foregrounding the influence of China's most authoritative writer and critic of the day, Lu Xun. Chapter three details the publication history of work by left-leaning European woodcut artists promoted by Lu Xun, as well as the work of George Grosz, whose artistic style was widely emulated by Chinese artists, but about whom Lu Xun, for reasons unclear, had little to say. Lu Xun's critiques of *Wenyi huabao* guide the discussion in chapter four. Bevan attributes these bitter verbal attacks to the famous author's longstanding enmity against Ye Lingfeng, and to Lu Xun's desire to defend his turf as the main spokesperson for leftist art in China.

Part three, "The Rise and Rise of the Pictorial Magazine," shifts focus away from the largely monochrome left-wing woodcut print and toward the colourful cartoons, or *manhua*, that flourished in the milieu of the mid-1930s' magazine boom. Chapter five, after offering a background analysis of why 1934 came to be called "The Year of the Magazine," turns its attention to bold cartoon-style magazine illustrations that thumbed their nose at Chiang Kai-shek's puritanical New Life Movement. Balancing the discussion of the "New-sensationist" writers in chapter one, chapter six then looks at the work and careers of three visual artists – Guo Jianying, Huang Miaozi and Ye Qianyu – whose illustrations accompany the book's four short story translations. The two chapters comprising part four, "The Shanghai Jazz Age," examines the role of the pictorial magazine in generating the multilayered connections behind the city's fascination with cinema, celebrity, illustration, literature and live music.

Readers of *"Intoxicating Shanghai"* will be impressed with, and at times overwhelmed by, the amount of fine-grained detail Bevan has extracted from an array of primary sources, ranging from the American humour magazine *Ballyhoo,* to the book lists in Lu Xun's private diaries, to Busby Berkeley's cinematic extravaganzas. For researchers of Shanghai's jazz-age culture, the extensive footnotes and bibliography cataloguing the book's source materials provide a wealth of leads for further research. What one does not find in this book, however, is explicit engagement with existing scholarship on Shanghai's globalized urban culture. In the end, however, one can well argue that the resolutely empirical approach informing all of *"Intoxicating Shanghai"* is precisely what sets it apart from the other studies of Republican-era Shanghai.

Chinese Film: Realism and Convention from the Silent Era to the Digital Age

Jason McGrath. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2022. 424 pp. $30.00 (pbk). ISBN 9781517914035

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Jason McGrath's long-awaited second book, *Chinese Film: Realism and Convention from the Silent Era to the Digital Age*, is an ambitious work of film criticism whose object is the ebb and flow of cinematic approaches to the real over the course of Chinese film history. Although the book is overwhelmingly concerned with the analysis of film texts, albeit with extensive historical and cultural grounding, McGrath is careful not to reduce the various kinds of realism he identifies to a set of given aesthetic conventions. Indeed, in framing realism writ large as "a credo of inscribing the

real" (p. 3), McGrath, following Roman Jakobson, structures the particularities of that credo as a dynamic historical dialectic between new and clichéd forms, aesthetic innovation and convention. In other words, that which is understood to best filmically inscribe the real at any given moment is subject to change over time and cultural circumstance – thus, it is implied, the sweeping *longue durée* of the overarching study.

The monograph is structured chronologically in a manner emphasizing this change; however, the analysis presented therein turns on the formulation of McGrath's typology of cinematic realisms. It comprises six basic categories: ontological, perceptual, fictional, social, prescriptive and apophatic. In keeping with the notion of historical dynamism, each category is defined by its underlying approach/claim to inscribing the real cinematically, rather than a set of particular representational conventions. Crucially, as a result, they are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, the categories and their priorities often overlap. As this typology is one of the book's most significant contributions, a brief word on each category is warranted.

Ontological realism turns on "the notion that the technology of photography provides a uniquely intimate and direct connection to material reality" (p. 9) Elements relying on the purported indexicality of the photographic image vis-à-vis that which it represents fall under this category. Perceptual realism, by contrast, emphasizes "the capacity of the moving image, whether photographic or otherwise (animation, CGI), to engage our perceptual apparatus and seize our attention, presenting itself to our senses as 'real' whether or not it is seen as representing something else that is ontologically real" (p. 10) Fictional realism refers to "the tendency of narrative film to encourage diegetic immersion, in which a fictional world (diegesis) is taken as provisionally 'real' […] whether or not the story's world actually resembles our own" (p. 12). Social realism, on the other hand, hinges on the pursuit of verisimilitude between a film's diegesis and the social and cultural world in which it exists, although that verisimilitude may or may not be deployed in the service of critique. Taking the implicit power of representation a step further, prescriptive realism refers to "the idea that a film might seek to represent, not just reality as it now appears, but a truer reality that lies beneath the surface or is yet to be fully realized" (p. 18). Finally, apophatic realism is "a mode of representation that seeks to acknowledge its own fundamental limitations, to build into its system an opening toward something beyond what representation can express" (pp. 20–21) That is, it gestures toward the unrepresentable and unrepresentability.

