**HISTORY 97G**

# Winter 2022

**Shanghai’s New Culture**,

**1895-1937**

The history of twentieth-century China has been dominated by the Communist revolution of 1949. Consequently, historians typically view Chinese society during the first half of the twentieth century in light of the events and ideas that led up to 1949. In particular, their focus has been trained on two momentous struggles: the clash between Confucian and Western values, and the triumph of the peasant revolution over the old regime. This course, however, is devoted to less cataclysmic cultural and political changes that took place in the cities, and thus made no direct contribution to the Communist revolution in the countryside. In Shanghai, amid the glare of the big city, cultural changes—both radical and subtle—created a new cosmopolitan world compounded of both Western and Chinese values and cultural icons. While lacking revolutionary consequences, the romance novels and Hollywood-style films (for example) of Shanghai’s urban culture still can tell us a great deal about the search for meaning and value in modern Chinese society. We will study this new culture of Shanghai and its political implications in the context of the transformation of urban society and the emergence of new social classes.

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Office Hours: Mondays 2-3; Wednesdays 10-12 noon

**Requirements**: The seminar meets once a week (Wednesday 2-4:50 pm).

### Attendance is mandatory. The amount of reading per week varies, but

usually is around 150-200 pages. In one week (the last week) we read a

whole novel that is considerably longer.

**Written Assignments**: Students will write three essays, 5-7 pages in length (typed,

double-spaced), on topics assigned by the instructor based on the assigned

readings/films for the course. The essays will be due on **February 2;**

**February 23; March 16**

**Grading**: Each written assignment is worth 20% of the final grade. The other 40% of the

grade will be based on class participation.

**Books Available at ASUCLA Bookstore and College Library Reserve:**

(Note: surnames of Chinese & Japanese authors are capitalized):

Marie-Claire Bergère, *Shanghai*

HAN Bangqing, *Sing-Song Girls of Shanghai*

Patrick Hanan, transl., *The Sea of Regret: Two Turn-of-the Century Chinese*

*Romantic Novels*

MAO Tun, *Midnight*

Riichi YOKOMITSU, *Shanghai*

**Note:** **All Other Required Readings are Available on the Class Website**

**Schedule of Classes and Readings**

**Week 1** (January 5th): **Introduction**

**Week 2** (January 12th): **“Shanghai Style”: Courtesan Culture**

Bergère, *Shanghai*, 1-7, 85-129

Han Bangqing, *Sing-Song Girls of Shanghai* (1892), chapters 1-14, 29-42 (pp. 1-

116, 234-252)

**Week 3** (January 19th): **Social Criticism in the Late Qing Novel**

FU Lin, “Stones in the Sea” (1906) and WU Jianren, “Sea of Regret” (1906) in

Patrick Hanan, transl., *The Sea of Regret: Two Turn-of-the Century*

*Chinese Romantic Novels*, 21-205

QIU Jin, “Stones of the Jingwei Bird (1905-7),” in Dooling & Torgeson, ed.

*Writing Women in Modern China*, 39-78

**Week 4** (January 26th)**:** **Romantic Love in “Butterfly” Fiction**

Bergère, *Shanghai*, 130-144

Perry Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, 1-64

SU Man-shu, “The Broken Hairpin (1916),” in Y.W. MA & Joseph LAU, ed., *Traditional Chinese Stories*, 234-248

CHANG Hen-shui, “Fate in Tears and Laughter (1929-30),” in LIU Ts’un-yan,

ed., *Chinese Middlebrow Fiction*, 255-287

## **Week 5** (February 2nd): **Sex in the City: From the Brothel to the** **Cinema**

**\*\*First Essay Due\*\***

Bergère, *Shanghai,* 147-176, 242-284

### Michael CHANG, “The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful: Movie Actresses and

Public Discourse in Shanghai, 1920s-1930s” in Yinjin ZHANG, ed.,

*Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai*, 128-159

Film in class: *The Goddess* (dir. Wu Yonggang; 1934)

**Week 6** (February 9th): **Eros and Liberation: The “Modern Girl”**

Wellington Chan, “Selling Goods and Promoting a New Commercial Culture:

The Four Premier Department Stores on Nanjing Road, 1917-1937,” in

Cochran, ed., *Inventing Nanjing Road*, 19-36

Carrie Warra, “Invention, Industry, Art: The Commercialization of Culture in

Republican Art Magazines,” in Cochran, ed., *Inventing Nanjing Road*, 61-

89

SHI Pingmei, “Lin Nan’s Diary (1928),” in Dooling & Torgeson, *Writing*

*Women in Modern China*, 115-130

DING Ling, “Miss Sophia’s Diary (1928),” and “Shanghai, Spring 1930

(1930),” in Tani E. Barlow and Gary J. Bjorge, ed., *I Myself Am A*

*Woman: Selected Writings of Ding Ling*, 49-81, 112-171

**Week 7** (February 16th): **Vanguard of Western Civilization: College Life**

Bergère, *Shanghai,* 177-212

Wen-hsin YEH, *The Alienated Academy*, 1-6, 49-166, 202-278

Film in class: *Plunder of Peach and Plum* (dir. YING Yunwei; 1934)

**Week 8** (February 23rd): **An Alien Country: Cosmopolitanism and Squalor**

**\*\*Second Essay Due\*\***

Riichi YOKOMITSU, *Shanghai* (1929-31)

Earnest O. Hauser, *Shanghai: City for Sale* (Shanghai: Chinese American

Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 235-281

**Week 9** (March 2nd): **Shanghai’s “Petty Urbanites”**

Wen-hsin YEH, “Petty Urbanites and Tales of Woe,” in YEH, *Shanghai*

*Splendor*, pp. 129-151

Film: *Street Angels* (dir. YUAN Muzhi; 1937)

**Week 10** (March 9th): **Demise of the Chinese Bourgeoisie**

MAO Dun, *Midnight* (1933)

##### March 16th: Final Essay Due