CINÉ- TRACTS

A JOURNAL OF FILM, COMMUNICATIONS. CULTURE, AND POLITICS

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN CINEMA

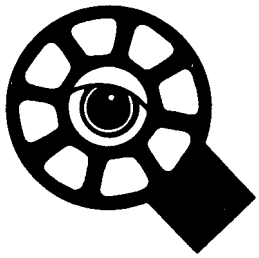
FILM PERFORMANCE
CAMERA MOVEMENT AND CINEMA SPACE
SELF-REFLEXIVITY IN DOCUMENTARY
THE FUNDAMENTAL REPROACH (BRECHT)
VERTOV'S MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA
VIGO/JAUBERT

"SINGING IN THE RAIN"

SPECTACLE AS SPECTATOR

NO.2

$2.50/£1.50



CINÉ - TRACTS

A JOURNAL OF FILM, COMMUNICATIONS, CULTURE, AND POLITICS

special issue on

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN CINEMA

edited by David Allen & Teresa de Lauretis

published in collaboration with the
Center for 20th Century Studies of
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

TO OUR READERS

Cine-Tracts is very pleased to publish the following articles from the 20th Century Studies Program which we feel raise some important questions for the study of film and for the theory of cinema in general.

The response that we have had to our first issue has gone beyond our original expectations both in terms of subscriptions and feedback. We have been criticized for using a language of analysis and criticism that is too closed, too academic and in some instances, too obscure. We agree with the editors of this issue (no. 2) that the present bias -- anti-intellectual and anti-theoretical—among people working in film is detrimental to the development of a 'critical' approach to ideology and cultural phenomena. Of equal importance to Cine-Tracts as a journal though, is our communication with our readership and it is our hope that we can balance between the clear need for a high standard of work and the obvious requirement of using a language of analysis to which you can relate. We want to avoid a form of knowledge production that gains its strength from mystification. We look forward to getting your letters about issue no.2.

R.B.
M.A.B.

CINE-TRACTS is a quarterly journal of film, communication, culture and politics.
4227 Esplanade Avenue, Montréal P.Q., Canada H2W 1T1

Please send all manuscripts in duplicate, double-spaced. All rights reserved. Articles copy-right their authors. Graphic Reproduction by Vanier College Press.
Phone no. (514) 845-5040

Depot légal -- Bibliothèque Nationale du Quebec

CINE-TRACTS

Vol. I - No. 2 Summer 1977

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

The Center for Twentieth Century Studies is a community of scholars in the humanities whose research focuses on ethnic studies, mass media (including film and video) and artistic/technological alternatives to print culture. In 1975 the Center organized its first International Symposium on Film Theory and in 1976 a Conference on the Teaching of Film. Papers from these two conferences are published in special issues of the *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* (vol. I, nos. 3 & 4).

A grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C. made possible a third conference in February 1977, this time an interdisciplinary study of production in film/theatre/video. I wish to express personal thanks to Don Druker, of NEA, who attended this third gathering, which also benefited from the presence and presentations of Michael Snow, Nam June Paik, and Marcel Ophuls. Most of the papers edited for this special issue of Cine-Tracts were delivered at the Conference in experimental workshops. Selecting from a very rich and interdisciplinary conference, the editors contributed their own theoretical perspective. We may not be quite ready yet for a cultural theory that would subsume theatre and video as performance arts under the same roof as film; film scholarship may still have some way to go from its specific focus to a system of intensities and their mediation across the arts. An energetics of spectacle (Lyotard, Eyzigman) points that way. But this issue, nonetheless, stand on its own — thanks to David Allen and Teresa de Lauretis. I am grateful to all, the editors, the authors, and our staff — Robert Dickey, Mary Adam, and Jean Lile — who pulled the contents of this issue together in record time.

The Center's work in film studies will continue next year in relation to our research theme which is technology. There will be a conference on the Cinematic Apparatus under the guidance of Stephen Heath, February 22-25, 1978 at the Center, and one a year later on Film and Language. They will tend to be closed work sessions organized toward theoretical results, so we welcome inquiries.

Michel Benamou, Director
Center for Twentieth Century Studies
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

INTRODUCTION

When we began collecting and editing these papers, we had not yet seen the editorial which launched the first issue of *CINE-TRACTS.* Some of the statements we had planned to make, by way of introduction, regarding the ideological premises of all cultural work, the political function of film criticism as a part of the larger concern with sociocultural change, and the relation between theory and practice within the critical activity, have already been made by the *CINE-TRACTS* editorial collective. There is no need to repeat them. But since the very notion of theory has come under attack from the left as suspect of elitism and mystification, some clarification seems necessary. Theory is a form of knowledge that would be foolish to discard simply because it may have been appropriated by the dominant classes.' Without theory, the complementary knowledge that is generated through practice would lack the critical and historical dimension. Our title is purposely plural: not theory as a set of axioms, normative laws, or even as a closed system of exchange between elements of a theory or between theory and practice; but rather theoretical perspectives, bundles of operations which are subject to transformation and redefinition by the very practice "which is that theory's condition of production."[2]

We also think, as stated in the *CINE-TRACTS* No. 1 editorial, that the value of any critical writing, hence of the following works, consists in the questions it poses as much as in the tentative answers it offers. Thus, this second issue is conceived to continue, extend and particularize the analysis of some of the crucial areas and problems indicated in the first issue. Within the general problematicof positioning the subject in relation to a hegemonic social structure operative in the institution of cinema in general and in the cinematic apparatus in particular, the papers presented here examine the perceptual and conceptual codes established by that apparatus, including self-reflexivity, excess, and the relations of image- and sound-tracks. Explicit or implicit in these discussions is the critical awareness of the irreducible, unsuppressable dimension of the socio-historical context in the film text, i.e. the social foundation of the most "personal" or "originalwork.[3] These problems are addressed in both general and specific terms, and examined in the perspectives of cinema as institution, of the codes established by a particular genre, or of the textual strategy of a single film.

A word on the order of presentation may be appropriate, for old habits die hard and sequence tends to be read as hierarchy — a misunderstanding that we want to prevent. Sequential ordering is unavoidable but no single criterion could have been followed other than alphabetical or random order. We also wanted to avoid the common distinction between theoretical and analytical studies, which recalls too closely the false dichotomy between theory/methodology and "application" as separate activities, and is at best epistemologically naive. So we chose to present the articles according to the type and quantity of the problems discussed, from the general to the specific — and even this only by rule of thumb, so to speak.

* * *

1 "All enquiry is 'motivated'. Theoretical research is a form of social practice. Everybody who wants to know something wants to know it in order to do something" (Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976, p. 29).

2 Juliet Mitchell, *Woman's Estate* (New York: Vintage Books), 1971, p. 91.

3 "L'oeuvre personnelle, même la plus radicalement novatrice, est une singularité dans le magma de la creation social-historique continuée, singularité qu'entoure une region plus dense et plus différenciée de ce magma" (Cornelius Castoriadis, "La psychanalyse, projet et elucidation," *Topique,* 19 (Janvier-février 1977), p. 56).

In choosing the title "Film Performance," Stephen HEATH focuses on the process of representation and in particular on the narrative representations of classical cinema. Even though photography and cinema became the currency of "reality" in the 19th century, Heath argues that "all presentation (of reality) is representation — a production, a construction of positions and effects — and all representation is performance — the time of that production and construction, of the realization of the positions and effects." As a system in performance, modern representation creates a subject-time which consists of two moments in a continual phasing: the subject-reflection and the subject-process (a distinction parallel to the one between subject of the enounced and subject of the enunciation). Heath traces the narrative film's performance of subject and representation through 1) the apparatus of *identification,* achieved with a system of looks";[4] 2) *Narrativisation,* memory joining subject-reflection and subject-process in "the vision of the unified and unifying subject"; and 3) *the novelistic,* whose problematic is "the definition of forms of individual meaning within the limits of existing social representations and their determining social relations." To highlight the arbitrariness of classical cinema's *"completion* of the subject, the translation of plurality into a *certain* history, the single vision," Heath concludes with a discussion of Snow's *Wavelengh,* which refuses the construction of a single subject and a unified time, indicating crucial tensions between classical and avant-garde cinema.

4 See Heath, "Narrative Space," *Screen,* 17 (Autumn 1976). 68-112.

* * *

David BORDWELL's "Camera Movement and Cinematic Space" discusses perceptual factors involved in the positioning of the spectator before the image — how the pictorial codes, based on perceptual factors, limit the number of cues which would enable one "to locate the picture as a flat surface and which create the visual effects of camera movement and spatial depth." Such cues, for example, function to achieve the "identification" discussed by Heath, to link the spectator's "look" and the camera's "look" into an "objective space" of the so-called pro-filmic event. But the unified spectatorial position may also be thrown into question by making the scenographic space difficult to unify or by creating inconsistent subject positions to break the identification of camera with spectator's "look". Bordwell emphasizes how many of the effects of classical cinema, as well as the efforts by the avant-garde to undermine those effects, are based on perceptual cues.

* * *

In "Spectacle and Spectator" Patricia MELLENCAMP examines the particular conventions and textual operations of American musical comedies, in the period 1933-55, which warrant their classification as a genre. The characteristic movement or tension between narrative and spectacles ("bracketed units mirroring the larger structure of the film") shifts the spectator's position as subject of identification in the interplay of looks and of visual codes with auditory codes. Within the framework formulated by Heath and by Christian Metz's recent studies, Mellencamp explores to what extent these shifts may be seen as countering or subverting the aims of narrativization. Conversely, and on the basis of her analysis of *Singin' in the Rain* and *Bandwagon,* she argues that the operations of containment at work in Hollywood musicals justify their classification as a sub-category of classical cinema.

* * *

Self-reflexivity in cinema is all too often addressed as a stylistic or formal aspect, without sufficient exploration of its implications for cinematic practice. These are particularly interesting in the case of the documentary film genre. Jeanne ALLEN's "Self-Reflexivity in Documentary" rightfully begins by examining the notion of verisimilitude: "because documentary is a very engaged type of cinema, it brings considerable pressure to bear on its claim of verisimilitude. And this is the perspective from which the use of self-reflexive techniques in documentary filmmaking must be viewed." Following is a discussion of the debate about objectivity vs. subjectivity as summed up in the opposing views of Roger Sandall and Nicholas Garnham. Examples analyzed in this study range from "March of Time" newsreels to Resnais' *Night and Fog* and to Chris Marker's *Letter from Siberia.* Taking Barthes' position that the technological diffusion of information tends to mask meaning construction, Allen builds her argument that the classical stance of neutrality or objectivity in documentary is highly problematic.

* * *

"The Fundamental Reproach" of Ben BREWSTER's title is the one made by Brecht to cinema: cinematic performance separates the moments of production and consumption of the film; what is viewed in cinema, the film, is not a process as is the theatrical performance, but a product, and object which the audience cannot change, "the result of a production that took place in their absence." In order to suggest the directions of a possible transformation of cinema, Brewster examines the significance of Brecht's objections in relation to the film text and to the cinema as industry. If there is no technical solution, as Brecht argued, to problems such as providing distanciation, given that the centralized, single perspective makes for a primary identification of the spectator with the camera and thus erases the process by which the object/images are produced, there may be, Brewster indicates, other ways for cinema to meet Brecht's reproach, other strategies to be sought in alternative forms of cinematic production, distribution and exhibition.

* * *

"The Concept of Cinematic Excess" outlines a working hypothesis for a definition of excess against the view of the filmic text as a homogeneous system: "incomprehensible elements are so because they do not fit neatly into the unified relationships in the work; they must be explained as tending towards excess." Combining the principles of Russian Formalism with recent works by Barthes and Heath, Kristin THOMPSON locates excess in aspects of the film which exist alongside unified stylistic and narrative structures. Her analysis is centered on *Ivan the Terrible.* In concluding, Thompson argues for the perceptual and ideological importance that an awareness of excess has for the spectator-critic.

* * *

"Vigo/Jaubert" examines several methodological problems attendant upon the analysis of film music in general (notation, principles of pertinence, etc.), and the relationship between film narrative and sound-track in particular. Segmenting *Zéro de conduite* according to rhythm, principal melodies and harmonies, tonality and instrumentation, Claudia GORBMAN discusses the diegetic and representational functions of music, non-musical sound, and silence. Jaubert's use of electronic recording as the "photographing of sound" and Vigo's editing of shots according to rhythmic patterns give sound a prominent formal role in the freedom/repression dialectic which characterizes the film: "the dis-organization of its visual and auditory

elements constitutes a rejection of realistic (conventional) modes of representation. The film form carries out the revolution in sympathy with the characters.''

* * *

Judith MAYNE's purpose in ''Kino-Truth and Kino-Praxis'' is to define the notion of political cinema outside of frequently assumed, reductive oppositions such as content vs. form or ideology vs. social practice. Rejecting both the ''everything is political'' attitude and a monolithic conception of ideology, her analysis of *Man with a Movie Camera* focuses on its textual strategy as nexus of techniques, ideology and social practice, and aims at ''revealing the vast network of ideological formations which determines all practice.'' In other words, Mayne argues, Vertov's film belongs in the category of political cinema which is not only self-reflexive of its techno-ideological basis but also conscious of being part of a political struggle.

* * *

As guest editors of this second issue, we wish to thank the *CINE-TRACTS* editors, Ron Burnett in particular, for their cooperation and good will.

A very special acknowledgment must be made to Robert Dickey of the Center for 20th Century Studies staff for his resourceful collaboration and professional commitment to this project. We are greatly indebted to him for generously sharing with us his knowledge of cinema and many valuable insights that have contributed significantly to the final shape of this work and to its production process. Thanks, Bob.

David Allen & Teresa de Lauretis
Guest Editors
Summer 1977

Center for 20th Century Studies
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Film Performance

Stephen Heath

'Sands of Iwo Jima'

A story by Apollinaire from 1907 (subsequently included in the 1910 volume *L'Hérésiarque et Cie,* the original title for which had been *Phantasmes):* "Un beau film".[1] The Narrator, the Baron d'Ormesan, tells how he and a group of friends founded the Cinematographic International Company — "which for short we called the CIC"! — and sought to obtain films "of great interest" for exhibition in the principal towns of Europe and America. A number of such films were procured but the Company "lacked the representation of a crime". The Baron and his friends thus decide to remedy that lack by organizing their own crime for the screen: a courting couple is captured in the streets of Paris one night, then a gentleman on his way to a gambling club; preparations are made in a specially rented house — "our photographer set

1 *Oeuvres completes de Guillaume Apollinaire,* ed. M. Décaudin, Vol. 1 (Paris 1965), pp. 206-208.

up his apparatus, saw to the appropriate lighting, and stood ready to record the crime" — and the gentleman is forced, under threat of himself being killed, to murder the young lovers. The crime is sensational (the victims prove to have been minor foreign nobility), the film a spectacular box-office draw: "You can imagine our success. The police did not for a moment suppose that we were offering the reality of the murder of the day, though we took great pains to announce that that was indeed just what we were doing. The public made no mistake. It gave us an enthusiastic reception..." Later, an innocent person is arrested and executed for the killing, the Company duly recording the execution to be added as a conclusion to its film. The Baron simply ends his narrative with an estimate of the amount of money he gained from his excursion into the commerce of cinematography.

* * *

Un beau film: the crime of the good film is the film itself, its time and its performance — its *performing of time.* It is not by chance that Apollinaire's fascination with the new medium is immediately in 1907 the story of a murder, the relation of cinema and crime: film is exactly a putting to death, the demonstration of "death at work" (Cocteau's "la mort au travail"[2]). Made of a series of stops in time, the timed stops of the discrete frames, film depends on that constant stopping for its possibility of reconstituting a moving reality — a reality which is thus, in the very moment of appearance on screen, as the frames succeed one another, perpetually flickered by the fading of its present presence, filled with the artifice of its continuity and coherence. Every film a fiction film: at once in this reconstitution of the scene of its crime — the practice of division and articulation — as the impression of "reality itself", the scene intact, unviolated, and in the distance on which it nevertheless plays for its mode of solicitation as spectacle, the mode of presence in absence, a real time there on film but not that same real time which is shown on film gone for ever. Hence the Baron's spectators have no problem ("the public made no mistake"): they know that they are really and not really seeing the crime; they are securely in *the fiction of reality* (and the crime, precisely, is in the film). This is the context of what has been described as the cinematic regime of pure memory: "everything is absent, everything is *recorded,* as a memory trace which is instantaneously so, without previously being something else".[3] Record and reality are together as a system of traces present always as the term of an absence: film's fiction as "the record of reality", the whole imaginary signifier of cinema as *memory-spectacle.*

Cinema is founded as the memory of reality, the spectacle of reality captured and presented (looking back on the early years, Louis Lumière will comment: "the film subjects I chose are the proof that I only wished to reproduce life".[4] All presentation, however, is representation — a production, a construction of positions and effects — and all representation is performance (1975), the time of that production and construction, of the realization of the positions and effects. Which is why, to anticipate an emphasis that will be made later, an avant-garde — and political — practice of film is involved necessarily at least in an attention to the real functioning of representation and is involved directly there by in a problematic of performance, of film performance; attention and problematic that pose the limits of the "good film", of the cinematic institution.

* * *

In its classic forms in our "advanced societies", representation is the achievement and operation of systems of coherence, of unity, which make up for the process of their structuration with strategies of completion that mask the heterogeneity — movement, difference, contradiction, fading — they effecti-

2 A phrase cited and developed by Straub: "Entretien avec Jean-Marie Straub et Danièle Huillet", Cahiers du cinema, 223 (August 1970), pp. 53-55.

3 Christian Metz, "Le signifiant imaginaire", Communications, 23 (1975), p. 31.

4 Cf. G.Sadoul, Histoire générale du cinema (revised edition), Vol. 1 (Paris, 1963), p. 288.

vely serve to contain, to *figure out.* The pole — or horizon — of such systems is the innocence of a realism given as re-presentation, the simple transmission of life recorded, imprinted: "photographic realism" as the nineteenth century expression for this horizon would significantly have it; "significantly" because of the power here of the imagination of the camera (the reference it becomes, the Perms of its exploitation) and of everything bound up with it (film included, of course). That realism, however, is precisely a horizon, wanted and envisaged — believed in — as a kind of potential of quotation (the photograph can indeed be quickly developed in the nineteenth century as a market in tokens of reality-itself-in-its-absolute-identity), a kind of basic currency of the real (thus the photograph becomes the very money of reality which in turn is its guarantee and standard), but as potential and a currency *to be used,* to be invested — and, in fact, realized — in specific projects. In other words, that realism is never the end of and could never exhaust representation, the systematic production of coherence and unity, the construction of the positions and effects of a "subject" and a "reality". Realism is only ever, and above all in its innocent proposals as straight transmission, an image — the final figure — of the representation system in which it is engaged; a system which, positioning and effecting, is a ceaseless performance *of the subject in time for the reality given, of subject-time.*

The performance of subject-time is itself a complex time, phasing between two constant moments that — these remarks concern classic narrative cinema, the commercial exploitation of film — are layered to-gether: the subject-reflection and the subject-process (the layering and balance of the two being the film's performance of subject-time). The subject-reflection is a narrative effect (or series of effects): in the movement of the chain of differences — the flow of multiple intensities of image and sound — the narrative defines terms for the movement of the chain, specifies relations and reflects a subject as the direction of those relations, produces the coherence of view and viewer. Effected by the narrative, the subject-reflection is in the order of vraisemblable, the fantasy order of an achieved unity of relations on the subject confirmed as a sufficient centre ("fantasy founds the vraisemblable", writes Lacan in one of his rare consideration of film);[5] the film thereby proposed for the subject it *includes* and *creates* in a scenario of desire fulfilled, a subject bound up in the consistance of the imaginary. Going along with the subject-reflection, the subject-process is just that: the *process,* all the elements of the system in its production-performance, the whole apparatus of the representation; is a *multiple circulation,* the perpetual movement of difference, the insistance of the symbolic against any imaginary centre. The close of the circulation is the subject-reflection — the very fiction of "the subject" — but that circulation is always more than the closure it can realize: the subject-process is the "more".

5 Jacques Lacan,"Faire mouche". *Nouvel Observateur,* 594 (29 March - 4 April, 1976), p. 64.

The two moments of subject-process and subject-reflection are, it was said above, in a *phasing.* In physics, a phase is a particular change or point in a recurring sequence of movements or changes; as, for example, a vibration or an undulation. What is at stake in the establishment of a system of representation with narrative film is the constant shifting together of those two moments or phases, their recurrent balancing out: the system achieves a reflection, images of unity, but, as production, is in excess of those images, that reflection, in which nevertheless the narrative offers to contain its production. The effective hold of representation lies in the mise en scène of circulation and fixity: the performance of the spectator as subject over the two as process-and-reflection, each maintained — the phasing, the balance— in terms of the other.

The function and functioning of the performance of representation can be

grasped more readily in the light of insights from analytic work on the relations of the individual as subject to meaning in language. Such work — stemming above all from a linguistics responsive to the problems raised by psychoanalysis — recognizes an important distinction between the *subject of the enounced* and the *subject of the enunciation,* between the subject in the proposition or statement made and the subject of the making of the proposition or statement. Thus, a classic paradoxical example, in the utterance "I am lying", it is evident that the subject of the proposition enounced is not one with the subject of the enunciation of the proposition — the "I" cannot "lie" on both planes at once: there is a division of the "I" necessary for the utterance to mean. Freud himself alludes to this splitting of the subject in language in his comparisons of the multiple appearance of the ego in dreams with the common fact of anaphoric pronominalisation in sentences of the kind "When *I* think what a healthy child *I* was" and more recently the psychoanalytic theory of Lacan has been concerned with the enounced/enunciation distinction in its descriptions of the constitution and process of subjectivity.[6] The passage into and in language divides and *in that division effects* the individual as subject: "The cause is the signifier without which there would be no subject in the real."[7] The subject, that is, is not the beginning but the result of a structure of difference, of the symbolic order, and that result indexes a lack — the division — which is the constant "drama of the subject in language", the inscription of desire and the elaboration of an imaginary order of wholeness, a set of images in which the ego seeks resolution as totality: "it is because it fends off this moment of lack that an image takes up the position of bearing the whole cost of desire: projection, function of the imaginary. . ."[8] The construction of the identity of the subject is a movement of exchange, a movement ceaselessly for balance between subject of enounced and subject of enunciation, symbolic and imaginary. In short, there is a permanent performance of the subject in language itself; permanent *and interminable,* never finished, the passage into and in language without end and hence the point of highly developed forms of social attention and regulation, the determination of institutions to play out the drama of meaning, to repeat the production of cohesion and identity, to provide fictions and images, to *make sense.*

6 For examples of Freud's comparisons, see *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (London, 1953-1966), Vol. IV, p.323; Vol. XIX, p.120. Lacan has a particularly clear discussion of the distinction in Le Séminaire livre XI (Paris, 1973), pp. 127-130.

7 Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits* (Paris, 1966). p. 835.

8 *Ibid.,* p. 655.

Institutions such as cinema: in this context the description of the performance of the subject in film begun above can be given further formulation, coming back on the two moments of subject-reflection and subject-process. In narrative films, the products of the institution cinema, there is an achieved activity of creation and return: movement and play are set going and yet always returned to a hold on the spectator, with the hold defined across that very movement and play. *On the one hand,* the film opens up a flow and circulation, is a symbolic production in which unity and position are ever slipping away, lacking — deferred and lost in the gap of the present, "death at work" (every film is potentially a danger). *On the other,* the film is figured out by its narrative as a totality, the imaginary relation of the spectator to an undivided present full of images of the accomplishment of desire (liking a film, the people in it, the things seen), of fictions of wholeness (including that of "the film", the object mastered by the spectator); exactly a memory spectacle in which the elements of production are bound up and resolved; the representation of unity and the unity of representation. The first is at the loss of the subject of the enounced, retraced in the tensions of desire, put into process; the second is the negation of the subject of the enunciation, the stasis of reflection. What is crucial is not one or the other but *the operation of the two together* (the layering, the phasing). Narrative makes the join, the suture, relating the film and giving it as that relation; not simply specify-

ing the imaginary but setting equally the limits of the symbolic, the play allowed. Film is to remember for you, remember you: to remember *bearably* — the point of the narrative — the drama of meaning and identity. It is this that is the function and the functioning of the operation.

* * *

How then does narrative film work in its performance of representation and subject? The attempt here to begin to reply to that question will involve consideration of three factors: i) the basic apparatus of identification; ii) narrativisation, the elaboration of narrative in film and the terms of memory and spectacle proposed; iii) the novelistic, the ideological category of the narrative elaborated.

To describe the basic apparatus of identification exploited in narrative film is to start from the importance of the look. Classically, cinema turns on a series of 'looks' which join, cross through, and relay one another. Thus: 1) the camera looks (a metaphor assumed by this cinema). . . at someone, something: the profilmic; 2) the spectator looks. . . at — or on — the film; 3) each of the characters in the film looks. . . at other characters, things: the intradiegetic. This series possesses a certain reversibility: on the one hand, the camera looks, the spectator looks at what the camera looks at and thereby sees characters in the film looking; on the other, the spectator sees characters in the film looking, which is to look at the film, which is to find the camera's looking, its **''**having looked**''** (the presence in absence). The first and second looks, moreover, are in a perpetual interchange of **''**priority**''**, of **''**origination**''**: the camera's look is found only by looking at the film but the former is the condition — one of the conditions — of the latter.

It is this series of looks which provides the framework in turn for a pattern of multiple relaying identifications (a term that would need to be carefully specified in each case; what is important now is merely to stress the multiplicity). The shift between the first and second looks sets up the spectator's identification with the camera (rigorously constructed, placing heavy constraints, for example, on camera movement). The look at the film is an involvement in identifying relations of the spectator to the photographic image (the particular terms of position required by the fact of the photograph itself), to the human figure presented in image (the enticement and the necessity of a human presence **''**on the screen**''**), to the narrative which gives the sense of the flow of photographic images (the guide-line for the spectator through the film, the ground that must be adopted for its intelligible reception). Finally, the looks of the characters allow for the establishment of the various **''**point of view**''** identifications (the spectator looking with a character, from near to the position of his or her look, or as a character, the image marked in some way as **''**subjective**''**).

The power of such an apparatus is in the play it both incites and controls: a certain mobility is given — across the different levels, the various relays (with genres as specific versions of that mobility) — but followed out — effectively *relayed* — as the possibility of a constant hold on the spectator, as the bind of a coherence of vision, of, exactly, **''**a vision**''**. Remember Bazin's fascination with a shot of Yvonne de Bray in Cocteau's (and Jean-Pierre Melville's) *Les Enfants terribles:* **''**the object of the shot is not what she is looking at, not even her look; it is *looking at her looking"*[9]. The apparatus of look and identification is the machinery for the fiction of such a position, cinema's institution of a film's view and viewer (the point of that view) in the totalising security of **''**looking at looking**''**. Play then, but a play *for:* taken up in

9 Andre Bazin, **''**Theatre et cinema**''**, *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?,* Vol. Il (Paris, 1959), p. 87.

the film, the spectator is dispersed to be re-established in mastery — the apparatus is the availability of film's subject vision.

That subject vision, moreover, is the impossibility for a film to be *heard.* The régime of the ''talking picture'' is one of the containment of sound as the safe space of the narrative voice, its securing in and for the apparatus. There is a significant hierarchical tourniquet in this respect: the image is all-powerful (the essence of cinema; people pay to *see* a film), the sound-track a supplement (often regarded historically as a potential threat to the luminous clarity of the image); at the same time, however, that the sound-track as voice, as dialogues, is dominant, arranging the images in scenes (which avoid the threat) — the film comes to a stop when it runs out of words, nothing left it but the words of ''The End''. Which is why work on the sound of a film has become so fundamental a problem and concern of avant-garde practice: from — citing European examples only — Godard (''the struggle of an image against a sound and of a sound against an image'') to Straub/Huillet (shooting with direct sound against the arrangements, the scenes, of commercial production), to Duras (the voice pulled away from its ''abject proximity'' to the image; the creation of a plural space of voices over the silence of the images). To disturb the achieved relations of sound and image in the apparatus is to disturb the performance, to break the whole coherence of vision.
The apparatus thus described is a basis remade and confirmed in every classic narrative film, its levels welded together as such as the elaboration of the narrative catches up and closes the film.

''Let's go and see. . . / No, I've already seen it.'' The problem of ''already'' — in this sense of ''once'', ''one time'' — is the problem of films insofar as they are caught up and closed as narrative (outside the terms of commercial production and consciously against classic narrative forms, independent cinema will achieve films that it is impossible to have ''seen once''). Narrative contains a film's multiple articulations as a single articulation, its images as a single image (the ''narrative image'', which is a film's presence, how it can be talked about, what it can be sold and bought on, itself represented as — in the production stills displayed outside a cinema, for example), its sounds as a single register of the image (hence the avant-garde question of hearing a film). In order to see the film again, you need to forget it so as to have once more — so as once more directly to be — the memory it constructs you. The final time of film as narrative is that of identity, centre, perspective, oneness, the vision of the unified and unifying subject, the reflection of that.

Narrative makes the join of symbolic and imaginary, process and reflection. That making, the elaboration of the narrative, amy be called narrativisation: the narrative is the close, the fiction of the film ultimately rendered; narrativisation is the rendering, the movement to the narrative in the film, of the film to the narrative. Narrativisation is the complex operation of the film as narrative and the setting of the spectator as subject *in the operation:* the spectator is placed as subject for the narrative relations and constituted in their reflection, but placing, relations, constitution are a process in which, equally, the spectator is entertained as subject — countenanced and occupied, kept going, held in (the etymology of ''entertainment''). As subject, in other words, the spectator comes all over the film, and comes together; narrativisation is the guarantee of the ''all over together''. A film is thus more than the narrative problem of ''already'', ''once'', previously mentioned. To see a film again you need to forget it, but you always need the film again (this film or another, the return to the cinema), the process, exactly the time of its performance, its performance of you — subject — in time.

