

## **EAS 231: Chinese Martial Arts Classics: Fiction, Film, Fact**

This course provides an overview of Chinese martial arts fiction and film from earliest times to the present day. The focus will be on the close-reading of literary, art-historical, and cinematic texts, but will also include discussion of the significance of these works against their broader historical and social background. Topics to be discussed: the literary/cinematic pleasure of watching violence, the relationship between violence and the law, gender ambiguity of the woman warrior, the imperial and (trans)national order of martial arts cinema, and the moral and physical economy of vengeance.

No prior knowledge of Chinese, martial arts, Chinese history is required. All texts are in English or subtitled.

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**Lecture:** Tuesday-Thursday 10.00-10.50, Jones Hall 100

**Discussion Section:** Tuesday or Thursday 13.30-14:20, 15.30-16.20

### **Grading:**

Final Paper: 40%

Biweekly Write-ups: 40% (5x8%)

Participation: 20%

### **Writing Assignments:**

Students are required to post on alternating weeks a 500-750 word response to material covered in class that week. Postings should be made on the Blackboard course website at 12 midnight, the day before precept discussion. Postings should reflect a thoughtful reading of the material and facilitate discussion in lecture and precept.

The final paper or project should be about 10 pages long (double-spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman). Organize your thoughts before you start writing. Structure your argument well and pay attention to both content and style, as both will influence your grade. Late papers will be accepted in cases of documented emergencies only. Proper research methods, citation of sources, and academic integrity will be discussed in class. By April, you should have had some sort of discussion with either your professor or preceptor about a potential topic. A brief synopsis of the thesis of the final paper is due April 21. The paper itself will be due on Dean's date.

Active precept participation is crucial and requires full familiarity with the contents of the lectures, films and the assigned readings. You will be called upon in both lecture and precept, so make sure you have spent sufficient time thinking about the material beforehand.

### **Readings:**

All readings except for the book to be purchased will be made available through the course Blackboard site. Please use the editions printed on the syllabus, not alternative translations (including the original text in Chinese). In order to be able to follow the lectures, complete assigned readings before coming to the lectures. The films can be accessed from the course Blackboard site. Films should be viewed before the lecture in which they will be discussed.

Please purchase the following books (available at Labyrinth Bookstore):

- Louis Cha, *The Book and The Sword*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Leon Hunt, *Kungfu Cult Masters*, Wallflower Press, 2003.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Tuesday, Feb 3: Introduction**

#### **Section 1: Empire, Nation, and the (Martial) Arts**

#### **Thursday, Feb 5: Sima Qian's 司馬遷(2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE) Assassins and the Empire of Qin**

- 1) S. Owen, *Anthology of Chinese Literature*, Intro and "Letter to Ren An" (報仁安書), 135-142
- 2) "The Prince of Wei, (魏公子傳), 145-152 (trans. Owen)
- 3) "Biographies of the Assassin Retainers" (刺客傳, *Shiji* 86), 45-67, (trans. Watson)
- 4) "Biographies of the Wandering Knights" (游俠傳, *Shiji* 124), 452-461 (trans. Watson)
- 5) Durant, *The Cloudy Mirror*, "(Wo)men with(out) Names," 99-122.

#### **Tuesday, Feb 10: Zhang Yimou's 張藝謀 *Hero* 英雄 and the People's Republic of China**

- 1) Wendy Larson, "Zhang Yimou's *Hero*: Dismantling the Myth of Cultural Power," *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 2 (2008), pp. 181-196.
- 2) **Screening:** Zhang Yimou, *Hero*, (2002)

#### **Section 2: Human and Inhuman Relations**

#### **Thursday, Feb 12, Human Relations at the Center**

- 1) Yang Liansheng, "The Concept of *Pao* as the Basis for Social Relations in China," pp. 291-309.
- 2) Prince Tan of Yan 燕丹子 (from *Yan danzi* 燕丹子), pp. 43-49.
- 3) Wu Shuang the peerless 無雙傳 (from *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* 太平廣記, 978 CE), pp. 52-57.

- 4) Feng Yen 馮燕, (from *Extensive Records*), pp. 50-51.

