



CULTURES & CIVILISATIONS DIALOGUE

“ASEF Lecture Tour”



Expressions of Traditional European Media techniques in the Modern Asian Context

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Abstract

Through comparative studies of media like optics, photography, movies, TV, etc in East Asian Modernity, this lecture will attempt to show **how the modernisation of media technology coming from the West in general and from Europe in particular has been a historical vector of the process of modernisation in Asia and consequently a cultural process by which Asian cultures have re-appropriated their own systems of expression.**

The lecture will start from a historical study on transformations of pictorial representation caused by the introduction of the occidental geometric perspective in the 17th century and of photography in East Asia in the 19th century. Also by analysing contemporary TV drama and animation movies, this lecture will trace how modern media techniques changed and reconfigured the representations of everyday life of people in Asia. In addition, it will also analyse how these techniques have finally given place to a general process of “cultural translation.”

Media technique is globalising but cultural use of the technique is an outcome of dialogue. Nowadays, several traditional layers of the Asian cultures are returning on the modern and postmodern media scene for example on television programs, comics (manga), animation movies, computer games, digital arts, etc. On the other hand, since the mid-20th century, the modern and postmodern European cultures have developed “artistic” or “critical” uses of the globalising media technique: for example, in European cinema, video and computer arts, and information design. There are now two cultural paradigms, vis-à-vis with the globalizing media process.

Europeans first arrived in Asia with their media techniques and Asian cultures have now created their own modernity through cultural adoptions of these Western media techniques. Why the massive return of the Asian paradigm in new media culture life? How can we interpret the emergence of a new type of popular culture in Asia? What are the conditions for Europe-Asia dialogues on the worldwide media culture?

This lecture – which will be illustrated by a projection of visual documents, will conclude with a diagnostics on the “present time” of Europe-Asia dialogues on global media culture.

Profile of speaker



Mr. Ishida is Philosopher, Professor of Information Semiotics and Communication Sciences, at the Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Information Studies, the University of Tokyo. He is holder of MA degree from the University of Tokyo and Docteur en sciences humaines de l'Université Paris X Nanterre. Since 2001, he is also Program Director au *Collège International de Philosophie* in Paris: he promotes in this institution a international seminar "La philosophie et ses lumières: penser les modernités en Extrême-Orient "; seminar that focus on the plurality of historical experiences of the Modernity.

The list of his publications includes the books *Media and Everyday Life* (2003), *Contemporary Philosophy* (2005), the collection *Discourses Analysis* (Ed. 2001-2002, 6 volumes), the integral translation in Japanese of Michel Foucault's *Dits et Ecrits* (Ed. 1999-2002, 10 volumes). Articles by Mr. Ishida are published in several academic journals and reviews : "The Perspective as a factor of the Modernity"(1998), "Nation et narration, le role de la littérature dans la formation de l'espace discursif moderne"(2002) , "Comment penser ensemble la modrenité ? : de la désorientation moderne "(2002), "TV and Everyday Life"(2003), "What is the Ecology of Meaning?"(2004), etc.

Mr. Ishida is actually promoting a Media Analysis Project based on information technology, called "a Knowledge Tree of Media Analysis"; he is also a directive member of the Center of Excellence for the 21th Century on "Ubiquitous Computing and Society" (project granted by Japanese Society for Promotion of Sciences).

About the Asia-Europe Foundation

Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue Programme

Notions of a "**Clash of Civilisations**" and a **deep cultural divide** have entered the lexicon of academic and public discourse. One of the most often cited work is Samuel Huntington's 1993 thesis on how today's battle lines will be made along "the fault lines of civilisations" and no longer those of economics or ideology.

A counter-movement is developing towards greater understanding, to stem the so-called "rising tide" of intolerance and distrust. The most important argument arising from this examination of cultures and civilisations is that **conflict need not be inevitable**. The Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) strives to be part of this effort.

At the 4th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit in Copenhagen (2002), the Chairman's statement stressed the need to promote "unity in diversity" among the various cultures represented among the 38 ASEM countries. ASEF was asked to accompany this initiative through its own "Civil Society" architecture in Asia and Europe.

In consonance with this enterprise, **the philosophy of ASEF's Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue** programme emanates from the following as the premise for dialogue: **respect for the equal dignity of all civilisations; conviction that cultural diversity is an asset, not a liability; and accountability for the impact of prejudice on present and future generations.**

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