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EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA

A MONTHLY PROJECTING IMPORTANT
INTERNATIONAL FILM MANIFESTATION



"TEN DAYS"-EISENSTEIN-SOVKINO

PRINCIPLES OF NEW WORLD CINEMA

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Experimental Cinema, published by the Cinema Crafters of America, is the only magazine in the United States devoted to the principles of the art of the motion picture. It believes there is profound need at this time for a central organ to consolidate and orient those individuals and groups scattered throughout America, Europe and U. S. S. R. that are working to liberate the cinema from its stereotyped symbolism. It believes the time has come for wide critical and creative support of these isolated movements not only from the point of view of the spectator but also from the point of view of the creator, and it is the intention to experiment with new forms and to introduce to the spectator and creator the leading ideas and principles of the new film world. Experimental Cinema will be a forum where the work of directors and creators such as S. Eisenstein, W. Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, C. Dreyer, Konzinstoff, Trauberg, E. Pommer, J. Feyder, B. Rahn, A. Cavalcanti, Mann Ray, M. Allegret, E. Deslaw, Pabst, J. Epstein, Rene Claire, A. Room, Lubitsch, Griffith, Stroheim, Vidor, Seastrom, Chaplin, Flaherty, von Sternberg and others will be discussed. There will also be criticism, analysis, and scenarios by internationally known men such as A. Bakshy, L. Moussinac, R. Aron, H. Potamkin, Seymour Stern, J. Lenauer, L. Bunuel, R. Desnos, R. Aldrich, Syd S. Salt, and others. Experimental Cinema as the advance guard of a new motion picture art believes it will be the nucleus of a profound and vital force toward the creation of a world-wide cinema ideology. It appeals to you to support this unique experiment.

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THE NEW CINEMA



It is one of the strange paradoxes of our time that the nineteenth century while trying in various ways to eliminate the mysterious and along with it *mystery* itself from the universe, at its close bequeathed to the twentieth, what is perhaps one of the greatest single forces that history will record, for imbuing immense masses of people with that concentrated mystic fervour which the church was once able to inspire in its devotees — the cinema, silent conqueror of space, time and causality. In a remarkable communication concerning the machine in modern civilization written by Elva de Pue and published as an appendix by Waldo Frank in "The Rediscovery of America", Miss Elva de Pue writes that "the movie alone which tells one people in a universal language about the life of other peoples, however banal its initial stammering language, must in the end draw them closer together than even the mystery which they gathered of yore in magnificent cathedrals which pointed them away from the earth and its values, the earth which they were forced temporarily to deny. In a world filled with the stench of gangrened wounds; in a world filled with the stench of sewage gathering in moats; in a world filled with plague, that plague which eventually was a factor in the loss of belief in a merciful God: no incense could disguise those stench. No great bells and no calm glory of intoning could drown the cries of brutalized underlings tortured by their masters, lay and clerical. In that dark world the dependence upon another life was necessary as a compensation, as salvation from despair." Today, particularly in America, at a time when there is everywhere desire to escape the perils and the problems of a mechanical age, at a time when it has become almost fashionable to fall back into traditional positions, beaten paths off the main road, without even attempt at analysis or *positive* statement of the problems of mechanism as to their social, political or psychological elements, and in this sense, the humanism of those who look back to New England for authority, is as far away from the actual problems of the American scene as the humanitarianism of those who look forward to U. S. S. R. for a point of reference. At a time like this, there is exigent need of a *force* powerful enough to assist in the presentation of these problems, socially, politically, psychologically, and if possible to transform them to meet the realities of the time, realities deeply implanted by the revelations of modern science. That *force* itself can be nothing other than a mechanism, a machine. Anything other than the machine is impotent in the face of so much machinery to orient. Such a *force* is the motion picture machine which throws its light from one end of the world to the other and back in an instant, "that tells one people in a universal language about the life of other peoples however banal its initial stammering language" may be. The motion pic-

