

**ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**French, German and Russian Film during the 1920s**  
**(FREN 4381 and GER/RUSS 3339)**  
**Fall 2019, MW 6:00 -7:30 P.M.,**  
**Room: Academic 121**

**Instructor (German):** Elisabeth-Christine Muelsch **E-mail:** [emuelsch@angelo.edu](mailto:emuelsch@angelo.edu)  
**Office:** A110E **Phone:** (325) 486-6163 **Office Hours:** MWF 11:00 A.M. -12:00 P.M.  
 and TR 10:00-11:00 A.M. and by appointment  
**Instructor (Russian):** Ewa Davis **Email:** [edavis@angelo.edu](mailto:edavis@angelo.edu)  
**Office:** A110H **Phone:** (325) 486-6161 **Office Hours:** MWF 8:30 A.M. -9:00 A.M. and  
 11:00 A.M. -12:00 P.M. and by appointment

### Required Texts

Isenberg, Noah, ed., *Weimar Cinema: An Essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era*.  
 New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Beumers, Birgit, *A History of Russian Cinema*.  
 Oxford – New York: Berg, 2009

### Recommended readings

Williams, Tami. *Germaine Dulac. A Cinema of Sensations*. Urbana, U of Illinois Press,  
 2014. (you will have to read at least one chapter of this book: „Dulac’s Aesthetic  
 Matures“, pp.124-134)

Les Films Albatros, Catalog of the Cinémathèque française,  
<http://www.cinematheque.fr/catalogues/restaurations-tirages/corpus.php?id=1>

### Idea Form Objectives

Essential (E)

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)

Important (I)

7. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual /cultural activity

### Course Description

This course focuses on the history of French, German and Soviet film during the 1920s. Students will be familiarized with impressionist and expressionist film and revolutionary cinema. Together we will explore and analyze narrative and documentary filming

techniques in 1920s France, the Weimar Republic and in the early years of the Soviet Union. We will analyze the techniques and applications of film montage as they developed in the 1920s in these countries. The German-Russian film relations were marked by economic interests, but also by a distinctly political agenda. In this course, we will therefore put particular emphasis on the Russian-German film studios Mezhrabpom (“The Red Dream Factory”), which played an important role in developing genre films and revolutionary cinema for large audiences. After the October Revolution the majority of Russia’s established filmmakers and actors emigrated, often via the Ukraine, to France. One of the most important French film studios, Albatros, was founded by Russian emigrés (many of whom also entertained close relations to the German film industry). However, French avant-garde film directors, especially those who embraced left-wing politics, were largely interested in the new Soviet cinema with its innovative montage techniques.

### **Goals**

Upon completion of this course, students will have a better understanding of French, German and Russian cinema during the 1920s and the interrelation that existed between these film industries and the various esthetic movements. Students will be able to view French, German and Soviet films and evaluate them under film technical, esthetic as well as socio-political aspects.

### **Grading**

Exams (2)	40%
Oral Presentation	10% (French, German and Russian minors will do this presentation in English)
Movie Reviews (3)	20%
Quizzes	20%
Attendance/Participation	10%

### **Grading Scale**

A= 90-100%    B=80-89%    C=70-79%    D=60-69%    F=59 or less

### **Exams**

There are two exams, clearly marked on the syllabus, a mid-term and a final. Russian minors will have to answer some of the questions in Russian. German minors will have to answer some of the questions in German. French minors will have to answer some of the questions in French.

**Make-up work**

If you miss the mid-term exam FOR ANY LEGITIMATE REASON (Angelo State University Undergraduate Bulletin online), you must contact us within two working days from the exam date or you will not be allowed to take the make-up test. No make-ups will be given for the final.

**Quizzes**

There will be four quizzes over the assigned homework, the readings and material covered in class. Russian minors will have to answer some of the questions in Russian. German minors will have to answer some of the questions in German. French minors will have to answer some of the questions in French. The quizzes are clearly marked on the syllabus.

