



AET1

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

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Thursday 4 June 2015 9 to 12.00 pm

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## **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. Discuss the social portrayal of young unmarried women in at least two of the film traditions studied in the course.
2. Analyse how costuming and/or make-up play important roles in three films studied this year.
3. 'In the cinema of East Asia, as elsewhere in East Asian societies and cultures, patriarchy may be mocked or criticized, but it generally manages to reassert its authority.' Illustrate, or criticize, the proposition with reference to two film traditions.
4. Define 'melodrama' as a genre or mode of storytelling and discuss its significance in East Asian cinema.
5. Is the concept of 'national cinema' defensible?
6. 'Cinema is commonly regarded as a visual form, but since the mid-twentieth century the aural dimension has come to be of at least equal importance.' Discuss with reference to at least two films studied this year.

## SECTION B

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

**7. China/Taiwan** Answer ONE of the following:

- a) 'Films concerned with the margins of society are doomed to remain of marginal cultural importance.' Discuss with reference to Wu Yonggang's *The Goddess* and Jia Zhangke's *The World*.
- b) How do Wang Bin and Shui Hua's *The White-Haired Girl* and Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* deal with the issue of female agency?
- c) How far does a reading of *Red Sorghum* and *The World* support the idea of a generational transition between 1984-2004?
- d) Compare and contrast the ways in which *The Goddess*, *The White Haired Girl*, and *Red Sorghum* deal with sexual violence.
- e) Compare the presentation of the Confucian family unit in Hou Hsiao-hsien's *A Time to Live and a Time to Die* and Jia Zhangke's *The World*.
- f) Discuss the relationship between self and environment as depicted in *The World* and *A Time to Live and a Time to Die*.

**8. Japan** Answer ONE of the following:

- a) An early review of *Throne of Blood* declared that from 'a purely cinematic standpoint' it was 'noteworthy for the remarkable manner in which it explores and extends the possibilities of the medium . . . It is all motion picture' (cited in Galbraith). Do you agree, or disagree?
- b) *Ohayô*, *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs* and *Nobody Knows* are all set in the same city, Tokyo. Compare and contrast the imaginary geographies created by the films.

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- c) Some 'films reveal a tension between a linear, teleological history . . . with other enchanted temporalities, inhabited and expressed by children' (Karen Lury). How would such a statement make sense of at least two Japanese films studied this year?
- d) Discuss the significance of *mise-en-scène* for the society and characters depicted in *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*.
- e) Can the story of Naruse's character Keiko be understood as anti-melodrama? Answer with some reference to at least one other East Asian film.
- f) How does *Nobody Knows* test, in both style and content, our understanding of fiction film versus documentary?

**9. South Korea** Answer ONE of the following:

- a) What's the matter with the family in *The Housemaid*?
- b) Discuss the role of cinematography and sound in any two South Korean films studied this year.
- c) In what way do *Joint Security Area* and *Memories of Murder* combine aspects of art-cinema with features of the blockbuster film?
- d) What combination of memories gives shape to *Memories of Murder*?
- e) Do the South Korean films studied this year share features which are particularly 'Korean'?
- f) 'It is possible to make a film about Buddhism but impossible to make a Buddhist film'. Discuss with reference to *Mandala*.

**END OF PAPER**