### **Tuesday, Feb. 17. Supernatural Beings at the Margins**

- 1) Robert Ford Company, "Ghosts Matter: The Culture of Ghosts in Six Dynasties Zhiguai." In *CLEAR* 13 (1991): 15-34.
- 2) Tang tales (8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> CE): a) "The Kunlun Slave" 昆仑奴; b) "Nieh Yin-niang" 聂隐娘; c) "Hung-hsien 紅線, tr. in Kao, 351-70; ), d) "Ts'uei Shen-ssu's [Cui Shensi's Wife], tr. James Liu, 96-97
- 3) **Screening:** Tsui Hark 徐克, *A Chinese Ghost Story*.

### **Section 3: Outlaws of the Marsh 水滸傳: Collecting Real Men**

#### **Thursday, Feb 19. Real Men**

- 1) *The Broken Seals*, Chapter 1, pp. 7-25.
- 2) *Iron Ox*, Chapter 66, pp. 55-73
- 3) *Iron Ox*, Chapter 71, pp. 143-163.

#### **Tuesday, Feb 24. Copycat Characters**

- 1) *The Tiger Killers*, Chapter 42-43, pp. 417-443
- 2) Kang Jinzhi, *Li Kui Carries Thorns*, pp. 200-245.

### **Section 4: Outlaws of the Marsh: Popular and Elite Masculinities**

#### **Thursday, March 26: Popular Tales**

- 1) *The Tiger Killers*, Chapter 23, pp. 1-17
- 2) Wang Shaotang, "Wu Song Fights the Tiger," pp. 171-188
- 3) Ren Jitang, "Pan Jinlian and Wu the Elder," pp. 261-275.
- 4) Liang Jiawei, *Shuihu zhuan, Wu Song*, comic book, pp. 107-134

#### **Tuesday, March 3: Elite Commentary**

- 1) Jin Shengtān's 金聖嘆 17<sup>th</sup> c. commentary on *Outlaws* 23, in *Chin Sheng-t'an*, pp. 53-81.
2. Jin Shengtān's opening essay on Chapter 23 (trans. Keulemans)
- 3) *The Tiger Killers*, Chapter 23-27, pp. 1-115.

### **Section 5: Dislocations in Gender: Woman Warriors**

#### **Thursday, March 5: Mulan and Others**

- 1) Anonymous ballads 4<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> CE (*yuefu* 樂府), "Song of the Prince of Lang-ya," and "The Ballad of Mu-lan" (tr. Owen, *Anthology*, 241-243)
- 2). Allen, Joseph. "Dressing and Undressing the Chinese Woman Warrior." In *Positions* 4.2 (1996). Pp. 343-379.

#### **Tuesday, March 10: The Flying Female Knight**

- 1) David Bordwell, "Richness Through Imperfection: King Hu and the Glimpse" in *The Cinema of Hong Kong*, ed. Fu and Desser, 112-36
- 2) 4) Pu Songling 蒲松齡 (1640-1715), *Liaozhai's Records of the Strange* (*Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊齋志異) a) "The Lady Knight-Errant," (Xianü 俠女), tr. in Lao & Ma, 77-81. b) "The Magic Sword and the Magic Bag" (Nie Xiaoqian 聂小倩), tr. Minford (in *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*

- 3) **Screening:** King Hu 胡金銓, *A Touch of Zen* 俠女, (1971), part 1.

**Interlude: Video Games I**

**Thursday, March 12: The Post Modern Return of the Pre Modern Card Game**

1. Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬 (1598-1652), *Outlaws of the Marsh Deck of Cards* 水滸葉子
2. Utagawa Kuniyoshi 歌川国芳 (1797-1861), *Outlaws of the Marsh ukiyo-e* 通俗水滸傳豪傑百八人
3. Fumi Ishikawa 石川史 and Junko Kawano 河野 純子, *Genso Suikoden Card Stories* 幻想水滸伝カードストーリーズ

**SPRING BREAK**

**Section 6: Modern (Re)Writings: Feminism, Communism, Freudianism**

**March 24 Feminism and Communism:**

- 1) Qiu Jin 秋瑾 (1875-1907), in *Women Writers of Traditional China*, pp. 632-657.
- 2) Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981), “Panther-Head Lin Chong 豹子頭林衝” (translated Keulemans)
- 3) *The Broken Seals*, Chapter 11-12 (partial), pp. 217-237.

