

FMST 310: World Cinema Before Television
Midterm Study Guide

Our midterm will be held in class on **Wednesday, March 18**.

Part I: Clip Identification

I will play four clips of films that you were assigned to watch on your own and/or that we watched together and discussed in class. While the specific questions you will be asked to address will vary depending on the clip, you should be prepared to provide:

- The title of the film and the name of the filmmaker(s)
- Studio, country, and year of release
- Artistic movement or film era with which the film is associated
- Information about the significance of the film to film history. In other words: why and how we and/or the scholars whose works we have read discuss this film (this is where the specific questions for each clip may differ)

A good way to begin preparing for this portion of the exam would be to make a timeline of all the films we have watched (from early experiments through *M*) by going back through the schedule of assignments, the PowerPoints on Blackboard, and your class notes.

Part II: Key Terms and People

Eight of the following terms will appear on the midterm. Be prepared to define or identify **five** and explain their significance in the context of the course. Provide one example from a specific film for each (except for technological devices).

Cinema of attractions

Muybridge (serial photography)

Etienne Marey

Pre-cinematic modes of visual entertainment: morgue, panorama, wax museum
 flaneurie

Maltese Cross

Latham Loop

Edwin S. Porter

Alice Guy-Blache

Editing technique: overlap on action or overlapping editing

Star Film Company

Cinema of narrative integration

MPPC

Nickelodeon

The Biograph girl

Keystone Film Company

Mabel Normand (the Keystone girl)

Sight Gag

Mimed Metaphor

D.W.Griffith

Billy Bitzer

Lillian Gish

Louis Feuillade *Les Vampires* (1915)
 Louis Feuillade *Fantomas* (1913)
 J.P.McGowan *The Hazards of Helen* (Kalem Film Co. 1914-1917) starring Helen Holmes
 Pathe Freres Film Co
 Gaumont
 Solax Film Company
 Alexander Khanzhonkov Film Company
 American Biograph

Narrative silent cinema (Soviet, Weimar, Hollywood, Japanese cinems)

Soviet Montage Cinema (1919-1933)

Kuleshov Effect
 Ideological Montage of Sergei Eisenstein in *Strike*
 Overlapping editing
 Double blow
 Kinoks *Person with the Movie Camera*
 Elizaveta Svilova
 Dziga Vertov
 Kirill Shutko

Weimar Cinema (1918-1933)

ParUFAMet Agreement
 Modern and postmodern horror film (the type of a monster character)
 Genres: horror, *Kammerspiel* film
 Mise-en-scene in expressionist film
 The role of femme fatale in Weimar cinema
 Wounded masculinity
 Unchained camera
~~Edvard Grieg "In the Hall of the Mountain King" (sound leitmotif)~~
~~Cross-cutting in M~~
 Use of trick photography and film stock in *Nosferatu*
 Monster in *Nosferatu* and *M*

Hollywood (1915-1929)

Vertical integration
 Block booking
 Zoning and clearance
 Analytical editing
 Cross-cutting
 Charles Chaplin (his role in studio system)
 Visual gag
 King Vidor
 Irving Thalberg
 United Artists vs. MGM, Paramount, Warner, Fox, RKO, Columbia, Universal

Japanese Silent Cinema of the 1920s-early 1930s

Jidaigeki, gendaigeki
 Shoshiku film studio
 Yasujiro Ozu

The basic structure of the shoshimin (petit bourgeois) film: urban setting, middle-class everyday life as a subject matter, mixture of humor and pathos in tone (Woojeong Joo. *The Cinema of Ozu* 57)

device of deviation (often humor) used to loosen the confinement of the everyday order (Woojeong Joo. *The Cinema of Ozu* 50)
benshi

~~Ethnographic film (historical and non-historical time in the ethnographic film)~~

Avant-Garde Cinema of Western Europe

Defamiliarization

Surrealism

Liebestod Richard Wagner in Louis Bunuel's *Un Chien Andalou*

Parataxis

Early Sound (not this year)

~~The Hays Code aka Motion Picture Production Code 1934~~

~~Gangster film (pre-code)~~

Part III: Film History – Industry and Style

Two of the following questions will appear on the midterm.

Be prepared to write an essay of 10-15 sentences (about 3-4 paragraphs) in response to one.

- A. Describe at least three pre-cinematic visual forms (created for entertainment or other purposes). Who was responsible for these attractions, media forms and technologies, and where did they develop and/or proliferate? How does each anticipate the cinema? How does each suggest alternatives to the cinema and/or film history as we know it?
- B. Tom Gunning argues that early cinema was primarily the cinema of attractions. Discuss this cinema's ideological premises about the meaning of the image; production, distribution, and screening methods of this cinema; stylistic features (at least three); genres (at least three); distribution of power in the global market. Identify and characterize at least two French and one American companies of the era. Discuss briefly at least one prominent filmmaker of the era and one of his films.
- C. Discuss the history of film editing from the cinema of attractions period through the silent era narrative and experimental cinema of the 1920s. Provide at least four examples of specific editing techniques from four films. Use as examples at least one French, American, and Russian/Soviet film.
- D. Critics argue that the mode of production and stylistics of avant-garde and experimental cinema of the 1920s have a lot in common with the early cinema of attractions. Agree and/or disagree with this premise. Examine the role of the filmmaker, how films were made, distributed and screened in both

modes of cultural production. Compare the cinema of attractions style with the style of avant-garde surrealist and/or documentary films. Give specific examples of films, filmmakers, and techniques.

Part IV: Film Theory – Representational Models and Cinema

One of the following questions will appear on the midterm. Be prepared to write a 10-15 sentence (about 3-4 paragraphs) response.

A. B. Discuss the differences and similarities in representation of urban space in *The Big Parade*, *the Crowd* and *Tokyo Chorus*. How is social class and gender represented in those films? How representation of urban space in those films different from the representation of urban space (camera mobility, editing, role of narrative) in the cinema of attractions (actualities and trick cinema)?

B. In her article “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” Laura Mulvey argues that

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact ... An active/passive heterosexual division of labor has similarly controlled narrative structure ... [the] narrative supports man’s role as the active one of forwarding the story, making things happen. The man controls the film phantasy and also emerges as the representative of power ... In contrast to woman as icon, the active male figure ... demands a three-dimensional space ... He is a figure in a landscape.

Mulvey concludes that the image of woman is “tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning.” With this argument in mind, discuss the representation of women in three films from the course thus far. How do these visual texts define the social roles of women? Are women allowed to control and direct the narration – to make rather than bear meaning – in avant-garde cinema? Give specific examples.

Fatimah Tobing Rony defines the primary goal of her book as the critique of the pervasive form of objectification of indigenous peoples, which she labels “Ethnographic” (5). Rony claims that the ethnographic approach to humans in cinema entails depiction of people as a tribe, not individuals, a focus on the exotic, mentioning of the story of the first contact, and the assumption that indigenous people exist at an earlier evolutionary stage and outside of modern historical time. Rony believes that cinema is central for the ethnographic vision of the world because it visualizes race and gender as natural (that is, immutable and not socially-conditioned) categories (9).

From this perspective, compare and contrast Robert J. Flaherty’s observational documentary *Nanook of the North* (1922) and one of the assigned films from this year’s Global Film Festival. Your discussion should include analysis of films’ representation of the center of modern culture and non-modern periphery, the analysis of specific cinematic techniques and their significance for the genres represented by each film.

NOTE: The exact wording of these questions may be altered for clarity.