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# HISTORY 347: CINEMA AND REVOLUTION

# Meeting Time and Place

# Lecture / Discussion: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30-3:45pm

Screening: Tuesdays 5:00-7:30pm (see calendar)

Bishop 105

**Course Description**

As historian of visual culture Nicholas Mirzoeff argued, “Modern life takes place on screen.” This statement is particularly apt in describing how cinema (along with television, and now new media) transformed the experience and consumption of revolution during the 20th and 21st centuries. Indeed, revolution truly became cinematic and, later, televisual during the last 100 years. In the cinematic age, revolution entered the peaceful space of everyday life as never before, and each were subsequently transformed in the process of reproducing and distributing motion pictures of conflict and its meanings.

“Cinema and Revolution” addresses how artists and revolutionaries have used the cinema for revolutionary purposes and engaged with the theme of revolution to explore the meanings and effects of modernity. Beginning with the Russian Revolution in 1917, cinema made possible the realistic representation of revolution on the screen, and transformed commemoration of revolution into an aspect of consumer culture and popular entertainment. The events of May 1968 in France represented a further extension of the celebratory nature of consuming revolution on the screen, and new technologies such as the hand-held Steady-Cam introduced the possibility for a more direct relationship between the agents of revolution and its audiences. Today, of course, we are more accustomed to viewing revolution live on our television screens or on YouTube, and the recent examples in Egypt and Ukraine offer new possibilities for understanding revolution as performance. Along with the examination of key cinematic, televisual and new media texts through in-class and home screenings, this course will study problems of spectatorship, collective memory and revolutionary agency.

**Note**: This course has a mandatory Tuesday evening screening during most weeks of the semester. Please consult the calendar at the end of this syllabus to make sure you attend on the correct weeks. You will also be required to watch other films on your own.

**Required Reading**

There are no required textbooks to purchase for this course. There are several readings posted to the course’s Blackboard site, which should be printed out and brought to class during the allotted discussion of them.

**Required Films**

Many of the following films are required viewing for students of History 347. Although you will have some viewing choices in the writing assignments, you are expected to be at least familiar with all of the films below. These films are either on reserve in the library (R), or through a streaming service like Netflix (N), Amazon Instant Watch (A), Hulu (H), and FilmBox Live (F). Some are also available on Youtube (Y). They are all available from a pay-per-view streaming service (AIW, iTunes, VUDU, etc.), and most are available on DVD. You should expect to spend some money on accessing / acquiring some of these films.

In-Class Viewing (Tues. evenings):

D.W. Griffith, *Orphans of the Storm* (USA, 1921) – RAY

Vsevolod Pudovkin, *The End of St. Petersburg* (USSR, 1927) – RY

Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (Italy / France, 1966) – RHY

Peter Brook, *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade* [aka, *Marat/Sade*](UK, 1967) – RY

Jean-Luc Godard, *Tout Va Bien* (France, 1972) – H

Koji Wakamatsu, *The Ecstasy of Angels* (Japan, 1972)

Chris Marker, *A Grin without a Cat* (France, 1977) – Y

Warren Beaty, *Reds* (USA, 1981) – R

Jehane Noujaim, *The Square* (USA, 2013) - N

Sergei Loznitsa, *Maidan* (Ukraine, 2014) – N

Individual Viewing:

Sergei Eisenstein, *October* (USSR, 1927) – FY

Anthony Mann, *The Black Book, aka, The Reign of Terror* (USA, 1949) – Y

David Lean, *Doctor Zhivago* (USA, 1965) – R

Pier Paolo Pasolini, *The Hawks and the Sparrows* (Italy, 1966) - AY

Michelangelo Antonioni, *Zabriskie Point* (USA, 1970) – Y

Bernardo Bertolucci, *The Dreamers* (France, 2003) – R

Koji Wakamatsu, *United Red Army* (Japan, 2007) – R

Steven Soderberg, *Che* (USA, 2008) – RN

Uli Edel, *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (Germany, 2010) – R

Evgenii Afineevskii, *Winter on Fire: Ukraine’s Fight for Freedom* (USA, 2014) – N

