

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Cultural and Religious Studies
2023-24 Term 2
CURE2016/UGEC2042: Modernity & Urban Culture
(tentative)

Instructor: Dr Ella Mei Ting LI
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Medium of instruction: Chinese & English

Lecture – Thursday 10:30AM - 12:15PM LSK 304

Tutorial – Thursday 12:30PM - 01:15PM LSK 304 / LDS 214

Course Description

Modernity is an interdisciplinary concept that describes the ensemble of the particular socio-cultural status of “being modern,” and urban culture is one of the crucial parts in understanding the formation of cultural modernity. Since urban modernity shapes our lives, several fundamental inquiries are worth our attention: What shapes the complex flow of cultural modernity in Asian cities? How are urban spaces socially constructed, divided, and contested? What voices and experiences are excluded from the delineation and operation of the modern Asian city? With recent urban cultural development, what results in residents' increasingly complex emotions?

In this course, our exploration of modernity and urban culture is structured under three major areas of study: modernity, spatial studies, and emotion and affect. Focusing on urban culture in Asia, this course explores critical sites that constitute a modern city as well as the formation of cultural identities. Starting with the debate on the possibility of alternative modernities, we scrutinize how “city” provides experiences that fuel the formation of “modern subjects.” Next, we will contextualise modern experiences in the context of Asia to go beyond the Eurocentric understanding of “modern.” Next, we look into artistic articulations of urban spaces in literature and film to investigate the visual representation of modern Asian cities, such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tokyo, and Seoul, etc. Finally, we move our focus from representation politics to the urban emotions of individuals and collectives. By studying different kinds of emotions, we examine how urban space relates to the structure of feelings in a society.

After taking this course, students will learn to develop a greater facility with theoretical texts, critically examine modern urban culture in Asian cities, and unravel key nodes of early modernists and now the nation-states' projects that result in the contemporary development of urban culture.

Learning Outcomes

- **Trace and Recognise** the theoretical development of modernity and urban culture in Asia context;
- **Understand and analysis** the artistic articulation and visual representation of modern urban spaces in different art forms, such as literature and film
- **Employ** a range of theoretical tools and methodologies to critically examine the production of space and the peculiarities of the social space;

- **Critically reflects** on the modern urban culture in everyday living in contemporary socio-cultural circumstances.

Course Components & Learning activities

1. Lectures and tutorials
2. In-class discussions panels
3. Guest sharing and/or fieldtrips (if possible, details will be announce during class)

Assessment methods (scoring rubrics will be provided separately)

Class participation – 10%

Students are required to attend lectures and tutorials. Constructive and critical responses to the presentations of your classmates will also be assessed. As every input is highly treasure, students who absent over 30% of lectures and tutorials will risk failing this course.

Reflection 1 (400 - 600 words in English or 1200 - 1500 in Chinese) – 20%

Selected **ONE** of the following texts to conduct a reflective analysis of their cinematic articulation of the city landscape. Considering the length of this essay, you should evaluate selectively **one to two significant scenes** of the depicted film.

- *The Terrorizers* (1986) Edward Yang
- *The Way We Are* (2008) Ann Hui
- *Burning* (2018) Lee Chang-dong

Reflection 2 (400 – 600 words in English or 1200 – 1500 in Chinese) – 20%

Selected a distract of Hong Kong that you are seldomly visit (or you have never visit before). Working alone or in pairs to pay a visit of that place and **take 5 to 8 photos** of the landscape, architectures, or critical cultural sites to conduct your reflection paper corresponds to **ONE** of the following concepts:

1. Alternative modernities
2. Globalisation and Metropolis
3. Speedy/Slowness City

Discussion panels – 15% (three in total, 5% per section)

Lecturer and tutor will lead the discussion on the required texts and readings. Each students will be given time to share their thought on selected part of the required texts and/or readings.

Group project – 35%

Students should form themselves in a group of 3-4 members to conduct the group project of creating a path of cultural tour plan.

1. Group report 12 – 15 pages double-line spacing in English or 4000-5000 in Chinese (exclude appendix and reference list) (25%)

2. Oral demonstration: 15 mins (10%)

Each group should consult their tutor on their project in advance with a one-page bullet-point outline which concisely describes your planning for the project and concepts and ideas to be applied. The criticality of this group project is highly treasure, each group need to **cite at least 3 weekly readings and/or reference** that listed in this course outline.

Weekly Planning

Part I Understanding Modern Cities

What is “modernity”? What is urban culture? Is there a parallel understanding of the “modern city” in Europe and Asia? Why does the government promote the concept of an Asian world city? In this part, we explore the multiplicity of understanding modern urban culture.

