

FR268-15 French Cinema and Society from the First to the Second World War

26/27

Department

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Douglas Morrey

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

A survey of canonical or otherwise influential films produced between the world wars in France, studied in relation to their social context in such a way as to introduce students to both a period of French history, cinematic and beyond, and the rudiments of film analysis.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

To introduce to key works, artists, techniques and debates in the so-called 'classical' period of French cinema from the late 1910s until the mid-1940s.

To survey key events, actors, debates and problems in French social and political history of the period from the First World War to the Liberation.

To explore and critically debate the relationship of mutual influence and interpenetration between the social and political history of France and its cinematic representations during the same period.

To show how specific audiovisual techniques are used in filmmaking to convey ideas and emotions.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction: Studying history through film; looking at film historically; France between the wars
2. French Cinema and the First World War: J'accuse (1919)
3. A French social cinema: Boudu sauvé des eaux (1932)
4. The Popular Front: La Belle Équipe (1936)
5. 'Poetic realism': Le Jour se lève (1939)
6. Reading week
7. Renoir the Master: La Règle du jeu (1939)
8. Filming under the Occupation: Le Corbeau (1943)
9. The Summit of Classical French cinema: Les Enfants du Paradis (1945)
10. Looking back: Panique (1946)

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- To understand and explain how cinematic forms and representations are historically determined by diverse economic, technological, social and cultural factors.
- To demonstrate how diverse social, economic, ideological and cultural factors brought about and shaped key events and episodes in modern French history.
- To understand and critically analyse the relationship between social, cultural and political history, on the one hand, and cinematic forms and representations on the other.
- To show how medium-specific techniques are used to convey narrative, ideas and opinions in the cinema. To communicate ideas and historical analyses in writing.
- To research, prepare and present an audio-visual presentation using film stills and clips as required to demonstrate analytical points.
- To identify and evaluate a range of primary and secondary sources on French social, political, cultural and cinematic history.
- To conduct independent research into French film history and its relation to wider social and cultural history.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

International

All modules delivered in SMLC are necessarily international. Students engage with themes and ideas from a culture other than that of the UK and employ their linguistic skills in the analysis of

primary materials from a non-Anglophone context. Students will also be encouraged to draw on the experiences of visiting exchange students in the classroom and will frequently engage with theoretical and critical frameworks from across the world.

Subject specific skills

This module will develop students' linguistic skills through engaging with primary materials in the target language. It will build students' capacity to engage with aspects of French culture through analysis of this primary material and through seminar discussion aimed at deeper critical thinking. In particular, students' awareness of French cinema and society from the two world wars will be enhanced through lectures and seminars which engage in scholarship in the field.

Transferable skills

All SMLC culture modules demand critical and analytical engagement with artefacts from target-language cultures. In the course of independent study, class work and assessment students will develop the following skills: written and oral communication, creative and critical thinking, problem solving and analysis, time management and organisation, independent research in both English and their target language(s), intercultural understanding and the ability to mediate between languages and cultures, ICT literacy in both English and the target language(s), personal responsibility and the exercise of initiative.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	124 hours (87%)
Total	142 hours

Private study description

Students will be required each week to watch films, preferably more than once, taking detailed notes. They will be given further reading suggestions in relation to each week, which it will be particularly important to follow up when choosing topics for presentation and (especially) essay. they will also produce a Powerpoint (and/or clip) for their presentation.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Presentation 10 minute presentation	20%	8 hours	

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Assessed Essay 80%

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in the course of the module in a number of ways. Feedback should be understood to be both formal and informal and is not restricted to feedback on formal written work. Oral feedback will be provided by the module tutor in the course of seminar discussion. This may include feedback on points raised in small group work or in the course of individual presentations or larger group discussion.

Written feedback will be provided on formal assessment using the standard SMLC Assessed Work feedback form appropriate to the assessment. Feedback is intended to enable continuous improvement throughout the module and written feedback is generally the final stage of this feedback process. Feedback will always demonstrate areas of success and areas for future development, which can be applied to future assessment. Feedback will be both discipline-specific and focussed on key transferrable skills, enabling students to apply this feedback to their future professional lives. Feedback will be fair and reasonable and will be linked to the SMLC marking scheme appropriate to the module.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of ULAA-MR00 Undergraduate Law with French

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French