Left and the Ideology of Socialism**

Chen Duxiu, “The Woman Question and Socialism” in *Women in Republican China*. 213-217.

Bai Wei, "Third-Class Hospital Ward" in *Writing Women in Modern China: The Revolutionary Years, 1936-1976*. 56-69.

Hu Lanqi, "In a German Women's Prison" in *ibid.* 70-80.

Monday, March 9: **Reportage and Beyond: Xiao Hong**

Xiao Hong, "Abandoned Child" and "A Sleepless Night" in *Writing Women in Modern China*. 343-366.

Xiao Hong, "Hands" in Goldblatt, transl. *The Dyer's Daughter: Selected Stories of Xiao Hong*. 71-117.

**Optional Film:** *Falling Flowers* by Huo Jianqi (2013, 120 minutes).

Wednesday, March 11: **Shen Congwen: Native Soil Writer and Modernist Master**

David Wang, "Critical Lyricism: The Boundary of the Real in the Fiction of Shen Congwen (Critical Lyricism and Irony)" in *Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China* 201-210.

Shen Congwen, "Xiaoxiao" in *CAMCL* 82-94.

Shen Congwen, "The Husband."

**\*\*\* Midterm Paper Due on Friday, March 13. Submit on Blackboard via Turn-it-in. \*\*\***

**\*\*\* March 15-22: Happy Spring Recess!! \*\*\***

**V. Shanghai Modern: Urban Cosmopolitanism and Chinese Transcultural Modernisms**

Monday, March 23: **The Erotic, The Fantastic, and the Uncanny: Shi Zhecun's Experimental Stories**

Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Erotic, The Fantastic and the Grotesque" in *Shanghai Modern* 173-181.

Shi Zhecun, "One Evening in the Rainy Season" in *CAMCL* 116-124.

Shi Zhecun, "Devil's Road" in *One Rainy Evening* 56-80.

**Film:** *Song at Midnight* by Ma-Xu Weibang (1937, 113 minutes).

Wednesday, March 25: **Mu Shiying: The Dance Hall and The City**

Andrew David Field, "Mu Shiying, An Appreciation of His Life, Times and Works" in *Mu Shiying: China's Lost Modernist* xv-111.

Mu Shiying, "The Man Who Was Treated as a Plaything" and "Shanghai Foxtrott" in *Mu Shiying: China's Lost Modernist* 1-34 and 103-118.

**\*\*\* Research Paper Proposals Due on Friday, March 27 / Please send to me via e-mail at [gfiss@usc.edu](mailto:gfiss@usc.edu) \*\*\***



Monday, March 30: **Eileen Chang I: Romances in a Fallen City**

Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Eileen Chang: Romances in a Fallen City" in *Shanghai Modern* 267-303.

Eileen Chang, "Writing of One's Own" in *Written on Water* 15-22.

Eileen Chang, "Sealed Off" in *CAMCL* 174-183.

Wednesday, April 1: **Eileen Chang II: Lust, Caution**

Julia Lovell, "Foreword" in *Lust, Caution* ix-xix.

Ang Lee, "Afterword" in *Lust, Caution* 59-61.

James Schamus, "Why did she do it?" in *Lust, Caution* 63-68.

Eileen Chang, *Lust, Caution* 3-57.

**Film:** *Lust, Caution* by Ang Lee (2007, 157 minutes).

## VI. Post-Mao Avant-Garde Fiction, Poetry and Cinema: The 1980's

Monday, April 6: **Re-Membering the Cultural Revolution I: Chen Ruoxi**

Perry Link, "Introduction" in *The Execution of Mayor Yin and Other Stories from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* xl-xxxii.

Chen Ruoxi, "The Execution of Mayor Yin" and "Jingjing's Birthday" in *The Execution of Mayor Yin* 3-61.

**Film:** *Farewell my Concubine* by Chen Kaige (1993, 171 minutes).

Wednesday, April 8: **Searching for Roots and Seeking the Self**

Li Qingxi, "Searching for Roots: Anticultural Return in Mainland Chinese Literature of the 1980's" in *Chinese Literature in the Second Half of a Modern Century* 110-123.

