

AET1
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

Tuesday 13 June 2017 9 to 12.00 pm

Paper AMES1

Cinema East

*Candidates should answer **three** questions, **one** from section A and **two** from section B. All questions carry **equal** marks.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** answer booklet.*

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

*20 page answer booklet
Rough Work Pad*

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

None

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.

SECTION A

Answer ONE question.

All answers to questions in SECTION A should refer MAINLY (75%) to East Asian films studied during this year's course, although some use may be made of other films that offer important comparisons or contrasts or were made by directors included in the syllabus.

1. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of the concept of genre for understanding East Asian cinema during its first century of development?
2. How has commercialisation affected East Asian cinema since the 1980s?
3. 'Politics has only ever been detrimental to filmmaking.' Discuss with reference to films from at least two East Asian countries.
4. Explore the tensions between the local and the transnational in Chinese-, Japanese- and Korean-language cinema.
5. How is justice portrayed in East Asian cinema?
6. Is there an identifiable East Asian cinematic way of treating the life of the family?

SECTION B

The questions below are grouped in three sub-sections matching the main national traditions studied in the course: China/Taiwan/Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea. Answer TWO questions which must be from different subsections.

7. China/Taiwan/Hong Kong

- a) 'From early silent films such as the 1934 classic *The Goddess* to more recent blockbusters such as 2015's *Mojin: The Lost Legend*, the portrayal of women in Chinese-language cinema has seen little progress over the decades.' Discuss, with reference to any of the Chinese-language films you studied this year.
- b) 'Xie Jin's 1964 film *Stage Sisters* can be considered a typical example of Socialist Realist cinema.' Discuss, with close reference to the film itself.

- c) Compare and contrast the cinematic treatment of time in two Chinese-language films of the twentieth century.
- d) Explore the symbolic value of martial arts in Chinese-language cinema, with particular reference to the 1992 film *Police Story 3: Super Cop*.
- e) How have the concepts of 'art for art's sake' and 'art for life's sake' interacted over the course of Chinese-language film history?
- f) Explore the thematic functions of diegetic and non-diegetic sound in Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* and Tsai Ming-liang's *The Hole*.

8. Japan

- a) Mizoguchi Kenji has been characterised as a director with a capacity for rich atmospheric detail and as having an abiding concern with the oppression of women. Would that description hold true for his film *Sanshō Dayū*?
- b) 'All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way' (Tolstoy). Test this famous proposition with regard to Japanese films studied this year.
- c) Compare the use of mise-en-scène AND cinematography in Mizoguchi Kenji and Imamura Shōhei.
- d) In Ozu Yasujirō's *I Was Born, But...* how does the director's characteristic style serve to illustrate similarities and differences between key characters?
- e) Can Koreeda Hirokazu's *Nobody Knows* be read as a social critique? If yes, can one be certain of the precise political dimensions of that critique?; if no, how should one interpret this film?
- f) Discuss why Yang Yong-hi's *Dear Pyongyang* should or should not be categorized as a Japanese film.

(TURN OVER)

9. South Korea

- a) What can be concluded from Kim Ki-young's deployment of the horror film genre within the fantastic mode as the privileged aesthetic expression of modernity in Korea under the Park Chung-hee regime?
- b) Which of the Korean films studied this year was your favourite and which did you like least? Write a detailed review of the two contrasting films.
- c) Discuss the concept of *han*, and illustrate with reference to at least TWO South Korean films.
- d) How did the secret friendship between North and South Korean soldiers go wrong and why did it call for vengeance and murder in Park Chan-wook's *Joint Security Area*?
- e) Is Kim Ki-young's *The House Maid* a horror film?
- f) Park Chan-wook's *Joint Security Area* has been characterised as a 'blockbuster', a 'mystery thriller', a male melodrama, and even as an anti-communist call for reunification. How can one film generate so many interpretations?

END OF PAPER