**Course Policies**

* Attendance for each scheduled class meeting is mandatory. Your absence will result in a lower grade for the semester. Note, however, that attendance alone does not guarantee you a good participation grade. If you miss class, you are responsible for the consequences. You have three allowed sick days/personal days. After that, your participation grade becomes an “F.” Only exceptional circumstances (major/prolonged illnesses, multiple deaths in the family, etc.) will be considered as exceptions to this policy. Tuesday evening screenings are also part of the attendance policy.
* You are responsible for all readings listed on the calendar. You must also bring your readings to class during our discussions of them.
* Film viewing in this class is very important. If you will find it difficult to dedicate enough time to viewing the large number of films during this semester, please register for a course that does not demand as much as your time.
* Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and you will receive a “0” for any assignment for which you are caught cheating. For each and every case of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty, I will initiate an academic discipline case with the university. If you have any questions regarding the nature of academic dishonesty, I will be happy to answer them and clarify any misunderstandings. Once I determine that academic dishonesty has occurred, it is too late to ask those vital questions.
* You should avoid using your cell phone in class, and they are to remain in your bag (NOT on top of your desk) while class is in session. **I will not tolerate texting/chatting/emailing in class**. You will be asked to leave if such an incident occurs, and you will be counted absent.
* If you bring any electronic devices to class, it must be dedicated to course-related purposes.
* Rest room breaks notwithstanding, if you leave class in the middle of the period, you will be counted absent.
* If you require special considerations based on a disability or extracurricular activities, you must inform me of them immediately.

**Assignments / Assessment**

Short Quizzes

You will take four short-answer quizzes in class during the semester, which will address your knowledge and understanding of the readings and lectures. All quizzes are labeled clearly on the calendar. You will know beforehand what material each quiz will cover. You can use your notes and any appropriate course materials (unless informed otherwise) during the quizzes. Each quiz will last 15-20 minutes.

Paper 1: Responding to a Film

You will watch a film closely. Take notes recording your impressions. Formalize these notes into a short essay, using the accepted terminology for film analysis..

Length: 500-750 words

Due: Sept 19

Paper 2 - Film and the Politics of History

You will watch several films and read existing scholarship (secondary literature) on them. Write a draft for a paper that explores the film’s political ideas and its treatment of history. Solicit and collect reviews of your draft from the professor and another student in the course. Revise and expand upon the paper based on these reviews.

Length: 1250-1500 words

Due: Nov 4

Paper 3 – Research Paper

You will propose your own short research project on the topic of “Cinema and Revolution.” Watch the films and conduct the necessary primary and secondary source research to complete the project. Write a research paper that makes an argument about a film or groups of films and their relationship to a historical problem.

Length: 2000-3000 words

Due: Dec 9

Final Exam

The **cumulative** final will address some of the larger problems in the course, and will consist of a closed book section on chronology and multiple choice, and a longer open book section consisting of short answer and essay questions.

Film Journal

For each film you watch, you will write a short journal entry based on a form that I will distribute. At the end of each thematic section (except the introductory section), you will submit a Word or PDF document with all of the film entries. These “journals” do not have to be polished pieces of writing, but they should be coherent and contain some analytical and interpretive points about each of the films.

**Grade Breakdown**

Short Quizzes: 15%

Paper 1: 5%

Paper 2: 10%

Paper 3: 20%

Final Exam: 15%

Film Journal: 15%

Participation: 20%

**Grading Criteria** **(in hierarchical order)** **for Your Papers**

1. Clear **thesis** statement and introduction
2. Logical **organization** and development of your ideas
3. Use of relevant **evidence** (both the quantity AND quality of the evidence are essential)
4. **Clearly** and sophistication of writing
5. Proper **form** and **style**; absence of **errors** (this includes the mechanics of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc., along with your ability to follow the rules of each assignment)

An "A" paper shows excellent command of all five aspects with few distracting errors in style.

A "B" paper satisfies points 1-4, but the form and style will sometimes distract the reader's attention.

A "C" paper meets the requirements of points 1-3, but its organization and style leave the reader confused about the intent and/or direction of the argument.

