

ARTS2457

China Imagined and Perceived

Term 2, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Professor Jon von Kowallis	j.kowallis@unsw.edu.au	by email	Morven-Brown 239	9385-1020

Lecturers

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Professor Jon von Kowallis	j.kowallis@unsw.edu.au	by email	Morven-Brown 239	9385-1020

Tutors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Dr. Cheng-wei Wang	cheng-wei.wang@unsw.edu.au	by email	Morven Brown 240	

School Contact Information

School of Humanities & Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Tel: 02 9348 0406

Email: hal@unsw.edu.au

Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.



Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous [UNSW's Indigenous strategy](#)

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

In this course you will examine how the Chinese are imagined and portrayed by Western culture and how the Chinese depict themselves. You will explore this “depicting China” discourse in both literary and popular culture and interrogate its significance both for the East and West. You will consider texts of literature, philosophy, critical theory, and intellectual history, supplemented by films of both Western and Chinese origin,

This course is taught in English and with readings in English.

Course Learning Outcomes


1. Critically read important texts of literature, comparative literature, film, and Chinese intellectual history
2. Analyse different genres in literature, critical theory, film and film theory
3. Apply research, analytical and essay-writing skills to a selected topic
4. Define and critique the concept of 'orientalism'

Teaching Strategies

This course is made up of literary, filmic and theoretical components. Lectures will focus on the topics covered in reading assignments but will also include an analysis and discussion of films, in particular filmic images. We will view segments of films in class. If you miss a class, all films will be available through the UNSW library. They can be viewed by reserving a machine there, but cannot be borrowed. Some films can also be viewed online. This course requires students to do a substantial amount of reading. It is important that you commit yourself to doing the readings on a regular basis from the beginning of the course. Classes based on literary studies and critical theory are focused on discussions and close analyses of primary and secondary texts, and only by reading them and thinking reflectively on the issues raised in class discussions can you expect to master the course material.

Assessment

Either the Harvard (brief in-text citation with bibliography at end of essay), the Chicago system (footnotes) or APA Style will be accepted as referencing systems. This holds true if you write your essay in English or in Chinese. If you cite web-based sources, give the web address and the date you accessed it.

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Presentation in Tutorials 	30%		1, 2, 3
2. Essay	40%	23:00 Friday Week 9 (29/07/2022)	1, 3, 4
3. Exam	30%	In formal examination period.	1, 2, 3

Assessment 1: Presentation in Tutorials (Group)

This is a 30-to-40 minute group presentation.

Students receive an individual mark with oral feedback to the group.

Assessment 2: Essay

Due date: 23:00 Friday Week 9 (29/07/2022)

Students will write an essay in either English (approx. 2500 words) or Chinese (approx. 4000 Chinese characters).

Feedback via a rubric with individual written comments.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Suggested Topics for the Essay

A 2500-word essay is required for this course. (2500 words if written in English; 4000 characters if written in Chinese). The essay will be **due in week 9. Please submit on Moodle.**

You are also free to make up your own topic, but that should be approved by the Professor in advance.

Suggested topics (if you pick one of these, advanced approval is not required):

1. Compare and contrast images of women in the *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun / Lu Xun* with those in Amy Tan's novel *The Joy Luck Club*.

2. Contrast images of China which appear in the writings of Pearl Buck, Lu Xun and Amy Tan. You may examine works by Buck and Tan other than *The Good Earth* and *The Joy Luck Club* as well, but this is not, strictly speaking, necessary.

3. Compare images of the seraglio (harem) in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* with other images of concubinage in both Orientalist and Chinese literature (perhaps including *Tai Pan*, *The Good Earth* and the PRC film *Raise the Red Lantern* directed by Zhang Yimou).

4. In his novel *Rene Leys* does Victor Segalen engage in what you would call "orientalism"? Start off with a definition of orientalism, either from Edward Said (cite page numbers) or in your own words, then summarize and critique the novel *Rene Leys* with a view toward answering this question. You may want to refer to other texts or films used in this course.

Or you may devise your own essay topic. If you do, please make sure to ask the lecturer, either after class, in consultation hours, or via email whether or not the topic you propose to write on is acceptable.

Re. citations: When writing an essay always cite the book and page number from which you are quoting or summarizing. The easiest way to do this is put the information into parentheses after the quote or paraphrase, eg. " 'I—I can't write,' said Ah Q shamefaced, nervously holding the brush. 'In that case, to make it easy for you, draw a circle!'" (Lu Xun, *Selected Stories*, p, 108). Or if you paraphrase, for example: Lu Xun tells us that Ah Q is an illiterate peasant, which seems not to phase his accusers under the new Republican government. They simply have him draw a circle on his death warrant. (Lu Xun, *Selected Stories*, p. 108). **You can use either Harvard, Chicago or APA style: what is most important is that you give the citation in a consistent format.**

Assessment 3: Exam

Assessment length: One hour

Due date: In formal examination period.