ture camera — which in the control of man is the cinema with a subject matter as wide as the universe and an understanding as great as nature, and in the control of men of genius — the cinema of Greed, Gold Rush, Theresa Raquin, Potemkin. End of St. Petersburg, New Babylon, Passion of Joan, Arsenal and the boundless potentialities of the new cinema of the future with its explorations into the legends and myths of the new age of the machine. This is the *devotional* cinema that is traversing with the speed of light and opening up to the masses, the mysteries of the new universe of modern physics, bounded yet limitless, almost in answer to the prayer for an interpretation of man's changing relationship with man and his ultimate position in the universe that will be something more than "isms" at the end of words or stultifying mechanical noise. The New Cinema — profound creator of free will and knowledge absolute — with the power of transmuting water into wine and thence to bread and back again to water should it choose to do so, wherein the fabled mountain to extend a metaphor, not only goes to Mahomet but to heaven as well to bring back the ghosts of all those slain in the name of Mohammedism; wherein Narcissus slips into the pool and finds himself being unreeled in the form of a flower that blooms to a fountain sprouting blood in streams as high as Betelgeuse — with no return to earth, defying gravities. In Cinema— Faust has reappeared on the thirteenth stroke of the clock, in new guise, to perpetuate the eternal alchemy that cannot be denied to spirit; the faustian soul has drunk deep of the new elixir and is appeased in cinema; for here is a new world of miracle wherein all is solved and sufficient; wherein every wish is granted; every hope fulfilled; wherein to conceive is to execute and execution — revelation. One receives in the words of a modern french cinematographer and poet: "A trolley car on the chest. An auto in the back. A trapdoor under foot. One has a tunnel in his eyes and rises to the fifteenth floor drawn by the hair. All this while smoking a pipe with the hands at the faucet . . . A storm tears out your tonsils, a cry passes thru you like the shadow of an iceberg" (*Cendrars*). Time is no more; the temporal becomes transformed into a timeless, ageless world; an incident occurs and later reoccurs at the same place and at the same moment in relation to past or future incidents. A smokestack falls and in an instant is resurrected to its former position. Two trains meet on one track and fly over each other with the grace of gods. Man has conquered the air without wing, in cinema; and the atom has finally given up its precious secret; of myths like these is born a great ideal. This is the subject of cinema, as all things are the subject of cinema; there is nothing it cannot transfix into a moment of beauty that no other agency can match so marvelously well; there is no

message it cannot immortalize in memorable moving pictures; it has in its sixth sense the power to penetrate so deeply into the mystery of reality because of the *instantaneity of vision* the camera gives, that all other media become pallid along side it. In Cinema, emotion, is caught and fixed at the very moment it is felt, in all its purity. Things are conceived as they are perceived; to think is to act. In that lies the *omnipotence* of the medium. This is the new cinema. And because it contains in its heart the very essence of the modern spirit which in its deepest implications is as catholic and as elastic as life itself — a spirit that Montaigne a true humanist if ever there were one, would have understood were it revealed to him in the cinema only — it is vitally necessary to those of us today who cannot accept local or aloof positions at a time when man has it in his power to unite with man from one end of the world to the other for the first time in history. When painters, writers, philosophers, laymen in tune with this catholicism come to realize the *potentiality* of the cinema as powerful stimulus to creative activity much in the same light as the authority of the church of the thirteenth century served as bulwark for work in philosophy, stained glass cutting, woodcarving etc., then the *renaissance* we have been awaiting so impatiently will have come indeed.

David Platt.

Dynamic Composition

By ALEXANDER BAKSHY

IN so far as visual images constitute the basic material of the motion picture the problem of cinematic composition is nothing else than the organization of these images in a sequential order. It is clear that there is more than one way of carrying out such an organization. The simplest and most obvious way is that of arranging the images in an order in which their content matter is used as so many connected links in the chain of representations which forms the narrative. In this case the actual form of images plays but a subordinate part, being at best, as in close-up, for instance, only the function of their representational content.

The motion picture as an art of story-telling has been principally concerned with supplying the spectator with such visual *information* as would ensure the desired intellectual and emotional reaction. At first, when the plots were simple and the technique still elementary, a straightforward stringing together of a series of scenes was all that was considered necessary for unfolding the story. Later, the more complicated stories and the greater detalization of images helped to bring into use the flashback and the parallel action, the two devices of cutting which introduced the method of intermittent composition. In this way the content matter of images became for the first time a formal element of cinematic composition. This formal character of the treatment of images, be it noted,

had nothing to do with their visual form; it was merely a means of organizing their content — a means which unquestionably has its origin in the peculiar mechanical structure of the motion picture, but which also has its analogues in other non-visual arts, as for example, in fiction and poetry.

