HUMANITIES SEMINARS PROGRAM

THE CHINESE CITY
FROM IMPERIAL CAPITAL TO GLOBAL METROPOLIS

SYLLABUS

FALL 2013
Thursdays 9:00-noon

Instructor: Fabio Lanza
Department of History and Department of East Asian Studies
flanza@email.arizona.edu
Social Sciences Room 125

The course analyzes the evolution of Chinese urban space to show how both Chinese people and outsiders viewed the evolving form of the city as the symbol of China’s progress, its position in the world, and its internal social dynamics. From the walls of the Forbidden City to the western buildings of Shanghai, from the massive squares and the drab structures of communism to the incredible expansion in the last thirty years, we will investigate the shifting meanings of architecture and city life. We will look at how such notions as cosmopolitanism, nationalism, and scientific rationality developed in and around the city. To accomplish this, we will introduce different and less canonical historical sources, including movies, memoirs, photographs, and art objects.

Required Readings

- Wu Hung, Remaking Beijing. Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space (University of Chicago Press, 2005)

Other readings will be posted online on a password-protected website and/or be made available to read/Xerox at the Poetry Center and the Humanities Seminars office.

The following syllabus might be subject to minor changes:

Week 1: October 3
The ancient city. Ideals and realities.
Buildings, structure, cosmology.

**Week 2: October 10**
The Birth of the Modern City (?)

- Viewing selections of *Camel Xiangzi*, dir. Ling Zifeng (1982)

**Week 3: October 17**
The (Semi-) Colonial City: Shanghai

- Viewing selections of *The Goddess (Shennu)*, dir. Wu Yonggang (1934) and *Street Angel (Malu Tianshi)*, Dir. Yuan Muzhi (1937)

**Week 4: October 24**
The Communist City (1)

- Viewing clips from *The city that never sleeps* and *Today Is My Day Off.*
- First part of *Remaking Beijing*

**Week 5: October 31**
The Communist City (2)

- Second part of *Remaking Beijing*

**Week 6: November 7**
The 1980s: the City in Between Two Worlds. Market, fear, hope and politics.


**Week 7: November 14**
The 1990s and the urban explosion.
All that is solid melts to air. Nostalgia and Change.

**Week 8: November 21**
City and Countryside in Contemporary China

- Viewing selections of *Last Train Home* (Gui tu lie che), Dir. Fan Lixin (2009)

**Week 9: December 5**
Imagining the world, fearing for the home.
The Olympics and the reinvention of Beijing.

- First part of *The Last Days of old Beijing*

**Week 10: December 12**
Documenting disruption.

- Viewing of *Meishi street* (Meishi jie), dir. Ou Ning, 2006
- Second part of *The Last Days of old Beijing*