**Oral Presentation**

Either by themselves or in groups of two, course participants are asked to do an oral presentation on one film not discussed in class. (You can find a list of possible films to choose from at the end of the syllabus). The presentation should provide a brief synopsis, information on the director and the actors, analysis of editing styles (supported through video clips from the film), filming techniques (supported through video clips from the film) and a comment on the musical score (if musical score is available). The presentation should last 7-10 minutes.

**Movie Reviews**

Each student will be asked to write three reviews. The first review will be on a German film watched in class. The second review will be on a French film watched in class and the third one will be on a Russian one watched in class. We will discuss *en détail* what should be mentioned in the review. Each review should be one page long (Font 12, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch margins). One page long means one page of text written (this does not include the title or the heading such as RUSS 3339 Professor Davis Fall Semester 2018 your name). The review should be between 300-350 words long. Pages that do not fulfill this requirement will not be accepted and students will receive a grade of -0- for the review. Russian minors will write this review in Russian; German minors will write this review in German, and French minors will write this review in French. All other course participants will write this review in English (if you write in English your review can be longer, but should not exceed 425 words).

**Plagiarism** and any other form of **cheating** will not be tolerated. Assignments that are plagiarized will receive automatically the grade -0-.

**Attendance**

Regular and on-time class attendance is of the utmost importance in this class. Each student will be allowed two (2) absences. These absences can be either excused or unexcused. Each subsequent absence will result in 5% deduction on the attendance/participation grade. An absence is no excuse for not knowing the material or not handing in the assignments. If you cannot hand in an assignment, ask another person to bring your assignment to me or to put it into my mailbox in A110. It is your

responsibility to verify your standing (attendance/grades/etc) should you have any questions.

### **Absence from Class for Religious Reasons**

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Participation**

In your own interest—participate in the class discussion. Classroom discussions are an important way to clarify concepts, develop, and express your own ideas about the films you have watched.

### **Office Hours**

Office hours held are also for remedial purposes. Please contact me early on if material is unclear to you or if you have any other questions regarding the class.

### **ADA**

Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any accommodations being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the ACADEMIC HONOR CODE, which is contained in both print and web versions of the *Student Handbook*.**

**Cellular Phone Policy: Turn off all pagers, cell phones, or other electronic communication devices before entering the classroom.**

### **Meeting Times /Assignments/ Screenings**

#### **August**

- 26 Introduction. The first animation film: Lotte Reiniger *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926).
- 28 Influences on Reiniger's animation films and Reiniger techniques. Reception of *The Adventures of Prince Achmed in Paris*. Reiniger, Koch, Renoir collaboration. Homework: Read "*Cinefication: Soviet film exhibition in the 1920s*" from the following site:

<https://easydb.angelo.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=31385733&site=ehost-live>

## September

### 2 **Holiday**

- 4 The beginnings of Russian cinema. French Imports to Russia. Ladislav Starevich (first puppet animation artist) *The Cameraman's Revenge* (1912). Introduction to Kuleshov. Homework : Read *Contextualizing Kuleshov's Mr. West* from the following site :

<https://easydb.angelo.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=31316523&site=eds-live>

- 9 Kuleshov. *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924) –Kuleshov effect—Ivan Mosjoukine **(film – 1:17 min.)**
- 11 Pudovkin *Mechanics of the Brain* (1925-26). **(film – 44 min.)** Homework: Read Andriopoulous, “Suggestion, Hypnosis, and Crime: Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920)”
- 16 Wiene *Dr. Caligari* (1920) Homework: Read Elsaesser, “No End to *Nosferatu* (1922).” **First movie review is due** (German)
- 18 Analysis of *Dr. Caligari* and introduction to F.W. Murnau
- 23 *Nosferatu* (1922)
- 25 Russian Cinema in Exil: Les Films Albatros
- 30 **Quiz 1** (Reiniger, Starevich, Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Wiene, Murnau, Albatros Films) –Introduction to French Impressionist Film; elements of impressionist film–Germaine Dulac (Homework: Read Tami Williams, „Dulac’s Aesthetic Matures“ in Tami Williams. *Germaine Dulac. A Cinema of Sensations*. Urbana, U of Illinois Press, 2014. 4. Pp. 124-134.)