Performance as a remembering, the production of a memory. To stress this is not, in the first instance at least, to insist on the degree to which memory, symptomatically, has been so crucial a topic in film — think of *Secret Beyond the Door* or *Pursued* or *Marnie,* or *Letter from an Unknown Woman,* entirely organized as a remembering, or *Suspicion,* where the intrigue turns on the absence of any memory of Johnnie (Gary Grant) and the accumulation for Lina (Joan Fontaine) of memory fragments that can never be resolved but in suspicion, the psychological category that fixes the film for the spectator. Nor is it to insist again on cinema itself as a specific memory system, memory traces instantaneously so. Rather, it is a matter of indicating the memory force of the elaboration of narrative through the film. In classic cinema, there is free play within the frame — the set — of the narrative, the elaboration of which edges the ramifying flow of images in a direction, constructs a legality (what is to be seen and heard, what is to be related, a context of rightness), regulates a point of view. Narrativisation is the mode, that is, of a continuous memory, the spectator as though "remembered" in position, in subject unity, throughout the film (which is why, within this process, images of dismemberment provide such a powerful and lucrative theme, as witness *Jaws);* with that remembering a pressure at every moment of the film, dispersion and binding up a constantly simultaneous movement (hence the possibility of the emergence of dismemberment as a safely pleasurable theme), a subject circulating and a subject fixed from that circulation — the pleasure of the film in the layering together, the balance, the performance, the remembering and the memory.

In psychoanalytic terms, the narrative, with the apparatus ensuring its ground, retains the film in a play of castration known and denied: a process of difference and the symbolic, the object lost, and the conversion of the process into the reflection of a fixed memory, and invulnerable imaginary, the object — and with it the mastery of the subject — regained. Near in this to that of fetishism, the structure of the memory-spectacle of film is the perpetual story of a "one time", a discovery perpetually remade with safe fictions. It is not by chance that classic narrative films should be so often arrested in the fascination of "the scene", a theatrical moment of the highlighted perfect image, and the image of "the woman" ("looking at *her* looking"): the illuminated body of Lisa (Joan Fontaine) modelling in *Letter from an Unknown Woman,* the first cabaret appearance of Amy Jolly (Marlene Dietrich) in *Morocco,* not to mention the explicit treatment of scene, image, the cinematic theatre of fetishism in a film like *Sylvia Scarlett;* examples, moreover, which should not be allowed to overshadow the ordinary inevitability of scene and image, momentarily found in so many films. Perpetual, the story of the "one time", the found image, is repeated, in film after film, the steady production of the industry; the remembering takes place again and again, a constant return. A classic narrative film works with a particular economy of repetition. The coherence of any text depends on a sustained equilibrium of new informations, points of advance, and anaphoric recalls, ties that make fast, hold together. One part of the particular economy is the exploitation of narrative in film in the interests of an extreme tendency towards coalescence, a tightness of totalisation; the film is gathered up in a whole series of rhymes in which elements — of both "form" and "content" — are reproduced, shifted, and turned back symmetrically, as in a mirror; in *Touch of Evil,* for instance, the two Quinlan (Orson Welles)/Tanya (Marlene Dietrich) sequences which answer one another at the beginning and the end of the film, the second bringing back and reversing the elements of the first, the film looping round on itself at its close. Yet this symmetry, the fascination of the film itself as flawless scene, is an effect of the elaboration of the

narrative which gives at the same time the necessary advance, an order. Absolutely, repetition is an absence of direction, a failure of coherence: the return to the same in order to abolish the difficult time of desire, it produces in that very moment the resurgence of inescapable difference, produces indeed the poles of "same" and "different"; its edge, its final horizon, is thus death, the ultimate collapse of same and different, pure totality of indifference. Remember how Freud can see repetition as the essence of drive and accord the death drives the fundamental place — beyond the pleasure principle — in his later accounts of psychical functioning. The narrative join of a film recasts repetition — difference, the interminable flux of desire, the horizon of death — into the balance of a fiction (an integrity of recall and progression), thus maintains the historical function of the subject ("the death drive expresses essentially the limit of the historical function of the subject").[10] A *contrario,* certain developments of repetition away from the classic narrative order in avant-garde film entail a threat to that function; a threat translated in the common reactions of "boredom", the irritation of "nothing happens" — a great deal does happen, of course, but not the performance of "the subject".

10 Lacan, *Ecrits,* p. 318.

"When the bourgeoisie had to find something else besides painting and the novel to disguise the real to the masses, to invent, that is, the ideology of the new mass communications, its name was the photograph."[11] Godard's remark serves to emphasize this at least: that film is developed and exploited from the photograph as an alternative and successor to the novel for the production-reproduction of the *novelistic;* the novelistic is the ideological category of the narrative elaborated in film, as it is of that in the novel. The title of the novelistic is *Family Romance* (or *Family Plot,* as the recent Hitchcock film would have it); the problem it addresses is that of the definition of forms of individual meaning within the limits of existing social representations and their determining social relations, the provision and maintenance of fictions of the individual; the historical reality it encounters, a permanent crisis of identity that must be permanently resolved by remembering the history of the individual-subject. Narrative lays out — lays down as law — a film memory from the novelistic as the re-imaging of the individual as subject, the very representation of identity as the coherence of a past safely negotiated and reappropriated — the past *"in"* the film (once again, the thematic routines: memory itself; childhood, *Citizen Kane;* nostalgia, *Meet me in St. Louis;* and, infallibly, the *Oedipus* — a film about possession by the devil? *The Exorcist* cannot but fold in the question as to the possessed girl's missing father) and *"of"* the film (the sequential and consequential join of the images from beginning to end, the holding of the spectator as the unifying position — the subject — of their relation in time).

11 Jean-Luc Godard, "Premiers sons anglais", *Cinéthique,* 5 (1969), p. 14.

It is to Freud that we owe the expression "family romance" (an essay published in 1909 is devoted to "Der Familienroman der Neurotiker") and this is in no way fortuitous: effectively, psychoanalysis is the novelistic from the other side, the development in and against it of a critical knowledge of its terms, its instances, its movements, its reasons. The Dora, Rat Man or Wolf Man case histories as Freud writes them are exactly novels overturned, monuments in the *demonstration* of the novelistic.

In no way fortuitous; but that necessity often remains unseen, and unseen by psychoanalysis itself. There is no subject outside of a social formation, outside of social processes which include and define positions of meaning, which specify ideological places. Yet this inclusion, definition and specification does not exhaust the individual subject: at once because it says nothing

concerning practice and also because it says nothing about the concrete history of the construction of the individual for such inclusion, definition, and specification. It is this latter area that psychoanalysis identified and opened up (the "new continent" discovered by Freud), that it takes as its province. Yet, to turn back round again, the real history with which psychoanalysis thus deals is still directly and immediately social, not "before" or "underneath" or "elsewhere" to social processes, ideological places. There is a material history of the construction of the subject for social/ideological history is also the social construction of the subject; it is not, in other words, that there is first of all the construction of a subject for social/ideological formations and then the placing of that constructed subject-support in those formations, it is that the two processes are one, in a kind of necessary simultaneity — like the recto and verso of a piece of paper. It is to the implications of such a simultaneity that psychoanalysis has found it difficult to respond: it describes an area that is absolutely specific but its encounter with that area, hence the terms of its descriptions, is always specifically social, within specific social formations; psychoanalysis is itself historical and a fully historical science.

Historical too in another sense, a corollary of the necessary simultaneity. As was said earlier, the construction of the subject is never finished, is interminable (psychoanalysis is not just to do with the first three or four years in the life of an individual); entry into language, for example, crucial in psychoanalysis's account of the construction and a point of the individual/social articulation, is not "once and for all": the individual is always entering, emerging as a subject in language (the lapsus for Freud was an explosive indication); the process of representation is permanently remade in language at that point of individual-social articulation (the complex process in which "a signifier represents a subject for another signifier" and "a sign represents something for someone"[12], of the movement from production to product together). The individual is always a subject in society, the place of social and ideological formations, but is more than simply the figure of that representation, is in excess of such placing formations. An important — determining — part of ideological systems is then the achievement of a number of machines (institutions) that can *move* the individual as subject, shifting and tying desire, realigning excess and contradiction, in a perpetual retotalisation — a remembering — of the imaginary in which the individual-subject is grasped as identity. It is in terms of this "double bind" — the statement of social meanings and the holding of the individual to those meanings, the suturing of the enounced and the enunciation, what was called above "the vision of the subject", that the institution of cinema can be understood. In this context, the force of psychoanalysis lies in the breaking it provokes of that vision, its attention to the limit and excess of the function of the subject and, from there, the questions it poses with regard to the whole subject performance repeated in those specially developed social machines.

12 Lacan, *Ecrits,* pp. 835, 840.

The problem addressed by the novelistic — what its fictions are to resolve — is that of the relation of individual meaning and social determination as an identity, of the realization of subject coherence; a problem, quite simply, in a world in which the social struggle of men and women in history has become the effective arena of value, of providing regulatory modes of "talking about oneself", "imaginations of life", "self representations", "your images". This operation of the novelistic, however, is not merely in the representation (what is represented, the content, the image); it is equally, as has been the stress here throughout, in the performance of the representation (the performance — of the subject — which the representation is); and because there is no immediately given and constituted subject to which re-

presentations have, as it were, only to be presented for assent: representation and subject are produced in the performance, which is thus involved in the multiple stratifications of the necessary simultaneity, the multiple times of the history of the construction of the subject and its representations. What is a film, in fact, but an elaborate time-machine, a tangle of memories and times successfully rewound in the narrative as the order of the continuous time of the film?

In its films, cinema reproduces and produces the novelistic: it occupies the individual as subject in the terms of the existing social representations and it constructs the individual as subject in the process, in the balancing out of symbolic and imaginary, circulation for fixity. The real of a film is complex, mobile, historically plural at the point of the function of the subject, mesh of determinations which interest both psychoanalysis and historical materialism. The "achievement" of the institution cinema in film — the apparatus of identifications, the narrative space of look and voice — is the construction-occupation as filling-in, the *completion* of the subject, the translation of plurality into a *certain* history, the single vision.

There is a crime in Michael Snow's *Wavelength:* the noise of breaking glass, the man who enters the room and falls out of frame to the floor, the woman who finds the body and telephones a man named Richard. There is also the crime of the film itself: against the certain history, the single vision, the *beau film.* At so many stages in the previous discussion, reference could have been made to the contrary practice of Snow's film, its dissociation from the classic terms of film performance.

Wavelength is produced as a complex of differing times: fragments of a narrative time, little quotations of narrative stereotypes drifting in on image — the fall, the telephoning — or sound — the crash of glass, a siren — tracks; the existence in time of the loft traversed in the film; a kind of encoding time, elements — colour and light-value changes, for instance — make various micro-systems through the film; the time of the continuous forty-five minute zoom from its widest to its smallest field; the times of the sound track, not simply the rising sine-wave that couples with the movement of the zoom-in but comprising a host of brief dispersed moments, as with the shutting of the window and the play with the noise "outside" or with the "Strawberry Fields" song over the radio; and so on. No production of any simple memory: the film plays with and on memory — as in the superimpositions: the room, the film suddenly posed in a past or a future to the present moment of the zoom — but the play is never unified in a pattern, a figure of desire realized in totality. In short, no *identification,* the apparatus pulls apart. Hence, probably, the common reactions to *Wavelength* as "tragic" (the response of Ihab Hassan, for example, finding himself "thinking of death" when watching Snow's work).[13] In their way, the reactions acknowledge the difficulty of times, the difference of the film: a film progression but in jerks, breakings, dissociations; a film without any subject performance, or rather a performance only in the difficulty, the difference, outside of *a* time, a vision. Despite the lack of any evident political signified (as though such an "evidence" could furnish criteria), Snow's films are politically insistent in their question of the cinematic institution of the subject in film, their question of another subjectivity — material, heterogeneous, in process — of a film that *makes a body.*

13 Comments during an open discussion with Snow in the context of the Film/Theatre/Video conference.

"We are never quite contemporary with our present. History goes forward masked, is inscribed on the screen with the mask of the previous sequence and we no longer recognize anything in the film".[14] The "making a body"

14 *Vent d'est* (bande paroles), *Cahiers du cinéma,* 240 (July-August, 1972). p. 35.

is there: recognizing in film, a subject splitting in the multiple contradictions of a present that includes those of the work of the film itself, such a history. The quotation, however, is from the sound track of *Vent d'est.* A provocation to bring together *Wavelength* and the Groupe Dziga Vertov? Simply the quick notation of the actuality and importance of the problem of film performance in these terms. The Baron d'Ormesan's public made no mistake in the secure illusion of the good film; the task now is to make new relations of film performance.

CAMERA MOVEMENT AND CINEMATIC SPACE

David Bordwell

Camera movement in the cinema is one of the most difficult areas for critical analysis. Seen as an alternative to montage, or as a stylistic fingerprint, or the occasion for reverie, camera movement has usually been considered too elusive to be analyzable. This essay is an attempt to examine more closely the functions of camera movement in cinematic representation. While several theoretical frames of reference (the semiological, the psychoanalytic) could help us in this task, I shall try to develop another approach, a perceptual approach, because of my conviction that a recognition of the perceptual features of cinema should be part of any thoroughgoing attempt to understand filmic experience.

Let me suggest the value of this approach with reference to a specific issue. It is a commonplace of contemporary film theory that certain cinematic processes seek systematically to station the viewer as subject before an idealized, objectified representation. This is a useful hypothesis, but too seldom do theorists analyze the perceptual bases of that subjective stationing. If we consider, for example, perceived depth on the screen, it is certain that pictorial codes function to help efface the image surface and push us toward reading the picture as an imaginary space, a scenography; and it may be fruitful to think of our relation to that scenography as being one whereby, as Baudry puts it, "the imaginary order fulfills its particular function of occultation, of filling the gap, the split, the subject on the order of the signifier."[1] But we should also recognize that the traditional conditions for viewing a film already, at the perceptual level, reduce the number of cues which might help us to locate the picture as a flat surface. For instance, *interposition,* the possiblity that the presence of other viewers besides and in front of us might let us see the screen as only one surface among a series of surfaces, is minimized by some very habitual theatrical practices — staggered seating and the correct viewing angle so that nothing blocks our view of the screen. Binocular disparity (the fact that the eyes see two slightly different fields and get slightly different information from each field) is ruled out by the "ideal viewing distance," which seeks to minimize the difference between the two eyes view onto the screen. The fixity of the screen itself eliminates the need for the viewer to make efforts of accommodation, those muscular movements that are necessary to focus the eye. Finally, we do not inspect the image on the screen as we might a picture as we stroll through a gallery. Any movement parallax on the part of the spectator is minimized by the fixity of the seat and the limitations put on the spectator's head movements. In sum, then, the viewing situation filters out many cues which would call our attention to the screen as a surface.

1 Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," *Film Quarterly XXVIII,* 2 (Winter 1974-75), 45.

Now the above sketch simply sets out some negative conditions for our viewing; a complete analysis would have to consider all the factors of the image and of the viewer's mental processes as well. If I cannot examine all of the perceptual conditions of film-viewing here, still less can I be exhaustive in applying a perceptual analysis to the representational functions of camera movement. Yet we can begin to ask how camera movement asks to be "read" perceptually. Though the temporal and expressive functions of camera movement are extremely important, I shall confine this analysis to some problems of space. What kinds of spatial perception are entailed by camera movement?

Representing space, depicting an absent space, seems fundamental to camera movement as ordinarily used. Like most of our critical concepts in cinema, however, "camera movement" is not derived from a unified critical theory, but rather has issued from a mixture of technical jargon and critical parlance. The very notion "camera" already situates us not before the cinema screen, but in a film studio, in production surroundings which include a mechanism called *a camera.* A profilmic event, this account might go, exists in empirical reality and is filmed by the camera. This event is represented, re-played on the screen. On this account, camera movement simply means that the apparatus which films this event moves while filming this event. The word "pan" then names one kind of movement of the apparatus, "tilt" another, "tracking shot" another. And both the camera's movement and the filmed event are recorded by the camera itself, to be re-presented on the screen.

The advantages of the pro-filmic event account are apparent. The model can be made quite exhaustive. With the aid of spherical geometry, we could plot within a three-dimensional system of coordinates any sort of camera movement in relation to any sort of subject movement. Such a geometrical system would have an advantage over the empirical terminology in revealing deductively many possibilities of camera movements which are seldom used and for which, in fact, we have no names. (What do we call it when the camera spins on its own axis, either horizontally or vertically?) By assuming the empirical existence of an object which can be manipulated in a three-dimensional space, the profilmic event account could yield significant categories. The three-dimensionality implicit in the profilmic event model suggests as well a basis for the orthodox comparison between the camera and the human body. The head may rotate, that is, pan or tilt, or the entire organism may displace itself, may "locomote" by tracking or craning.

Still, the profilmic event model poses difficulties when we apply it to the problem of camera movement. Because this account repeats the problematic dualism between some innocent "real" event and some transformation of that event by the act of filming, the profilmic-event model cannot specify *the perceived screen event* which we identify as camera movement. Camera movement during filming is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the perception of camera movement in the finished film. Some obvious examples would be process work or backdrops unrolling behind people walking on treadmills. Animated film poses a supreme example of this problem: we may see camera movement in an animated cartoon even though the empirical camera has remained absolutely stationary during production. All such screen events use an immobile camera to present enough correct onscreen configurations for us to identify "camera movement". Similarly, the movement of the camera during production does not guarantee that a perceptible camera movement will appear on the screen. Recall how, in the "Lullaby of Broadway" number in *Golddiggers of 1935,* Winnie Shaw's head, a pinpoint of light at the center of the screen, comes swimming out of the

darkness at us. In production, of course, the camera was moved, but on the screen the overriding perceptual fact is that of a face floating out toward us. More elaborately, in Dreyer's film *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc,* though the camera did move in production, in certain shots figures walk across the room against blank backgrounds and don't seem to be moving; they seem to jog in place. Similar effects occur in the films of Miklos Jancso and Michael Snow. The conclusion is that we need another model for describing camera movement, one that does not rely on a conception of some profilmic event through which, around which, toward which the camera is moved.

There must be perceptual cues which determine a "camera-movement effect" onscreen *regardless of whether the camera moved in production or not,* (since we recognize camera movement without necessarily making any inferences about production circumstances, and since animators have intuitively understood what cues will produce that camera-movement effect). But the cues must be visual ones, (Or in the case of the sound cinema, visual and sonic ones: This essay confines itself to visual cues.) This of course, already limits the range of the cues available for us to sense the camera-movement effect. In our normal movement through the world we operate with a host of cues — kinesthetic cues, bodily movement cues, tactile cues, labyrinthine cues, cues for balance and gravity, as well as visual cues. Special screening conditions, of course, sometimes supply those other cues as well, as in Hale's Tours or Disney World's "Trip to the Moon" ride. But usually cinema screenings omit such desiderata and make visual and sonic cues do duty for all the other kinds. From the standpoint of the history of the concept of representation, this funneling of information onto the visual channel would be another symptom of the Post-Renaissance linkage of sight with truth. Perceptually, however, limited cues can still be powerful. For instance, in ordinary situations, nonvisual cues are utilized during *active* locomotion, when we determine our movement through the world or some movement of our body. But passive locomotion, say, riding on a train or bus, enforces a much greater dependence upon purely visual cues. When we sit in an unmoving train, the sight of a passing train can even mislead us into thinking that *we* are moving and the other train is stationary. Our dependence on visual cues is more strongly marked in a passive locomotion situation, *the situation most analogous to the cinema spectator's viewing situation.*

Camera movement, I suggest, presents us with a constricted but effective range of visual cues for subjective movement. The primary cue for recognizing the camera movement effect is what psychologists of perception call "monocular movement parallax," a concept first explained by the psychologist Helmholz. When we walk through a countryside with eyes fixed on the distant horizon, he noted;

> ". . . objects that are at rest by the wayside . . . appear to glide past us in our field of view in the opposite direction to that in which we are advancing. More distant objects do the same way, only more slowly, while very remote bodies like the stars remain permanent positions in the field of view. . . Evidently, under these circumstances, the apparent angular velocities of objects in the field of view will be inversely proportional to their real distances away; and consequently, safe conclusions can be drawn as to the real distance of the body."[2]

2 Quoted in James J. Gibson, *The Perception of the Visual World* (Cambridge, 1950), 119.

In more formal terms, for the impression of subject movement to arise, a differential angular velocity must exist between the line of sight to one object and the line of sight to any other object at a different distance and/or angle within the visual field. Mathematical formulas have been constructed to cal-

culate and predict such differential velocities In applying to camera movement, we could on the basis of onscreen evidence state mathematically the conditions for, say, a pan shot; that is, a specific set of differential angular velocities that are obtained among objects moving across the frame. For the camera movement effect to occur, monocular movement parallax must be read from the entire visual field. If only a part or item in the visual field yields that differential angular velocity across time, then camera movement will not be specified — only the movement of that object will be specified. Thus camera movement can be described and analyzed perceptually, as a screen phenomenon. A Gestalt psychologist like Rudolph Arnheim could explain that total displacement of the visual field effected by camera movement by using concepts like dependence, enclosedness, variability, size differences, and so on.[4] A psychophysicist like James J. Gibson would hold that perceived subject movement is indicated by changes in the rate of displacement of contours in a visual field; Gibson could analyze that flowing optical array on the screen into features of texture gradient, and then the relationships between those features could be specified to give us an analytical description of camera movement.[5] However different the theoretical frames of reference, camera movement could be described as a system of perceptual relationships.

One of the principal kinds of information that differential angular velocities produce is spatial. I suggested earlier that the conventional viewing situation works to block our perception of the screen as surface. What enters to fill that blocked perception is an extensive system of cues for reading the represented space as possessing depth. Within this system, the moving camera becomes a powerful tool for rendering a static visual array as three-dimensional. A still picture — a photograph, or a painting, or a single frame of film — yields a great number of perceptual cues for the layout of the depicted space — the familiar size of objects, overlap of objects, shadows attached to objects, cast shadows, detail perspective, aerial perspective, linear perspective, color, and others. Experiments have shown, however, that despite such cues a static picture retains a certain fundamental ambiguity about its spatial layout. In 1946, for instance, Adelbert Ames constructed a room which could be viewed only through a peephole, and showed that when a single vantage point forbade the spectators' investigating the object from other positions, a crisscross of lines and planes could be read from that point as a perfectly legible image (a chair, say). But only from that point. This entails that the perceptual configuration "chair" can be produced by an infinite number of possible arrays. As Gombrich puts it, "Any number of objects can be constructed that will result in the identical aspect from the peephole."[6] Similarly, R.L. Gregory has constructed objects which seem impossible and contradictory when viewed from a single fixed point.[7] The conclusion has been that any pictured scene may be read as an infinite set of possible three-dimensional shapes. The static image does not specify the physical layout of a depicted space, Now the familiarity of objects and the movement of objects (as in cinema) reduce such ambiguity considerably. But subject movement can virtually eliminate any ambiguity. "In any given configuration," J.J. Gibson writes, "the optical flow [produced when moving from one point to another], the transformation, is specific to that layout of surfaces, and no other."[8] That is, subject movement gives us a sufficient amount of information to define a particular spatial layout. A moving vantage point supplies a dense stream of information about objects' slants, their edges, their corners, their surfaces, their relations with other objects. Julian Hochberg puts it another way: "When the observer moves, the informational economy of seeing only one spatial arrangement in front of him or her becomes overwhelm-

3 C.H. Graham, "Visual Space Perception," in Clarence H. Graham, ed., *Vision and Visual Perception* (New York, 1965), 51 1-516.

4 See Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception,* second edition (Berkeley, 1972), 394 ff.

5 See Gibson, *Perception, and The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (Boston, 1966), 161.

6 The experiment is described in E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (Princeton, 1965), 248 ff.

7 R.L. Gregory, *The Intelligent Eye* (New York, 1970), 37ff.

8 Gibson, *Senses,* 199.

ingly greater than that of any other. In fact, it appears that if he uses all the visual information that is available, there is no way at all of fooling a moving observer once we let him determine his own movements."[9] So in its most usual employment, the moving camera replaces that free binocular movement parallax which we surrender upon settling into our cinema seats and substitutes a monocular movement parallax that can eliminate an enormous amount of ambiguity about the spatial layout of that scenographic space.

The ability of subjective movement to endow static arrays with depth is usually called the "kinetic depth effect." As camera movement, the kinetic depth effect operates to some degree in panning, tilting, and all other rotational movements around the axis of the camera itself. But the kinetic depth effect achieves its greatest power to define space through the traveling shot. Indeed, directors seem to have intuitively understood how traveling shots can produce the kinetic depth effect. Some of the most celebrated early tracking shots, such as in Pastrone's *Cabiria* and Griffith's *Intolerance,* give volume to otherwise static architectural masses, rendering enormous sets legible as depth rather than as a flat construction. "In dollying," says Alan Dwan, "we find it's a good idea to pass things in order to get the effect of movement. We always noted that if we dollied past a tree, it became solid and round instead of flat."[10]

9 Julian Hochberg, *Perception* (Englewood Cliffs, 1964). 94.

10 Quoted in Peter Bogdanovich, *Alan Dwan* (New York).

No sooner have we eliminated the profilmic model, with the camera as a mechanism coasting through a three-dimensional studio, than we find ourselves confronting set of onscreen cues which install the viewer as a subject moving through a fictive scenographic layout. Monocular movement parallax thus defines not only the space of the image but also the perceptual position of the viewing subject. If only one spatial layout corresponds to the trajectory of the movement, it is also true that only one trajectory is specified by the differential angular velocities of the objects. Thus we can hardly resist reading the camera-movement effect as a persuasive surrogate for our subjective movement through an objective world. Under normal circumstances it is virtually impossible to perceive those screen events as merely a series of expanding, contracting, labile configurations. The cues overwhelmingly supply a compelling experience of moving through space. The charm of the profilmic-event model is that from those plentiful screen cues, the person versed in the ways of cinema can easily extrapolate a dualism of filmed event and a mobile filming mechanism. To use the terms proposed by Stephen Heath, camera movement operates in that zone between the spectator's "look" and the camera's look," perceptual cues serving to identify the two.[11]

This essay has necessarily limited itself to the perceptual representation of space through camera movement. Obviously the entire question needs more examination. We must study not only space but the temporal and expressive functions of camera movement. Because the camera-movement effect depends upon perceiving differential angular *velocities,* the duration and order of stimuli are also central to its effects. Through time, camera movement can reinforce, modify or shift expectations and hypotheses about the scenographic space. Moreover, because of the predominant anthropomorphism of our conception of camera movement, we need to look at the concept of the "expressive" features of camera movement (what makes a movement languid or portentous or fluid?). Finally, the whole problem needs to be examined in a historical frame of reference.[12] The most useful conclusion to this essay might be some suggestions about the extent to which a unified spectatorial position may be undermined by camera movement.

11 Stephen Heath, "Anato Mo," *Screen* XVII, 4 (1976).

12 I have suggested a start in this direction in "Camera Movement, The Coming of Sound, and The Classical Hollywood Style;" *Purdue Film Studies* II (1977).

If the mobile frame normally yields a strong illusion of a subjective movement through an objective space, a filmmaker can seek disturb the objectivity of that space or disturb the subjective status of the view of that space. First, it is possible to establish a scenographic space which, in one way or another, becomes difficult to read. In Murnau's *Sunrise,* for example, the country village has been built in false perspective, and the camera movement through the village makes objects which are already unnaturally large or small swell or diminish with excessive speed. Later in *Sunrise,* when the husband goes out to meet the vamp in the swamp, the camera picks him out against the moon, swings left and through some trees to reveal the vamp, standing and waiting for him under a second moon. Disparity is built into the scenographic space itself; the profilmic event becomes contradictory. Or in many films the camera will show us a character in a locale, track or pan away, and reveal the same character elsewhere dressed differently. (Such effects occur with various inflections in films like *Vampyr, Last Year at Marienbad, The Passenger,* and *Partner.)* Obviously, offscreen space always plays a considerable role in camera movement, but most particularly here. What is violated is our expectation that the space outside our traveling vision will be homogeneous with what is within our traveling vision. These examples also indicate that these spaces become inconsistent not through a strictly perceptual interrogation of the camera-movement effect, but through narrative systems that establish norms about what could be in a scenographic space.

There is a second, potentially more radical possibility; that of troubling the subjective position defined by camera movement. At first glance, a simple device offers itself: simply stipulate that a camera is producing the image, thus foregrounding the apparatus as mechanism and not organism. But the camera point-of-view is easily read as that of a machine steered by a human subject. A camera implies a cameraperson. Our eye then becomes simply that of the camera, still comfortably moving through an objective array.

More significantly, the viewer's position in camera movement may be made difficult through the creation of inconsistent subject positions. For one thing, there are the possibilities of constructing contradictory or difficult subject positions by fracturing the image so that the camera movement is no longer rendered as the movement of a subjective eye through an objective world. Gance's superimposed tracking shots, the pendular and prismatic movements in Leger/Murphy's *Ballet Mécanique,* and the split-screen effects in Vertov's films explore this possibility. Alternatively, the camera movement can block an anthropomorphic reading, refusing it as an intelligible or likely surrogate for bodily movement. Since camera movement makes kinesthetic cues come to us through the visual channel, it's possible to present kinesthetic cues which violate some normal conceptions of how our body might move. What comes to mind immediately are those unnamed movements forbidden by the dominant narrative and stylistic systems in cinema. The assumption is that since the camera is to its support as the head is to the body, the camera cannot execute those movements that our head cannot or "normally" does not execute. To my knowledge, it is chiefly animated film and American avant-garde films which have begun to explore the possibilities of such forbidden movements; Michael Snow's *La Région Centrale* is the major film here.