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

Ah Cheng, "The King of Children" and "Afterword" in *The King of Trees*.

**Film:** *Yellow Earth* by Chen Kaige (1984, 89 minutes).

Monday, April 13: **Re-Membering the Cultural Revolution II: Yu Hua**

Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, "One Kind of Chinese Reality: Reading Yu Hua."

Yu Hua, "On the Road at Eighteen" in *CAMCL* 439-444.

Yu Hua, "One Kind of Reality."

**Film:** *To Live* by Zhang Yimou (1994, 132 minutes).

Wednesday, April 15: **Poetry as Subversion: Bei Dao, *Jintian* and the Democracy Movement in China**

Steven Ratiner, "Reclaiming the Word: A Conversation with Bei Dao" 151-165.

Bei Dao, "Declaration," "Résumé" and "Another Legend" in *CAMCL* 576-578.

Bei Dao Poems from *The August Sleepwalker* (1988) and *Old Snow* (1991). (Choose 5 poems from each collection to focus on; read the rest if you have time)

Monday, April 20: **Tiananmen 1989: Dissident Voices, Modernist Poetic Experimentations and Protests**

Michelle Yeh, "Contemporary Chinese Poetry Scenes" 279-283.

Huang Guobin, "A Night Prayer" and "When You are Naked, You Have Everything" in *CAMCL* 570-571.

Shu Ting, "When You Walk Past My Window," "Assembly Line" and "The Cry of a Generation" in *CAMCL* 579-581.

Wang Xiaolong, "Surgery Ward" in *CAMCL* 584.

Shang Qin, "The Cat Who Walks Through the Wall" in *CAMCL* 585.

Yang Lian, "To A Nine-Year-Old Girl Killed in the Massacre" and "The Dead in Exile" in *CAMCL* 587.

Gu Cheng, "An Ending" and "Curriculum Vitae" in *CAMCL* 590.

**Film:** *Gate of Heavenly Peace* by Richard Gordon and Carma Hinton (1995).

**V. *Fin-de-siècle* Masters of the Lyrical**

Wednesday, April 22: **The Liberation of the Feminine: Zhang Jie and Wang Anyi**

Lai-fong Leung, "In Search of Love and Self: The Image of Young Female Intellectuals in Post-Mao Women's Fiction" 135-151.

Zhang Jie, "The Boat I Steer: A Study in Perseverance" 118-122.

Zhang Jie, "Love Must Not Be Forgotten." 1-15.

Wang Anyi, "Needed: A Spirit of Courageous Self-Examination" 123-127.

Wang Anyi, "Why I Write" 200-205.

Wang Anyi, "Granny" in *CAMCL* 462-469.

**Optional Film:** *Through Chinese Women's Eyes* by Mayfair Yang (1997, 53 minutes).

**\*\*\* Second Response Paper Due on Friday, April 24! Submit on Blackboard via Turn-it-in.\*\*\***

Monday, April 27: **Ambiguous Subjectivities: Reading Can Xue**

Can Xue Poems, "A Particular Sort of Story" 206-210.

Can Xue, "Hut on the Mountain" in *CAMCL* 325-328.

Can Xue, "Dialogue in Heaven" 136-141.

Can Xue, *Dialogues in Paradise* 23-36.

**Final Project Presentations**

Wednesday, April 29: **Magical Realism and Beyond: Mo Yan**

David Wang and Michael Berry, "The Literary World of Mo Yan" 487-494.

Mo Yan, "Iron Child" in *CAMCL* 379-387.

Mo Yan, Preface: "Hunger and Loneliness, My Muses" in in Goldblatt, trans. *Shifu, You'll do Anything for a Laugh* vii-xix.

**Film:** *Red Sorghum* by Zhang Yimou (1987, 95 minutes).

**Final Project Presentations**

**\*\*\* Final Research Paper Due on Friday May 8 via Turn-It-In \*\*\***