

**Module title:** Cinema and Eastern Philosophies

**Module code:** FLM6037

**Credit value:** 15

**Level:** 6

**Pre-requisite modules:** N/A

### **Content Description**

This module explores a largely neglected approach of interpreting cinema, through the lens of Eastern Philosophies. The rich sources of Eastern philosophies offer great insights on ethics, aesthetics, and human's relationship with nature, nonbeings, and the cosmos. Focusing on Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, it examines how cinema invokes these philosophies, how filmmakers in East Asia respond to such philosophical and aesthetic heritage in their practices, and how western films and other non-Asian cinemas could also be approached through Eastern Philosophies.

### **Module Aims**

This module aims to expand the approaches in interpreting cinema, by bringing Eastern philosophies and aesthetics to analyse cinema as art, cultural production and eco-socio-practice. Through interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, it offers new insights in understanding film and ethics, film aesthetics, eco-cinema, poetics of cinema, cinematic realism, and 'the fiction and nonfiction divide' in documentary studies. Ultimately, it aims to expand current English language film studies to a global film studies, contributing to the decolonising film studies agenda of the department and in the larger international academic community.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Academic Content:

A1 Engage critically with debates in the field of Eastern Philosophies in relation to the study of art and cinema, and put them in productive use.

A2 Make critical judgements in the understanding of film philosophy, especially in relation to ethics and aesthetics.

A3 Understand cinema and film practices through the perspectives of Eastern philosophies.

Disciplinary Skills – able to:

B1 Employ appropriate philosophical approaches and resources for exploring film and film practice.

B2 Collate and critically evaluate a variety of research material within academic literature.

B3 Draw from a particular philosophical perspective to the practice of filmmaking or festival programming.

Attributes:

C1 Collate, organise and deploy ideas and information in order to formulate arguments cogently, and express them effectively in written, oral or other forms.

C2 Critically appraise public debate relevant to film philosophy and cinema and ecology.

C3 The ability to use their knowledge and understanding of Eastern philosophies as a basis for the examination of ethical issues and intervention whether in the public domain.

## Activity Hours

Activity Type	Time spent (hours)
Lecture	11
Seminar	22
Tutorial	1
Guided independent study	116
Total	150

## Indicative Reading List

- Chang, Chia-ju. "The Missing View in Global Postsecular Cinema: Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon as a Visual Kō'an/Gong'an" in *Paragraph*, 42:3, 2019. pp370-386
- Chang, Chia-ju. *The Global Imagination of Ecological Communities: Western and Chinese Ecocritical Praxis*, Zhenjia City, China: Jiangsui University Press, 2013.
- Chen, Yuehong. "Aesthetic Fidelity versus Linguistic Fidelity" in *Translating China for Western Readers: Reflective, Critical, and Practical Essays*, edited by Ming Dong Gu with Rainer Schultz, Albany: State University of New York Press. 2014.
- David. F. Ho. "Selfhood and Identity in Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism: Contrasts With the West" in *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 25:2, 1995.
- Despeux, Catherine. and Kohn, Livia. *Women in Daoism*. Cambridge, MA: Three Pines Press, 2003.
- Fairlamb, Horace L. "Romancing the Tao: How Ang Lee Globalized Ancient Chinese Wisdom" in *Symplokē*, Vol. 15, No. 1/2, *Cinema without Borders* (2007), pp. 190-205.
- Fan, Victor. "The Something of Nothing: Buddhism and The Assassin" in *The Assassin: Hou Hsiao-hsien's World of Tang China*, edited by Pang Hsiao-yen, Hong Kong University Press, 2019.
- Hall, David L., and Roger T. Ames (1998), *Thinking from the Han, Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture*, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Inada. Kenneth K., "A Theory of Oriental Aesthetics: A Prolegomenon" in *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Apr., 1997), pp. 117-131.
- Ivanhoe, Philip J. (2000), *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publications.
- Jia, Yuxin and Jia, Xuelai. "The Anthropocosmic Perspective on Intercultural Communication: Learning To Be Global Citizens Is Learning to Be Human" in *Intercultural Communication Studies* XXV: 1 (2016).
- Jullien, Francois, *In Praise of Blandness Proceeding from Chinese Thought and Aesthetics*, translated by Paul m. Varsono, Zone Books, 2007.
- Jullien, Francois, *Living Off Landscape*, RLI, 2018
- Jullien, Francois. *The Great Image Has No Form, or on the Nonobject Through Painting*, University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Kohn, Livia. *Cosmos & Community: The Ethical Dimension of Daoism*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2005.
- Liu, Xiaogan (Ed.), *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, Springer, 2015
- Miller, James. *China's Green Religion: Daoism and the Quest for a Sustainable Future*, Columbia University Press, 2017.
- Miller, James. *Daoism: a short Introduction*, 2005.

- Miller, James. Girardot, N. J., Liu, Xiaogan, eds. *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*, 2001.
- Mickey, Sam. "Contributions to Anthropocosmic Environmental Ethics" in *Worldviews*, 11 (2007) 226-247.
- Munro, Donald J. (ed.) (1985), *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values*, Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies Publications, University of Michigan.
- Nelson, Eric Sean. "Responding with Dao: Early Daoist Ethics and the Environment" in *Philosophy East and West*, Volume 59, Number 3, July 2009, pp. 294-316.
- Sang, Tze-lan Deobrah. "The Many Ways of Speaking as "I": Wuna Wu's First-person Documentaries from Taiwan" in *Studies in Documentary Film special issue on Feminist Approaches in Women's First Person Documentaries from East Asia*, March 2020.
- Sterckx, Roel. et al, eds. *Animals through Chinese History: Earliest Times to 1911*, Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Sterckx, Roel. *Chinese Thought: From Confucius to Cook Ding*, Pelican, 2019.
- Suchenski, Richard. *Hou Hsiao-Hsien*, Austrian Film Museum Books, 2014
- Teo, Stephen. *Eastern Approaches to Western Film: Asian Reception and Aesthetics in Cinema*, Bloomsbury, 2019.
- Paul Cohen and Merle Goldman (eds), *Ideas Across Cultures: Essays on Chinese Thought in Honor of Benjamin I. Schwartz*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1990.
- Peter Rist, "Renewal of Song Dynasty Landscape Painting Aesthetics Combined with a Contemplative Modernism in the Early Work of Chen Kaige", in *The Poetics of Chinese Cinemas*, 2016.
- McLeod, Alexis. *Theories of Truth in Chinese Philosophy: A Comparative Approach*, Rowman&Littlefield International, 2015
- Wang, David Der-wei. "Fei Mu, Mei Lanfang and the Poetics of Screening China" in *The Lyrical in Epic Time : Modern Chinese Intellectuals and Artists Through the 1949 Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.
- Wang, Keping. *Chinese Culture of Intelligence*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019
- Wang Robin, *Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012
- Wu, Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting*, University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Yang, Guorong, Paul J. D'Ambrosio et al. (trans). *Philosophical Horizons, Metaphysical Investigation in Chinese Philosophy*, Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2018
- Yu, Kiki Tianqi, "Introduction" in *'My' Self on Camera: First Person Documentary Practice in an Individualising China*, Edinburgh University Press, 2019.