Finally, there is the possibility of making a subjective-movement position inconsistent at the narrative level as well. This will often involve a playing upon point-of-view shots. At the close of Oshima's *Battle of Tokyo,* the protagonist Motoki as subject and point-of-view character, splits and so does

our position as and with him. At the beginning of a handheld shot, we are posited as seeing what he sees through a movie camera's viewfinder. But in the course of the shot, he runs out from behind the camera, into his/our viewpoint. What were his eyes, his bodily movement, and thus ours, are no longer his, and the idea of "our" position becomes highly problematic. It is a permissible play with convention to have a character enter a shot which has been initially established as her or his point of view, but *not* when that point of view is defined as that of a camera in his hands. Moreover, Motoki runs into our field of vision *carrying* the camera through which we are presumably seeing him. Our subjectivity is split, our position impossible.

As most of these examples have suggested, camera movement's impression of reality has chiefly been undermined at the level of narrative, not at the level of perceptual activity. This is probably why camera movement is usually studied as a narrative device. The ways in which the camera-movement effect yields certain perceptual cues are rarely contested. Most saliently Michael Snow's films point toward ways of making problematic the sheerly perceptual features of camera movement. Consider only one strategy, that of camera movement velocity (a strategy apparent in a film like ⟷). At the highest speeds, or with abrupt and unpredictable stopping and starting, acceleration and deceleration, a pan shot can make it difficult to read a space as scenographic. There is produced a tension between reading the shot as the movement of a body swiveling quickly or that of a series of abstract patterns whizzing across the screen. Such a constant hesitation between readings of the image defines, perhaps, some conditions for working upon the sheerly perceptual features of camera movement. Problematic camera movements, contesting the unity of the scenographic space or the unity of the viewing subject, have impelled us to ask, "What is seen?" or "Who is seeing this?"; theorists and filmmakers must now ask, "What is this mode of seeing?"

SPECTACLE AND SPECTATOR

Patricia Mellancamp

Looking Through the American Musical Comedy

And we; spectators, always
everywhere,
looking at everything and never 'from'

Rainer Maria Rilke

This paper assumes that the musical comedy is a sub-category of classical Hollywood cinema, having significant codifications of conventions which warrant labeling it a genre. These codifications create a movement between narrative and spectacle, shifting the position of the spectator from the "once upon a time" of the fictive narrative to the "here and now" of the performed spectacle. The spectacles, enclosed units which mirror the larger structure of the film, often reveal both the repressed cinematic apparatus and the suppressed "family romance" thematic, thereby repositioning the spectator within the text. Thus, three problems will be addressed: the musical comedy as classical narrative; the codes operative in the spectacle which precipitate the shifting position of the spectator; and the functioning of that shift. The notion of the fiction film as a process operating with and on the spectator will underlie both sections of the paper. The critical model assumed here is derived from the constructs of classical narrative evolved by Christian Metz and Stephen Heath.[1] Genre is defined in accordance with Tzvetan Todorov's approach as codifications of procedures and responses which represent codes shared by the writer and the reader.[2] These three theorists emphasize the relationship between text and reader, film and spectator, as an active process of shared conventions.

1 Stephen Heath's essay, "Narrative Space," *Screen,* 17 (Autumn 1976), 68112, is frequently cited. However, other concepts were gained from two intensive seminars conducted by Heath at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Spring 1976 and Spring 1977, under the auspices of the Center for Twentieth Century Studies. The specific texts of Christian Metz used here are "The Imaginery Signifier," *Screen,* 16 (Summer 1975), 14-76, and "The Fiction Film and Its Spectator: A Metaphychological Study." *New Literary History, 8* (Autumn 1976). 75-103.

2 Tzvetan Todorov. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach* to a *Literary Genre,* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1975).

Classical Narrative

Classical narrative. dated by Metz as 1933-1955, creates and preserves film's illusion of "reality, of verisimilitude as 'truth'," the truth of vision. Formal spatial and temporal elements are subordinated to the consuming process of the narrative, centered on the human figure, actor, or character as the dominant focus in a linear cause-effect chain. In his essay, "Narrative Space," Heath describes this process: "The fiction film disrespects space in order to construct a unity that will bind spectator and film in its fiction" (p. 101). The spectator is thereby located in a position of intelligibility, temporarily and spatially stabilized by the form's adherence to the 180 and 30 degree rules, eyeline matches, and other "invisible" continuity editing practices. Moving inexorably to resolution through an intricate balancing of symmetry, by constant repetitions and rhymings on the sound and image tracts, classical narrative meticulously follows the rules of its conventional game. Pleasure is provided by the play of these shared conventions: relays of anticipations and delays which alternately create expectations and provide gratification for the spectator. This process is concluded by the narrative's resolution; the spectator, voyeur of a hermetic world, is led to stasis, "The End."

This operation, the "work" of the narrative which "sutures," "binds," and "contains" the spectator in the fiction, is dependent upon the suppression of the spectator's awareness of the film mechanism and of the cinematic machine as an institution of social regulation.[3] Thus, the narrative overlays and contains the revelation of the mechanism's operations and consequently the spectator's awareness of self. Film theorists Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean-Louis Baudry have illustrated this ideological process. Comolli argues that the dominance of the ideology of the visual in Western representational art contributes to this concealment.

3 For clarification of notion of "suture," see Heath, pp. 98 and 99.

The camera, "a reduced model" of the machine, is the only visible component. The invisible elements of cinema, among them "the processes of grading and sound mixing," are located in the "hidden and unreasoned areas of cinema." In his detailed historical essay, he concludes:

> It is to the mutual reinforcement of an ideological demand ("to see life as it is") and the economic demand to make it a source of profit that cinema owes its being.[4]

4 Jean-Louis Comolli, "Technique and Ideology: Camera, Perspective, Depth of Field," *Film Reader,* 2 (January 19771, 132 and 138.

Baudry, adopting similar premises, expands the model of the cinematic apparatus and asserts:

> Both specular tranquility and the assurance of one's own identity collapse simultaneously with the revealing of the mechanism, that is, of the inscription of the film work.[5]

5 Jean-Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," 27 (Winter 1974-75), 46.

Christian Metz advances this argument in "The Imaginary Signifier:"

> The cinematic signifier does not work on its own account but is employed entirely to remove the traces of its own steps.[6]

Heath elucidates the process that results in the suppression of the filmic mechanism for the spectator:

> Classical cinema does not efface the signs of production, it contains them, according to narrativisation. It is that process that is the action of the film for the Spectator.[7]

6 Metz, "The Imaginary Signifier," p. 44.

7 Heath, p. 97.

This suppression of the mechanism through a set of "invisible" techniques — more precisely, "visible for the narrated" (Heath, p. 90) — enables the narrative to dominate classical cinema. The emergent fiction, the overriding theme of this narrative is "family romance." The End restores patriarchal structures, the restitution of a briefly disturbed system of Law and Order. The resolution spirals back to the beginning.

Musical Comedy as Classical Narrative

The narrative of musical comedy coincides with classical narrative. In fact, musicals depict a literal version of "family romance," a thematic often embedded within another "story" in other genres. Musicals virtually re-enact the ritual of re-creation/pro-creation of the privileged heterosexual couple, the nucleus of patriarchal society. As in classical narrative, the work of musicals is the containment of potentially disruptive sexuality, a threat to the sanctity of marriage and the family.

A youthful couple loves at first sight, meets and overcomes obstacles, and unites in the end. The rise-to-public-success story often parallels the romance. A surrogate family surrounds the central couple and serves several functions: ensuring that the couple couples; providing comic elements; and reversing, parodying, or rhyming the relationship of the privileged couple. Actual parents, authority figures, and children are usually absent, impotent, or relegated to off-screen space. Unlike other genres, the Oedipal drama is often resolved before the film begins. (In *Gigi* Gaston's father is dismissed in the dialogue; Gigi's mother is silenced by closing the door on her off-screen singing. Annette Kellerman's father in *Million Dollar Mermaid* loses his job, sickens, ages, and finally dies.) Love and fame, or sex and money as interchangeable commodities, are ultimately bestowed upon the privileged couple as a reward for "true talent" and for proper, socially accepted behavior. The End is the beginning of a new family. Love and marriage do go together like a horse and carriage.

The dominance of the "family romance" theme as exemplified by the privileged, altar-bound couple is ensured by many codes, among them center framing through camera placement, re-framing by camera movement and editing, elevated height of "stars," and the presence of an on-screen audience re-making centrality. Marginality is a place from which the characters within the film look. Centrality is the space in which one is looked at. These are among the "invisible" codes that "bind the spectator in place, the suturing

central position that is the sense of the images" (Heath, p. 99).

A brief analysis of the function of these codes in two musicals, *Singin'in the Rain* (1952) and *The Bandwagon* (1953), illustrates how they generate the narrative. *Singin' in the Rain* creates the privileged couple by eliminating the male buddy, Cosmo Brown, from the initial triangle of the opening shot and hence, from the film's conclusion. After the MGM logo, the film begins with a full shot of Don Lockwood, Kathy Seldon, and Cosmo Brown in yellow raincoats and hats against a blue backdrop singing the title song. Titles then re-mark the triangle: first, Gene Kelly; second, Donald O'Connor; third, Debbie Reynolds. After this initial equivalent framing and titling, Cosmo is repeatedly shoved to a marginal position, but not because he fails as does Lina Lamont when occupying the central place. In fact, as musical director and as performer, he initiates much of the film's action. It is immediately one-half of the central couple. Upon his arrival at the Hollywood film premiere, Brown is pushed to frame left, a viewing place of marginality. Lockwood's centrality is marked by center framing, intercut closeups during the "flashback" montage, and by his role as narrator, which grants him the supreme authority of the voice. However, this system of framing alters when the two friends are alone together, talking or performing. In these instances, e.g. in "Moses" and "Good Morning," they share center frame. Lockwood even serves as audience for Brown's solo performance, "Make 'Em Laugh." The most overt examples of Brown's marginality occur during the encounters with R.F., the producer, and Lockwood. While Brown is making artistic decisions, he is center framed by camera placement, re-marked by the marginal placement in the mise-en-scene of R.F. and Lockwood. After suggesting a solution, Brown is immediately pushed to a marginal position. Secondary players can occupy this privileged center space only for brief moments. The key to the complexity of Cosmo and to the conventions of framing is his and the spectator's awareness and apparent acceptance of his marginality.

The interchangeability of Kathy and Cosmo and his implied asexuality is an exchange that further reinforces his marginality and foreshadows his inevitable elimination. In "Make 'Em Laugh" Cosmo dances with a dummy, an action repeated in "Good Morning" which in many ways is the rhyme of "Make 'Em Laugh." In the raincoat segment, Kathy dances a hula, Don mimics the steps of a Spanish toreador, and Cosmo dances with his raincoat as a dummy while wearing Kathy's hat. After this spectacle, Cosmo stands in front of Kathy, miming her voice. This action is rhymed at the end of the film when Cosmo replaces Kathy behind Lina Lamont and sings. After Lamont's humiliation, Lockwood rushes out, reclaims center stage, and calls Kathy up to the stage while Cosmo descends to his marginal position of conductor of the orchestra and the union of the couple. He is totally eliminated in the final images of the film as the privileged, heterosexual couple kiss in front of a huge billboard promoting their film and their love. The "suturing central position" of both the couple in the frame and the spectator to the film is "the sense of the images," the family romance thematic.

The Bandwagon, in contrast, partially displaces the spectator's accustomed position by a system of symmetry and asymmetry that alternates centrality and marginality. Displacement occurs because in this film it is the "star" instead of a secondary character who undergoes the ordeal or marginality before achieving the resolution of total centrality. The first instance of "star" marginality is Tony Hunter/Fred Astaire's encounter with Ava Gardner at Grand Central Station. Hunter is framed left, watching with a quizzical look. This asymmetry is immediately rhymed by symmetry: the marginal moment

is followed by a centered "By Myself." Hunter walks and sings the song, the tracking camera following him while unaware porters move in the opposite direction. The spectator is thus granted a privileged position which demonstrates the centrality and "talent" of the star. This song is repeated during the film's resolution. Hunter hums the tune in his dressing room while his valet adorns his slim body in the proper Astaire attire, tails and a top hat. Hunter carries the melody backstage, meets the acclaim of the play's cast, and receives the promise of marriage in the kiss of the woman. The restoration of the "star" and the re-creation of the couple occur at the same moment. The spectator is led to stasis, in this instance the resolution of the framing dilemma which in many ways replicates the privileged couple/family romance thematic. The end re-verses the beginning.

This alternation of marginality and centrality is maintained throughout the film, particularly in Hunter's scenes with Jeff Cordova, the "genius" producer/director/actor. In their initial encounters, Hunter is marginal and Cordova central. For example, during Cordova's play, Hunter is in the wings, watching. He is placed frame left in the long shot, excluded from the frame as the camera dollies into a medium shot of Cordova and the Martons, and repeatedly ignored in the dialogue. When the four move backstage to discuss their new "show," Hunter is seated in a white chair frame left, again watching. Cordova walks and talks while the camera follows him, often excluding the marginal Hunter from the frame. Hunter eventually asserts his individuality by standing; the two men then meet mid-frame. But after this brief frame equality, Hunter again sits, in a marginal place while Cordova remains standing, retaining control of center frame. Round one to Cordova. This segment is rhymed in the latter half of the film during the beer party sequence with the chorus and the Martons. Cordova is seated frame right, while Hunter stands in control of center frame. They meet mid-frame, resolving the final shift of authority. The frame has passed from Cordova to Hunter, the rightful heir to centrality, a heritage granted him by his role in the privileged couple.

The spectator's sense of displacement or discomfort during Hunter's moments of marginality is created by prior knowledge of Astaire as "star," but most importantly by a series of privileged glimpses in the film. Among these are the already mentioned "By Myself," Hunter's center framing between his friends, Lily and Lester Marton, and the "Shine on Your Shoes" spectacle. The Martons have left Hunter after their walk down a decaying Broadway. Thus, no continuing characters in the film witness this spectacle which again presents the "truth" of the Astaire/Hunter talent. The anonymous audience in the penny arcade mirrors the anonymous, average viewer in the movie theatre, in league with each other and with the omnipotent camera as purveyor of the truth of vision. The spectator knows. It's only a matter of time before the world of the film will confirm it. This moment of recognition is the film's conclusion, the resolution of the framing ordeal and the restitution of fame and the family. The framing system of "Shine on Your Shoes" is identical to that of the resolution: Hunter is center framed, reframed by camera movement and editing, dominant in height on the shoeshine platform, a centrality re-marked by the presence of an on-screen, appreciative audience. The frame is righted; the star is knighted. However, the operation of these codes that precipitate the shift in the position of the spectator is designed to be "invisible," and the apparatus, in Baudry's phrase "the inscription of the film work," concealed. Up to this point, musicals obviously obey classical narrative rules.

The Spectacle

Narrativisation, which "contains," "binds," "sutures" the spectator into the fiction, is usually a covert operation with concealed codes. The spectacles in musical comedy overtly function as enclosed units within the larger narrative, rupturing the perceptual transference of the spectator to the filmic illusion of "reality" by an interaction of codes that momentarily displace or halt the forward movement of the diegesis. Spectacles are the literal, visible enactment of "that moment of closure that shift the spectator as the subject in its terms" (Heath, p. 99). It was argued earlier that musical comedy is a literal version of "family romance," a thematic usually embedded within another story in other genres. In an analogous fashion, the alternation between narrative and spectacle is a literal, dramatic version of the spectator's shifting position vis-a-vis the text.[8]

Spectacles are closed units within the larger narrative, set off by a system of brackets. First and most importantly, spectacles are bracketed by complete musical scores. Music is a foregrounded code which symmetrically re-occurs as "functional" scoring in the narrative segments and under titles, thereby either anticipating or re-calling the spectacle. Singing and dancing are the unusual performances modes but not a necessary component of the genre. Because music is the dominant code, the performer can sing, dance, skate, or tumble to its rhythms. Hence the term, "musical comedy." When the music concludes so does the spectacle.

The opening and closing musical notes are re-marked by another system of mirrored bracketing shots. Identical shots of theatre stages, curtains rising, orchestras and conductors and/or on-screen audiences open and close the spectacles. This theatrical iconography refers both to the origins of the genre and to the spectator in the movie theatre, usually a proscenium stage with an inserted, reflective screen. For example, the "Girl Hunt Ballet" spectacle in *The Bandwagon* opens with a long shot from the stage down on the conductor, the orchestra (two flutists) and a "theatre" audience behind the orchestra pit. The spectacle closes with the same shot. Modified bracketing shots, cuts to high angle long shots, track-ins past balconies, railings, etc., operate in a similar mirrored manner, opening and closing the spectacle.

Within these clearly bracketed spectacles, the performer denotes "to-be-looked-at-ness." Four interacting codes operate to sustain this central position, the "point of the film's spatial relations" (Heath, p. 99) for the spectator:

1. Center framing of the performer by camera placement.
2. Re-framing of the performer by camera movement and editing. In the spectacles these movements are choreographed to the rhythm of the music which parallels the movement of the performer.
3. Elevated height of the performer. Performers are often placed on "real" stages, as in the "Girl Hunt Ballet," of functional equivalents of stages — the shoeshine stand in "Shine on Your Shoes," the desk and chairs in "Moses," the stairs and tiered levels of Lockwood's house in "Good Morning."
4. Presence of an audience. This audience can be a "real" theatre audience ("Girl Hunt Ballet"), a chorus ("Broadway Melody"), a single viewer (Lockwood in "Make 'Em Laugh," the vocal coach in "Moses"),the spectator of the film (by direct looks and gestures addressed to the camera as in the conclusion of "Good Morning"), or a combination of the above. Whatever the source of the look, the camera, the characters within the film, or the spectator, all looks are funneled to the performer as "star."

8 The concept of "shift" is used to indicate that meaning does not arise from an object relation but from the position of the spectator in relation to the film text.

"What moves in film, finally, is the spectator, immobile in front of the screen. Film is the regulation of that movement, the individual as subject held in a shifting and placing of desire, energy contradiction … This is the investment of film in narrativisation." (Heath, p. 99.)

The erotic messages of the spectacles, however subdued by Hollywood convention and regulation, are celebrations of the body and the voice, intensified by the interaction/duplication of visual and aural codes. Mise-en-scene, camera movement, editing, and sound rhythmically re-mark each other with a high degree of redundancy. These bracketed and rhythmically marked spectacles, *set in and apart from* the overall movement of the narrative, accord the musical a particular status in the category of fiction film. Musicals make explicit and even exhibit in their textual organization certain operations that other genres of classic narrative work to suppress.

The Spectator in the Spectacle

In "The Fiction Film and Its Spectator," Metz draws an analogy between film and dream that lends insight into the function of the spectacle within the narrative:

> . . . the spectator of a novelistic romanesque film no longer quite knows that he is at the movies. It also happens, conversely, that the dreamer up to a certain point knows that he is creaming — for instance, in the intermediary states between sleep and waking. . . , and more generally at all those times when thoughts like "I am in the middle of a dream" or "This is only a dream" spring to mind, thoughts which, by a single and double movement, come to be integrated in the dream of which they form a part, and in the process open a gap in the hermetic sealing-off that ordinarily defines dreaming. (p. 77)

Through the redundance and repetition of codes, through the revelation of usually "invisible" codes such as music, thereby alerting the spectator to the fact of filmic illusion which is mirrored in the illusion of the spectacle within the narrative, spectacles in musicals may be said to "open a gap in the hermetic sealing-off that ordinarily defines" classical narrative film. The spectator is awakened to the "here and now" of performance and to the awareness that the events of the "once upon a time" of the fictive narrative are not "real." (Gene Kelly and Donald O'Conner are *really* dancing, but Lockwood and Brown are only acting.) Moreover, as Metz states: "Certain nightmares wake one up (more or less), just as do certain excessively pleasurable dreams." (Metz, p. 78) Spectacles can be considered as excessively pleasurable moments in musicals, awakening the spectator to the fact of filmic illusion. Ironically then, the moments of greatest fantasy and potentially greatest identification would coincide in musicals with the moments of maximum spectator alertness. But this seeming contradiction must be examined further.

Just as musicals literally enact both the "family romance" thematic and the process of shifting the spectator's position, so do they dramatize the look. The privileged couple falls in love "at first sight," a drama which overtly signals the significance in the spectacles of the classical recipe of looks, the mechanism which creates identifications which locate the spectator in the text. First, all looks are funneled to the performer. Second, the sealed code of looks is often broken, the performer acknowledging the presence of the camera as spectator, present at the "immediate" moment of performance. And third, there is an absence of point of view shots or shot-reverse shots from the performer's position. The look turns into a stare, the drama of vision becomes the spectacle of vision. The performer denotes "to-be-looked-at," not "to look;" the passive exhibitionist arouses the active voyeur in the spectator. *The Bandwagon* demonstrates the tension that occurs when the characters' and the camera's look work in opposition to the spectator's look and consequent identification and the resolution that results when all looks work in unison.

The look not only positions the spectator in place enabling a permutation of possible identifications; it is also a source of sexual pleasure, the pleasure of scopophilia in relation to the "star" which "takes other people as objects subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze."[9] Sexuality is coded by the performer's movements, the love lyrics, and an often lush mise-en-scene which intensify the pleasurable fantasy of the body and the voice.

According to Metz and other film theorists, the look at a source of identification is predicated on the Lacanian mirror phase. The spectator of the film, like the child in front of the mirror, is in a sub-motor state, perceiving a reflection of self, yet a more complete, capable self: "there is no break in continuity between the child's game with the mirror. . . and certain localised figures of the cinematic codes."[10] In film, this immobile spectator in front of the screen can identify with actor, character, camera, projector, screen, and finally, with self as the source of the look.

> the spectator is the searchlight . . . duplicating the projector, which itself duplicates the camera, and he is also the sensitive surface duplicating the screen which itself duplicates the film strip.[11]

In Metz's phrase, "the spectator *identifies with himself* . . . as a pure act of perception" (p. 51). This accords with Mulvey's description of the functioning of the mirror phase for the child: "This is the moment when an older fascination with looking…collides with the initial inklings of self-awareness."[12] Two factors emerge from the analogy: the spectator's immobility and silence in a darkened theatre; and the identification (recognition/mis-recognition) with a superior body and/or voice. During the spectacles, the discrepancy between the spectator's immobility and silence and the performer's and/or camera's heightened mobility plus the foregrounded music/voice can result in awareness of that very immobility and silence — the place of the spectator *as* spectator in a movie theatre. At the same time, intensified identification with a superior self capable of fantastic athletic feats can occur, drawing the spectator further into the spectacle's fantasy. Tension results; the movement of the diegesis in ruptured by both possibilities, and the spectator is no longer completely sutured into the fiction. This gap is analogous to the gap of the dream, "the intermediary states between sleep and waking." Furthermore, the drama of that first vision of self in the mirror is re-enacted as literally as the couple falling in love at first sight. However, the difference consists in the spectator's awareness, and awareness that was not present in the first encounter with the mirror, and that wakes the spectator up by momentarily fracturing the "illusion of reality" of the larger narrative. Spectacles are momentarily subversive fantasy breaks in the wished-for "illusion of reality" of the narrative super-structure. These breaks displace the temporal advance of the narrative, providing immediate, regular doses of gratification rather than delaying the pressures until The End. (Spectacles satiate the spectator with several "Ends" as well as feeding the pleasure of repetition.) Through this play, the psychical energies of the spectator are granted freer movement and the signifiers less suppressed.

However, the spectacles are ultimately contained by the process of narrativisation. Just as the policeman must stop and censor Lockwood's sexual explosion in the cold shower spectacle, *Singin' in the Rain,* so does the narrative regulate, order, and contain the spectacles for the film's (and the spectator's) climax preserving the sealed impression of reality. As Metz states, "all diegetic fiims, quite apart from their content and degree of realism, play on this impression."[13] The circulation of the codes of "star," framing, and music/voice throughout both the narrative and spectacle segments maintains continuity, indicating that the spectacles mirror rather than rupture, at once anticipating

9 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen,* 16 (Autumn 1975), 8.

10 Metz, p. 58.

11 Ibid., p. 53.

12 Mulvey, p. 9.

13 Metz, "The Fiction Film," p. 79.

and delaying the resolution of the narrative. It might be said by analogy that the secondary processes of the narrative and the "invisible" filmic apparatus control the primary processes of the erotic spectacle — the pleasure of looking at the performer as sexual object of unbounded exhibitionism, and the excessive style of the spectacle. In this sense, the spectacle functions as a strip tease: spectacles are a tease, but finally part of a strip of classical narrative film.

The preceding analysis attempts to describe the musical comedy as a theoretical genre, a "specific version of process," or "excess" of classical narrative, "a series of relations with the spectator it imagines, plays, and sets as subject in its movement" (Heath, p. 97). The central hypothesis advanced, that musical comedy displays certain of the processes of classical narrative usually more rigidly contained in other genres, suggests several crucial problems or areas for further study:

1. The interaction between sound and image. Figure and voice interaction is an instance of complex exchange between codes. Other genres, war or horror films for example, which are dependent on foregrounded music might function in the same manner as musicals, without the comedy.
2. The relation of spectacle to narrative. The potentially disruptive alternation of spectacle and narrative exists as a possibility for radical cinema. This relates to the first question, voice-image inter-action; both are largely uncharted, unexplored problems.
3. Applicability of the theoretical model for musical comedy proposed here. The form is open to variation as illustrated by several recent films. Is the variation only a matter of historical evolution, the process of the genre becoming progressively less literal but functioning in the same way? Classical musicals, manufactured by the same industry that produces other narrative films, play the same game, varying the rules during the spectacles. Within a capitalist society, there seems to be only one commercially viable, visible game in town. Conventions might vary but the process stays. That's entertainment.

SELF-REFLEXIVITY IN DOCUMENTARY

Jeanne Allen

Documentary justifies itself as a category of film on the grounds of its ability to replicate reality not primarily for the purposes of entertainment or diversion but for evidence and argument. Verisimilitude for the documentary rests on film's ability to supply a visual record of events which transpired before the camera (its photographic component), minimizing the impact of the filming process to motivate or direct those events (the component most traditionally used to distinguish it from the fictional film), and adopting a filmic style associated with minimal manipulation of the pro-filmic event by the camera and editing process (a style sometimes shared with the fictional of directed film). Hence, documentary is quickly drawn into the ongoing debate among theorists as to the nature of filmic representation and art: whether film is artifice as Arnheim, Munsterberg, and Eisenstein would argue, or whether it is more completely a reproduction of reality as Bazin and Kracauer would have us believe. A paper of this length cannot address this larger issue except insofar as the debate over documentary has become a subset of this pivotal question. Yet the larger theoretical question is an extremely pertinent one given that verisimilitude constitutes documentary's very reason for being.

The second part of the definition of documentary as a category of film involves the sense of function or justification: to supply evidence or proof in an argument. Because documentary is a very engaged type of cinema, it brings considerable pressure to bear on its claim of verisimilitude. And this is the perspective from which the use of self-reflexive techniques in documentary film-making must be viewed. Self-reflexivity is defined here as any aspect of a film which points to its own processes of production: the conceptualization of a film, the procedures necessary to make the technology available, the process of filming itself, editing to construct a single presentation from separate segments of image and sound, the desires and demands of marketing the film, the circumstances of exhibition. These processes constitute film's manipulative nature. By presenting them self-reflexively, a documentary film can make an audience aware of the processes of production as a limitation on the film's neutral stance, its ability to document objectively. In doing so the film draws attention to the process of selecting and reconstructing events to convey meaning. Self-reflexivity becomes then a reaction against or a way of countering the traditional mode of the documentary which emphasizes verisimilitude.[1]

1 I am indebted to the editors of this journal, Teresa de Lauretis. David Allen and Bob Dickey for the intelligent criticism and suggestion which has shaped much of this discussion. It has been a pleasure to receive and respond to their careful scrutiny and clear thinking.

One would not then expect to see documentary self-reflexivity in areas which claim to be free of ideological conditioning and in which audiences accept professional authority and expertise in the absence of their own. Several kinds of observation make the claim of objectivity as the basis for professional authority and audience credibility. The anthropological documentary seeks to record evidence of a cultural life style gained from naturalistic or scientific observation. As cultural scientist, the anthropological filmmaker tends to find counterproductive any relativization of her/his perspective and to resist the notion that film incorporates a spectrum of decisions informed by the filmmaker's cultural values. Like other documentarists, the anthropological filmmaker uses film to state a truth, this time scientific, i.e. assumed to be outside the boundaries of ideology or cultural conditioning. As recently as 1974, Roger Sandall argued for the objective veracity of the filmic record for anthropological documentation.

> Realism in the cinema has been steadily modified by technical developments which have all tended to enlarge the possibility of observation, to bring the capabilities of cameras and sound recorders ever closer to the human eye and ear. The result is not just that the effect is more 'naturalistic.' It is that fact can be distinguished from fiction and true from false. . . an audience can never tell what happened, in camera or cuttingroom, when one part of the scene ended and the next began. The inclusiveness of a scene shot with a zoom lens removes all doubt. Watching it on the screen an audience shares with the cameraman one continuous observation which coheres. In such a scene the relation of elements is not merely suggested or implied: it is proved.[2]

2 Roger Sandall, "Observation and Identity," *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 41, No. 4 (Autumn 1972). pp. 192-96.

Sandall's faith in film technology's ability to increasingly approximate an event may result in further obscuring the ideological functions of film grammar. What Roland Barthes has suggested about the use of the photographic image in advertising might also apply to the increasing naturalism of the documentary mode of filmmaking: "This is without doubt a historically important paradox: the more technology develops the diffusion of information (and especially of images), the more it provides the means of disguising the constructed meaning under the appearance of a given meaning."[3] the technology and aesthetic of film naturalism may only conceal the operation of manipulative processes.

3 Roland Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image," *Working Papers in Cultural Studies,* Vol. 1 (Spring 1971). pp. 37-50.