**March. 26. Freudianism**

- 1) Shi Zhecun 施蛰存 (1905-2003), *The Love of Shi Xiu* 石秀之戀. Tr. Lucas Klein and Paize Keulemans
- 2) *The Gathering Company*, Chapters 44-46, pp. 12-60.

**Section 7: Chinese Fiction from the English Colonies**

\*\*\*\*\* **Office Hour Visit to Discuss Final Paper**\*\*\*\*\*

**March 31: *Book and Sword: Part I*, inventing nationalism**

- 1) Louis Cha 金庸, *Book and Sword* 書劍恩仇錄, Chapter 1-3, pp. 1-174.
- 2) Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, “Introduction,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 1-4.

**April 2: *Book and Sword: Part II*, colonial nationalism**

- 1) Louis Cha, *Book and Sword*, Chapter 4-5, pp. 175-281.
- 2) Christopher Hamm, *Paper Swordsmen*, pp. 1-11 and 55-64.

**Section 8: History and Myth**

**April 7: Jingwu Men: History?**

- 1) Brian Kennedy, *Jingwu: The School that Transformed Kung Fu*, selections.
- 2) Andrew D. Morris, “From Martial Arts to National Skills,” in *Marrow of the Nation*, pp. 185-229.

**April 9: Jingwu Men: Myth?**

- 1) Leon Hunt, "Wicked Shapes/Wicked Lies: Performance and Authenticity in Hong Kong Martial Arts Film," in *Kungfu Cult Masters*, pp. 21-47.
- 2) **Screening:** Lo Wei 羅維, *Fist of Fury* 精武門, 1972

### **Section 9: Buddhist Bodies**

#### **Tuesday, April 14: Historical Authenticity**

- 1) Meir Shahar, "Ming-Period Evidence of Shaolin Martial Practice," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 359-413.

#### **Thursday, April 16: Physical Authenticity**

- 1) Leon Hunt, "Burning Paradise: The Myth of the Shaolin Temple," in *Kungfu Cult Masters*, pp. 48-75.
- 2) **Screening:** Law Kar-leung 劉家良, *The 36<sup>th</sup> Chamber of Shaolin* 少林三十六房, (1978).

### **Section 10: Kungfu Slapstick: Objects, Bodies, Words**

#### **\*\*\*\*\* Final Paper Proposal Due**

#### **Tuesday, April 21. Peking Opera, Hollywood Slapstick**

- 1) Leon Hunt, "Fat Dragons and Drunken Masters," in *Kungfu Cult Masters*, pp. 99-116.
- 2) **Screening:** Yuen Woo-ping 袁和平, *Drunken Master* 醉拳, (1978).

#### **Thursday, April 23. Verbal and Physical Chaos**

- 1) Linda Chiu-Han Lai, "Film and Enigmatization: Nostalgia, Nonsense, and Remembering," in *At Full Speed*, pp. 231-250.
- 2) **Screening:** Stephen Chow 周星馳, *Kungfu Hustle* 功夫, (2004).

### **Section 11: Global Martial Arts and New Media**

#### **Tuesday, April 28: Crouching Tiger, Hidden Panda**

- 1) Thomas Lamarre, "Speciesm, Part I: Translating Races into Animals in Wartime Animation," in *Mechademia 3* (2008): 75-95.
- 2) **Screening:** Mark Osborne, John Stevenson, *Kungfu Panda* (2008)

#### **Thursday, April 30: Video Games II: Pandamonium**

- 1) **CLIPS:** World of Warcraft, Pandaren
- 2) Jane McGonigal, "What is a Game," and "The Rise of the Happiness Engineers," in *Reality is Broken*, pp.
- 3) Heather Chaplin, "I Don't Want to Be a Superhero: Ditching Reality for a Game Isn't as Fun as it Sounds."
- 4) Johan Huizinga, "Play and War," in *Homo Ludens, A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, pp. 89-104.