

M1/M2 COURSE:

Understanding people's views and visions.

A semiotic and cultural approach of amateur audiovisual productions.

SCENES FROM DAILY LIFE

A MONTAGE OF AMATEUR FILMS PORTRAYING THE DAILY LIVES OF JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES PRIOR TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR

MONTAGE AVAILABLE ON THE SITE:

[AUDIOVISUAL RESEARCH ARCHIVES \(ARA\)](#)

QUESTIONNAIRE

TO GUIDE THE CRITICAL VIEWING AND SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF VIDEO EXCERPTS

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1/ Analysis of the main filmic scenes

	Questions	Filmic content	Comments...
1	What are the main scenes being depicted in the amateur films that make up the montage (scenes like “making repairs to the house,” “family poses,” “family in their yards,” etc.)?	Give a list of the scenes you identified...	Looking back at the list of identified scenes, what are they trying to say, what impressions do they give you?
2	If we compare the different scenes, could we classify them, could we identify an underlying classification?	Provide a classification	Comment, explain (reason, justification) your classification
3	Can you identify in the various films any elements that could be used as a “guiding light” for understanding the montage?	Identify these elements and classify them	1/ Comment, explain how these elements could be used as a “guiding light” for understanding the overall filmic montage
4	What elements and/or scenes are not included (or only in a very marginal way) in the different amateur films?	Give a list of these “missing” elements	Going back over your list of these elements, what are you feelings, impressions?

2/ Interpretations, explanations, and comments based on your analysis of the filmed scenes

	Questions	Comments, ...	Filmic examples
1	How do you interpret the scenes identified in the amateur films from a “culturalist”/intercultural point of view?	Develop an argument	Back up your argument using examples from the filmic montage
2	How could we interpret the presence of those filmed elements that serve as our “guiding light” in the different films from the montage – and how could they be useful for a cultural and/or intercultural approach?	Explain how these elements are relevant for a cultural/intercultural approach	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
3	How would you interpret (from a “culturalist” perspective) the systematic absence of certain filmic elements in the amateur films?	Try to formulate an explanation	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
4	Can we identify several ways of viewing the montage? If so, what are they?	Identify and explain these different ways of viewing the montage	Back up the proposed ways of viewing the montage using concrete examples from the filmic montage

3/ Significance for the “media, cultural diversity, and interculturality” theme

	Questions	Comments, ...	Filmic examples
1	What “images,” what representations does the montage convey about the topic (Japanese in the USA) and how is this done? Could these images/representations be developing of stereotypic vision of Japanese society/culture? If so, how?	Identify and describe these “images” or representations Explore the ways a stereotypical vision might be being developed in the montage	Back up your argument using examples from the filmic montage
2	What are the elements that point to a supposed specificity of the Japanese community and which filmic elements do the opposite (i.e. show similarities with other communities, social groups, etc.?)	Identify these elements and develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
3	Could we say that these amateur films could have been made by any author, regardless of his/her belonging to a social group, to one specific culture?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
4	Do these films help us to have a “better” understanding of the specific culture of a given social group? If so, how?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
5	What vision do these amateur films put forth of the integration or adaptation process of a social group to the culture of a hosting group?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
6	What place do these amateur films give to the “hosting” community and the other communities/groups present on American soil?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your argument using examples from the filmic montage

7	How does the montage “thematize” (attribute an overall vision to) the relationships between the Japanese community in the United States and in Japan? What vision(s) emerge?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your answer using concrete examples from the montage
8	Do some research to understand the specificity of the images and representations developed in these amateur films in relationship to other images and representations.	Cite some references and explain the relationships with the representations developed in the filmic montage.	
9	What images does the montage convey about Japanese immigration to the United States and how do these images correlate with the history of Japanese immigration and with the perception of it in the United States?	Identify and describe these “images” or representations. Explore how a stereotypical vision might be being developed	Back up your argument using examples from the filmic montage
10	Would it be appropriate to evoke a “political agenda” (in the broad sense of the term) that was behind the making of this montage?	Identify these elements and develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage
11	Is there a difference in what the content of the various amateur films and the actual montage are saying? If so, what is it?	Develop a coherent argument	Back up your explanation/argument using examples from the filmic montage