Chinese Film's seven chapters deploy McGrath's typology of realisms in the consideration of key moments/texts in the history of Chinese cinema. Chapter one examines the pursuit of realism-qua-modernity in silent cinema, especially in the works of the renowned actress Ruan Lingyu, as manifested both in the problem of how to act for the camera and the contemporary elevation of scientistic discourse. Chapter two explores the realism advanced by Shanghai left-wing cinema of the 1930s. McGrath argues that these films not only engaged with but also critiqued contemporary Hollywood conventions, thereby advancing a unique take on the problem of realism all their own. Chapter three examines the articulation of realism and historical event in three generically diverse war films: *A Spring River Flows East*, *Spring in a Small Town* and *Crows and Sparrows*. Chapters four and five investigate the problem of realism in the context of revolution, first in the complex temporality of the cinema of the 17 years after 1949 and then in the extreme formalism of the films of the model theatre. Chapter six considers realism as devised in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, focusing on the use of the long take, in particular. Finally, chapter seven explores realism in the context of new digital technologies, requiring a thorough reexamination of cinematic indexicality.

Chinese Film is ambitious both in its historical scope and intellectual claims. (One sometimes wonders, in fact, what *isn't* encompassed by McGrath's expansive typology of realisms.) Well written and researched, the book is sure to reach a broad audience in film studies. Indeed, it seems clear that McGrath's primary intended reader is not necessarily familiar with recent Chinese history or its study but is very much at home in discussions of Hollywood and Western film theory. The author's

chosen film texts are notably canonical but brilliantly analysed. Readers in Chinese studies may be disappointed by McGrath's adherence to the well-worn path. It will be up to others to explore how McGrath's analytical tools might be used to reconceive the Chinese cinematic canon itself.

Hollywood in China: Behind the Scenes of the World's Largest Movie Market

Ying Zhu. New York: The New Press, 2022. 370 pp. US$32.99 (hbk). ISBN 9781620972182

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In April 2016, as Marvel Studios prepared to release *Dr Strange*, it ran into controversy. In adapting the source comic to screen, the studio had changed the ethnicity of a key character, the "Ancient One," from Tibetan to Celtic, casting white British actress Tilda Swinton for the role. When the first trailers were released, American fans were horrified, accusing the studio of racism. In defence of the decision, scriptwriter Robert Cargill went on the record as saying the switch was necessary due to the sensitivities around Tibetan representation in the PRC. A non-Tibetan character would minimize potential offence to the Chinese government and guarantee access to the Chinese box office. The move seems to have worked: eight months later, *Dr Strange* earned US $44.4 million in its opening weekend in China. The consequences stateside were less salubrious. In July 2020, then-US attorney general William Barr gave a speech on Hollywood's capitulation to Chinese censorship at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. *Dr Strange* was one of his prime examples.

This debacle nicely illustrates the multiple geopolitical, cultural and financial interests the US film industry must juggle as it negotiates access to the world's largest film market. But, as *Hollywood in China* makes clear, *Dr Strange* is, historically, a far from exceptional example of the compromises required to sustain this transpacific relationship. Instead, the film's production and its reception bring into focus not simply the Chinese and US film industries' primary stakeholders, but also, crucially, the central conundrum – to resist, collaborate or co-opt – that has underpinned the Sino-Hollywood courtship for over a century. Marshalling industrial analysis and individual character sketches alongside vignettes of key releases, Ying Zhu maps how both parties have responded to this challenge, from the early-20th century to the present day.

Structured chronologically, *Hollywood in China* falls roughly into two halves. The first four chapters cover the period up to the 1990s; the latter five focus on the relationship from the 1990s to the present. A brief, personal portrait of the Paris Theatre – a famous Shanghai landmark that became the Huaihai Cinema after the revolution but now lies beneath a shopping mall – sets the scene before we move directly into the first two chapters, on the American and Chinese film industries to 1949. Hollywood both dominated the early Chinese film market and served, through the privately run studio system, as its model. Yet the 1920s also saw the earliest arguments for cinema as a tool of education and nation building, alongside initial attempts to resist this dominance through industrial consolidation and censorship regulations. Tensions between emulation and