A second prominent quarter from which the claim for documentary verisimilitude can be heard is that of television journalists who use documentary film as reportage. As Nicholas Garnham points out in a recent issue of *Screen,* "the impartial broadcasting institutions claim to 'reflect' the world. It is therefore essential for their ideology that they adopt the aesthetic mode which claims to do the same, i.e. naturalism."[4] Garnham argues that film technique is not neutral because of the ideological significance of film grammar. But when an audience accepts the objective or scientific claims of professionals, the informing power of ideology is not acknowledged nor need it be.

4 Nicholas Garnham, "TV Documentary and Ideology," *Screen,* Vol. 13, No. 2 (Summer 1972), pp. 109-15.

Consequently, the film spectator apprehends the "reality" presented by the film as the only one actually there for the filmmaker to show. That is why, as Michael Silverman has argued recently,[5] one cannot argue that the early films of Rossellini are politically revolutionary. Using a style which Bazin described as framing and containing reality rather than impinging upon it — long takes, depth of field, long shots — confers on the pro-filmic event the quality of a given whole in its totality. A world so presented is securely con-

5 Michael Silverman, "Rossellini and Leon Battista Alberti: The Center Power of Perspective," *Yale Italian Studies,* Vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter 1977), pp. 128-42.

stituted and authentic; existing structures are valid as they appear through such a style of filmic representation.[6]

One can see from the discussion above that the claim of objectivity and the credibility that ensues from it can rest on various combinations of the component parts of documentary verisimilitude: the technology of the photographic record, the integrity of the filmmaker's refusal to "influence" the profilmic event, a film style which minimizes manipulation, and the implicit authority of the professional who claims to "stand back" and neutrally observe. It is with this position in mind as the normative posture of the documentarist that we now turn to a discussion of the context in which documentary self-reflexivity appears. There are a variety of ways used to challenge the documentary's traditional mode, but they all share a desire to counter the claim of verisimilitude as a neutral posture. In varying degrees, the following uses of self-reflexivity in documentary film take a skeptical view of the dominant mode and of its assumptions with regard to the reality it seeks to document.

6 Silverman, p. 131.

7 Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 254.

Self-reflexivity is used as a kind of de-compression chamber in Jean Rouch's *Chronique d'un Eté* (19611, a film engaged in what Erik Barnouw called a "kind of hometown anthropology, a study of 'this strange tribe living in Paris.'"[7] Not only does the film use the cinema vérité principle of avowed participation by not hiding the machinery of film interviewing, but it ends with a segment which features the participants in the interviews discussing their reactions to the film. In a sense, the participants are given an opportunity to re-structure the previous reality with a commentary of their own and hence exert a measure of control previously reserved for the filmmaker. Rouch's experience in anthropological filmmaking had exposed him to criticisms for imposing on his footage tendentious narrations which contained interpreted significance without at the same time revealing the ways in which the film created significance. The addendum for *Chronique d'un Eté* is presented in contradistinction to the self-effaced style of the anthropological film, which disguises the fact that the filmmaker is the organizing consciousness.

The subjectivity of cinema vérité, employing such features as the hand-held camera which reminds the viewer of the specific, hence limited perspective of the camera, does. suggest a limitation or challenge to neutral omniscience. But these subjective qualities are not synonymous, I think, with self-reflexivity unless they comment on themselves within the scope of the film. One way of commenting upon a subjective film style as a particular and therefore relative one is to contrast it with film which is not congruent with such a style. Alain Resnais' celebrated short documentary, *Night and Fog* (1955), alternates contemporary color images of what used to be a Nazi concentration camp (accompanied by a highly personal voice-over meditation on the theme of the present's ability to bury the past) with stark black and white footage of the camp's atrocities during war-time. Resnais also alternates a continually tracking camera ferreting out details about the camps in present time with still shots of the victims of the camps. The black and white footage resists any attempt to be included in Resnais' personal narration. It seems to have a different ontological status; it belongs to historical record. The resistance of the black and white still footage conveys Resnais' message — that the past *cannot* be buried — at the same time that, by contrast, it points to the ways in which the filmmaker can manipulate his materials to express his own personal truth.

One of the clearest examples of documentary self-reflexivity used to demystify the traditional mode of documentary representation is Dziga Vertov's

Man With a Movie Camera (1929). On one level the film operates as a kind of explanation of magic tricks, not only the tricks of the cameraman and of the editor, but also the implicit "trickiness" that is built into film viewing. Vertov continually presents us with the super-human qualities of the camera followed by the human manipulation which yields them. As his explication of editing shows the viewer how the film is constructed, his own pattern of editing, which makes formal comparisons between the film crew and other types of workers, argues that filmmaking is also work rather than magical or "artistic" perfomance.[8] Vertov's film most clearly stands against an attitude which places film in a transcendent realm impervious to the spectator. Instead Vertov *explains* how film works, how it is organized, and that its sleight-of-hand is the result of human labor. Vertov matches his opposition between everyday common reality and the glamorous, romantic world of the fiction film with an opposition between filmmaking as the result of careful human manipulation and work and filmmaking as a seamless magical world, the mysterious creation of the Artist.

8 Judith Mayne, "Kino-Truth and Kino-Praxis," in this issue.

The compilation documentary's approach to self-reflexivity is not limited to the post-filming processes of assembling a film, but might also include its preliminary steps — selecting a topic, searching archives, assembling a unifying structure usually dominated by the soundtrack — thus including sonic elements and aspects of the production process. A compilation documentary might be self-reflexive in indicating the sources for and its use of stock footage, a practice which has bedeviled Jay Leyda, Raymond Fielding, and the United States Information Agency for different reasons.[9]

9 Jay Leyda, *Films Beget Films* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964). Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel: 1911 -1967* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972).
"History and All that Jazz," *Film Comment,* Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring 1965), pp. 64-66.

A compilation documentary which makes interesting forays in this direction is Jerry Kuehl's *The Siege of Leningrad* from the BBC's "The World at War" series. Kuehl would appear to be introducing a degree of self-reflexivity into this film by labelling the source of some of his footage, thus pointing to the fact that his film is an assemblage of disparate footage. The impulse to do so stems from a reaction against historical compilation films which are not so careful about combining footage of spontaneous historical incidents with footage of reconstructed events. By labelling his shots of the reunion of the Russian army after the siege of Leningrad as a reenactment done after the war for propaganda. purposes, Kuehl at one level demonstrates a mode of manipulation that can be introduced into the documentary. Kuehl's labelling places that footage in the following context: this is visual support but it is not historically accurate.

The effect of the disclaimer, however, is not to condition the audience's regard for the historical veracity of the film by suggesting a way in which the camera can effect the presentation of an event. Rather it is intended to disavow the possibility of such a limitation in the rest of the film. Within the category of reenactment as suspect manipulation, the distinction is valid according to the filmmaker's best knowledge. But the only other case of "labelling" or indicating the status or origin of the film footage blurs the distinction between "neutral" and "committed" sequences. Kuehl uses some *March of Time* footage accompanied by its narration and music with the implication not that the footage is historically suspect but that it was shot and used within the ideological context of the *March of Time* series. The segment may signal to the audience the way in which documentary footage is used at different historical points for ideological purposes, just as the archival footage Kuehl has assembled for his film is being used at times to illustrate the narration of a particular revisionist historian reflecting upon World War II in the 1970's.

The interesting difference between these two examples of labelling footage is that the first serves to underscore the veracity of all the historical footage not labelled "reenactment" and suggests that it is free from the taint of manipulation; while the second instance calls into question, if only momentarily, the neutral stance of the compilation documentary as historical record. The *March of Time/World at War* analogy is intriguing despite the fact that Kuehl nowhere else seems to be aware or makes explicit the conditioning of his own footage — the selectivity and length of his shots, the manner in which they are edited together, the historian's structuring narration, the highly dramatic music, and the muted but eloquent voice of Laurence Olivier. The *March of Time* clip gives the viewer a glimpse of how self-reflexivity might operate in a compilation film, but its exceptional status leaves us with a film which is definitely not self-reflexive. The quality of neutral omniscience of the traditional documentary dominates. And that it does so more forcefully in the voice of Olivier, whom we do not see, than in the voice of the revisionist historian whom we do see, is a phenomenon that merits considerable examination.[10]

10 Bill Nichols, "Documentary Theory and Practice," *Screen,* Vol. 17, No.4 (Winter 1976 7), pp. 34-48. See his discussion of modes of address.

The important relationship between sound and visuals in the compilation film discussed above is of crucial importance in the last example I will discuss here. Indeed, Chris Marker's *Letter from Siberia* (1958) picks up the implications of potential manipulation between visuals and linguistic anchorage touched on in *The Siege of Leningrad* and makes them of focal concern.[11]

11 For the notion of linguistic anchorage, see Barthes, p. 43.

Letter from Siberia might be regarded as a meta-travelogue. While many of the patterns of the film resemble this sub-genre of the documentary, the film is simultaneously an essay-critique of the travelogue and its means of conveying meaning. Marker adopts methods of self-reflexivity, like other documentarists, for the purpose of critiquing a dominant tradition: documentaries which feature the quasi-anthropological and geographical scientist stance, unaware or unwilling to admit that their perspective is structured by ideology and cultural conditioning. Marker's primary mode of challenge is to present a series of discrepancies or contradictions which make the viewer aware that the documentaries disguise the separateness of sound and visual elements to emphasize the naturalness of the film's content.

Marker's film centers around the documentarist's use of the soundtrack to structure the meaning of the visuals. By placing his visuals at odds with the soundtrack, Marker indicates the film's capacity for making arbitrary connections or associations appear natural. For example, the film opens with the announcement on the soundtrack that the speaker is writing the listener a letter. The soundtrack then becomes that letter and the visuals implicitly become the illustration of the letter. "As I am writing you this letter, my eyes wander along the edge of a grove of birch trees. . ." While the voice-over describes what he sees, the camera pans in long shot the edge of a grove of birch trees. The viewer is locked into this mode of illustration when later in the film, during a presentation of the activities of the Low Temperature Institute's underground labs, the voice-over remarks, "We even see André Gide in person, as well preserved as the flowers." The fur-capped Mongolian-featured face in the foreground which 'illustrates' this sentence reminds us as viewers that we are easily caught up in a process of accepting highly discriminatory processes as factual givens.

Another example of the soundtrack/visuals discrepancy in this film hinges on one of the central motifs of the documentary and, indeed, of many travelogue documentaries: the contrast between the past and the present. The

voice-over announces: "And now here's the shot I've been waiting for, the shot you've all been waiting for, the shot no worthwhile film about a country in the process of transformation could possibly leave out: the contrast between the old and the new. . . Look closely because I will not show them to you again." But Marker does show them to us again and again, the first instance not thirty seconds after this announcement: a cart passing a heavy-duty truck, and later, a flying duck becoming an airplane through editing, an arrow in a historical drama becoming a rocket; the camera continually pans from new to old, power plant to birch trees, city buildings to the forest.

The above excerpt from the narration illustrates the parodic quality of the soundtrack and its challenge to the travelogues whose methods of structuring significance Marker illuminates. At another point Marker offers a textbook lesson in what is meant by linguistic anchorage by presenting an almost identical sequence of shots three consecutive times but accompanied by highly varied interpretive narrations. The narrations are pro-Communist, anti-Communist and "objective," the latter being rapidly followed with a disclaimer on the impossibility of objectivity. Besides this, Marker takes occasional verbal pot-shots at cultural provincialism: "and now for the Siberian version of 'diamonds are a girl's best friend" or "now don't get the idea that they're distant cousins of Nanook of the North" or the heavily ironic "the arctic world suffers from a serious lack of Woolworth stores" which is itself critiqued by "and yet our irony may be more naive than their enthusiasm."

While the soundtrack humorously reflects upon the cultural smugness of the travelogue tradition, Marker's exposure of the ways in which most travelogues conceal their ideological perspective emerges from the interplay of soundtrack and visuals. The tensions between these components help to make the viewer aware of how the documentary structures reality through language and how the images are made to illustrate the conceptual reality defined by the voice, so that the viewer experiences not so much a visual truth (the filmic document) as a verbal and conceptual one. Similarly the narration instructs us as to the means of manipulating film material through camera movement and editing. We sense how selecting footage structures a personal vision of the subject Siberia in the phrase "here's the shot I've been waiting for" which also tells us "this is why I have chosen this shot."

Like *Man With a Movie Camera's, Letter from Siberia's* primary thrust is to counter a dominant mode — the traditional travelogue — by revealing the naturalizing operations of the genre and its implicit ideological position. The other films discussed here explore other means and degrees of self-reflexivity. Certainly many more variations could and should be explored, as well as the subtle differences among them. But this analysis argues for one aspect of the self-reflexive documentary which all these examples share: the function of challenging a type of documentary which has maximized the claim to verisimilitude and therefore succeeded in effacing the documentary's ideological conditioning. Even Resnais' *Night and Fog,* which seems to counter a specific tradition the least, is so overly a personal statement confronting a historical fact that it makes the viewer aware that a film is always a *statement by* an historical person. This is itself a strong statement against the tradition of factualness and objectivity.

Documentaries can say to us "this did happen," these women and children were gassed to death and shovelled into mass graves, or these students were fleeing when the soldiers turned and fired upon them. But documentaries rarely confine themselves to pointing. They create meaning with sequence,

shot context, soundtrack and so forth. If the dominant mode of the documentary conceals its processes of producing meaning and seeks to present a historical, scientific or cultural given, self-reflexivity, as exemplified in the preceding discussion, repeatedly argues against the given-ness of documentary reality and for its constructed-ness, thereby documenting the very limitations of verisimilitude.

THE FUNDAMENTAL REPROACH (BRECHT)

Ben Brewster

I take my title, the 'fundamental reproach', from a note in Brecht's *Arbeits-journal,* the diary he kept from 1938 to his death in 1956. This fundamental reproach of Brecht's was one made to the cinema and film from the stand-point of a man of the theatre, even though when he wrote this note in 1942 Brecht was more or less cut off from the theatre and was attempting to make a living within the American cinema. My own sympathies are not with the theatre, but on the contrary with the cinema, and I might as well admit that I rather dislike the theatre, so I am not reproducing this series of criticisms of the cinema in order to imply that the theatre, and certainly the theatre we know, does have enormous advantages over the cinema. On the contrary, my interest is to test Brecht's objections to the cinema and to suggest ways the cinema might be transformed in relation to them.

This diary entry dates from 27th March 1942 and it was written in Los Angeles:

> 'conversation with wiesengrund-adorno, who is very jumpy because of the curfew,' about the peculiarities of the theatre as opposed to the film. The lehrstück, the learning-play, can obviously be excepted, for there the actors act for themselves alone. the theatre's first advantage over the film is in *dramatik,* that is in the division between play and performance. in principle, of course, one could make as many filmings as one liked of one particular theme, but there hasn't yet been a 'piece' of that type. of course, with films today controlled by clothes merchants and bankers, an artistic film is hardly conceivable. the ussr in fact already rather produces film which will not be ridiculous in five years time, and chaplin's work, too, is stylised so that the themes appear historicised, and still have flavour after some time. there are technical objections that can be made vis-à-vis music and also apply to speech. "the microphone is monaural, one-eared, and thus is unable to communicate music conceived in binaural terms, with its inherent sound perspective. moreover there is a legally imposed limit to the number of cycles per second which are transmitted, and finally there is the problem of the hear stripe."[2] technical improvements might be made in all these respects, but i don't myself believe that all technical problems are soluble in principle. in particular, i think that the effect of an artistic presentation on its spectators is not independent of the effect of the spectators on the artist. in the theatre, the audience regulates the performance. the film has monstrous weaknesses in detail which seem unavoidable in principle. there is the delocalisation of the sound; the hearer has first to put every line of dialogue into a character's mouth. then there is the strict fixation of viewpoint; we only see what one eye, the camera, saw. this means that the actors have to act for this eye alone, and all actions become completely unilinear, and so on. more subtle weaknesses: the mechanical reproduction gives everything the character of a result: unfree and inalterable. here we come back to the fundamental reproach. the audience no longer have any opportunity to change' the artists' performance. they are not assisting at a production, but at the result of a production that took place in their absence.'

1 Imposed on 'enemy aliens' (including Adorno and Brecht) at the USA's entry into the War.

2 The quotation is in English in the original. The 'hear stripe' is presumably the range of audible frequencies — or does Brecht mean the sound strip?

This quotation contains a whole series of interesting problems which are worth discussing, but I think I should begin by making two caveats. First, the occasion is a discussion with Adorno, and Brecht is clearly paraphrasing him at various points in the note. It might thus seem that Brecht here is adopting Adorno's pessimism vis-à-vis the mass media, going back on the positions he had taken in the *Dreigroschenprozess* in 1931. I think my drawing out of Brecht's points will show that the position they imply is not an Adornoan one. Second, it is a common objection to the cinema, particularly from actors who are primarily stage actors and find acting in the cinema very difficult, that there is an empathy between performer and audience in the theatre which is absent in the cinema. I think it is important to stress that Brecht is not making this objection to the cinema, he does not think that it is, as it were, a less empathetic medium than the theatre. On the contrary, Brecht's point is that distanciation is precisely possible in the theatre because of the co-presence of audience and actors. It is the co-presence that makes it possible to establish a distance from the actions which are portrayed on the stage.

I think this relation can be illuminated by a model for the way in which an epic theatre or a progressive form of an art of representation would operate which, although I am not sure that Brecht ever directly refers to it, is implicit in a lot of his work: the model of a dialogue or conversation. In any conversation, there is a moment of identification or empathy *(Einfühlung)* between the two people engaged in conversation. There is the moment in which in hearing what the other conversant says, I identify with that person and simultaneously identify their objects, grasp their drift, what they mean. But there is also always the second moment in conversation where I separate myself from what has been said and reply. This separation from the objects is also a separation from the conversant. The mode of reply can always be one in which the basis of what has been said and the position from which it has been said can be challenged. A conversation is productive when it proceeds by establishing a concurrence in meaning, breaking with that concurrence and establishing (perhaps) a new one. The simplest way in which this occurs is when I challenge in somebody's converse the use of a term; I say, you can't talk about such and such in those terms. There is a breaking with the set of identities established in common by the conversants and hence of their mutual identification, so that whatever is being talked about can be reconstructed in terms which will enable them to derive some use from the conversation. There is also, of course, something else that may occur in conversation, and that is that the conversants may come to a limit of this operation of redefinition, the limit at which dialogue ceases to be possible. It is at this limit that a political division is produced between the two speakers, a point of fundamental principled difference emerges through the conversation. Thus there is a possibility of a false unity between them being broken down in the process of conversation.

It seems to me that this model of what takes place in a conversation is very illuminating for the way in which Brecht conceives the relation between audience and actors or audience and presentation within the epic theatre. One of the most famous examples he uses is in fact based on a kind of conversation intermediate between an ordinary conversation and a play: the example of the street accident. When the witnesses at an accident are called on to say what happened, they will act out what happened to whoever is requesting the information. Here there is an oscillation between presentation and conversation: the speaker goes over to the spot and lies down in the street and says, 'She fell down here', and then gets up and says 'and the car was over there', and so on. There is not just talk but also the performance of actions which are performed in the way things are discussed in a speech, that is they are presented both for identification and then distantiation by the other partners in the dialogue.

Now when we turn to formal plays, we have a further series of problems. First there is the problem that Brecht excludes straight away at the beginning of the diary entry, that is the problem of the *Lehrstück,* the learning play, which is not intended to be performed before an audience at all, but only for the members of its cast, and I shall come back much later to talk about the *Lehrstück* in relation to the cinema. When, on the contrary, we are dealing with a play which is pre-written and is being formally produced for an audience, there is the set of problems that Brecht considers in this entry and in general, about the relation between the presentation, that is, the performance, and the play.

First of all, there is one which is again very familiar: the problem of the relation between an actor and his or her role in the epic theatre. For Brecht it

was important that a distinction be maintained throughout the performance between the actors and the parts that they are ficitionally playing. What is important here (especially when discussing it in relation to the cinema) is the fact that in the theatre the co-presence of actors and audience ensures that there is one level at which the audience is assisting at a performance and can see actors on a stage, which is what they have come to see, and at another level, precisely the level of the fiction that is being presented, they see these actors no longer as actors but as their fictional parts. But, given a certain kind of play in a certain kind of production with a certain kind of acting, the presence of the actor allows the distinction to be maintained. One can identify with the actor, which implies a separation from the role, and then identify with the role, and that implies a separation from the actor. To achieve identification with role and actor at one moment is precisely the aim of a theatre of catharsis. There is the same oscillation between identification and non-identification in epic acting as there is in conversation.

A second problem which Brecht discusses in the diary entry is that of the relation between the particular performance and the fact that what is being performed is a particular play, separate and separable from the performance. The word he uses, *Dramatik,* refers to the traditional theatrical text: what is inherited and a relative constant in the theatre is the text of the words spoken by the actors and a particular performance is a performance of that text. Brecht was not interested in a theatre of improvisation and insisted on the importance of actors precisely quoting a text, but also, particularly in the last period when he was working with the Berliner Ensemble, he wanted a kind of documentation of the theatre which would go beyond the text in this narrow sense into a whole series of other areas: the *Theaterarbeit* and the model books try to present photographic and other methods of documenting decor, grouping, gesture and so on, which another particular performance will reproduce and adapt as it reproduces and adapts the traditional play text. In this difference between performance and text, which has to be maintained for Brecht and should be a moment of every performance, there is again something which relates to the model of conversation. *Mach meinem letzten Umzug,* Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's film which includes footage he shot on 8mm in 1952 of rehearsals for Brecht's Berliner Ensemble production of Goethe's *Urfaust,* contains a remarkable example of this. *Faust* is a classic text, but the Brecht' production moves away from a conventional presentation of the text and, while keeping very strictly to Goethe's structure, produces a distance from the play as a classic and in so doing effects a transformation in the German cultural tradition, i.e., makes a political intervention. The production devalues Faust as the central figure until he becomes the type of the German ideologist as characterised by Marx, and the play thus becomes quite different. It remains in a sense very tragic, but the tragedy becomes the tragedy of Gretchen — what kind of ideological subjection must she be in to be vulnerable to such a charlatan? This critique of German Ideology operates not only at the level of the content of the play, but also at that of where the play stands within the German classical tradition. A double operation is performed on the content of the play and the nature of a classical text. This only works because the text is Goethe's *Faust,* because the audience are not coming in to see something completely new, for the first time, they are coming to see a play which is a recognised classic in a production which displaces it in relation to that classical tradition.

It is easy to see that Brecht's objections might hold very strongly vis-à-vis the cinema; the kind of operations I have discussed are very largely obscured or made difficult by what are often quite strictly technical properties of the

cinematic medium. I want to examine this fundamental reproach as it were from two sides. Firstly from within the film text and its performance; and secondly from the standpoint of the production, distribution and exhibition of films, that is from the side of the cinema as industry.

Stephen Heath has argued that in the cinema as we know it, that is the cinema as it has developed within capitalist societies (the question as to whether it has developed fundamentally differently in socialist societies is a difficult one which I shall touch on a bit later), that the film has functioned as a machine to produce and reproduce what is outside the cinema as a set of memory images.[3] These images are retrospective, but they are insistently immediate — there is nothing behind this screen, beyond the memory projected on to it. Hence a second viewing of a film abolishes the first, becomes it. The distinction between moment of text and moment of performance is abolished. Brecht himself suggests that it would technically be possible to establish a body of film subjects and then make many films of each of those subjects, but I doubt whether that would make much difference. Within the institutions of the commercial cinema, particularly at periods when it has been dominated by studio production, there have been occasions when it has operated in almost that way — the notorious pile of scripts on Jack Warner's desk, which were made in succession, and when the bottom was reached, the names were changed in the top one and it was remade, and so on down the pile. This is a caricature, but there is a sense in which for a powerful studio system, subjects exist which can be made again and again and again, and yet there is never the relation between a text and its performance that Brecht singles out in the theatre: the process of changing the name, and even more the very institutionalised nature of film performance and film-making for that performance convert the film into a new film which is then seen for the first time. if the audience says, that is just the same film as the one we saw last week, it would mark a failure of that adaptation for the institution.

3 'Film Performance', *Cine-Tracts* No. 2 Summer 1977.

Second there is the question Brecht raises about the unique perspective. As an effect of perspective projection and the way in which the screen is viewed in the cinema, all the audience see the picture from the same place. Acting is as it were directed at that ubiquitous place, there is no oblique view, whereas in the theatre there are always as many points of view as there are seats, and some of these pointsof view can be quite oblique, so the play is not directed at each spectator in the same way. This is the area, also discussed by Stephen Heath yesterday, of identification with the camera, which is so central to film viewing. It is particularly important to emphasise this here because identification as it is normally used by Brecht in discussing the theatre is identification with *characters.* In the cinema as we know it, that is the cinema of the cinematic institution, identification with the camera is always the ground bass over which identification with character plays. Hence in the structure of the point-of-view shot, to take the simplest example, in the alternation between shots of a character looking and shots of an object from what appears to be the position of the character, the fact that I can identify with the character by adopting his or her viewpoint depends on the fact that in the objective shot I had already vicariously adopted the viewpoint of the camera. In the theatre my viewpoint remains my own from a particular place in the auditorium, looking at a performance as well as at a fiction. It is this identification with the camera that Brecht is talking about here, that again makes it difficult to separate the objects being shown from the process by which they are being shown, that is, the particular performance.

Finally, there is as within the theatre the problem of the identification of actor and role. As everyone knows, stage acting is different from screen

acting; it is often said that the difference stems from the possibility of the close-up making a certain exaggerated style which is perfectly acceptable on the stage unacceptable on the screen. However, there is something more central. In general, the kind of screen acting which has been most successful is that kind which precisely produces an identification between the actor in everyday life and the actor on the screen — John Wayne remains John Wayne, whatever he is playing. The kind of acting which works within this system (which is by no means an acting of no skill) is one which obscures the separation between actor and role. The only times when this does come through in the narrative cinema are when the role itself includes that doubling to some degree. In the film in which Brecht himself participated, *Hangmen Also Die,* there are sequences which show torture, police brutality, as an established routine in which the presentation of their work as routine is one of the means employed by the Gestapo. In these sequences there is a break between the actions and the characters performing them, and thus in a sense one between the actions and the actors. In sequences where the heroes and heroines of the film appear there is no such separation, and it is very hard to see how one could be accomodated to this cinematic form.

However, the traditional narrative cinema does exhibit an area of trouble vis-à-vis actor and role, precisely in the star system. Naturalistic presentation is consistently broken within the commercial cinema in the interests of the star system. This is most obvious in the costume picture, where however much attention goes into authenticity in the decor, the stars' clothes present a kind of compromise between historically authentic costume and the clothes the stars would wear in everyday life. But this trouble is no more than that, because the star functions as one of the images which are part of the establishment of the film memory: rather than the star emerging as an actor, the star emerges as an image; the image is capable of disturbing the development of the narrative, and Laura Mulvey has discussed how the image of Marlene Dietrich functions in this way in Sternberg's films, but the disturbance of the text is contained in the institutions of the star system as an ancillary part, an 'other side' of the cinematic institution itself.

To turn now to the objections from the viewpoint of production, distribution and exhibition, I should like to give as an example a genre which Steve Mamber has studied, the cycle of films on the campus revolt which emerged in the USA in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the most typical of which was probably *The Strawberry Statement.* The commercial cinema speculates on topicality, but in so doing it faces a characteristic set of difficulties. First of all, there is a very long time between the inception of a production project and the final release of the finished film. Secondly, the predominant aim of production in the USA has always been to produce films which have the widest possible market at home and abroad. (There are certain sectors where the exploitation of a narrow market in depth has been the commercial strategy adopted, but through most of its history this has not been the predominant form.) Hence a topical theme may have ceased to be topical by the time a film attempting to exploit it appears, and there is a potential audience which may have no interest in that topical theme. The original project for *All the President's Men* was simply to exploit the topicality of the Watergate theme, and to use completely anonymous look-alikes for the central parts, increasing the authenticity and hence the topical appeal. But it was impossible to get the film made on those terms. The central parts had to be allotted to major stars, since the distributors (whose guarantees were required to raise the initial capital) were not to know whether Watergate was not going to be anathema to much of the American public in six months time, or whether

anybody in Europe was in the slightest bit interested in it, whereas they knew very well that they would all be interested in Robert Redford and Warren Beatty. Thus they could gamble on the topicality while covering themselves by insisting on another, more general interest. Now in the campus revolt genre this process had specific political effects. An all-out concentration on the topicality of the theme was avoided by what was called 'human interest'. The campus revolt incident in the films was usually inserted into a plot in which an apolitical student goes up to university and gets involved in militant activity because of sexual difficulties; he then resolves his personal problems, drops out of militant activity and thereby avoids being caught in its defeat. So the campus revolt is there, but there is the more human story alongside it. It is obvious in this case that, without there necessarily being any direct political censorship or control of the subject matter, the pressures of the distribution problem, precisely the problem mentioned by Brecht of the separation of the moment of the production of the film from the moment of its consumption, have imposed a plot strategy which completely defuses any politically radical potential in the subject matter of the film made. The fact that this strategy is 'human interest' links it with Brecht's critique of the bourgeois theatre for substituting for the specific and therefore class dimension of its subject matter one which anyone in the audience can sympathise with, that is the universally human dimension. Political subject matter is completely defused and reduced by being treated as universally human rather than specifically political.