11 Jan Week 1 What’s city and who’s city

Required:

- James Scott, (1998) “The High Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique”, Ch. 3 in *Seeing Like a State*, Yale University Press.
- Sharon Zukin, (2002) “Whose City? Whose Culture?”, p. 225-234 in *Readings in Urban*, eds., S. Fainstein and Scott Campbell, Blackwell.

Further readings:

- Benjamin, Walter. “Paris, capital of the nineteenth century.” *Reflections*. NY: Schocken Books, 1978, 146-162.
- Soja, Edward. “Exopolis: The Restructuring of Urban Form” in Miles, Malcolm and Hall, Tim ed., *City Cultures Reader*. London, Routledge, 2000.

18 Jan Week 2 Singler or Plural? Modernity detour

Required:

- Leo Ou-fan Lee, “Shanghai Modern: Reflections on Urban Culture in China in the 1930s,” in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar ed., *Alternative Modernities*, Duke University, 2001, pp 86-122.

Further readings:

- Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, “On Alternative Modernities,” in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar ed., *Alternative Modernities*, Duke University, 2001, pp 1-23.

25 Jan Week 3 From Metropolis to Asian World City

Required:

- Cuthbert, Alexander “Under the Volcano: Postmodern Space in Hong Kong.” *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*. Eds. Sophie Watson and Katherine Gibson.
- Gordon Matthews, “Chungking Mansions: A Center of ‘Low-End Globalization,’” *Ethnology* 46, no.2 (2007): 169-183.

Further readings:

- Sassen, Saskia, “Overview of Global Cities” in Kleniewski, Nancy ed., *Cities and Social Theory*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Modern Life,” in Malcolm Waters, ed. *Modernity: Critical Concepts* (London: Routledge, 1999), vol. 2, pp. 35-46.

1 Feb Week 4 Wrap-up of part 1 + Discussion panel 1

- Screening + discussion section on *AKIRA* (1988) Katsuhiro Otomo
- Further readings: Savage, Mike & Warde, Alan, “Modernity, Postmodernity & Urban Culture” in Kleniewski, Nancy ed., *Cities and Social Theory*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

Part II The Modern Temporality

The study of space and time is a dialectic one; in this part, we investigate the relationship between the planning of urban modernisation of temporality. How does modern urban city shapes our

8 Feb Week 5 The Capitalist Temporality

Required:

- Sagan, Claire. “Capitalist Temporalities as Uchronia.” *Theory & event* 22, no. 1 (2019): 143–174.

Further readings:

- Ugo Rossi “Neoliberalism,” in Mark Jayne, and Kevin Ward ed., *Urban Theory: New Critical Perspectives*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

*****Week 6 15 Feb Luna New Year Holiday*****

16 Feb **Submission of reflection 1**

22 Feb Week 7 The Gendered Temporality

Required:

- Judith Halberstam, “Queer Temporality and Postmodern Geographies”, from *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (2005)

Further readings:

- Julia Kristeva (1981) ‘Women’s Time’, *Signs* 7 (1): 13-35. Trans. Alice Jardine and Harry Blake
- Emily Apter (2010), “‘Women's Time’ in Theory’, *differences* 21 (1): 1-18.

29 Feb Week 8 The (Im)mobile Temporality

Required:

- Martin, Fran, John Nguyet Erni, and Audrey Yue. 2019. “(Im)Mobile Precarity in the Asia-Pacific,” *Cultural Studies* 33, 33 (6): 895–914.

Further readings:

- Cruz-Del Rosario, Teresita, and Jonathan Rigg. "Living in an Age of Precarity in 21st Century Asia." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49.4 (2019): 517-27.

*****Week 9 7 March Reading Week*****

14 Mar Week 10 Wrap-up of part 2 + Discussion panel 2

- Screening + discussion section on *Parasite* (2019) Bong Joon-ho

Part III Urban Emotions

Claims about urban life have long involved claims about affective life. How, then, are affects part of urban life? What implications does learning to sense and disclose affective life have for urban theory? We unfold the city with urban emotions from the late 19th century to the contemporary.

21 Mar Week 10 City of Boredom ****Submission of reflection 2****

Required:

- Coppoolse, Anneke. "Create No More!: Clutter and Boredom, a Hong Kong Perspective." In *Boredom, Shanzhai, and Digitisation in the Time of Creative China*, edited by Jeroen de Kloet, Chow Yiu Fai, and Lena Scheen, 53–76. Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

Further readings:

- Goodstein, Elizabeth S "Introduction: The Rhetoric of Boredom," *Experience without Qualities: Boredom and Modernity*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2022.