Students complete an exam (2 hours).

Students will receive a mark and can consult the lecturer for further feedback.

Additional details

The exam will be one hour only. Please disregard the "2 hours" above.

Attendance Requirements

Listening to all online lectures and 80% attendance in tutorials is mandatory in this course. In Lecture/Tutorials you will actively engage with core course content, enabling you to attain CLO 1,2,3,4. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each tutorial. Unexcused absence from more than 20% of tutorials will result in a failing grade.

Active participation is required in tutorials. In every tutorial meeting, you may be called upon by name to respond to either your classmates or the professor, or participate in group activities. If you are called upon and FAIL TO respond TWICE in any meeting, it will be considered as an absence.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 30 May - 3 June	Lecture	1. Overview of the Subject: What is 'orientalism'? 2. What is the film "Tai-Pan" about and where can we expect to see elements of orientalism in it?
	Tutorial	Before coming to this tutorial you should have already listened to the pre-recorded lecture and viewed the film "Tai-Pan". An overview of the course will be given and the critical concept of 'Orientalism' will be introduced. How are Westerners depicted in "Tai-Pan" and how does this contrast with the depiction of Chinese people? Can you identify elements of orientalism in the movie Tai-Pan?
	Blended	View: "Tai-Pan" (in Mandarin this would be pronounced Daban 大班) (USA-Australia 1986)* total 127 mins.
Week 2: 6 June - 10 June	Lecture	Orientalism and Contrasting Images of the Opium War.
	Tutorial	Jonathan Spence is a great popularizer of Chinese history in the West. What are the characteristics and limitations of Spence's writing on China? What is Zhang Longxi's conclusion on "difference"? How does the treatment of the Opium War differ in the films "Tai-Pan" and "Lin Tse-hsu". How are Chinese and Westerners depicted in "Lin Tse-hsu" and how does this contrast with "Tai-Pan"?

		How did the opium trade develop and who were the historic opium merchants in terms of their origins in Britain? Was the British Parliament or Queen Victoria keen on the war?
	Reading	<p>Spence, Jonathan "Western Perceptions of China from the late Sixteenth Century to the Present";</p> <p>Zhang Longxi 张隆溪, "The Myth of the Other: China in the Eyes of the West" (both in course reader).</p> <p>Optional additional reading: Jacques Gernet (College de France), <i>A History of Chinese Civilization</i> (Second Edition), trans by J R Foster and Charles Hartman (Cambridge University Press, 1982), ch. 25 "The Great Recession: The Internal Causes of the Decline", pp. 533-545; ch. 30 "Political Developments in the First Half of the Twentieth Century", pp. 626-624; ch. 31 "Philosophical and Literary Developments" pp. 646--657. This is generally considered to be the most objective among secondary sources on Chinese history.</p>
	Blended	View: "Lin Zexu/Lin Tse-hsü" 林则徐 (PRC 1959)* total 107 mins. starring Zhao Dan 赵丹, a Chinese depiction of the Opium War made around the time of the Great Leap Forward (Da Yue Jin 大跃进).
Week 3: 13 June - 17 June	Lecture	<p>Edward Said's critique of Orientalism.</p> <p>Early Western Depictions of China</p> <p>Marco Polo</p>
	Tutorial	<p>1. How does Said define 'orientalism' and what are the solutions he proposes? Are elements of orientalism present in the first three films we have seen, if so where?</p> <p>2. What were the earliest Western perceptions of China? Did Marco Polo get to China?</p> <p>3. "55 Days at Peking" (USA 1963) is a drama set against the backdrop of the Boxer Uprising (Yihetuan 义和团 aka "Gengzi zhi Luan" 庚子之乱) in China (1900). Can you see examples of orientalist stereotypes in it? What does it say about the mission of empire-building on the part of Britain and other imperialist powers then active in China? What other more recent events might it</p>