My other example is the Chinese cinema as a whole in the last decade. In his book on the Chinese cinema[4] which was written just at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Jay Leyda argues, and I think quite convincingly, that the policy of the Cultural Revolution meant the death of the cinema as he conceived it, that is, the artistic cinema which Leyda stands for, which informs *Kino* and his other works. He had had hopes of such a cinema in China, but thought it totally impossible under the conditions of the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, the cinema more or less disappeared during the height of the Cultural Revolution, and for a year or so the only productions were documentaries and filmings of Peking Opera productions. Bearing in mind Brecht's objections, one of the reasons why this should have been the case is clear enough. It is extremely difficult to fit the cinema, and certainly any cinema that we know of, into a political movement whose aim is the criticism from the base of all the structures of society, because of the highly centralised nature of its production, and the interval between production and exhibition (especially in remote regions). A travelling theatre, on the contrary, can adjust its repertoire to immediate local needs much more easily, and the travelling theatre seems to have flourished during the Cultural Revolution. But this is not the whole story, for, as I have said, Peking Opera films and documentaries continued to be produced. In each case, the model character of the productions seems to have been decisive: the Peking Opera films were at least in part designed as models for local opera troupes in the new style of Peking Opera, whose abolition of 'Ghosts and Monsters' served both as one of the initiating sparks and as a general metaphor for the Cultural Revolution, so even for non-specialised audiences they were emblematic of the general aims of the movement; while the documentaries were usually accounts of the activities of a model worker or cadre, anchored in their own time and place, with the result that a separation between the events filmed and the conjuncture in the place and time of their projection was built in. But for all the reasons already discussed, the fiction film resists this specification, and therefore had to be put into abeyance. When it returned, from around 1970, it took off from the reform of the Peking Opera. Before the Cultural Revolution, the traditional sufferings of the heroes and heroines of Peking Opera

4 *Dianying,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1972.

had simply been given a class origin; during the Cultural Revolution, on the contrary, the suffering hero or heroine were largely replaced (under the slogan of 'revolutionary romanticism') by a representative of the toiling masses triumphant. The new fiction films have followed suit. But the result is a cinema of centralised directives. Revolutionary actions have not been presented as models for critical adaptation to local conditions; however radical the message, it has had to find a guarantee in a command from the top (a telegram from Mao Zedong in *Breaking with Old Ideas)* or in nature (youth as such and the Chinese landscape in *Hong* Yu).

Brecht argues that the problems I have discussed so far may be problems that have no technical solutions in principle. But if there are no *technical* solutions, can any other solutions be offered? I should like to discuss three.

The first is exemplified by the films of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet. Many of their films address themselves to the problem of the text and its performance, to the fact that in general text and performance are fused within a film. Nearly all the Straub-Huillet films are in some way concerned with establishing a distance between the cinematic presentation of a text and that text, and this is the source of much of their success and interest. In films like *Machorka Muff* and *Nicht Versöhnt,* this is already the case, though less explicitly than later. *Nicht Versöhnt, Not Reconciled* is an extremely difficult film to cope with as a film in the sense of the standard cinema, because it does not have in itself the power to substitute for and therefore abolish the text of which it is an adaptation. You cannot understand the *story* of *Not Reconciled* in the ordinary way you understand the story of a film, unless you know the novel on which it is based, with the result that there is a tension within the film between the Heinrich Böll novel which is being adapted and the particular filmic presentation. Of course the same thing is much more explicit in films such as *Othon* and *History Lessons,* where a test is recited or presented in a relation which completely contradicts any possibility of that text assuming its simple fictional place. This is one way to reestablish that separation between a text and a film performance which is a presentation of that text, which Brecht insisted was so important a part of the epic theatre.

The second solution I want to discuss is to work for different forms of distribution and exhibition which allow audiences a different kind of relation to the film. A simple example is to make the film not the only part of the performance, but to have someone there to make a presentation of the film, producing a distance between the film performance itself and the situation in which the film was made. Obviously there is a quite traditional market for the presentation-cum-film, where an appearance by the film-maker is part of the package — he or she is interviewed respectfully or gives a little presentation and the films are shown, and this is already an economically important aspect of distribution in certain areas of independent film. It cannot simply be offered as a recipe without further specification. But in the case of *The Nightcleaners* film, the Berwick Street Collective, who made it, do try and handle the film performance in relation to this Brechtian objection. In making the film, the Collective took aesthetic and political decisions with very little direct consideration of the audience to which the film was to be addressed; that is, they carried out those operations within the text which seemed to them to be necessary to make the points they held had to be made about the political issue they were dealing with and its representation. Now the film is constantly attacked on the grounds that it cannot have any effect because most audiences simply reject it. The Berwick Street Collec-

tive's answer to this attack is that if possible they should be present when the film is shown, so that the performance can be challenged by an audience and they can then respond to that challenge, making the mode of presentation of the film the object of discussion in a triangle between the film, the audience and the film-makers. Obviously it does not have to be the film-makers who perform this role, it could be a film critic or a political militant. Thus it is possible to construct a form of exhibition which introduces this third moment, and therefore produces the possible effect of difference which Brecht insisted on.

The third of my examples of a possible solution is very speculative. It derives from Brecht's theory of the *Lehrstück,* the learning play. As you know, in the late 1920's and early 1930's, Brecht wrote a number of plays which he gave this name and which were designed to be performed not before an audience but by a group for themselves. Brecht had in mind a variety of specific institutions, notably schools and the Communist Party's ancillary cultural organisations, where these plays could be performed. But they were based on a more general theory that Brecht developed very fragmentarily, which eventually included a kind of utopia or model of a theatre of the future, based on the example of the *Lehrstück* (which he insisted throughout his life was the most advanced kind of theatre he had ever done, while the parable plays, which present the theme through a story in the more conventional way, represented a necessary political compromise, given his particular situation). The culmination of the idea of the *Lehrstück* was what he called a 'pedagogium', which was to be an institution within a society of the future that would hold in some archived form models of every known and classified form of behaviour. Members of the society could go into the pedagogium and draw out a particular action which for some reason concerned them, see it demonstrated and try it out for themselves. This has a double edge to it. At one level it is quite straightforward; if someone wants to make an after-dinner speech, Brecht suggests, they could go to the pedagogium and draw out the model of the after-dinner speech and try it out, with the result that they would be more successful the next time they made an after-dinner speech. Thus the pedagogium has an absolutely direct utility in terms of a particular kind of behaviour. But Brecht also thought that its stock should by no means be restricted to socially useful actions (assuming that making after-dinner speeches is a socially useful action), but should also include quite directly anti-social forms of behaviour, models of which would be available on exactly the same basis (that is, the pedagogium would make no judgement as to what is or is not a socially useful action). Thus if a man were tempted to beat his wife, he could go to the pedagogium and draw out a model of beating one's wife. This would help him to establish a distance from wife-beating which would then able him to take up a productive attitude to that action.

What is speculatively interesting for the cinema here is that the form of the model that could be drawn out is not specified by Brecht himself. He might well have meant that there would be actors who could be booked to carry out the action first, but it is clear that there is an opportunity here for the use of film. Brecht himself does seem to have had a somewhat similar idea — obviously in a less speculative and utopian form — about parts of *Hangmen Also Die.* According to Fritz Lang, one of his proposals was that, although what Lang had to do was to make a film which would have a sale within the American commercial cinema, the film should be made so that there would be sections in it which would demonstrate various types of social behaviour; the sections Brecht was particularly interested in were ones which concerned

a group of hostages from all classes of Czech society arrested as a result of the assassination of Heydrich, and their reactions to one another within the prison camp. Brecht proposed to Lang that these parts of the film should be extractable, *so* that later he could take them out of the fiction film which Lang had made, and use them in post-War Germany to assist reconstruction, assembling them in whatever form was appropriate for demonstrating the nature and effects of German oppression in Czechoslovakia to a post-War German audience who had, of course, been deprived by twelve years of Nazi rule of that knowledge. This suggests a possible type of cinema which breaks away completely from traditional forms of distribution and exhibition and yet is implicitly there in Brecht's own ideas about the cinema, and is one of the ways of trying to deal with his fundamental reproach.

THE CONCEPT OF CINEMATIC EXCESS

Kristin Thompson

"No, no, I'll take no less,
than all in full excess." — *Handel's Semele*

"Analytically there is something ridiculous about it." — *Roland Barthes*[1]

Recently certain writers have moved away from the traditional concept of criticism as an activity designed purely to explain the narratively functional aspects of the work. Following essentially, I believe, in the direction opened by the Russian Formalists, these critics have suggested that films can be seen as a struggle of opposing forces. Some of these forces strive to unify the work, to hold it together sufficiently that we may perceive and "follow" its structures. Outside of any such structures lie those aspects of the work which are not contained by its unifying forces — the "excess." The term is used by Stephen Heath in his essay "Film and System: Terms of Analysis"; there he asserts:

> Just as narrative never exhausts the image, homogeneity is always an *effect* of the film and not the filmic system, which is precisely the production of that homogeneity. Homogeneity is haunted by the material practice it represses and the tropes of that repression, the forms of continuity, provoke within the texture of the film the figures — the edging, the margin — of the loss by which it moves; permanent battle for the resolution of that loss on which, however, it structurally depends, mediation between image and discourse, narrative can never contain the whole film which permanently exceeds its fictions. "Filmic system," therefore, always means at least this: the "system" of the film in so far as the film is the organisation of a homogeneity *and* the material outside inscribed in the operation of that organisation as its contradiction.[2]

"Homogeneity" is here the unifying effect I have mentioned. Heath suggests that the material of the image in film creates a play which goes beyond this unity. A film depends on materiality for its existence; out of image and sound it creates it structures, but it can never make all the physical elements of the film part of its set of smooth perceptual cues. The critic concentrates neither wholly upon the coherent elements nor wholly upon the excess; he/she who deals with the tensions between them. I am using the Russian Formalist definition of narrative as an interplay between plot and story; plot is the actual presentation of events in the film, while story is the mental reconstruction by the spectator of these events in their "real," chronological order (partly on the basis of codes of cause and effect). Heath is talking about the classical Hollywood film, which typically strives to minimize excess by a

1 Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning," trans., Richard Howard, *Artforum,* Vol. 11, No. 5 (January, 1973), p. 47.

2 Stephen Heath, "Film and System: Terms of Analysis. Pt. I," *Screen,* Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), p. 10.

thorough-going motivation. Other films outside this tradition do not always try to provide an apparent motivation for everything in the film, and thus they leave their potentially excessive elements more noticeable.

Roland Barthes' essay "The Third Meaning" ("Le troisième sens") lays out a similar idea that the materiality of the image goes beyond the narrative structures of unity in a film. The choice of the term "meaning" is a misleading one, since these elements of the work are precisely those which do not participate in the creation of narrative or symbolic meaning; Barthes himself calls it "the obtuse meaning," and says: "it does not even indicate an *elsewhere* of meaning. . . it rather frustrates meaning — subverting not the content but the entire practice of meaning.[3] For this reason I prefer to use Heath's term, "excess," rather than Barthes'.

3 Barthes, p. 49.

But Barthes is ultimately more clear as to what he considers part of this filmic excess. Heath's analysis of *Touch of Evil* provides examples that tend to confuse his term rather than clarify it. He calls the scenes in Tanya's place in that film excess because they " have no narrative function,"[4] even though this is clearly not the case. These scenes provide *relatively* little causal material to forward the proairetic, in comparison with the other scenes of the film. They do, however, contain a considerable amount of semic material about Hank Quinlan and hence provide motivation for his behavior in the rest of the film; Tanya's place provides the connection between Quinlan and Menzies that allows the latter to engage Quinlan in the final incriminating conversation. These are not the only narrative functions these scenes play, but they will serve to indicate that Heath has chosen a rather easy way out of the problem by dismissing whole scenes as excess when they are simply different from more causally-dense portions of the narrative. Heath also resorts to a psychoanalytic explanation for excess, indicating that it is the material which must be repressed by the film; see, for example, his discussion of the character of the "night man" as a figure of excess.[5] But none of this comes to terms with Heath's own claim (possibly derived from Barthes') that the excess arises from the conflict between the *materiality* of a film and the unifying structures within it. Heath in fact never analyzes a scene into its material and structural components to find examples of excess.

4 Heath, p. 67.

5 *Ibid.,* pp. 73-4.

Barthes' entire essay, on the other hand, is based specifically on the material aspects of film as the source of its excess. He in fact analyzes only still photographs, but his conclusions are applicable to film (and also to the material qualities of the film's sound, which Barthes ignores). At one point, Barthes claims that excess does not weaken the meaning of the structures it accompanies: "if the signification is exceeded by the obtuse meaning, it is not thereby denied or blurred."[6] This seems doubtful, however. Presumably the only way excess can fail to affect meaning is if the viewer does not notice it; this is a matter of training and background. Certainly a steady and exclusive diet of classical narrative cinema seems to accustom people to ignoring the material aspects of the artwork, since these are usually so thoroughly motivated as to be unobtrusive. But the minute a viewer begins to notice style for its own sake or watch works which do not provide such thorough motivation, excess comes forward and must affect narrative meaning. Style is the use of repeated techniques which become *characteristic* of the work; these techniques are foregrounded so that the spectator will notice them and create connections between their individual uses. Excess does not equal style, but the two are closely linked because they both involve the material aspects of the film. Excess forms no specific patterns which we could say are characteristic of the work. But the formal organization provided by style does not exhaust

6 Barthes, p. 47.

the material of the filmic techniques, and a spectator's attention to style might well lead to a noticing of excess as well. Elsewhere Barthes acknowledges that his "obtuse meaning" does indeed affect our perception of meaning in a distractive way; speaking of certain qualities of a photographic image, he asks, "are they not a kind of blunting of a too-obvious meaning, a too-violent meaning? . . . do they not cause my reading to skid?"[7] This image of a skidding perception is interesting, because it is not far from the kinds of metaphors the Russian Formalists chose to describe the effects of delaying devices in a narrative, such as "staircase construction." In each case, there is an attempt to describe a movement away from a direct progression through an "economical" structure. Barthes also speaks of the obtuse meaning as separate from the diegesis of the film; referring to a frame enlargement from *Ivan the Terrible,* he says:

> The obtuse meaning is clearly counternarrative itself. Diffused, reversible, caught up in its own time, it can, if one follows it, establish only another script that is distinct from the shots, sequences, and syntagms . . . . Imagine "following" not Euphrosinia's machinations, nor even the character (as a diegetic entity or as a symbolic figure), nor even, further, the countenance of the Wicked Mother, but only, in this countenance, that grimace, that black veil, the heavy, ugly dullness of that skin. You will have another temporality, neither diegetic nor oneiric, you will have another film.[8]

Probably no one ever watches *only* these non-diegetic aspects of the image through an entire film. Nevertheless, they are constantly present, a whole "film" existing in some sense alongside the narrative film we tend to think of ourselves as watching.

The idea that the critic's job might include the pointing-out of this excess may startle some. But we have been looking at the neat aspects of artworks so long that we may forget their disturbing, rough parts. As Barthes says, "The *present* problem is not to destroy the narrative, but to subvert it."[9] For the critic, this means the realization that he/she needs to talk about those aspects of the work that are usually ignored because they don't fit into a tight analysis.

The concept of excess need not be used only in semiotic, structuralist, or post-structuralist analyses. It fits into a critical approach based on Russian Formalism as well. For, while the Formalists did not come up with the idea of excess as such, they did move in a direction that implied it. When Viktor Shklovski says, "the language of poetry is not a comprehensible language, but a semi-comprehensible one,"[10] we must assume that the incomprehensible elements are so because they do not fit neatly into the unified relationships in the work; they must be explained as tending towards excess. Shklovski also makes a distinction between "material" and "form"; in speaking of music he says, "We have found, not form and content, but rather material and form, i.e., sounds and the disposition of sounds."[11] The process of "disposition" of materials into structures does not eliminate their original materiality. Thus the Formalists seem to have at least approached the realization that excessive elements provide a large range of possibilities for the roughening of form; the material provides a perceptual play by inviting the spectator to linger over devices longer than their structured function would seem to warrant.

Of course no element in a work is strictly excessive to the degree that it has *no* connections to other elements (except perhaps simple technical errors —

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.,* p. 49.

9 *Ibid.,* p. 50. Italics in original.

10 Viktor Shklovski, "The Resurrection of the Word," trans., Richard Sherwood, *20th Century Studies,* 7/8 (December, 1972), p. 46.

11 Viktor Shklovski, "Form and Material in Art," trans., Charles A. Moser and Patricia Blake, *Dissonant Voices in Soviet Literature,* ed., Patricia Blake and Max Hayward (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 21.

the airplane the sky of a biblical epic scene). As the Soviet film-makers of the post-revolutionary period realized, simply to place two things together is to create a perception of them as related. This is one reason why excess is so difficult to talk about: most viewers are determined to find a necessary function for any element the critic singles out. For some reason, the claim that a device has *no* function beyond offering itself for perceptual play is disturbing to many people. Perhaps this tendency is cultural, stemming from the fact that art is so often spoken of as unified and as creating a perfect order, beyond that possible in nature.

But if part of the difficulty of talking about excess stems from its novelty as a concept, the critic is also faced with the fact that excess tends to elude analysis. For example, take Barthes' description of Efrosinia given in the above quote. That one *can* look at the visual figure in the images quite apart from her narrative function seems reasonably certain; we may go further and say with some confidence that one can perceive the visual figure even while following the narrative function it fills. But a discussion of the *qualities* of the visual figure at which we look seems doomed to a certain subjectivity. We may not agree that the texture of Efrosinia's skin has a "heavy, ugly dullness." The fact, however, that we can agree it has *some* texture opens the possibility of analysis. The critic and his/her reader must resist the learned tendency to try and find a narrative significance in every detail, or at least they must realize that a narrative function does not exhaust the material presence of that detail. Our conclusion must be that, just as every film contains a struggle of unifying and disunifying structures, so every stylistic element may serve at once to contribute to the narrative and to distract our perception from it.

Excess is not only counternarrative; it is also counter-unity. To discuss it may be to invite the partial disintegration of a coherent reading. But on the other hand, pretending that a work is exhausted by its functioning structures robs it of much that is strange, unfamiliar, and striking about it. If the critic's task is at least in part to renew and expand the work's power to defamiliarize, one way to do this would be precisely to break up old perceptions of the work and to point up its more difficult aspects.

I shall follow Barthes' essay in drawing my examples from *Ivan the Terrible.* The act of "pointing" must be my principal tool here, since other means of analysis are designed for non-excessive structures. (Barthes says in his essay, "I am not describing, I cannot manage that, I am merely designating a site."[12]) Analysis implies finding relationships between devices. Excessive elements do not form relationships, beyond those of co-existence. The Russian Formalists, however, give us a tool which may at least make the process of pointing somewhat systematic: motivation.[13] Strong realistic or compositional motivation will tend to make excessive elements less noticeable; the perception of the narratively and stylistically significant will dominate. But at other times, a lack of these kinds of motivation may direct our attention to excess.

More precisely, excess implies a gap or lag in motivation. Even though the presence of a device may not be arbitrary, its motivation can never completely control our perception of the film as material object. To a large extent, the spectator's ability to notice excess is dependent upon his/her training in viewing films. The spectator who takes films to be simple copies of reality will probably tend to subsume the physicality of the image under a general category of verisimilitude; that shape on the screen looks as it does because

12 Barthes. p. 48.

13 Boris Tomashevski, "Thematics," *Russian Formalist Criticism; Four Essays,* trans. and ed., Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska press, 1965), pp. 78-87.

"those things really look like that." Another spectator, trained to look at films as romantic expressions of the artist, might attempt to see every aspect of every shot as conveying "meaning," "personal vision," and the like; the image looks the way it does because that is how the artist saw the world. At the other extreme, the "art for art's sake" viewer — the "empty" formalist — will tend to ignore motivation in favor of a totally free play of the "aesthetic" elements. All these approaches tend to vitiate the tension in the work between unified and excessive elements. The current study attempts to suggest an alternative.

A film displays a struggle by the unifying structures to "contain" the diverse elements that make up its whole system. Motivation is the primary tool by which the work makes its own devices seem reasonable. At that point where motivation fails, excess begins. To see it, we need to stop assuming that artistic motivation creates complete unity (or that its failure to do so somehow constitutes a fault). There are at least four ways in which the material of the film exceeds motivation.

Firstly, narrative function may justify the presence of a device, but it doesn't always motivate *the specific form that individual element will take.* Quite often, the device could vary considerably in form and still serve its function adequately. Perhaps its color is vital, but its shape could be different. With an infinite number of points in space, we must assume that there is some range of camera placements which would frame the scene adequately to its function. In *Ivan the Terrible,* Ivan must be an impressive character, but his impressiveness could be created in many ways. The actual choices are relatively arbitrary: a pointed head, a musical theme, close-ups with a crowd in deep focus, and so on.

Secondly, the medium of cinema is such that its devices exist through time. Motivation is insufficient to determine *how long* a device needs to be on the screen in order to serve its purpose. (Indeed, for different spectators, the requisite time is probably different.) We may notice a device immediately and understand its function, but it may then continue to be visible or audible for some time past this recognition. In this case, we may be inclined to study or contemplate it apart from its narrative or compositional function; such contemplation necessarily distracts from narrative progression. (In Russian Formalist terms, the perception of narrative progression involves the spectator's mental construction of a chronological set of story events "behind" the concrete presentation of plot action in the film.) On the other hand, the device may be more obscure and require a longer process of interpretation to make sense; how can motivation determine the length of time necessary for this perceptual activity? Noel Burch's concept of "legibility"[14] provides a rough guide. A large number of items within a single space will require a greater duration for complete scanning than a smaller number of items. But this determination can only be relative; the specific length must always be arbitrary to a certain degree. Repeated viewings of a film are likely to increase the excessive potentials of a scene's components; as we become familiar with the narrative (or other principle of progression), the innate interest of the composition, the visual aspects of the decor, or the structure of the musical accompaniment, may begin to come forward and capture more of our attention. The legibility has shifted for us; we now can simply *recognize* the unifying narrative elements, rather than having to perceive them for the first time. As a result, we now have time to contemplate the excessive aspects. The function of the material elements of the film is accomplished, but their perceptual interest is by no means exhausted in the process.

Thirdly, a single bit of narrative motivation seems to be capable of functioning almost indefinitely. It may justify many devices which have virtually the same connotation, even though they may vary greatly in form. Thus Ivan's basic function in *Ivan the Terrible* is to formulate and embody the goal of unifying Russia.

14 Noel Burch, *Theory of Film Practice,* trans., Helen R. Lane (New York: Praeger, 1973). P. 52.

This symbolic position motivates the extremely redundant expression of Ivan's scenes in every cinematic channel; the film must confirm and reconfirm Ivan's adequacy to the goal he represents. This redundancy does not advance the narrative in every case; rather it tends to expand the narrative "vertically." After a point, the repeated use of multiple devices to serve similar functions tends to minimize the importance of their narrative implications; instead, they become foregrounded primarily through their own innate interest.

Fourthly and lastly, a single motivation may serve to justify a device which is then repeated and varied many times. By this repetition, the device may far outweigh its original motivation and take on an importance greater than its narrative or compositional function would seem to warrant. This kind of excess is extremely common in *Ivan.* The introduction of the bird motif, for example, is realistically motivated; a couple of the objects in the coronation ceremony have historically authentic bird emblems on them (the sceptre, the little rug on the dais). But later the birds become less integral to the action at hand. They have associations, but these associations are relatively arbitrary; the birds on the wall behind Ivan's throne during his argument with Philip, for example, have minimal narrative connotations. We cannot say that the various instances of birds in the film are unmotivated, for they all relate to each other and hence form a unified structure. But they do draw attention to themselves far beyond their importance in the functioning of the narrative.

With these characteristics of excess in mind, let us look at some examples from *Ivan.* Some of these may seem trivial; they will certainly not always be the kind of thing the critic ordinarily points out. But taken together, they should suggest the wealth of excessive details which make the film a rich perceptual field.

Ivan's excess becomes readily apparent if we compare it with a more standardized usage like that of the classical Hollywood cinema. One critic whose approach is largely tied to the classical Hollywood narrative style, Pauline Kael, finds *Ivan* difficult to enjoy; while she admits its grandeur, she says, "we may stare at it in a kind of outrage. True, every frame looks great — it's a brilliant collection of stills — but as a movie, it's static, grandiose, and frequently ludicrous . . ."[15] In our terms, this "outrage" is in part the rejection of excess, the reluctance to consider the uneconomical or unjustified. Ivan, with its broken rhythms of acting, its systematic mismatches of mise-en-scene at cuts, and its constant heightening of stylistic devices, stands in contrast to the Hollywood cinema. Here style becomes foregrounded to an unusual degree, necessarily calling attention to the material of the film.

The composition of visual elements within the frame may become a rich source of excess. Striking arrangements abound in *Ivan;* they become particularly prominent because Eisenstein uses *so* many static or nearly static shots to explore space and further the narrative. The long shots of Ivan's tent on the hill at Kazan would be an example of this; the arrangement of curved lines of soldiers and a group of banners provide a striking composition in which little movement occurs (Pt. I, 281-82).[16] The series of shots of Boyars and ambassadors in the courtyard at the beginning of the illness sequence in Pt. I invites our attention to small shifts of space, to faces and textures of fur and brocade, to the changing visual overtone of the cathedral icon, and to the rhythmic chiming of the various bells. In the opening coronation scene, three bald European ambassadors speak and shake their heads, but of at least equal interest is the pattern formed by their heads in the center of three large white ruffs (I, 9).

The deep focus shots in the Alexandrov sequence of Pt. I place Ivan in close-up with the crowd on the snow-covered plain beyond. In each shot, Ivan moves his head — up in the first, down in the second (796,800). These head movements are unmotivated; they seem to exist only to play on shifting graphic relationships between Ivan's profile and the curved shape of the crowd beyond, the amazing juxtapositions of space and volume, the texture of Ivan's hair and skin against the whiteness, and the vertical montage relations of sound and image.

15 Pauline Kael, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (Boston: Little Brown, and Company, 1968), p. 288.

16 Shot numbers are as given in Sergei Eisenstein, *Ivan the Terrible* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970).

The four shots of Ivan's return to Moscow in Pt. II also play on formal values. Since all four shots show the same basic action — the galloping of the procession of Oprichniki and coach — we must conclude that one shot would convey as much narrative information as four (or six or eight). Formal interest rests in the rhythm of the fast music in conjunction with the swift movement and in the small shifts of the church spire in the background at the cuts. Shot 99 (the second of the segment) has almost the same set-up as shot 98. Shot 100 shifts to a longer view of the whole scene, but shot 101 again has almost the same framing. These small changes (a violation of Hollywood's "30° rule" that every shot should be distinctly different from its neighbors in order to clearly motivate the cut) create variations that add nothing except as perceptual material.

The textures, colors, and shapes of the costumes are frequent site for excess in *Ivan.* For example, the glitter of light on the costumes of Vladimir and Efrosinia in the beaver lullaby scene becomes very prominent. The contrast of Philip's plain black cloth cassock with Ivan's heavy fur cloak provides the basis for considerable play in the scene of their argument early in Pt. II. In shot 213, Philip turns suddenly and moves to the throne to lean over and speak directly to Ivan; the shifting train swirls behind him and stretches into a series of diagonal folds as he moves. Later, as Philip stalks away, shouting his curse back to Ivan, the long shot frames the entire empty throneroom (216). First Philip moves away, turns briefly to shout back, then continues out; during this, Ivan moves right and then across left to follow Philip. The indirect, hesitating movements of the two men in black against the light flagstones of the floor set up swirling patterns of visual interest and excess. In the Livonian scene, Sigismund leans forward in close-up until his head seems to be suspended in the center of a set of radiating black and white lines (his ruff; shot 84, Pt. II). In the same scene, one knight wears armor decorated with huge, curling feathers, elaborately backlit (68).

Excess is present in the way things happen. The tassel of Pimen's rosary drags lightly over the carvings on the gold Bible in a close-up during the illness sequence (I, 455). Ivan's sweeping turn as he carries the poisoned cup to Anastasia is unnecessary in relation to the action. Efrosinia's behavior as she sings the lullaby is strange in a way which goes beyond the narrative connotations. Ivan's kiss on Malyuta's brow before the execution in Pt. II slips away from the straightforward causal motivation of the scene.

The style of many devices is highly exaggerated in *Ivan,* compared to that in the classical narrative film. Elements of the acting like the sweeping gestures and the staring eyes stand out as strange; we may recognize their function in the filmic system, but this will not obliterate their peculiarity. ("Peculiar" and "strange" here have only positive connotations; these qualities are a large part of Ivan's appeal.) The Hollywood norm has accustomed us to clear, seamless space; now we are confronted with frequent, pointless shifts and gaps. Ivan's device of cubistic editing constitutes a perceptual game.[17] If the spectator consciously notices the cubistic cuts, he/she may indeed be drawn aside from the smoother structures to notice more and more subtle instances of this spatial instability. Indeed, any stylistic disjunction may lead the spectator into an awareness of excess — unless he/she strives too hard to recuperate them.

17 See Burch's comparison of Ivan's cutting to the painting style of Gris in *Theory of Film Practice,* pp. 37-9.

Problematic or unclear elements are likely to become excess. Many of the icons in the cathedral, for example, are never seen in their entirety. They are realistically motivated as portions of a reasonably authentic historical setting;

but because they are only partially visible, they invite inspection in an (necessarily fruitless) attempt at identification. Half-glimpsed hallways, partially darkened corners of rooms, slightly out-of-focus backgrounds, and other similar visual presences, may all tend to draw the eye, particularly on repeated viewings. What are we to make of the black-clad body that lies in the background of one shot of the execution scene of Pt. II (285)? The body is not there in any other shot, nor is there the faintest narrative motivation for its presence; it is not one of the Boyars, nor is there any suggestion that an Oprichnik dies or faints in this scene. Beyond the frequent use of confused spatial cues in the cutting, there is also one point where the geography is flagrantly inconsistent. When Efrosinia leaves the wedding banquet to check on the progress of the riot, she goes out by a little door and emerges outside at the head of the stairway. Later, she receives Demyan's report in a little archway at the foot of this same stairway; yet when the pair go through the door in this archway, they (at least Efrosinia — Demyan has disappeared during the cut of the interior of the hall) are coming in the same little doorway by which Efrosinia has previously exited.