A "D" paper is a "C" that does not use enough evidence (or relies on inappropriate or incorrect evidence (i.e., factual errors)) to support the thesis.

An "F" paper is seriously flawed and lacks a developed argument.

For each paper, I will distribute a grading rubric with the assignment, and my comments will address each of these five points.

**Grading Criteria for Class Participation**

“A” – active participation

“B” – sporadic, but valuable, participation

“C” – inactive participation

“D” – refusal to participate

**“F” – more than 3 absences during the semester**

**Calendar** (These dates are subject to change. Please listen closely for any modifications to the calendar, and write them into your copy of the syllabus.)

**Introduction to the Course: Theorizing Revolution**

Tue, Aug 23: Intentions and Expectations for History 347: Cinema, Modernity, and Politics

Thurs, Aug 25: Ancient and Modern Theories of Political Revolution

Readings:

* Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book V, 350 BCE
* John Locke, selections from *The Second Treatise on Government*, 1690
* Maximillian Robespierre, documents on “Revolutionary Government,” 1793

Tue, Aug 30: Marxism, Social Revolution, and the Possibilities of the Cinema

Reading: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, selections from *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848

Thurs, Sept 1: **Quiz 1** and Discussion of Aristotle, Locke and Marx/Engels

**Theme 1: The French Revolution as a Flexible Symbol**

Tue, Sept 6: Introducing the French Revolution

5:00 Screening: D.W. Griffith, *Orphans of the Storm* (USA, 1921)

Reading: Marc Ferro, “Film as an Agent, Product and Source of History,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 18 (1983), 357-364.

Optional Reading: Jeremy D. Popkin, *A Short History of the French Revolution*

Thurs, Sept 8: Meanings and Appropriations of the French Revolution: Discussion of *Orphans of the Storm*

Reading: Timothy Corrigan, “Beginning to Think, Preparing to Watch, and Starting to Write” and “Film Terms and Topics for Film Analysis and Writing,” in *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* (BB)

Weekend Viewing: Anthony Mann, *The Black Book, aka, The Reign of Terror* (USA, 1949)

Tue, Sept 13: Re-Appropriating the French Revolution after World War II and Beyond…

5:00 Screening: Peter Brook, *Marat/Sade* (UK, 1967)

Thurs, Sept 15: Discussion of films together (submit Theme 1 journal before class)

**Paper 1 due Monday, Sept 19, before midnight**

**Theme 2: The Russian Revolution and the Promise of Revolutionary Cinema**

Tues, Sept 20: How and Why Revolution Came to Russia

5:00 Screening: Vsevolod Pudovkin, *The End of St. Petersburg* (USSR, 1927)

Optional Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, “1917: The Revolutions of February and October,” in *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 40-67

Thurs, Sept 22: Discussion of *The End of St. Petersburg* and Introduction to Eisenstein’s *October*

Weekend Viewing: Sergei Eisenstein, *October* (USSR, 1927) and David Lean, *Doctor Zhivago* (USA, 1965)

Tues, Sept 27: Violence and Fear after the Russian Revolution

5:00 Screening: Warren Beaty, *Reds* (USA, 1981)

Optional Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, “The Civil War,” in *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 68-92

Thurs, Sept 29: **Quiz 2** and discussion of *Reds* and *Doctor Zhivago* (submit Theme 2 journal before class)

Reading: Robert A. Rosenstone, “*Reds* as History,” *Reviews in American History*

**Theme 3: Rebellions and Revolutions in the 1960s**

Tues, Oct 4: Doing Historical Research on Film; Introducing the Revolutions of the 1960s

5:00 Screening: Chris Marker, *A Grin without a Cat* (France, 1977)

Thurs, Oct 6: De-Colonization and Third World Revolution

Optional Reading: Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett, “Introduction” to *The Third World in the Global 1960s*, pp. 1-16.

Weekend Viewing: Steven Soderberg, *Che* (USA, 2008) (watch both parts, but focus on the first part)

Tues, Oct 11: Cuba, Algeria and Their Legacies

5:00 Screening: Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (Italy / France, 1966)

Optional Readings:

* Marifeli Pérez-Stable, “Politics and Society, 1961-1970,” in *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy*, pp. 98-120
* John Ruedy, “The Challenges of Independence, 1962-1978,” in *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation*, pp. ??