## October

- 2 *La Souriante Madame Beudet* (1923) Homework: Read *The wise and wicked game: re-editing and Soviet film culture of the 1920s* from the following site:

<https://easydb.angelo.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.3815312&site=eds-live>

- 7 Introduction to Sergei Eisenstein – *Film Montage: Projection of Modernity*  
Homework: Read *A History of Russian Cinema: Soviet Montage Cinema: Eisenstein and Pudovkin, 1925-28* (pages 53-57) (film – 25 min.)
- 9 Eisenstein *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) (film – 1:14 min.)
- 14 **Second Movie Review due (French). Quiz 2 (Dulac, Eisenstein).** Homework: Read Margaret Werth: “Heterogeneity, the City, and Cinema in Alberto Cavalcanti’s *Rien que les heures*”  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1467-8365.12046>
- 16 City Symphonies: *Cavalcanti – Rien que les heures* (1926) Discussion.  
Homework: Read Alter, “Berlin, Symphony of a Great City (1927)”
- 21 Introduction to Ruttmann. Ruttmann *Berlin- Symphony of a Great City* (1927)  
Homework: Read *A History of Russian Cinema: Vertov: Animation and the Documentary, 1922-29*
- 23 Vertov, *The Man with the Movie Camera* (1929) (film – 1:09 min.)
- 28 **Quiz 3 (Cavalcanti, Ruttmann, Vertov)** Boris Kaufman “Les Halles” (1929)
- 30 **Mid-term**
- 31 **Last day to drop a course**

## November

- 4 Discussion Kaufman and Vigo. Jean Vigo “A propos de Nice” (1930)
- 6 Abram Room, *Third Meschanskaya Street* (1927) Discussion. Homework: Read *A History of Russian Cinema*, pp. 57-59 (film – 1:09 min.)
- 11 Pudovkin *Mother* (1925) (film – 1:27 min.)
- 13 Discussion. Mezhrabpom-Film and Prometheus Homework : Read Marc Silberman, “Whose Revolution ? The Subject of *Kuhle Wampe?*”

- 18 Dudow/Brecht/Ottwald/Eisler, *Kuhle Wampe oder Wem gehört die Welt?* (1932)  
Third movie review is due (Russian)
- 20 Jean Renoir : *La Chienne* (1931)
- 25 **Discussion. Quiz 4** (Kaufman, Vigo, Room, Pudovkin, Dudow, Mezhrabpom, Renoir)
- 27 **No class –Happy Thanksgiving !!**

## December

- 2 Discussion and Review**
- 4 Final Exam**
- 9 Presentations (8-10 P.M.)**

### The following films can be used as a topic for presentation:

Alberto Cavalcanti. *La p'tite Lilie* (1927)

Germaine Dulac. *The Seashell and the Clergyman (La Coquille et le clergyman)* (1928)

Fritz Lang. *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* (1922)

---. *Metropolis* (1927)

---. *Scarlet Street* (1945)

F.W. Murnau. *The Last Laugh* (1924)

---. *Faust* (1926)

Phil Jutzi, *Mother Krause's Journey to Happiness* (1929)

S. Eisenstein. *Strike* (1925)

--. *October* (1927)

---. *The General Line* (1929)

L. Kuleshov, *The Project of Engineer Prite* (1918)

Ivan Mosjoukine. *Le Brasier ardent* (1923)

V. Pudovkin, *Storm over Asia* (1928)

Jean Renoir. *On purge bébé* (1931)

L. Starevich, *Christmas Eve Ночь перед Рождеством* (1913)

*The Voice of the Nightingale (La Voix du rossignol)* (1923)

Jean Vigo, *L'Atalante* (1934)

---. *Taris, roi de l'eau* (1931)

This syllabus is subject to change.