Certain props carry interest beyond their function in the narrative. The repeated close-ups of the emblems of Riga, Reval, and Narva at the beginning of the poisoning sequence are only tangential to the narrative; we would undoubtedly be able to understand Ivan's speech without these "visual aids." But their carvings attract attention. Similarly, the coffin and its trappings in the scene of Ivan's mourning are striking and elaborate: Anastasia lies in a hollowed-out log, surrounded by a fan of shining decorations like a peacock's tail.

We may find some of the most extreme examples of excess in the Fiery Furnace play scene. The play's function in the narrative is clear, but its manner of execution tends towards excess. Barthes speaks briefly of this scene in discussing excess, pointing to the three boys and, "the schoolboy absurdity of their mufflers diligently wrapped around their necks."[18] The mufflers work in with the general principles of the playlet's style, with a heightening of signification accomplished in the various channels by adding a symbolic device to the literal one: the boys stand over fire, but also light candles to imply that they are in the fire; they are tied together, but also wear mufflers to heighten the concept of "bound-ness"; they step into the furnace, but the Chaldeans also turn cartwheels to mark the moment (to suggest a sense of falling or confusion?). But beyond this function, Barthes' description seems to me right; there *is* something about those mufflers that goes beyond their symbolic participation in the playlet. Their individual decorative pattern and strangeness in this context convey a quality which is perhaps, as Barthes says, "absurd," perhaps amusing, touching, or all three. The same is true for other aspects of the scene: the Chaldeans' painted grimaces, the cymbal crashes, the boys' haloes, and the rest, all have qualities beyond their immediate functions.

18 Barthes, p. 48.

I have said almost nothing about sound, but clearly it can have its excessive features as well. The strange, jangling bell towards which Vladimir glances in the courtyard scene of the illness sequence of Pt. I would be one example. Birds are heard chirping in only one shot of the scene of the herald towards the end of Pt. I. Malyuta's repetitions of the word "pes" (pronounced "pyos," meaning "dog") in his conversation with Ivan before the executions in Pt. II seem to me rather comic, mainly because of the sound of the word itself and the injured tones in which he delivers the lines. In general, music has a great potential to call attention to its own formal qualities apart from its imme-

diate function in relation to the image track. The tendency of the actors to speak their lines in separate bits with long pauses between also tends, I suspect, to call attention to the sounds and rhythms of the dialogue.

A couple of obvious devices in the film that seem strongly excessive: the shifts between color and black-and-white stock, which inevitably must cause a perceptual shock dependent entirely upon the material of the images; and the use of two identical shots from the coronation sequence (I, 58-9) of two young women spectators in the Fiery Furnace scene of Pt. II (334-35). In the latter case, we can recuperate the repetition logically by positing that the device helps create a narrative parallel between the two scenes; nevertheless, the two shots stand out as disturbing elements because we know they are physically the *same* shots — they violate our expectations about the temporal distinctness of the two scenes.

These few indications from *Ivan* must suffice to help define excess concretely. I can do no more than indicate; a systematic analysis is impossible. Why then bother with excess at all? What is its value? Beyond renewing the perceptual freshness of the work, it suggests a different way of watching and listening to a film. It offers a potential for avoiding the traditional, conventionalized views of what film structure and narrative should be — views which fit in perfectly with the methods of film-making employed in the classical commercial narrative cinema. The spectator need not assume that the entire film consists only of the unified system of structures we call form and style; he/she need not assume that film is a means of communication between artist and audience. Hence the spectator will not go to a film expecting to discern what it is "trying to say," or to try and reassemble its parts into some assumed, pre-ordained whole.

An awareness of excess may help change the status of narrative in general for the viewer. One of the great limitations for the viewer in our culture has been the attitude that film equals narrative, and that entertainment consists wholly of an "escapism" inherent in the plot. Such a belief limits the spectator's participation to understanding only the chain of cause and effect. The fact that we call this understanding the ability to "follow" the narrative is not accidental. The viewer goes along a pre-ordained path, trying to come to the "correct" conclusions; skillful viewing may consist of being able to anticipate plot events before they occur (as with the detective story, which becomes a game in guessing the identity of the criminal before the final revelation). This total absorption in narrative has some unpleasant consequences for the act of viewing. The viewer may be capable of understanding the narrative, but has no context in which to place that understanding; the underlaying arbitrariness of the narrative is hidden by structures of motivation and naturalization. A narrative is a chain of causes and effects, but, unlike the real world, the narrative world requires one initial cause which itself has no cause. The choice of this initial cause is one source of the arbitrariness of narrative. Also, once the hermeneutic and proairetic codes are opened in a narrative, there is nothing which logically determines how long the narrative will continue; more and more delays could prolong the chain of cause and effect indefinitely. Thus the initiation, progression, and closure of fictional narratives is largely arbitrary. Narratives are not logical in themselves; they only make use of logic. An understanding of the plot, then, is only a limited understanding of one (arbitrary) portion of the film. But if one looks beyond narrative, at both the unified and the excessive elements at work on other levels, the underlying principles of the film (such as the hermeneutic code and the patterns of motivation) may become apparent. The viewer is no longer caught in the

bind of mistaking the causal structure of the narrative for some sort of inevitable, true, or natural set of events which is beyond questioning or criticism (except for superficial evaluation on the grounds of culturally defined conventions and canons of verisimilitude).

One example of the result of a willingness to view films for excess as well as for unified structures is the genre of experimental films which examines already-existing films. These often consist of optical printer alterations of the original film, emphasizing the material of the image. Ken Jacobs' *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* (1969) is one such film, which takes a short silent film of the primitive period and blows up and repeats portions of the various shots to create a feature-length film. Narrative begins to break down and tiny gestures, grain, and individual frames become foregrounded. Joseph Cornell made *Rose Hobart* (late 1930s) by taking an obscure American adventure picture *(East of Borneo,* 1932) and turning it into a play on the concept of narrative by isolating individual shots, cutting them together out of order, and repeating shots. He substituted a musical track for the original sound and specified that the film be shown through a purple filter. The result hints obliquely at the original narrative, but generally concentrates on the gestures and appearance of Rose Hobart, a minor Hollywood actress, and on the absurdly exotic studio jungle settings. These, as well as some of Stan Lauder's loop films, suggest the structural possibilities an awareness of excess can create. I don't mean to imply that the spectator and critic will be led to aesthetic creations of their own as a result of watching for excess. But Jacobs' and Cornell's films demonstrate the kinds of perceptual shifts which might take place once one becomes aware of excess.

Once the narrative is recognized as arbitrary rather than logical, the viewer is free to ask why individual events within its structures are as they are. The viewer is no longer constrained by conventions of reading to find a meaning or theme within the work as the solution to a sort of puzzle which has a right. answer. Instead, the work becomes a perceptual field of structures which the viewer is free to study at length, going beyond the strictly functional aspects. Each film dictates the way it wants to be viewed by drawing upon certain conventions and ignoring or flaunting others. But if the viewer recognizes these conventions and refuses to be bound by them, he/she may strive to avoid having limitations imposed upon his/her viewing without an awareness of that imposition. Obviously there is no completely free viewing situation; we are always guided by our knowledge and cultural tradition. But a perception of a film which includes its excess implies an awareness of the structures (including conventions) at work in the film, since excess is precisely those elements which escape unifying impulses. Such an approach to viewing films can allow us to look further into a film, renewing its ability to intrigue us by its strangeness; it also can help us to be aware of how the whole film — not just its narrative — works upon our perception.

SCIENCE & SOCIETY

VOLUME XLI, NUMBER 1, SPRING, 1977

TOWARDS A MARXIST UNDERSTANDING OF SHAKESPEARE: A SYMPOSIUM

Subscription: $ 8.00 Foreign Subscription: $ 9.00
Institutions: $11.00 Foreign Institutions: $12.00

SCIENCE & SOCIETY, 445 West 59th St., N.Y.C., N.Y. 10019

VIGO/JAUBERT

Claudia Gorbman

Zéro de conduite is the first of two collaborations by Jean Vigo and composer Maurice Jaubert. Although among his thirty-eight film scores Jaubert also made remarkable contributions for the Prévert brothers *(L'Affaire est dans le sac),* Clair *(Quatorze juillet, Le Dernier Milliardaire),* and Carné *(Drôle de drame, Quai des brumes, Hôtel du nord, Le Jour se lève),* this particular director-composer partnership strikes a rare resonance. Jaubert's critical awareness of the narrative and expressive possibilities of film music, which he voiced during the Thirties, partially accounts for the elegance and poetic quality so many critics have seen in *Zéro de conduite.*[1] In this article we shall 1) examine his principles at work in the film, and 2) consider some of the methodological problems involved in the analysis of film music in general.

Zéro was the most closely autobiographical film of the three that Vigo made before his untimely death in 1934. Scenes from it loom out at us with all the primal quality, as well as the distortion, of memories from childhood. While the film elicits such a response, this nostalgia-for-what-we've-never-experienced constitutes only a fraction of *Zéro's* complex functioning. Structurally, it is

ED. NOTE

Due to the length of the foot-notes in this article they have been printed at the end.

an extremely disciplined poetic work whose wealth of visual and auditory motifs more than compensate for apparent stylistic laxity. Ideologically, the school in the film acts as a social microcosm, a locus for a revolution of the imagination. What is "childlike" does battle with "adult" values; the schoolboys' natural collectivity takes action in the face of the administration's rigid hierarchy.

If the administrators form a calcified system, an illogical, indeed caricatured, application of meaningless values (meeting out zeros for conduct and decreeing Sunday confinements), it is the children who, through intuitive logic, seek to solve the problem of existing within such a system. The film sets up a dialectic of orders: neat disciplined lines imposed by the school — a static order — versus the boys' spontaneity and natural unruliness which (and this if essential) ultimately generate an order stronger than the imposed one.

Vigo does not seem concerned with accounting for everything in "good narrative" fashion. The curious effect of his elliptical segmenting — Caussat and Colin walk alongside a fence and ceremoniously bow to each other, Caussat stays on Sunday with a little bourgeois family whose putative father is lodged behind a newspaper and whose daughter hangs a goldfish bowl precariously from a wire traversing the salon — is not to distance or to puzzle, but rather to make one feel privileged to participate in them, as if in flashes of memory. In brief enigmatic scenes like these, Vigo's reputation as a surrealist is justified; a dreamlike quality results from tension between the real and imagined, present and past, the communicable and the incommunicable.

Zéro de conduite exemplifies how technical choices are also moral and aesthetic decisions. It has been said that an "anarchistic" style prevails. We note evidence of Vigo's debt to earlier filmmakers-of-the-imagination in subtle parallels to films of Mlies (Caussat's ball disappearing act in the classroom), Cohl (Huguet's cartoon coming to life), and Clair (madcap chases in the streets), as well as Chaplin and Linder. But *Zéro* goes beyond Clair or Méliès in straining at the bounds of narrative logic and visual proprieties. In scenes of joyous freedom, such as the classroom under Huguet's non-rule, bodies literally. hang from the rafters; pairs of legs dangle into the frame from above; other characters are only partially included in the composition. It is as if the narrator were saying "merde" to the (anal-retentive) regularity of the rectangular film screen. The spectator's pleasure comes not only from witnessing the students' freedom of movement, but also from violations of the classical rules of visual order. This particular scene moves from freedom to imprisonment, however, for as Parrain the proctor takes over the class we fade out on an image of straight rows of desks and now-unnatural silence punctuated only by the teacher's repetition of the word "No". . .

At issue here is a set of values and the way the film portrays them. Liberty, anarchy, and repression find their expression in a plot and in a style. Is the film anarchistic? Those who draw a direct line of descent from the political anarchist Almereyda — Jean Vigo's father — to the story of *Zéro de conduite,* most staunchly assert that Zéro's unruliness (on all levels) is its message. The film's final sequence, the Alumni Day disturbance, certainly lends support to this notion. Down into the courtyard, where authority is depicted more cartoon-like than ever (the Perfect sits at a little pavilion flanked by dummies), suddenly plummets garbage hurled by the four young revolutionaries on the roof. The ceremonies participants scatter in all directions. Where will the boys' revolution lead them? Certainly the children will not assume control of the school the next day. But the surprise bombardment is a complete

success within the context of the film, and that is what counts.

On the other hand, a film professing *stylistic* anarchy would have been much more unglued that *Zéro.* Instead, this story proceeds in a number of brief, tailored segments — episodes that all focus around the freedom-repression polarity, and that most often end with the repressive forces of authority having the upper hand. Only when the boys organize does the tide change: Tabbart's "merde" to the principal inaugurates the series of scenes that lead up to the students' final collective triumph. Exteriors and interiors take on positive and negative values through their placement in the story, as do movement and stasis. The promenade sequence, alternating between the group's joyous rampling and the principal's stifling office, between their noisy fun and his officious verbosity, demonstrates how Vigo's structuring and narrating principles are identical. And the "unglued" realm of the imagination does take over completely in the film's final moments: while in the third-to-last shot the four boys crawl atop the school roof, the final image shows them climbing up toward the summit as if somehow they had not arrived there yet. But if the film ends on a spatially illogical note, the careful episodic patterning that builds up to this ending involving the notion of visual "disorganization" as one *pole in a stylistic system* has narratively and stylistically prepared it as the logical result. And music, the subject of our investigation, has played a central role in the process.

Although writers on film music frequently allude to specific parts of scores, extremely rarely can we find an exhaustive analysis of a score and its narrative functioning in the entire filmic context. *Zéro's brevity* renders it an excellent object for close scrutiny: *barely* sixteen minutes of music are included in its forty-five minutes. In performing such an analysis, we shall see that *Zéro's* score raises, and answers in its way, important questions about *rhythm, form,* and *representation* in both film and music. It consciously explores music not only in terms of its emotive and rhythmic properties, but also in its aspect as a *physical sound phenomenon,* and as a *recorded* soundtrack element.

Zéro's score "raises questions," "explores" the music-film relationship: Jaubert, perhaps the film composer most conscious of the breadth of music's narrative potentialities in film, devoted careful attention of these issues in his articles and lectures during the Thirties. We shall examine his theories and the extent to which they agree with his film-music practice.

Here we must open a parenthesis: for how is it possible to accurately describe the film-music practice? What is relevant to the description of a scene *and* its music — short of another screening/audition of the film itself? Can a standard methodology evolve, and if so, how should it appear on paper? We are confronted with a problem of *notation,* priorities, principles of pertinence. Writing about the ways in which film music, coinciding with dialogue and images, functions in the story film — means not merely copying down the composer's printed score: for the score by itself tells us at best about the instantaneous music-shot relationships, and virtually nothing about music's effect on the narration. The almost complete absence of any close, accurate analyses of narrative film music results from this dilemma of notation.[2]

Along this line, Raymond Bellour has eloquently pointed out the exasperating nature of the film in general as an "unattainable text": the filmic text is unattainable because it is an unquotable text. He reminds us that in literature,

> nothing is more immediate, simpler than to quote a word, a phrase, a few lines, a sentence, a page. Omit the quotation marks that signal it and the quotation is invisible . . .[3] The written text is the only one that can be quoted unimpededly and unreservedly.[4]

Similarly, an independent musical work is quotable, says Bellour, since the score is codified into a standard written notation — although with the important difference that

> the musical text is divided, since the score is not the performance. But sound cannot be quoted. It cannot be described or evoked. In this the musical text is irreducible to the text, even if it is, metaphorically, and in reality thanks to the plurality of its operations, just as textual as the literary text.[5]

The sound film

> conjoins five matters of expression, as Christian Metz has shown: phonetic sound, written titles, musical sound, noises, the moving photographic image. The first two of these pose no apparent problems for quotation . . . (although dialogue) undergoes a certain reduction as soon as it is quoted: it loses intensities, timbres, pitches, everything that constitutes the profound solidity of the voice. The same is true of noises. . . what might be called motivated noise, which can always be evoked more or less since it indicates the real, should always be distinguished from arbitrary noise, which can go so far as to serve as a score, then escaping all translatability since it is not even codified as the musical score is . . . noise constitutes a greater obstacle to the textuality of the film the more it is one of the major instruments of its textual materiality. Musical sound obviously takes this divergence between text and text to the extreme: given the specifications implied by the phenomenon of combination which makes film music not a work in itself but an internal dimension of the work, we have here again the problems posed in this respect by musical works (code vs. performance).[6]

Bellour devotes greatest attention to the dilemma of quoting the moving photographic image the fifth of Metz's "matters of expression" which no one would dispute is the primary textual component of cinema. Obviously if we desired to quote the film's image-track as faithfully as we can quote literature, we would be obliged to show the film itself. Bellour concludes that the only solution can be found in the compromise of using stills: although "The frozen frame and the still that reproduces it are simulacra . . . Obviously the language of the analysis is responsible for the rest. It attempts to link together the multiplicity of textual operations between the simulacra of the frozen images like any other analysis."[7] And finally, since film analysis does not deal purely with separate textual images but must also contend with "that absolutely illusory thing known as its story,"

> Thus it constantly mimics, evokes, describes; in a kind of principled despair it can but frantically try to compete with the object it is attempting to understand.[8]

I have quoted extensively from Bellour's essay in order to emphasize how much remains to be worked out and agreed upon even in the relatively well-established field of film analysis. No such methodological considerations have even entered the picture in the field of film music, although the very

disorganization of its critical literature has at times yielded curiously "modern" results. If it is only in the Seventies that the methodical use of stills has become customary in the structural analysis of film,[9] it was as early as 1938 that Eisenstein described a sequence from *Alexander Nevsky* in stills juxtaposed to the musical score to demonstrate the exact audio-visual correspondence that he and Prokofiev supposedly achieved. In 1957 Manvell and Huntley used Eisenstein's basic format to cite segments of *Henry V, Louisiana Story, Julius Caesar,* and *Odd Man Out.*[10] Regrettably, these latter writers did not follow up their transcriptions with any analysis. As for Eisenstein, his work has stood alone as a vigorous and thorough — if somewhat delirious — combination of transcription and analysis.[11]

The other approach, used by film composers, concentrates on transcribing the complete musical score itself: additional cues for images, actions, and/or lines of dialogue briefly evoke the music's position in the given scene. Needless to say, the composer and his notation system are weighted heavily toward the music at the expense of minimizing the visual importance of the moving compositions on the screen as well as the score's moment-by-moment relationship with the narrated story.

As inheritors of this mixed tradition of film music notation, we shall pursue an analysis of the inaugural sequence of *Zéro de conduite,* concentrating on the music's functioning with relation to the diegesis ("that absolutely illusory thing"). I have chosen to consider the segment from the perspective of the musical rhythm that governs the soundtrack and often the images themselves. I have not deemed it essential to the analysis to write out the entire score, but rather to indicate rhythm, principal melodies and harmonies, and instrumentation. The shot lengthsare not described in absolute time (i.e., in seconds) but in terms of their co-incidence with the music. This "textual simulacrum" will then serve as a point of reference for the analysis that follows.

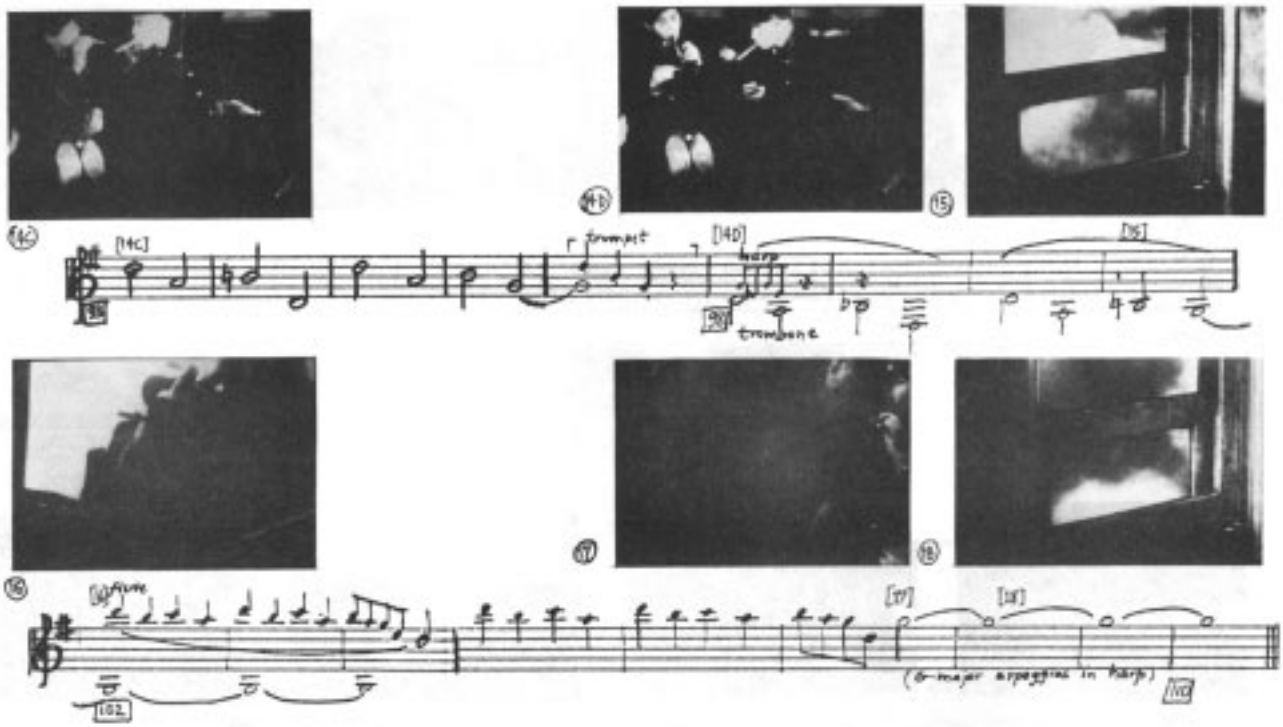
Structure

The musical organization of this "ragged" little sequence[12] closely mirrors its narrative organization. The diegesis, we will recall, opens at Caussat and Huguet wordlessly share a compartment on the moving train (shot 1-7, meas. 1-20). The train slows to a stop — first division — and Bruel clambers on. The ride continues, joyously now, as Caussat and Bruel play tricks with fingers, trumpets, feathers, balls, balloons, and cigars. As the train screeches to a halt, the sleeping Huguet thuds to the floor, and the boys half-seriously mistake him for a corpse. Second train stop, second division. The boys join their colleagues on the platform. Parrain, Colin, Tabard and his mother, and the decidedly undead Huguet are presented. Finally, after everyone has filed out of the station, a fade-out ends the sequence as a fade-in began it.

So the first of these three sections consists of an exposition: vacation finished, the train in motion. The music that accompanies this rather mournful collection of shots is all in G minor; it is dominated by a bassoon playing the principal four-note motif, and the low strings playing a "train-like" rhythmic ostinato in the bass. The music then decelerates with the train; as a matter of fact, there is no way of knowing that the train is slowing down *except* for the musical decelerando.

Part Two, the leg of the voyage with Bruel, begins in the major sub-dominant of the original G minor (C major); woodwinds play the theme in double-time.


FINIES LES VACANCES.
LA RENTRÉE.
Vacation is over. Back to school.



Il est mort...

...foutons lecamp!"

[Rhythms noted from shots 21-38 are diegetic sounds of trains.]

Caussat:
"Voilà Monsieur Pète-sec.
On ne rigolera encore pas
cette année."

Caussat & Bruel:
"Colin ..(?) Vieux Colin..
..(?) avec un mort!"

Caussat:
"..Eh! Fiche-nous la paix!'

Parrain:
"Dis-donc, Caussat,
finies les vacances."

Parrain:
"Par ici, vous. Allons!"

Mme Tabart:
"Pardon, monsieur. René..
René Tabart ne rentrera que
demain matin. Il a le
coeur gros ce soir."

Caussat:
"Un mort....

. . . je te dis, un mort.
La preuve!..

Colin:
"La preuve,
le v'là là-bas."

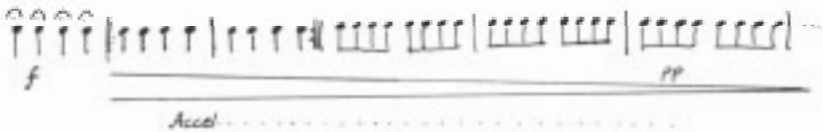
(train
whistle)

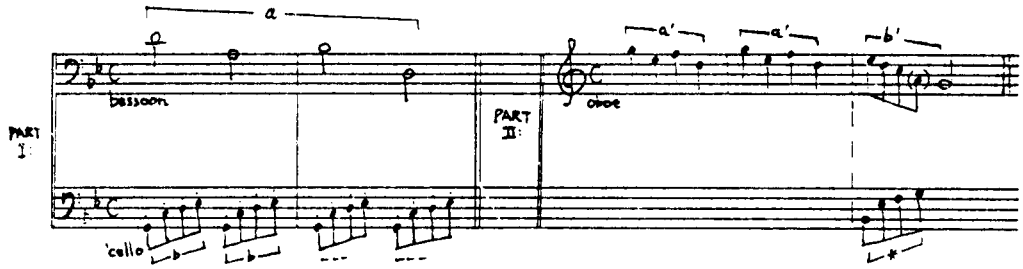
Huguet:
"Je suis le nouveau
surveillant...

...le surveillant
Huguet."

(train whistle, as
X. puts on his hat)

(FO)



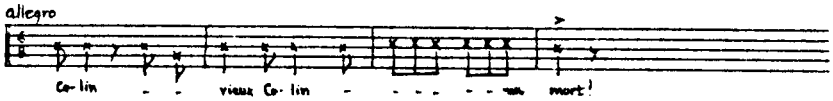


I have labeled melodic elements *a* and *b* to indicate how *b,* the train-rhythm accompaniment for Part One, actually incorporates itself into the melody for Part Two: not in its original form, but with one passing-tone added, and in melodic inversion (I have re-inverted it as "*" so that the musically untrained reader may compare it to *b* of Part One). It may be noted also that the exact intervals among the four melodic components of *a* have not been retained (except for the semitone between the second and third notes), but the shape of the melody is unmistakable.[13] Jaubert's pleasingly economical choice and manipulation of motifs results in continuity in score and in filmed segment. We may consider Part Two the real development section of the sequence on all levels at once. It is the longest and most eventful of the three parts, and is distinct from its neighboring sections by virtue of its joyful mood. Narratively, it gives a first view of the marvels that seem to occur whenever the schoolboys are left to interact freely with one another. In addition it introduces visual thematic material that will crop up all during the film giving it further formal strength and cohesiveness; here visual motifs are presented as playthings: the body, various balls, feathers a trumpet, smoke.[14] Musically, this is a section of development and recapitulation: moving from C major and voyaging harmonically through a tonal menagerie (A_b, D_b, C, E, and G major), the four-note melody *(a)* is performed by a zoo of solo instruments, undergoes melodic variations, and comes to rest on an elephantine trombone rendition in G minor — which magically resolves to G major as the boys puff contentedly and the train pulls into the station.

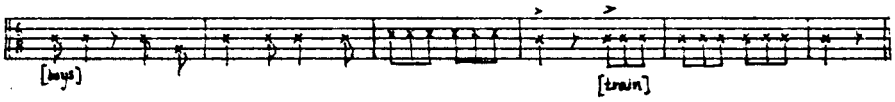
At this juncture, the train's arrival, the third segment begins. Huguet slides to the compartment floor, and one of the boys whispers loudly, "Il est mort!" — the first nonmusical sound in the film. The instrumental music ends with an onomatopoeic flourish and thump in G major to underscore Huguet's fall and the ride's end. ".. Foutons le camp!" Beginning with shot 21, the "natural" sounds of the train station are heard, and thus between shots 19 and 21, tonal music has given way to dialogue and sound effects, the soundtrack elements that will finish out the sequence exclusively.

This does not mean that the "music" is over. For *music is rhythm,* and the soundtrack continues just as rhythmically as before. First the ambient steam-locomotive sounds are heard in a 3/4 rhythm (cf. shot 21) and then, beginning with shot 22, they form another rhythmic pattern with a steady repetition of eighth notes. The most elegant evidence that this section is planned musically is to be found in shots 26 and 27. Caussat and Bruel shout in resonant stage whispers to their pal Colin that they have just shared their train ride with a dead man (their words are unfortunately indistinguishable to my ears, and the dialogue in *L'Avant-scène du cinéma* is inaccurate at this

point,[15] but what is all the more discernible for my lack of comprehension is the *rhythm* of their speech):



And what follows, in perfectly continuous timing, is a battery of "natural" locomotive steam sounds as if in response to the rhythm of the boys' speech. The several measures, reduced to their rhythmic and not their "realistic" or representational content, run this way:



Furthermore, just as various solo orchestral instruments punctuate certain actions on the train ride, a "concrete" solo instrument now performs Huguet's "theme" on the platform. After Caussat says "The proof? There's your corpse," a nearby train whistle toots loudly on the soundtract to punctuate Huguet's approach into the shot's foreground. The whistle happens to sound again exactly at the moment when Huguet, having presented himself to Parrain, tips his hat. A ridiculous punctuation, the toot informs Huguet's character with a note of the fantastic, the lighthearted, and from the outset it redeems him from the stifling musical silence that envelops all his stuffier colleagues at the school.