Thurs, Oct 13: Discussion of *Battle of Algiers* and *Che*; Cinema and Sexual Revolution

Reading: Irene Bignardi, “The Making of *The Battle of Algiers*,” *Cineaste*

Optional Reading: David Allyn, “(Id)eology: Herbert Marcuse, Norman O. Brown, and Fritz Perls,” in *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History*, pp. 196-205

Weekend Viewing: Bernardo Bertolucci, *The Dreamers* (France, 2003) and Michelangelo Antonioni, *Zabriskie Point* (USA, 1970)

Tues, Oct 18: 1968 in “The West” and Its Aftermath

5:00 Screening: Jean-Luc Godard, *Tout Va Bien* (France, 1972)

Reading: Eric Hobsbawm, “May 1968,” in *Revolutionaries*, pp. 279-291.

Thurs, Oct 20: **Quiz 3** and Discussion of *The Dreamers*, *Zabriskie Point* and *Tout Va Bien*

Reading: James Roy MacBean, “*Tout Va Bien* and *Letter to Jane*: The Role of the Intellectual in the Revolution,” in *Film and Revolution*, pp. 166-180.

**Paper 2 draft due Monday, Oct 24 to Dr. First and your peer reviewer**

Tues, Oct 25: Workshop paper drafts; Introduce the Japanese 1960s

5:00 Screening: Koji Wakamatsu, *The Ecstasy of Angels* (Japan, 1972)

Thurs, Oct. 27: The Allure of Terror

Weekend Viewing: Koji Wakamatsu, *United Red Army* (Japan, 2007) and Uli Edel, *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (Germany, 2010)

Tues, Nov 1: Closing Discussion of the 1960s (submit Theme 3 journal before class)

NO SCREENING

**Theme 4: Cinema and Revolution in Our Time**

Thurs, Nov 3: Documenting Liberal Democracy’s Hegemony

Reading: Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *The National Interest*, Summer 1989

Optional Reading: Padraic Kenney, “Introduction: Causes, Comparisons, and Connections,” in *1989: Democratic Revolutions at the Cold War’s End*, pp. 1-20

**Paper 2 due on Friday, Nov 4**

Tues, Nov 8: Revolutions in the Islamic World

5:00 Screening: Jehane Noujaim, *The Square* (USA, 2013)

Optional Reading: Lisa Anderson, “Demystifying the Arab Spring,” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3 (2011)

Thurs, Nov 10: Discussion of *The Square*; Introduce 1989

Weekend Viewing: Evgenii Afineevskii, *Winter on Fire: Ukraine’s Fight for Freedom* (USA, 2014)

Tues, Nov 15: Revolutions in Post-Socialist Eastern Europe

5:00 Screening: Sergei Loznitsa, *Maidan* (Ukraine, 2014)

Optional Reading: Donnacha Ó Beacháin and Abel Polese, “Color Revolutions,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*, vol. 2, pp. 810-818

Thurs, Nov 17: **Quiz 4**;The Maidan and the Future of Eastern Europe (submit Theme 4 journal before class)

Reading: Andrey Kurkov, selections from *Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev*

Optional Readings:

* Vicken Cheterian, “The Arab Revolt and the Colour Revolutions,” *Open Democracy*, 10 March 2011: https://www.opendemocracy.net/vicken-cheterian/arab-revolt-and-colour-revolutions
* Vicken Cheterian, “European vs. Arab Revolutions: Regimes, Ideas, Violence,” *Open Democracy*, 10 April 2015: https://www.opendemocracy.net/vicken-cheterian/european-vs-arab-revolutions-regimes-ideas-violence

**Paper 3 draft due Friday, Nov 18 to Dr. First**

Tues, Nov 29: NO CLASS: Individual Meetings with Dr. First about Research Paper

NO SCREENING

Thurs, Dec 1: Conclusion: Overcoming the Poetics of Apathy

**Final Exam: Tuesday, Dec 6, 4-7pm**

**Paper 3 due on Friday, Dec 9, before 11:00am. No late submissions will be accepted!**