		have alluded to in the eyes of its audience when released?
	Reading	Edward Said, <i>Orientalism</i> (excerpted in reader); Simon Leys' review of Said from his book <i>Burning Forest</i> ; de Rachewiltz, <i>Papal Envoys to the Great Khans</i> ; and excerpts from <i>The Travels of Marco Polo</i> (in reader). View: "Sand Pebbles" (USA 1966)* 175 mins.
	Blended	View: "Fifty-five Days at Peking" (USA 1963)* 153 mins. (view excerpts and discuss)
Week 4: 20 June - 24 June	Lecture	1. China and the European Enlightenment 2. The Subaltern
	Tutorial	1. How are "oriental" characters and the Orient being used by Montesquieu and Goldsmith as well as in the Charlie Chan and Fu Manchu films? What were the historical backgrounds out of which these characters evolved? What stereotypes are present in the Hollywood depictions, how do they differ from each other and why? Is there any carry over from Fu Manchu to the way certain Chinese figures (such as Prince Duan) are depicted in "55 Days at Peking"? 2. "Sand Pebbles (USA 1966) is feature film set in 1926 during the Beifa 北伐 (Northern Expedition) in which a coalition of Nationalist (Kuomintang 国民党) and Communist forces mounted a military campaign against the northern warlord government (Beiyang Zhengfu 北洋政府), a campaign that initially, at least, had nationalistic and anti-imperialist overtones.
	Reading	Montesquieu, <i>Lettres Persanes</i> ("The Persian Letters") (1721); Oliver Goldsmith, <i>The Citizen of the World</i> (aka "The Chinese Letters") (1762).
	Blended	View: "The Mask of Fu Manchu" (USA 1932) View: "Charlie Chan: Murder Over New York" (USA 1940) View: "Sand Pebbles" (USA 1966) 196 mins. (view excerpts and discuss)
Week 5: 27 June - 1 July	Lecture	1. The Subaltern 2. The Subaltern and the West

	Tutorial	Why might some Western readers today still think Arthur Smith's 19th century book <i>Chinese Characteristics</i> valuable in understanding China? What does Lu Xun (1881-1936) have to do with orientalism? How does orientalism manifest itself in the depictions of China and the Chinese people in "The Good Earth"? How does the 1956 film version of "The New Year's Sacrifice" differ from the 1924 short story Zhufu 祝福 by Lu Xun? Are there aspects of the film which tend to "orientalise" China? If so, what are they and how did they end up there? Is it Lu Xun who orientalises China or the Communist screenplay adapters? Why would he or they do so? What beliefs does Communism espouse and where did it originate? Think about the music in the film; the gestures and postures of the actors; the treatment of religion/superstition.
	Reading	Lu Xun 鲁迅 (Lu Hsun), read the short story Zhufu 祝福 (The New Year's Sacrifice) in Lu Hsun (Lu Xun), <i>Selected Stories</i> (1918-1926), pp. 125-143. Arthur H. Smith, <i>Chinese Characteristics</i> (excerpts in course reader); Lydia Liu 刘禾, "Translating National Character" in <i>Translingual Practice</i> ; Pearl S. Buck, <i>The Good Earth</i> (1931).
	Blended	View: The New Year's Sacrifice / Zhufu 祝福 (PRC 1956) 100 mins.; The Good Earth (USA 1937) 138 mins.
Week 6: 4 July - 8 July	Lecture	No classes. This is Recharge week.
Week 7: 11 July - 15 July	Lecture	1. The Subaltern and the West (continued) 2. The Debate over Literature as National Allegory (continued)
	Tutorial	Lu Xun finished writing "Ah Q" in December 1921. This novella was adapted into a film in 1981, a period of optimism which marked the end of the Cultural Revolution and the beginning of the era of Reform and Opening, begun by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. 1. What does Frederic Jameson tell us about Third World Literature and National Allegory and how does Aijaz Ahmad respond? 2. The film "Suzie Wong" was filmed on site in

		Hong Kong in 1960, an era of military build-up in East Asia at the outset of the Vietnam Conflict. To what extent does Suzie embody the Ah Q spirit? How is she similar to Ah Q and how is she different? Why do their fates contrast so markedly?
	Reading	<p>Lu Hsun (Lu Xun) 鲁迅, <i>Selected Stories</i>, (make sure you have read Lu Xun's "Preface to the First Collection of Short Stories" 呐喊自序; "The New Years Sacrifice" 祝福 and "The True Story of Ah Q" 阿Q正传) in Lu Hsun (Lu Xun), <i>Selected Stories</i>.</p> <p>Frederic Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" in <i>Social Text</i>, no. 15, Fall 1986, pp. 65-88.</p> <p>Aijaz Ahmad's response "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the National Allegory" in <i>Social Text</i>, no. 16, pp. 3-25;</p> <p>Jameson's response, no. 16, pp. 26-27.</p>
	Blended	<p>view: The True Story of Ah Q / A Q Zhengzhuan 阿Q正传 (PRC 1981).</p> <p>view: "The World of Suzie Wong" (UK/USA 1960)* 126 mins.</p>
Week 8: 18 July - 22 July	Lecture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imperialism and the Diaspora 2. Communism and "Eternal" China
	Tutorial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How might the image of "the Chinese woman" be manipulated as a national symbol in Chinese Communist discourse? Does "Yellow Earth" employ orientalized images of China to attempt a re-assessment of the Communist revolution? What was the controversy over the film "Yellow Earth" about? How do Fifth Generation filmmakers Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou offer a reappraisal of the Revolution and also allude to the experiences of young intellectuals sent down to the countryside in the late 1960s in the wake of the Cultural Revolution? 2. Some viewers and critics see "Ju Dou" and "Raise the Red Lantern" as "national allegory". To what extent does it rely on orientalist imagery?
	Reading	Amy Tan, <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ;