The boys and their teachers walk off into the night to the offscreen accompaniment of a train accelerating and leaving the station, and the image fades to black. Again, this first fade-out in the film lends support to the idea that the film's beginning is organized into one continuous sequence from shots 1 through 38. The musical score's *tonality* changes after Part One (meas. 1-20) — from G minor to C major and related keys; its *instrumentation* changes after Part Two (meas. 21-1 10) — from orchestral instruments to organized noise. Thus the entire sequence unmistakably comprises a musical-poetic whole.[16] Jaubert had a pioneering concern with the porous nature of the wall separating music and natural sound, and with the unique possibilities that cinema offers for organizing sounds into music:

> Freed from all academic impedimenta (symphonic developments, orchestral "effects," etc.), music, thanks to the film, should reveal to us a new character. It has still to explore the whole territory which lies between its frontiers and those of natural sound . . . Music must never forget that in the cinema its character of *sound phenomenon* outweighs its intellectual and even metaphysical aspects . . .[17]

Instrumentation

It is interesting to see how the composer sarcastically reproaches his contemporaries for the conventions of instrumentation they perpetuated:

> . . . Plus généralement, on demande à la musique de *commenter* l'action. La scene est-elle tragique? Quelques accents de cor ou de trombone vont accentuer la noirceur de l'image. Scène sentimentale? solo de violin qui rendra, croit-on, plus persuasive la déclaration d'amour du jeune premier.[18]

Zéro's score avoids instrumental clichés. Instead, each solo seems capable of standing on its own, while completing and giving unique definition to actions on the screen. In this perspective, Eisenstein spoke of Prokofiev's intuitive genius in scoring solos for *Alexander Nevsky:*

> Il me semble que c'est précisément de la tonalité et du timbre choisis pour l'image que nait l'équivalent mélodique et orchestral de celle-ci en musique.[19]

Equivalent — not illustration, commentary, or explanation. To understand this distinction in Jaubert's practice we shall turn to measures 45 to 48 in *Zéro.* The violin and oboe introduce a sprightly rhythmic three-note motif as one of the boys one-ups the other with a ball-and-spring toy. Perhaps an oboe alone would have done about as well here — but the violin brings in special qualities. The movement of the ball popping up from the spring mechanism is amplified by the bouncy, almost pizzicato notes from the resonant violin. Elsewhere, from measures 70 to 74 and 98 to 104, the trombone plays the four-note motif, corresponding to the images of Bruel's mammary-suggestive balloons, and the friends' sucking-and-smoking cigars. The trombone, full and blowy, comically reinforces these physical aspects of the images it accompanies. In every case throughout *Zéro's* score *the physical* qualities of the solo instrument — register, timbre, articulation — correspond in some way to the physical and dynamic content of the images. (The train ride sequence also has "motivated solos," a different use of solo instruments: i.e., the trumpet that plays on the soundtrack as Caussat plays his toy trumpet. Here, the music is clearly aping *representational* functions the way musical accompaniments did for the silent films.)

Just as remarkable as Jaubert's efficiency with melodic motifs and solo instruments is the tonal variety he achieves with such a small ensemble. According to his biographer, François Porcile, the "orchestra" for *Zéro* consisted of only eleven instruments: four woodwinds, percussion, trumpet, trombone, harp, piano, violin, and violoncello, and additional singing in three scenes. Through extreme orchestral economy and imaginative choice of solo instruments, the score moves easily from one dynamic situation to the next.

Rhythm

For Jaubert, the function of film music

> is not to be *expressive* by adding its sentiments to those of the characters or of the director, but to be *decorative* by uniting its own rhythmical pattern with the visual pattern woven for us on the screen.
>
> That is why I believe it to be essential for film music to evolve a style of its own. If it merely brings lazily to the screen its traditional interest in composition and expression, then instead of entering as a partner into the world of images, it will set up alongside a separate world of sound obeying its own laws. Even if this autonomous sound-structure reveals all the marks of genius, it will never have any point of contact with the visual world which it ought, nevertheless, to *serve.* It will live its life, sufficient unto itself.
>
> Let film music, then, free itself from all these subjective elements; let it also, like the image, become realistic; let it, — using means

> strictly musical and not dramatic — support the plastic substance of the image with an *impersonal* texture of sound, accomplishing this through a command of that mysterious alchemy of relationships which belongs to the essence of the film composer's trade. Let it, finally, make physically perceptible to us the inner rhythm of the image, without struggling to provide a translation of its content, whether this be emotional, dramatic, or poetic.[20]

From this eloquent statement of film music's objective functions let us extract Jaubert's comments on rhythm. Music ought to "make physically perceptible — the inner rhythm of the image." Exactly what is meant by the inner rhythm of an image? Does Jaubert invite the reader onto Eisensteinian grounds again, suggesting an equivalence between spatial compositions and temporal ones? Is he referring to movements within a shot, or to the rhythms of editing itself? or to the "subjective tempo" of an image in its narrative context? Jaubert might agree with all three of these attempts to corner him — although, I suspect, he would not be wholly pleased. Let us examine some of these aspects of rhythm in *Zéro's* train sequence.

First, the bass ostinato: its rhythm *is* the train's rhythm, its variable pace reflecting, really denoting, the speed of the train. Music is functioning as noise (and in doing so invites us to perceive everyday sounds as permeated with musical rhythm). Here the rhythm acts as a representational element: since *there* is *no diegetic* sound at all until shot 19 — we are in effect watching a "silent film" — the music takes over the iconic duties of the soundtrack in the meanwhile. Vigo evidently considered establishing shots prosaic, for there is none at the beginning of the scene (the only shot defining the space of the compartment is the fifth in the sequence). Merely the door-window, smoke outside, and the rhythmic bass on the soundtrack provide the narrative information.

Between measures 17 and 20 we (musically) hear the train slow down to a halt. After Bruel has climbed on, the rhythm picks up again (meas. 21 to 24) in the 'cello, indicating that the train is once more on the move. This rhythm is much faster than the original bass rhythm. Aside from its loosely representational role, the rhythmic bass has an emotive function; it serves to indicate a rise, a *quickening,* in spirit with the entry of Caussat's comrade. *Allegro* becomes equivalent to *allegresse:* a kind of pathetic fallacy is at work. This points also to a politics of tempo (auditory) and motion (visual) that pervades *Zéro.* The schoolmasters, seemingly impervious to motion, are usually seen standing, ordering, sitting, sleeping. The boys are happiest running, playing, and in kinetic states with respect to the film frame as well; and sprightly music is very often present to insist on the rhythms of their movements.

Editing to music. If *Zéro's* style capitalizes on the poetic interrelationships "found" between musical rhythm and natural rhythm, we might expect Vigo to edit shots according to the same rhythmic patterns as well. Indeed he does: it is clear from the transcription of the sequence on the preceding pages that musical rhythm is a primary principle according to which the sequence is constructed. Following are examples of cuts to music.

> The beginning of shot 2 coincides exactly with the beginning of the repetition of the four-note G minor motif in the bassoon.
>
> The theme's recapitulatory statement, beginning in meas. 13, begins at the same time as shot 5. in the images as well as in the music, several disparate introductory materials have been presented, and the composition of shot 5 recapitulates them in a manner

similar to the way the music recapitulates its own thematic material. The parallel effects of music and editing are aesthetically pleasing.

Shot 16, the low angle shot of the boys and their cigars, begins in precise conjunction with a final statement of the motif, this time in G major by the flute.

Other shots are cut so as to begin on a musical downbeat: examples are shot 4 (meas. 9), shot 6 (meas. 18), shot 10 (meas. 35), shot 11 (meas. 39), shot 15 (meas. 101), and shot 16 (meas. 102). Other shots cut to logical rhythmic beats within a measure, i.e., usually the third beat, are shots 1, 3, 8, 12, 13, 14, and 17.

Further, *movements within a shot* often are timed to match the rhythm on the soundtrack. Several of these image-music orchestrations occur during shots 12 and 14, the lengthy two-shots of the friends as they play "épater le copain" with their successive amusements. For instance, measure 45 inaugurates the three-note motif in A♭ major, as Bruel gets out his ball toy. Measure 58 seemingly motivates Bruel to play the notes on the trumpet that Caussat is blowing. With a transition in the score from C major into E major at the beginning of measure 64, Bruel takes a balloon out of his coat pocket. Caussat feels Bruel's right balloon in time with measure 66, and the left balloon to the rhythm of measure 67, and so on.

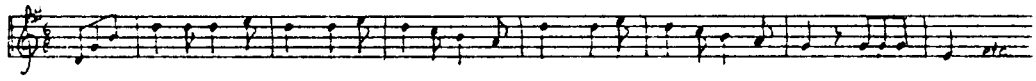
In fact, it is in this extraordinary concern on Vigo's/Jaubert's part to match auditory with visual rhythm that we may find a partial explanation for two of the awkward jump cuts in the sequence. Notice the timing of the jump cut that occurs near the end of shot 12, when Caussat removes the mouthpiece from his toy trumpet before he plays it through his nose. Caussat's original playing lines up well with meas. 56 ff, and the match continues acceptably through Bruel's playing (meas. 58, 59). in order that the closeup of the "nose-trumpet" should not end up out of synch with the music's rhythm, Vigo seems to have felt it necessary to cut a few frames out of shot 12's final moments when Caussat removes the mouthpiece. If this was indeed the reason for that jump cut, we can see to what unorthodox lengths Vigo would go to preserve the audio-visual integrity of the rhythm behind this sequence.

The transcription and discussion of the music in this first sequence brings to light several important aspects of Vigo's and Jaubert's approach to film and film music. We have noted Jaubert's economy of composition and instrumentation achieving a remarkable variety of narrative effects. We have cited Jaubert's concern with music as physical sound, and consequently have seen that *Zéro's* score assumes representational functions, and conversely that sound effects assume musical function. We have dealt with some formal relationships between soundtrack and image-track: the musical demarcations and subdivisions of the diegetic action, correlations between musical phrases and actions on the screen, and so on. Above all, it has become evident how important rhythm is in the poetic unfolding of the sequence — important enough to influence strongly the sequence's actual editing and important enough to necessitate jump cuts (for reasons much less iconoclastically self-conscious than Godard's, for example). What should be quite clear at this point is the absolute interdependence of music and images. It may surprise the reader that Jaubert wrote in 1936 that "music must remain the servant of the image." But let us recall that there are dumb, slavish servants and there are indispensable, imaginative ones, like Moliere's Dorine: Jaubert's statement may be seen in emphatically more than one way.

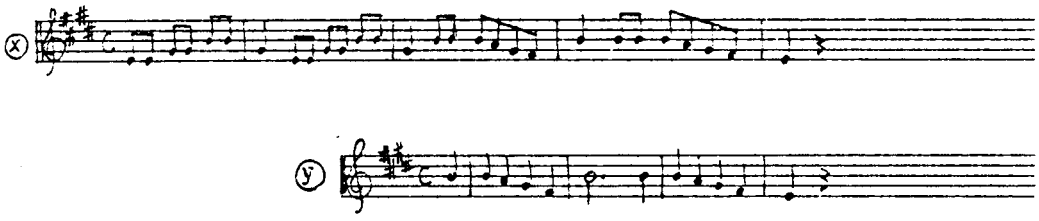
Filmed riot, musical organization

An essay on *Zéro's* music would not be complete if it neglected to consider the sequence of the dormitory revolt near the end of the story. Two additional film-music factors demand attention here: musical themes (i.e., any music that is repeated during the course of a film) and electronic recording.

First, how does *Zéro* treat musical themes? Let us for a moment list some of the recurrent melodic figures. Two principal motifs run through the train music: the ascending eighth-note figure in the bass, which we labeled *b* (subsequently transformed but retaining its intervallic integrity), and the slower, four-note figure, *a,* which moves a skip down, a step up, and another skip down. Another of the film's repeated melodies is the boy's song over the beginning credits, diegetically sung later as their marching song during their outing in the village:



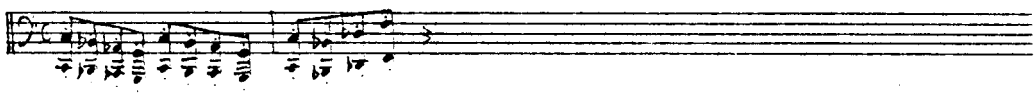
Solo snare drums also briefly intrude on two occasions: when Parrain jumps out to awaken his sleepy students in the morning, and when Huguet herds them from the courtyard into the classroom. Aside from this the only music remaining (not repeated in the score) is the ensemble music accompanying the strollers' increasingly wild pursuit of a woman spotted on the street. For reasons which will become clear, we shall note here two closely related motifs from that music:



X accompanies the boys' chase after Huguet, and soon after, the entire group ischasing the elusive gentlewoman. *Y,* a demure version of the latter half of *X,* plays while Huguet and the boys first tip their hats respectfully to the fashionable lady.

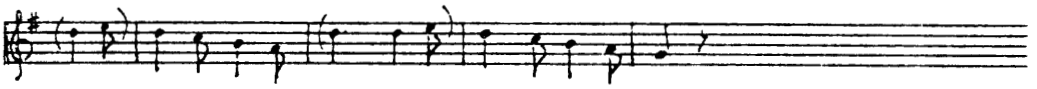
The extradiegetic music on the soundtrack during thenocturnalrevolt includes bits and pieces of all the motifs heard previously on the soundtrack. We do not wish to reproduce the score for the revolt — an unnecessarily laborious undertaking for both writer and reader — but merely to note down some motifs from this music, and to trace their origins.

As the boys begin their "revolution," running atop the beds, screaming, and generally disheveling everything within their enthusiastic reach, the music begins militantly in the piano's lower register:

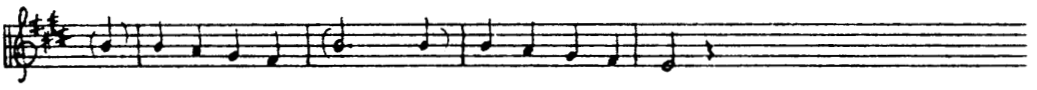


The figure is reminiscent of other motifs heard in previous contexts: (1) the very opening of the score, the "train motif" in the 'cello, also consisting of eighth notes played staccato, also in a minor key. The motifs differ in instru-

mentation, and the melodic direction is inverted (as it was, for the matter, in "Part 2" of the train sequence). (2) the latter half of the boys' marching song contains the same descending melodic figure, only in triple rhythm:

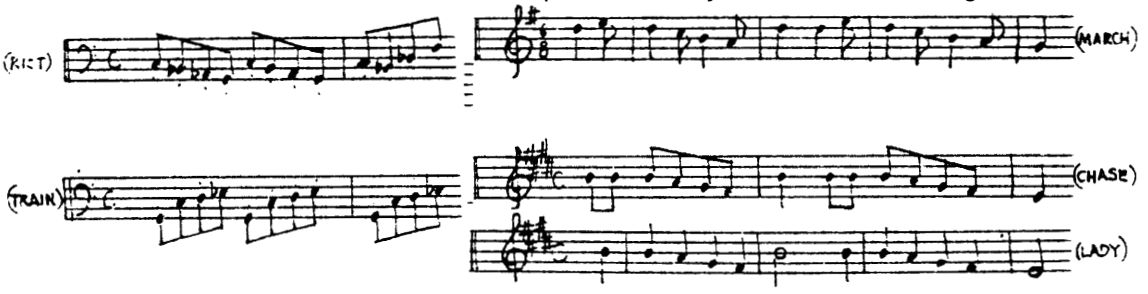


(3) the lady on the street is introduced to this descending melody:

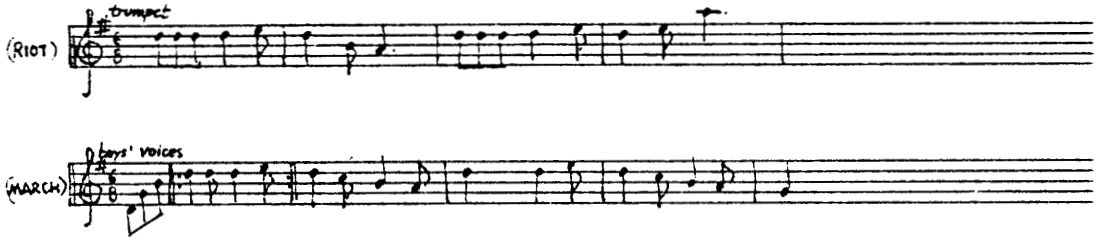


and as we have just pointed out, the cousin of this same figure is found in the chase music for the promenade sequence as well.

A comparison of all these motifs to the C minor motif launching the dormitory riot shows that while each motif has a distinct musical identity, each also bears a fundamental relationship of similarity to the C-minor figure:



Likewise, we can find a family tree for virtually every other motif in this crowded little selection of riot-music. Here is another:



The motifs in the riot sequence each serve as a *combinatoire* of anterior musical material. But only in a generalized sense do they convey thematic significations associated with the diegesis. In other words, the C minor figure does not effectively make the listener recall the train ride, the village outing, and the pursued lady: we would better make these connections if the music associated with them consisted of one stable, consistent motif. Here it is more a question of musical resemblances too subtle and evanescent to *generate denotation* the way, say, Ford's Indian drum motif does in *Stagecoach.* The motivic *combinatoire* acts less specifically, more poetically; in evoking similar music it has the effect of summing up previous musical material: mirror-fragments from the boys' lives are picked up, transformed, and used in an apparently chaotic piece that plays while they riot.

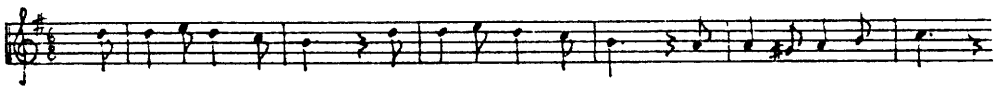
This is music whose tonality, harmony, rhythm, continuity in general, keep threatening to disintegrate completely — again, a perfect mirror for the frenetic activity on the screen . Suddenly the music leaps to an E major chord and stops dead, as on the screen Bec-de-gaz opens the dormitory door, pokes his

nose in, and hastily retreats. A "controlled breakdown." musically speaking; followed by silence, and then the famous backwards music to the boys' slow-motion procession among the pillowfeathers.

Electronic recording

> . . . Let us recollect that (the new film music) will be *recorded.* Once recorded, the music . . . will stand equally to benefit from all the various manipulations which the sound-track is able to undergo. It is well known that the sound-track receives its impressions from the vibrations of light caused by the vibrating diaphragm of the microphone, itself set in motion by the sound-vibrations of the orchestra. Indeed, one can say that recording consists in the *photographing* of sound. The director, with this photograph at his command, is in a position to treat sounds just as he treats images: the technique of mixes and cuts is just the same. Indeed, the device of re-recording allows him to go further still in manipulating the sound-track. A certain sound or musical phrase, or several, can be first recorded separately and then transferred together to a single strip of film.[21]

In order to produce the haunting music for the slow-motion sequence in the dormitory, Jaubert had to undergo several steps involving the manipulation of his photographed sounds. He used for the melody a phrase in the boys' marching song:



which a soprano's voice transforms into a slow, mellifluous anthem without words. First he had to record the melody, then re-record it backwards, and transcribe the backward version for his musicians to execute it, an extemely difficult task owing to its awkwardly unmusical character in that form. This backwards version was then recorded, and itself re-recorded backwards: such is its state in the finished soundtrack. The music thus had to undergo two electronic reversals, so that we may hear the melody make musical sense forwards. At the same time, we hear all the instrumental articulations backwards — i.e., a note's resonance will be heard *before* its attack — producing the otherworldly effect that matches the visuals so well.

All that Vigo had requested for the scene was "une musique de dessins animés."[22] Why, then, did Jaubert go through all these musico-electronic contortions for a score otherwise made as simply as possible? The key lies in the scene's importance in the total film. Although the true revolution does not take place until the following day when the boys open fire and pelt garbage on the Founder's Day ceremonies, the nightime dormitory riot makes the stronger impression. In Vigo's poetic vision, the dreamlike, not the "realistic," conveys the more compelling sense of truth.

Throughout the film, the boys have been attempting fragmentary revolts, small disruptions of authority and meaningless repetition. Colin throws a ball into the odious pot of beans destined for the students' dinner, Tabard actually says "merde" to his superiors. There is a strong parallel between the boys' desire to disrupt tradition, "imposing disorganization," and the principle behind this sequence: the dis-organization of its visual and auditory elements

constitutes a rejection of realistic (conventional) modes of representation. The film form carries out the revolution in sympathy with the characters. But it does not just destroy formal organization — it creates a new one, floating high in the realm of the cinematic imagination. The slow motion photography purified the "jeunes diables,"[23] cinematically transforming them into angelic figures clothed in white and surrounded by white. The cross-shaped standards the boys bear are both a parody of religion (this partially explains why *Zéro* was censored for so many years[24]) and a celebration of its rituals. The marching-song theme renders this music the triumphant marching song of their (and our) imaginations: its electronic treatment parallels in beauty the slow-motion reproduction of the images. (The real technical analogue to the slow-motion photography would of course be to play the music in slow motion too: but anyone who has ever heard a 45 rpm phonograph record at 33 rpm knows that the effect this produces is decidedly not a euphonous one!)

From the riot scene's rejection of conventional modes of representation arises not chaos but a new order. And in fact, can we not say the same for the music? To record a piece backwards makes chaotic non-sense of it: but to return it to its normal state via a second transformation restores it to a new order, creatively different from the original. It seems that *Zéro de conduite* accomplishes this on all its levels, transforms any prison that culture may impose. To quote a line from *Zéro's* original story outline here is to show how closely Vigo's moral and stylistic concerns are wedded: "If we must be prisoners, at least let us choose our prison, let's be happy and have fun there, so that we will want to stay there for the rest of our lives."[25]

FOOTNOTES

1. An excellent compendium of critical reactions to Vigo's works can be found in P. E. Salles Gomes, *Jean Vigo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), particularly pp. 220-238.

2. I would point out as an exception Fred Steiner's analysis of *Psycho's* score: "Herrmann's Black-and-White Music for Hitchcock's Psycho," in *Filmmusic Notebook,* the publication of the Elmer Bernstein Society, Vol. I (in two parts), Autumn and Winter, 1974-5: but even this accurate and intelligent piece of work, by virtue of the author's choice of what is pertinent to his description, largely ignores many of the score's narrative functions. Steiner illustrates his discussion with the relevant musical selections (in standard musical notation, including cue marks), pairing these in his text with skeletal descriptions of the scenes they accompany. Thus the music-image relationships and the music-action relationships are reduced to a purely verbal plane. Though he declares a concern for achieving a just balance in his analysis, aware as he is of the "difficulty of trying . . . to strike a balance between information of musical interest and that of cinematic interest" (part one, p. 291, Steiner has chosen to concentrate more heavily on the musical codes than on the film-musical codes.

   This raises another issue of obvious importance. Any methodology must have a basis in theory of what film, music, and film music are. Such theoretical considerations unfortunately lie beyond the scope of this article.

3. Raymond Bellour, "The Unattainable Text," *Screen* XVI, 3 (Autumn 19751, p. 20.

4. ibid., p. 21.

5. ibid., p. 22.

6. ibid., pp. 23-24.

7. ibid., p. 25.

8. Ibid., p. 26.

9. cf. for example Raymond Bellour, "The Obvious and the Code," *Screen,* Winter 1974-5 (on *The Big Sleep),* and Nick Browne, "The Spectator-in-the-Text: the Rhetoric of *Stagecoach," Film Quarterly,* 29, 2, 1976.

10. *The Technique of Film Music,* rev. ed. 1975 (New York: Communication Arts Books), pp. 96-107, 120-125, 130-131, 140-149.

11. His "delirium" arises from his idea that we perceive the melodic and dynamic contours of music analogously to the actual visual dynamics of shot composition. His analysis of the music-image relations in the "Battle on the Ice" sequence in *Alexander Nevsky* rests on the further assumption that we read a filmed image from left to right as linearly as the music's progression on the soundtrack. See his famous article, "Form and Content: Practice," in *Film, Sense,* trans. and ed. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1947, pp. 156-216.

12. Fully three jump cuts appear within 38 shots (i.e., shots 6, 12, and 29), apparently a consequence of Vigo's lack of money and shooting time for the film. However, the jump cuts prove to have a more systematic basis; cf. below, "Editing to Music" section.

13. This is normal in any tonal composition that undergoes modulation and variation.

14. For example, consider Vigo's treatment of the visual motif of cigar smoke. Smoke and steam come to connote movement, life, (scatological) immersion in one's atmosphere. The film has as its first shot the train compartment's door with steam billowing outside it. This same shot is repeated twice more (shots 15 and 18), accumulating resonance with each occurrence: if at first the shot simply indicates the interior of a moving train, it also comes to rhyme with the schoolboys' smoke-filled interior, etc., and the two-shot of Caussat and Huguet (shot 5) also includes the smoke. Huguet appears on the station platform breathing steam, recalling both the train steam out the window and the boys' cigar smoking, further reinforcing the double aspect of smoke as a visual rhyme and an element of diegetic information.

15. *L'Avant-scène du cinéma* (No. 21, 12/15/62) prints the original screenplay, so the line it gives here is "Haricot fils! haricot fils! on a voyage avec un mort!" — not helpful, but interesting in that it suggests that the line was changed in order to form the rhythmic whole.

16. Because of this, we may criticize Manvell and Huntley's narrow view of the music in *Zéro.* They briefly mention the film in their *Technique of Film Music* (p. 107), and I quote their treatment of shots 19 to 22: "As the train jerks to a standstill, a sleeping youth sic falls to the floor of the compartment. Il est mort!' shouts one of the boys; he has fallen with a heavy, musical thud. The natural sounds of the station platform flood in on the track, the boys get out of the train. The game is ended; the fantasy world becomes a real station platform. The sequence ends as abruptly as it began. The music is finished."

17. From "Music on the Screen" (p. 112), in *Footnotes to the Film,* ed. Charles Davy. This is *a* translation of what was originally a lecture Jaubert gave in London on December 10, 1936, entitled "La Musique dans le film," and which was subsequently printed in *Cinéma* (Cours et conferences de l'IDHEC), 1, 1944. It was also reprinted in *Ecran français* No. 522, June 26, 1946.

18. Jaubert, "La Musique dans le film."

19. S. M. Eisenstein, *Réflection d'un cinéaste* (Moscow: Editions du progrès, 1958), p. 178.

20. *Footnotes to the Film,* pp. 111 -112.

21. ibid., p. 113.

22. Quoted by François Porcile in his *Maurice Jaubert: musicien populaire ou maudit?* (Paris: Editeurs Français Réunis, 1971 **),** p. 205.

23. The film's entire title: *Zéro de conduite, or jeunes diables au college.*

24. The French Board of Censors banned *Zéro de conduite* soon after its release in April 1933, giving no explanation for their action. Whether they were pressured to do so by the Catholic authorities, or whether they took offense at scatological references and a brief shot of a male organ, or whether they deemed it subversive — a threat to public order — is a matter of speculation. Its public rerelease did not occur until twelve years later, after the Liberation. It opened at the Panthéon in Paris, in November 1945, on the same bill with Malraux's *L'Espoir.* For a detailed account of the film's history, see Salles Gomes, op. *cit.*

25. Salles Gomes, op. cit., p. 98.

KINO-TRUTH AND KINO-PRAXIS:VERTOV'S MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA

Judith Mayne

Technique, ideology, and social practice

Dziga Vertov's 1929 film, *Man with a Movie Camera,* is both an homage to socialist society and an elaborate analysis of the ways in which cinematic forms function and signify. Although political content has a central role in it, the film avoids the formulae of "socialist realism" such as realist plot and narrative, the development of positive heroes, and simple or facile praise of socialist ideals. At the same time, and despite its self-reflexivity and formal experimentation, it defies easy classification in the antithetical category of "formalism." An extremely complex film, *Man with a Movie Camera* attempts to define the terms in which cinema can be grasped as an ideological medium — that is, as a system through which social relations are experienced and understood. From this analysis of the ideology of cinematic form, Vertov explores the function of cinema as social practice. Technique, ideology, and social practice: the links between these terms can be seen in the operations of what might be called the textual strategy of *Man with a Movie Camera.* Therefore an analysis of this strategy may help us to investigate and to define the notion of political film outside the simplistic dichotomies propagated by much film criticism-socialist realism versus formalism, form versus content; and in contemporary writings, ideology versus social practice.

Whereas political interpretation has been too narrow in the former, traditional criticism, political analysis in more recent studies is self-consciously oriented to revealing the vast network of ideological formation which determines all practice. Too often, however, the "everything is political" attitude implies a levelling of very different aspects of political film practice, which are thus collapsed into a monolithic structure of Ideology. In this perspective, little or no difference would exist between a cinema which analyzes its own ideological basis, and a cinema which is *also* consciously part of a political struggle. That Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* belongs to the latter category of political film is the major working hypothesis of this paper.

Man with a Movie Camera is above all an analysis of movement. We follow the cameraman's movements as he films a population which awakens, goes to work, goes to the beach, engages in sports, listens to music; the movements of the film editor as she cuts and organizes the film strips; the movements of spectators who watch a film, and watch themselves being filmed and watching a film. The orchestration of movement is complex to the point that it is difficult to determine where one movement begins and another leaves off. Each movement is inscribed and defined within the context of another, so that a constant flux is created. The analysis of movement as central to cinematic production is also the analysis of social production as labor and as ideology.

The opening shot of the film depicts the instruments of film production: the cameraman climbs to the top of a gigantic camera behind which are clouds and a small hill, sets up his camera, and aims. The second image, a building with clouds moving by rapidly in the background, is, we assume, the image filmed by the cameraman. The how precedes the what; the image is not designated as a reflection of reality, but as a product of the cinematic process. The following two shots repeat a similar pattern with slight differences. In shot 3 we perceive the cameraman at an increased distance; and the angle of shot 4, lampost, is slightly different from the angle of shot 2. A puzzling reversal occurs as well: the off-center but nonetheless continuous match between shots 1 and 2 is impossible between shots 3 and 4 since in shot 3 the cameraman picks up his equipment and moves off-screen.[1] A sense of continuity is established and violated at the same time.

1 Alan Williams' analysis of the opening sequences of *Man with a Movie Camera,* unpublished at the time of this writing, examines the implications of such effects of discontinuity in detail.

Effects of discontinuity aside, the organization of the opening four shots follows a strict ABAB alternating montage pattern. The film as a whole is built with an identical pattern. The first four shots described above, are centered on the relationship between the instruments of film production and the images which result. Let us call this relationship, and the corresponding section, "A". A shift of emphasis occurs with shot 5, where the cameraman walks through a curtain later identified as the stage curtain in a movie theatre. We then see a movie theatre preparing for a film screening: spectators enter and take their seats, the projectionist sets up, and musicians prepare to begin their accompaniment. Here the fundamental relationship is between the spectator and the means by which images are perceived: the projector and the movie screen, most obviously, but also the accoutrements of film viewing such as music and the accommodations of the theatre. Let us call this relationship, and the corresponding section, "B".