28 Mar Week 11 City of Melancholy

Required:

- 〈導論——情感的現代性與現代性的情感〉，載於甯應斌、何春蕙：《民困愁城：憂鬱症、情緒管理、現代性的黑暗面》臺灣社會研究雜誌社，2012。

11 Apr Week 12 City of Exhausted

- 韓炳哲著；莊雅慈、管中琪譯：《倦怠社會》台北市：大塊文化出版股份有限公司，2015(selected chapters)

19 Apr Week 13 Wrap-up + Discussion Panel 3

****Submission of written group project report****

- Oral demonstration on group report

Reading & Reference

Modernity

*Berman, Marshall. *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. London: Verso, 1983.

*Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Polity, 2012.

*Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

Dube, Saurabh. *Subjects of Modernity: Time-Space, Disciplines, Margins*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press. 2017.

Wagner, Peter. *Modernity Understanding the Present*. Cambridge, U.K. ; Polity, 2012.

Mouzelis, Nicos P. *Modern and Postmodern Social Theorizing: Bridging the Divide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

David Harvey, "Time-space Compression & the rise of modernism as a cultural force," in *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge & Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 260-283.

John Hannigan, (2002) "Fantasy City: Pleasure and Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis" from *Reading in Urban Theory*, eds. S. Fainstein and S. Scott, Blackwell.

Felski, Rita. *The Gender of Modernity*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Waters, Malcolm. *Modernity: Critical Concepts*. London; Routledge, 1999.

*詹明信著、吳美真譯：《後現代主義或晚期資本主義的文化邏輯》·臺北：時報文化出版企業股份有限公司·1998。

*馬歇爾·伯曼著；徐大建·張輯譯：《一切堅固的東西都煙消雲散了：現代性體驗》·北京：商務印書館·2003。

*齊格蒙·包曼著；陳雅馨譯：《液態現代性》·臺北市：商周出版·2018。

Urban Culture

Stevenson, D. *Cities and urban cultures*. Open University Press. 2003.

Abbas, Ackbar, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*. Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 1997, pp. 63-90.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers. 1991.

Stevenson, Deborah. *Cities of Culture: A Global Perspective*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014.

Jayne, Mark, and Kevin Ward. *Urban Theory: New Critical Perspectives*. London; Routledge. 2017.

Gilles Delalex, (2002) "Non-Places: The Everyday Experience of Flows" in *disClosure*, No.11.

Farha Ghannam, (1997) "Re-imagining the Global: Relocation and Local Identities in Cairo" in *Space, Culture, Power: New Identities in Globalizing Cities*, eds. A.Öncü and P. Weyland, London: ZED books.

Smith, Michael P., and Michael. McQuarrie. *Remaking Urban Citizenship: Organizations, Institutions, and the Right to the City*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2012.

Lehan, Richard Daniel. *The City in Literature: An Intellectual and Cultural History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

胡嘉明、張劭穎(2016)：《廢品生活：垃圾場的經濟、社群與空間》香港：中文大學出版社。

Emotions and Affect

Wulff, H. *The emotions: a cultural reader* (English ed.). Berg. 2007.

Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

*Han, Byung-Chul. *The Burnout Society*. Trans. Erik Butler. Stanford, California: Stanford Briefs, an imprint of Stanford University Press, 2015.

Ben Singer, "Modernity, Hyperstimulus, and the Rise of Popular Sensationalism," in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*. Edited by Leo Charney & Vanessa R. Schwartz. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995), 72-99.

許寶強：《情感政治》香港：天窗出版社·2018。

黃宗儀：《中港新感覺：發展夢裡的情感政治》新北市汐止區：聯經出版事業股份有限公司·2020。

甯應斌、何春蕤：《民困愁城：憂鬱症、情緒管理、現代性的黑暗面》臺灣社會研究雜誌社，2012。

*韓炳哲著；莊雅慈、管中琪譯：《倦怠社會》 台北市: 大塊文化出版股份有限公司，2015。

Honesty in Academic Work: A Guide to Students

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on honesty in academic work submitted by students and adopts a policy of *zero tolerance* on cheating and plagiarism. Any related offence will lead to disciplinary action including termination of studies at the University. Students must submit their assignments via the Webpage of the Chinese University Plagiarism Identification Engine (CUPIDE) <http://cupide.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/student>

Although cases of cheating or plagiarism are rare at the University, everyone should make himself/ herself familiar with the content of this website and thereby help avoid any practice that would not be acceptable.

Section 1	What is plagiarism [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p01.htm]
Section 2	Proper use of source material [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p02.htm]
Section 3	Citation styles [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p03.htm]
Section 4	Plagiarism & copyright violation [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p04.htm]
Section 5	CUHK regulations on honesty in academic work [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p05.htm]
Section 6	CUHK disciplinary guidelines & procedures [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p06.htm]
Section 7	Guide for teachers & departments [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p07.htm]
Section 8	Recommended materials to be included in course outlines [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p08.htm]
Section 9	Recommended declaration to be included in every assignment hand in [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p09.htm]
Section 10	Electronic submission of term papers [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p10.htm]