

# MLC230 European Culture and Representation

3rd and 4th quarters, Sophomore

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| <b>Instructors</b>       | MATSUDA KAZUYUKI, ISOZAKI KOTARO |
| <b>Style of Class</b>    | Lecture                          |
| <b>Number of Credits</b> | 2                                |
| <b>Day and Period</b>    | Friday, period 2                 |

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## Course Description

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In this course, students will consider the representational culture of modern and contemporary Europe as produced through various media. While considering films produced around the juncture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the central object of study, we will learn about the various specific works of art that form their generative context.

Mr. Isozaki will deliver the eight lectures that make up the first half of the course, which address the representational culture of the German-speaking world and its relationship with the media from the nineteenth century onwards. Isozaki's discussion touches on novels, works of art, films, the performing arts, and other forms of expression, considering the ways in which each of these deals with the problems of memory and recollection.

Mr. Matsuda will deliver the seven lectures of the second half of the course, basing his discussion on specific examples from twentieth-century film and play adaptations of the Bible and Greek myths. Interwoven with occasional viewings of the works in question, his lectures will deepen our consideration of the characteristics of cinema as a complex representational medium while also cultivating our knowledge of Hellenism and Hebraism, arguably the two great pillars supporting European culture.

Note that in some years the order of the first and second half of sessions may be reversed.

## Course Objectives

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- (1) To deepen comprehension of the cultural context and media context prevailing in the French- and German-speaking communities, which lie at the heart of the European Union.
- (2) To consider the contemporary social significance of representational culture from the nineteenth through the twenty-first century.
- (3) To consider more deeply differences arising from different representational formats and media, even when dealing with the same substantive content.
- (4) For each student to take responsibility for assigned problems and to experience active and collaborative learning.

## Expected Outcomes

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- (1) To acquire basic knowledge of European culture from the perspective of both linguistic expression and visual representation.
- (2) To gain knowledge of trends in recent cultural studies and media studies, and to become familiar with various positions relating to the European cultural context.
- (3) To learn the complex and critical thought processes characteristic of academic subjects in the humanities.
- (4) To gain insights for comparison with the media context and cinema context of contemporary Japan for application in future research activities.

## Prerequisites

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While no mandatory prerequisites have been set, students are advised to take French, German, and related subjects.

## Class Materials

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Handouts will serve as the principal teaching material, so there are no plans to specify a particular textbook. The following reference books may be useful:

- (a) Satō Takumi, *Gendai media-shi* (Contemporary Media History), Iwanami Shoten, 1998.

- (b) Aleida Assmann, *Kioku no naka no rekishi: Kojinteki keiken kara kōteki enshutsu e* (History in Memory: From Personal Experience to Public Production), Shōraisha, 2011.
- (c) Yoshida Atsuhiko, *Oidipusu no nazo* (The Riddle of Oedipus), Kōdansha, 2011.
- (d) Kuribayashi Teruo, *Shinema de yomu shin 'yaku seisho* (Cinema & Bible), Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppankyoku, 2005.

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### Course Method

This course will follow a lecture-based format. The instructors will conduct lectures and assign regular readings. Students are expected to engage with these assignments in advance, summarizing these in a reaction paper to be submitted at the end of each class. In addition, students will compose a Final Report at the end of both the first and second half of the course.

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### Evaluation/Assessment

#### Reaction Paper

Students will be given time to write at the end of each class, to reflect on the lecture and summarize its content, as well as any relevant opinions, questions, or requests.

#### End of Term Report

While students are asked to choose report topics in line with their respective interests, these should be based on content found in the lectures or assigned readings.

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### Grading

40% Reaction Paper

60% End of Term Report

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### Course Schedule

**Week 1:** Orientation and Introduction: A Review of New and Old Media Theory

**Week 2:** On “Oral Traditions” and “Written Traditions” Up to the 19C

**Week 3:** Benjamin’s “Aura” and “Mechanical Reproduction” in the Age of New Media

**Week 4:** Photography as Media: Perspectives from Sontag and Barthes

**Week 5:** The Culture of Photography and Cinema: Turning Points in the Twentieth Century

**Week 6:** War and Media

**Week 7:** The Media of Urban Space (in the German-speaking World) and its Possibilities (1)

**Week 8:** The Media of Urban Space (in the German-speaking World) and its Possibilities (2) / First Term

Summary

**Week 9:** The Two Great Pillars of European Culture: Hellenism and Hebraism

**Week 10:** Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*: The Traditional Image of Oedipus

**Week 11:** Cocteau’s Interpretation of Oedipus (1): The opera-oratorio *Oedipus Rex*

**Week 12:** Cocteau’s Interpretation of Oedipus (2): The play *The Infernal Machine*

**Week 13:** Pasolini’s Interpretation of Oedipus: The film *Oedipus Rex*

**Week 14:** The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ: An Outline of Christian Doctrine

**Week 15:** Depictions of the Hill of Golgotha in Cinema: *Ben-Hur*, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, etc.

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### Preparation and Follow-up

- (1) Before each lecture, students should complete the reading assignment to be discussed, as well as relevant items in the corresponding reference texts (preparation).
- (2) After attending the lectures, students are asked to deepen their understanding of the lecture contents and handouts, as well as relevant items in the corresponding reference materials (follow-up).