With the appearance of the number "1" on the screen, the film within the film (seen by the spectators in the theatre) coincides with the film that has already begun. The emphasis shifts to the underlying principle of section "A" of the film, the relationship between images and the instruments of film pro-

duction. This relationship is subjected to a number of reversals, pauses, and visual parentheses, but a fundamental organizational link is maintained between the chronology of a day in the life of a Soviet city, and the activities of the filmmaker as he produces this chronology. The repetition of section "A" constitutes the largest portion of the film.

A vertiginous sequence of superpositions, rapid editing, and split images depicting Soviet citizens listening to and making music marks the final segment of this part of the film. Music defined the transition from "B", the conditions of watching a film, back to "A", the conditions of producing it. Here as well music determines the shift back to "B". The remainder of the film revolves around the relationship between the spectator and the film. The film-within-the-film continues and is shot from alternating angles, where images of the film (coinciding with our vision of the screen), of the spectators watching the film, and of isolated spectators reacting to the film, are constantly interchanged.

Approximately half-way through the "B" section of the film, we suddenly see the movie theatre in preparation for another film to begin: the lights go down, the musicians begin playing, and the curtain opens. From this point on, nearly all the images are repetitions or variations of images that have already been seen. The final segment, then, presents a reintegration of the principal elements that form the opposition ABAB. The film dissects and disperses its own structure: the final moments are characterized by a dizzying pace of technical virtuosity; in the last image, a human eye in extreme close-up is reflected in a camera lens, marking the fusion of human perception and cinematic technique; the "end" of the film, implying a new way of seeing, marks the beginning of another process.

The structure of *Man with a Movie Camera* suggests that the film is not a simple narrative (where the major relationships would focus on the events told, rather than the ways of telling them), but might be regarded as a meta-narrative, i.e., a film that tells a story about itself, about the activities of the cameraman in the place of a central narrative character. From the very beginning of the film, however, the centrality of the cameraman's vision is put into question: he moves out of frame in the third shot of the film. Visual continuity is turned back onto us, as spectators watching *Man with a Movie Camera,* before other spectators-within-the-film with whom we might identify are introduced. Visual perspective is not localized in a single mirror figure, but rather dispersed through multiple perspectives. Thus the relationships dividing the film into four parts revolve around another, more basic relationship: perception and representation.

Early in the film, when spectators enter the movie theatre (section "B"), two series of images alternate over a brief time span: shots of seats in the theatre which "magically" unfold by themselves, and shots of spectators who enter the theatre, find their seats, and sit down (folding down the seats themselves). As in the opening four shots of the film, an obvious manipulation of the image contrasts with shots that are more realistic — more "natural". This alternation ends with a shot of one seat unfolding by itself; a woman and small child enter the frame and sit down. Two different ways of showing an event are condensed in the same image: one emphasizing representation as overt manipulation; and the other emphasizing representation as immediate perception, realistic in its focus. Only limited stress is placed on how an event might be narrated. More important is how that event can be dissected and analyzed. Similarly, the chronology in the film ("a day in the life of a

Soviet city") seems to function more as a vehicle for the analysis of movement than as the narrative substance of the film. An opposition is created between narration as an illusory ordering of space and time, and production as a laying-bare of that illusion — i.e., production as suspension of narration.

Four particular moments of cinematic production are depicted in the film: the cameraman and the act of filming, the camera itself, editing, and the act of viewing a film. The absence of a chronological ordering governing these moments suggests that the film is continually being put into focus, recorded on film, edited, and viewed, i.e. that the film is continuously being produced. These moments also become points of reflection for other activities implicit in the production. Cinema is labor, hence similar to the work of machines in the numerous factory segments of the film. In more general terms, cinema is linked to the structural patterns of the games and sports Soviets play and the music they listen to. Cinema is like these activities in that they reproduce similar, often identical structures. But cinema is also given a special function as the medium that alone is capable of producing the knowledge of motion and the identity of structures. This view of the cognitive capacity of cinema assumes that cinema, as technology, is capable of significantly changing the nature of human perception. Such an assumption cuts across two major contexts: cinema as an apparatus of representation which simultaneously demystifies; and cinema as one part of a social totality, the backdrop against which any change — perceptual or otherwise — is ultimately defined.

Representation and the montage principle

Like other Soviet filmmakers of his time — most notably Eisenstein — Vertov considered montage both the essence of cinematic form and the foundation of cinema as a dialectical medium.[2] Thus it is not surprising that a demonstration of editing occupies a special position in *Man with a Movie Camera.* The camera, the act of filming, and the viewing as moments of production are central in the film from its opening shots. The method of editing, however, is not depicted until approximately one-third of the way through the film (the second "A" section) in a sequence which is set off from the narrative. Thus the four major aspects of cinematic representation initially appear to be organized around an opposition between perception (camera, filmmaker, and spectator) and construction (the film editor).

2 For a comparison of Eisenstein's and Vertov's views on montage, see my "Eisenstein, Vertov, and the Montage Principle," *Minnessota Review* No. 5 (Fall 1975), 116-124.

The demonstration of editing occurs within a sequence in which the cameraman films carriages in motion. The movement of the carriages is suspended in a series of frozen shots, and is later resumed after other frozen or motionless images, drawn from different points of reference, become illustrations for the stages of film editing. The editing sequence consists of forty-four shots (see appendix) which can be broken down into five segments, each organized according to a specific function of montage.

The first segment consists of nine photograms, the first four of which are repetitions from the carriage sequence immediately preceding. Although movement is frozen, linear continuity is preserved. Shot 5, a frozen long shot of a city street full of people, has not been seen in the film. However similar shots of city streets are used in *Man with a Movie Camera* as a means of indicating the progression of a day's activities, with the amount of activity and number of people present indicating the time of day. This is the first image of this type that signifies a city in full activity. Just as the basic element of the impression of motion in film is, paradoxically, a single motionless frame, so the height of a city's activity is represented by a still shot.

The four images which follow repeat the familiar pattern of ABAB montage construction. Two shots of peasant women, their heads in scarves and facing screen right alternate with two shot of little girls wearing bows in their hair and facing screen left. The first peasant woman was seen earlier in the film, although recognition of this image is not as immediate as recognition of the carriage sequence images nor the image of the city street. The second peasant woman appears in this sequence for the first time, as do the children who reappear much later as spectators at a magic show on the beach.[3] While these four images have different points of reference (the past, present, and future tenses of the film), they are linked here by a repetition of the central structuring device of the film, the ABAB pattern. Thus we perceive continuity of movement as both presence and illusion. The illusion is taken an additional step backwards, beyond simple frozen motion: the images of the little girls are filmstrips, with sprocket-holes clearly visible. Cinematic time is the function of cinematic space, itself dissected into two components: the space of the screen and the space of the filmstrip. The principle, then, of the first nine-hole segment is a gradual laying-bare of cinematic space and time: time to the individual photogram, space to the boundaries of the filmstrip.

Segment two of the sequence consists of two images of rolls of film classified on shelves. These images recall the rolls of films shown when, early in the film, the projectionist loads the projector to begin the film-within-the-film. In that scene, attention is drawn as well to the isolated image on the film strip, a window which later appears immediately after the number "1". A chronology of the status of the image is sketched, from reel of film to single photogram, to image in movement on the screen. The editing sequence repeats the same principle in reverse: image in motion to single image on the filmstrip, to rolls of film. Between the isolated images that begin the editing sequence and the rolls of film classified on shelves, ready to be edited into a film, some type of work occurs, like the threading of the projector which previously defined the transformation of the film strip into the image in motion. Segment three demonstrates this work, situating itself as a hypothetical bridge between the images inscribed by the cameraman and the images that are classified; between these classified images and the ways in which they are organized in the film.

In this segment, a series of images depicts the basic materials with which the editor works: a motionless take-up reel, a photogram of a fat peasant woman, and' the film strip being wound onto the reel. A shot of the editor portrays the actual cutting of the film strip as she operates the take-up reel and, in close-up, cuts the film. Finally the film strip is transformed. An eyeline direction match unites the photogram of the peasant woman and the editor as she examines the film strip: the film strip then "comes alive", its boundaries redefined as identical to those of the screen. Three aspects of production are separated, not as autonomous entities but as dialectical moments. Each visual representation bears the mark of how it is at once part of another process. The illustration of the editor's materials gives indications of the method that is operative; and the illustration of the method of cutting indicates, through the eyeline direction match, what the product will be. The result of this fusion of method and material suggests itself as a constant process rather than an absolute finished product.

The fourth segment of the sequence reiterates the work of editing in shorthand form, showing editor, film strip, and image in motion. The images transformed are those of children who, like the little girls seen earlier as photograms, reappear later in the film. Thus the work of editing, previously

3 Annette Michelson has analyzed the relationship between the two sequences in *"The Man with a Movie Camera:* From Magician to Epistemologist," *Art Forum,* 10, No. 17 (March 1972), 60-72.

demonstrated on an image which appears nowhere else in the film, here becomes anchored more immediately within the film narrative.

The reinsertion of editing into the text continues more intensely in segment five. Two frozen images of an old woman and the city street are the same images seen in segment one. As these recognizable frozen images alternate with the same images in motion, the editor appears less frequently. While these images bring us, the spectators, back to the narrative context of the film, they function simultaneously as objects, pieces of raw material which are transformed: representation is here equated with a work of transformation rather than simple transparent reflection.

Finally the carriage sequence recommences, briefly interrupted three times. An image of the editor's hand with extreme light and dark contrast shows the hand as it moves over a film strip, where the image is indiscernible. The re-establishment of normal continuity is accompanied by intense abstraction: the image could be any image, and the moment of transformation, any moment. The continuation of the carriage sequence is interrupted again by an image of the take-up reel, now moving rapidly and bearing a full roll of film. The reel defines the duration of the editing sequence, as the shots of city streets are temporal markers in the film, and as the take-up reel marks the time of the projection of the film that we are watching. Finally, there is a shot of the cameraman walking down a street. Previous to the editing sequence it was his activities which organized the carriage sequence. Here he is separate from the resumption of the sequence; he too becomes a figure of production.

It is significant that in the editing sequence film strips are cut, looked at, and classified, but never fused together. Montage is Vertov's principle of construction, understood simultaneously as a work of deconstruction. Lines are drawn together simultaneously in one direction only to be fragmented in another. Thus montage cannot be equated, in Vertov's terms, with a single technique, a single moment of fusion. Vertov's comments on the function of montage often appear to be simple ecstasizing on the virtues of the "pure cinematic language" the filmmaker sought to elaborate. Seen in the context of the editing sequence, the following statement clarifies to what degree montage-construction cannot be focussed on a definitive single movement:

> Each kino-eye film is in montage from the moment a subject is chosen to the emergence of the final film: that is, the film is in montage during the entire process of cinematic fabrication.[4]

4 *Articles, Journaux, Projets,* trans. Jacques Aumont (Paris: 10/18, 1972), p. 29. English translation by the author.

The editing sequence contains elements that are shared by the activities of the camera, the filmmaker, and the spectators. Just as the camera aligns itself with human perception to reveal different structural properties of the objects before it, so the work of the editor is a clarification of movement. Similarly, the editor's relationship to the film-object is analogous and parallel to the relationship between the cameraman and what he films in the preceding carriage sequence. And the ways in which the editor views the images are not unlike those of the relationship between the spectator and the film screen. The initial separation between perception and construction which marks off the editing sequence serves, then, to redefine more clearly the interdependence of the two terms as inseparable moments of production.

In demonstrating the work of montage, the editing sequence redefines cinematic representation as a process of production. Production is seen as multi-

directional flow, implying a refusal both to ground the image(s) into one-dimensional reality and to assign to them a set of closed meanings. Vertov challenges, in other words, the notion of representation not only as simple reflection of reality, but also as a fixed, stable relationship between image, object, and perceiver. Images circulate; patterns of continuity disrupt rather than contain.

It is precisely in terms of "containment" that representation can be understood in an ideological sense. An imaginary yet cohesive bond ties the subject to the representational apparatus, and the apparatus to the objects depicted. The subject is held in a specific place, her/his perception constrained, contained within fixed boundaries. Representation contains but disguises its own means of containment, seeking to be understood as "natural", i.e., as determined by natural laws. Cinematic representation is thus a complex configuration where events and objects appear to flow "naturally", where the rules of cinematic construction are rendered invisible to create a spectacle with which the spectator identifies, situated at what appears to be an ideal vantage point. Representation is governed, in short, by an ideology of realism. Vertov's film attempts to crack open and expose this ideology. In semiotic terms, this translates as a definition of the signified of cinematic discourse as a constant movement back to the formations of the signifier, rather than an illusory anchorage to a referential framework external to these formations.

Technology and the social sphere

To say that Vertov attacks the ideological basis of representation is one thing; to see this demystification as itself governed by an ideological *parti pris* is quite another. Ideologies are the imaginary links between individuals and their real conditions of existence; put another way, it is through ideology that we live and understand our real conditions of existence. It is a common assumption in recent studies of the nature of ideology, particularly those of Louis Althusser[5], that the basic structure of ideology is always the same, insofar as ideology is necessary to the functioning of any state system; ideology always produces a naturalizing effect and always assigns individuals a specific place. It is possible to agree with this assumption without necessarily seeing bourgeois ideology as the absolute denominator or central mechanism of all ideologies. Socialist ideology also naturalizes as it creates certain means of identification; but there is such a wide potential gap between the effects of ideology in a socialist context, and the deception and false consciousness which we have come to associate with bourgeois ideology, that it can be misleading to insist upon a single fundamental structure of ideological processes. Even more misleading is the absolute division suggested by this definition between ideology and science. According to this view, any system which successfully demystifies the workings of ideology is no longer itself ideological but scientific. In the case of Vertov, one can perhaps draw an imaginary dividing line in his work between a cinema of ideology and a cinema of science. And by fragmenting the fundamental workings of cinema as ideology, one might see his practice as effectively transcending the containment of ideology itself. Indeed the most central and far-reaching question that can be raised concerning the practice of *Man with a Movie Camera* is whether the laying-bare of representational models is itself at the service of ideology. The question can only be put in blunt terms: is the notion of kino-truth elaborated in this film a moment *of* socialist ideology; or is it a gesture which seeks to move completely beyond the realm of ideological practice? Nowhere in *Man with a Movie Camera* do socialist values appear in simple, positive equa-

5 See in particular "Ideologie et appareils ideologiques de l'etat," *La Penseé,* No. 151 (May-June 1970), 3-37.

tions; yet the film is clearly the product of socialist ideology, understood here as a complex and dynamic system rather than a rigidified institution. Several aspects of the film link cinematic practice to the work of Soviet society through the common denominator of technology. The technology of cinema in Vertov's film functions both as a qualitative change in ways of seeing, and a component of human labor: in other words, technology mediates perception and production.

The camera is often isolated in the film as a means of intensifying and refining human perception. Early in the film, close-ups of the camera alternate with images of a woman's eyes. Her foggy vision is clarified as the scene outside her window moves into crisp focus. The camera also functions, as Seth Feldman suggests, as a "barometer of social involvement."[6] When the cameraman films Soviets who awaken and go to work, close-ups of the camera lens alternate with shots of a young lumpenproletarian who awakens from a night spent on a park bench. The boy mugs for the camera, conspicuously amused. Immediately following the last image of the boy is a shot of a woman cleaning a city street. The only other conscious mugging for the benefit of the camera occurs during the carriage sequence. The fragments of taxis and passengers that are seen represent a brief rundown on social classes. A woman in one of the carriages, clearly a bourgeois, giggles as she imitates the movements of the cameraman's hands. The camera identifies itself with labor in order to differentiate between those committed to the work of Soviet society and those extraneous to it.

6 "Cinema Weekly and Cinema Truth: Dziga Vertov and the Leninist Proportion," *Sight and Sound,* 43, No. 1 (Winter 1973-1974), p. 35.

The filmmaker is often portrayed in a social context. Just as the work of montage initially appears as a moment of construction opposed to perception, so an opposition between social practice and technique is temporarily established in the marking off of montage from the immediate social arena defining the work of the filmmaker. Approximately half-way through the film (the second "A" section), however, the work of montage reappears and through a series of rapidly edited shots is literally equated with the productive work of Soviet society.

The sequence depicts different kinds of labor, gradually introducing cinema as one of them. First, alternating images depict two kinds of labor. Men and women beautify themselves: a woman has her hair washed, another has her face made up, a man gets a shave, another woman has her hair cut and styled, and another gets a manicure. Between each of these images, another kind of labor is portrayed: clothes are washed, an axe is sharpened, shoes are shined, and mud is thrown on a building. Each juxtaposition of images is determined by movement and direction matches. This formal continuity is disrupted by the irony which undercuts the opposition between the pains taken for the purpose of beautification, and productive labor. Political reference invades the sphere of formal continuity, giving it an ideological substance.

Shots of the camera and the filmmaker in the act of filming begin to replace the images of productive labor, equating the two and implying that filmmaking also is antithetical to the work of superfluous decoration. A similar opposition underlies an alternation between a manicure session and the film editor as she, in movements formally similar to those of the manicurist's hands, prepares to join pieces of film together. Up to this point, attention is focused on the objects and instruments of work. The actual "worker" in each case is not seen in her/his entirety. However, in a series of images of a young woman sewing, the human body is defined in work rather than as an object of work; and labor is portrayed in organic, rather than fragmented

fashion. The focus on the individual worker changes with a series of images of collective work in a textile factory. Finally, images of the sewing factory alternate with shots of the editor on the basis of the common properties of movement and direction. Editing is equated with social practice, and in the series of images that follow, machines, the camera, and the editor are interwoven into a dizzying montage that conveys the height of the day's production. Editing is redefined as linked to the social function of the camera, and the two are inseparable poles of cinema as labor.

The sequence described above is one of the few in *Man with a Movie Camera* that can be clearly understood in thematic terms, but the dizzying formal effects of the sequence make it impossible to articulate the equation of cinema with labor as a one-way causal relationship. Montage is the nodal point where the film's most elaborate exploration of representation converges in the ideological equation of cinema with socially productive labor. Montage mediates, in other words, cinema as ideology and cinema as social practice, a mediation which reflects the way in which technology, on a broader scale, is the interface between cinema and social practice. It is through technology that cinematic demystification is incorporated into a broader social framework; and, in counterpoint, social relations have no other expression in this film than as facets of a technological prism. Vertov assumes, almost naively, that technology can instantly be endowed with the positive principles of socialist revolution: a capitalist camera may mystify, but a socialist camera will reveal truth.[7] Such a perspective was not uncommon in Vertov's time. A major assumption of proletarian dictatorship is that a transformation of the relations of production is the necessary condition to redefine technology as a means of fulfilling human possibilities rather than stultifying them. Too often "necessary condition" has been confused with "unique condition" — a confusion which has justifiably been of central concern in evaluating the relationship between socialism and technology.

"One of the foremost tasks of art has always been the creation of a demand which could be fully satisfied only later", writes Walter Benjamin.[8] The theory and practice of Vertov had long been relegated to the marginalia of film history, when in the late 1950's and early 1960's, the advent of cinema direct appeared to make Vertov's notions of kino-truth more fully realizable. "Cinéma-verité", the term coined by Edgar Morin in conscious homage to Vertov, simultaneously reduced Vertov's influence to one of pure technique. Another "demand" postulated by Vertov was the fusion of human perception with the technology of cinema. Certainly the growth of technology has come to define the ways in which we see, but as passive agents of consumerism far removed from the sense of discovery and fresh apprehension of reality envisaged by Vertov and his use of the camera eye. What appear to be the limitations of Vertov's vision are the result of technological hindsight: an examination of Vertov's work is central to a deciphering of the ideological scope of such technologized vision.

7 "The camera was unlucky. It was invented when no countries existed that were not ruled by capital. The bourgeoisie had the diabolical idea to use this new toy to amuse the masses, or, more specifically, to divert the attention of the working class from its primary goal, the struggles against its masters" (Vertov, *Articles, Journaux, Projets,* p. 97). Kino-truth, on the other hand, is an instrument for "the communist deciphering of the world" (p. 62).

8 "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations,* trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (London: Fontana, 1973), p. 239.

APPENDIX*

SHOT LIST OF EDITING SEQUENCE

SHOT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF SHOT
1—	MUC of horse, freeze frame; front legs and part of head are visible. Identical to previous shot which was in motion.
2—	MS of two women with umbrellas, freeze frame. They face screen right.
3—	MLS, freeze frame of one of the taxis; slight high angle.
4—	MS of two women (same as 2), freeze frame. They are facing left; the image is slightly blurred.
5—	LS of very crowded street, freeze frame. Downward tilt.
6—	CU of peasant woman, freeze frame. Faces right. The same woman was seen earlier in the film. Her head is wrapped in a scarf; a man is visible in the background.
7—	CU of a small girl, freeze frame. She wears a bow in her hair, is smiling and facing screen left. Sprockets of the film are seen; also visible in the frame are the bottom and top of two photograms.
8—	CU of another peasant woman, freeze frame, head wrapped in scarf, and facing screen right.
9—	CU of another little girl, wearing a bow in her hair, facing screen lift. The photogram is more off-center than in 7).
10 —	MS of two shelves with 10 rolls of film on each. Part of each roll is suspended.
11 —	MS of shelves with rolls of film (completely rolled up); the shelves are divided vertically into 2 parts.
12 —	CU of a take-up reel and spindle; motionless.
13 —	CU of a film strip. Two frames appear sideways of a fat cheerful peasant woman wearing a white scarf.
14 —	CU of take-up reel (same as 12); the reel is turning as film is wound onto it.
15 —	MS of the film editor. She is operating the reel seen in 13) and 14). She faces left and looks at film on a desk. Poor lighting.
16 —	CU of a film strip, moving diagonally on editor's desk; stops on a transparent strip between two sets of images. Scissors enter the frame and cut the film.
17 —	Editor, as in 15). She continues cutting (continuous with 16). She places a piece of film on the desk.
18 —	Film strip with one image of a fat cheerful peasant woman with white scarf; strip is at a slight diagonal.
19 —	MS of the editor, shot from a different angle. She takes a piece of film and classifies it. The shelves seen previously are in front of her. She examines a film strip.
20 —	CU of a fat cheerful peasant woman with a white scarf. The image is now in movement. She smiles and appears to be talking to someone.
21 —	Editor, as in 17), looking at pieces of film.

22 — CU of a film strip (1-1/4 frame) of two children. In the foreground is a boy wearing a cap and laughing. In the background is a little girl with a puzzled expression on her face.

23 — CU of the boy from 22), in movement, facing screen left and laughing.

24 — Editor, as in 21), looking at filmstrips.

25 — CU of a film strip with three children. In the center is the little girl with a puzzled expression on her face who was in the background in 22).

26 — CU of the little girl (25) in movement. The image is slightly closer than in the previous shot.

27 — CU of an older peasant woman, freeze frame. Same as 6).

28 — LS of a city street, freeze frame, downward tilt. Same as 5).

29 — CU of little girl and boy, facing screen left, watching and laughing.

30 — LS of street (28) now in motion.

31 — MCU of older peasant woman (27), now in motion. She talks and gestures to someone off screen; she is facing screen right.

32 — Editor, as in 24), looking at film and turning the take-up reel.

33 — CU of a film strip passing on the table over a sheet of transparent glass. Stop on a transparent strip of film; images of babies seen earlier in the film are visible.

34 — MS of two women in carriage, freeze frame, as in 2).

35 — Frozen shot (34) goes into motion. Tracking shot of carriage.

36 — MCU of a young peasant woman with a scarf, previously seen in a frozen image (8). She faces the camera and talks.

37 — MCU of a horse trotting, head and harness visible. Camera tracts right to left.

38 — MS of two women in a carriage; they are wearing hats. This is not the same shot as 35).

39 — CU of a film strip; a hand moves over it. Extreme light and dark contrast; image on the film strip is not discernable.

40 — MLS of two women standing outside of a carriage; image is at a slight high angle. One woman takes money out of her purse; the second woman moves forward, toward the camera and the carriage.

41 — CU of the take-up reel in motion as film is being would onto it. More film is on the reel than before.

42 — Continuation of 40). The two women are in the foreground; an old woman comes out of a house in the background and takes the baggage from the carriage.

43 — ML tracking shot of the cameraman walking down a street, carrying his camera, moving right to left.

44 — MS of another horse-drawn carriage and two women stepping down from it. The driver helps them; the three move off-screen.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Writers

JEANNE ALLEN teaches film and broadcasting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her recent articles include "The Decay of the Motion-Picture Patents Company" in T. Balio, ed., *The American Film Industry,* and an essay on Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* and its film adaptation *The Innocents* in G. Perry, ed., *The American Novel and the Movies.*

DAVID BORDWELL teaches film history and theory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author of a monograph on *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc,* articles in *Screen* and *Quarterly Review of Film Studies,* and of a forthcoming book on the films of Carl-Theodor Dreyer.

BEN BREWSTER is currently a lecturer in film studies at the University of Kent in Canterbury and was the Editor of *Screen* from 1974 to 1976, having been on its editorial board since 1972. He has published articles, in *Screen* and elsewhere, on Marxist theory, on film semiotics, and on Brecht and the cinema.

CLAUDIA GORBMAN teaches film at Indiana University, Bloominton, in the Comparative Literature Program. She has published articles, mostly on the sound-track and on music in particular, in *Quarterly Review of Film Studies, Purdue Film Annual, Film Quarterly,* and *MovietoneNews.*

STEPHEN HEATH, former Editor of Screen and now a member of its editorial board, teaches English and film at Jesus College, Cambridge University, and at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. He is the author of *The Nouveau Roman: A Study in the Practice of Writing, Vertige du deplacement,* a critical study of Roland Barthes, and articles in *Screen, Tel Quel, Cine-Tracts,* etc.

JUDITH MAYNE teaches film, literature, and women's studies at Ohio State University and was 1975-76 Postdoctoral Fellow of the Center for 20th Century Studies. She has published articles on film and ideology in *Minnesota Review, Quarterly Review of Film Studies,* and *Jump Cut.*

PATRICIA MELLENCAMP studied theatre and film at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was Associate Director of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre Research. She currently teaches film theory and criticism in the Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

KRISTIN THOMPSON is currently completing a Ph.D. at the .University of Wisconsin-Madison. This article is an excerpt from her dissertation, "Form and Material in *Ivan the Terrible."* She is the author of "Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu," in *Screen,* and other articles in *Film Reader* II and *Wide Angle.*

The Editors

DAVID ALLEN was Postdoctoral Fellow of the Center for 20th Century Studies in the 1976-77 academic year. He has taught theories of visual representation and is currently working on perception and representation.

TERESA DE LAURETIS, 1976-77 Fellow and currently Associate Director of the Center for 20th Century Studies, is Professor of Italian at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She is the author of *La sintassi del desiderio,* a semiotic study of the novels of Italo Svevo, and has published on literature, film and semiotics in *Diacritics, Modern Fiction Studies, PMLA, Women's Studies, Film Quarterly,* etc.

SEMINAR IN CANADIAN FILM

CINE-TRACTS IS AT THE MOMENT EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING A THREE DAY SEMINAR IN FEBRUARY 1978, ON CANADIAN FILM. WE WOULD LIKE TO BRING A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE TOGETHER, FILMMAKERS, PRODUCERS, CRITICS, THEORISTS, HISTORIANS, ETC., TO DISCUSS AND DEBATE THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FACING FILM IN THIS COUNTRY. WE SEE THIS AS ONE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF A JOURNAL'S WORK. WE WOULD WELCOME SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR READERS AND FROM POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS AS TO THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF SUCH A MEETING'.

NOTES:

The Edinburgh Film Festival will feature a conference on Cinema in History this year and Ciné-Tracts will report on it in its next issue.

The Canadian Film Studies Association will be holding its Fall Meeting in Winnipeg this year, and the topic is Third World Cinema.

We would highly recommend the new Feminist film Journal, CAMERA OBSCURA. (see ad this issue)

Johan Van der Keuken is a major Dutch filmmaker whose work is not that well known in North America. His films are highly charged political documents — all of them examine the present crisis of capitalism from a Marxist point of view while at the same time remaining intensely subjective (though not subjectivist) in their self-reflexive use of the camera. Here are some of his notes on his new film, 'SPRINGTIME'.

Springtime consists of five portraits from the social reality. Portraits of people who have different ways of relating to the present economic and social crisis. I had some reasons for choosing the portrait form: First, in surveys of the economic situation one is seldom confronted with the effect it has on the individual, on his perception and emotions. I wanted to give a personal dimension to this rather abstract economic situation, which is often perceived by the public as a kind of natural phenomenon: Second, in the films which I have made over the past few years, the problems created by the prevailing economic system capitalism, are shown in a world-wide perspective. In this film I wanted to see things on a smaller scale and look more closely at a few characters within the somewhat more homogenous society of Western Europe: Third, while in most of my films I have used the image and spatial sound as driving forces, in the present film I have mainly worked on the basis of the spoken work.

Thus in *Springtime* we have five characters, each in his own surroundings. Three Dutchmen and two foreigners, three workers and two intellectuals; together they make an overall picture that could be endlessly enlarged if we didn't put a limit to it.' — *Johan Van der Keuken.*

R.B.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES:

THE HISTORY OF FILM, A RE-EVALUATION
IDEOLOGY AND FILM
ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS
NEW TRENDS IN CULTURAL THEORY
ARTICLES ON:
WALTER BENJAMIN
JOHN BERGER
RAYMOND WILLIAMS
LUCIEN GOLDMAN
REVIEWS AND ANALYSES OF RIVETTE , TANNER, GODARD

'FAMILY LIFE'