		<p>Minford and Barme, ed. ch. VIII "Yellow Earth" in <i>Seeds of Fire</i>, pp. 252-269. Nov. 1996, pp. 180-190.</p> <p>Chris Berry, "Writing as a Foreigner" in <i>The UTS Review</i>, vol. 2, no. 2, Nov. 1996, pp. 180-190.</p>
	Blended	<p>View: "Yellow Earth" 黄土地 (Huang Tudi) (PRC 1984) 89 mins. Directed by Chen Kaige 陈凯歌 with Zhang Yimou 张艺谋 as cinematographer.</p> <p>View: "Ju Dou" 菊豆 (PRC 1990) 95 mins. Directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Gong Li 巩俐.</p> <p>View: "Raise the Red Lantern" 大红灯笼高高挂 (PRC 1991) 125 mins. Directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Gong Li 巩俐.</p>
Week 9: 25 July - 29 July	Lecture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fetishization and Obsession with the "Center" 2. The PRC as the "Centre": what is "real" history? <p>Note: The essay is due on Friday at 23:00 this week</p>
	Tutorial	<p>Is Victor Segalen's novel <i>Rene Leys</i> an orientalist work?</p> <p>Where do you see elements of orientalism in <i>The Last Emperor</i> and how do they function?</p>
	Reading	Victor Segalen, <i>Rene Leys</i> (1912/1988).
	Blended	View: "The Last Emperor" (Italy/USA/PRC 1987).
Week 10: 1 August - 5 August	Lecture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communism and "Eternal" China 2. Fetishization and Obsession with the "Center" revisited
	Tutorial	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Rey Chow critique the idea of the Centre? 2. Bertolucci's film "The Last Emperor" was based loosely on the book <i>From Emperor to Citizen</i>, the "autobiography" of Aisin Gioro Puyi. What do the preoccupations of the movie "The Last Emperor" tell us about the limitations of much Western interest in China and on what aspects do these continue to focus? What are the most significant contrasts between Bertolucci's treatment of the life of the last emperor and that of <i>Huo Long</i> 火龙

	(Fire Dragon) the film from the PRC? How would you compare "The Last Emperor" with <i>Huo Long</i> , the PRC filmic version of Pu Yi's life.
Reading	<p>Rey Chow 周蕾, <i>Writing Diaspora: "Orientalism and East Asia"</i> pp 1-26.</p> <p>Bertolucci's "The Last Emperor" was based loosely on the book <i>From Emperor to Citizen</i>, 《我的前半生》 the "autobiography" of Aisin Gioro Puyi 爱新觉罗溥仪. If you are interested, that book and Reginald Fleming Johnston's <i>Twilight in the Forbidden City</i> are available through the UNSW Library..</p>
Blended	View: <i>Huo Long</i> 火龙 (Fire Dragon) (PRC 1985).

Resources

Prescribed Resources

- ARTS2457 Course Reader

Recommended Resources

- website for the study of Chinese literature and film: [Modern Chinese Literature and Culture \(MCLC\)](#). Maintained by the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, The Ohio State University.
- website: jonvonkowallis.com This is the Professor's personal website, maintained at his own expense. Here you can access Lu Hsun, *Selected Stories* trans. by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972) through the link to Coldbacon, a website created by Dr Will Manuel, Prof von Kowallis' former student.
- René Leys
- Selected Stories
- The Joy Luck Club
- Heritage of China
- A History of Chinese Civilisation
- The Good Earth
- Did Marco Polo go to China?

Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered from students using myExperience. Students are encouraged to complete their surveys by accessing the personalised web link via the Moodle course site.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The [UNSW Academic Skills support](#) offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has [the ELISE tool](#) available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines>

Image Credit

Photo by [JD X](#) on [Unsplash](#)

CRICOS

CRICOS Provider Code: 00098G