During the last few years some very interesting attempts have been made in various countries, and particularly in Russia, to develop other methods of formal composition on the basis of image-content. The problem has been attacked from two different sides. On the one hand, experiments have been tried to establish a primary cinematic unit in the form of a group of images constructed somewhat on the lines of a grammatical sentence. Examples of this method are found in Eisenstein's "Ten Days that Shook the World" in which the use of symbols in the construction of various "figures of speech" deserves special notice. On the other hand, attempts have been made to base the composition of the film as a whole on such methods of formalised treatment of the image content as the arrangement of "rhymed" sequences with certain images recurring at definite intervals, or of whole cycles of sequences on the lines of a repeating pattern somewhat after the manner of certain verse forms. Dziga Vertov is considered in Russia as the head of this school of cinematic composition.

Side by side with the line of development just described which is based on the assumption that *the form of cinematic composition is the function of the sum total of its image content*, the history of the motion picture reveals another line of development which sometimes crosses the former and sometimes follows an independent course, and which proceeds from the assumption that *the content matter of a film is the function of its organized visual form*.

Ever since the first motion pictures were made it has been universally recognized that the cinematic visual image has one fundamental characteristic which distinguishes it from the visual images in other arts. This characteristic is movement. Although the term, particularly in its solemn guise of "dynamic quality", has acquired a sort of mystic halo, it is well to remember that it is essentially pragmatic in its origin and represents strictly definable properties of the motion picture mechanism. The men who made movies when the art was still new and unexplored, were not theorists. All they were concerned with was to give their pictures the semblance of life, and it took them but a short time to discover that a motionless object on the screen was as good as dead. Hence the orgy of recorded motion which distinguished the early movies.

It was at a comparatively early stage, too, that the necessity of movement not only in the characters and objects, but in whole scenes in relation to one another, was realised. Two reasons dictated this necessity. In the first place, there was the concentrated technique of cutting arising from the fragmentary nature of the film record, which had the effect not only of speeding up movement but also of compressing time. In certain situations this

latter effect was found to conflict rather too harshly with the sequence of events in *real time*. For instance, a scene showing a man in front of a street door, followed immediately by a scene showing the same man inside the house, is likely to produce the impression of something unreal. An interval of time is clearly demanded between the two scenes, and this is supplied by an interpolated third scene which may be a close up of the man, or the view of the room he is about to enter, or some other related subject. The method of parallel action is but an extended application of the same principle and achieves a similar effect of expanded time which sometimes, as in the climaxes of Griffith's pictures, is deliberately prolonged beyond even the realistic implications of the subject for a specific emotional effect.

The other and perhaps even more important reason for changing scenes and thus introducing a greater mobility of visual images, is found in the very character of realistic acting when it is used on the screen. In real life or on the stage speech itself constitutes action. A conversation between two persons may contain a series of events pregnant with dramatic significance, although the person speaking may engage in very little physical movement. On the screen the situation is different. Deprived of his words, even when these are present in the form of subtitles, the screen actor can express himself only by means of gesture and movement. But the naturalistic convention of acting excludes all but a few of these forms of expression. The inevitable result is that while the stage actor who uses speech can sustain a situation without a change in the setting for the length of a whole act, the screen actor finds his resources of expression exhausted within as short a time as a minute. It was to relieve the screen actor of this predicament and at the same time to give greater emphasis and variety to the means of expression, that long situations were reduced to a series of fragmentary scenes with long and medium shots, close-ups and "angles" thrown in for the sake of variety and emphasis. It is instructive to note that with the advent of talkies long scenes depending entirely on the dialogue and showing very little movement made their appearance on the screen. The fact that the latest talkies indicate a return to the technique of the silent picture with its short and fragmentary scenes, only goes to prove that the handling of dialogue on the screen is still far from being efficient and that the old "dynamic" form of composition wields a superior power of emotional appeal.

If the movement involved in the change from one scene to another brought to the fore the immediate significance of the form of the visual image, the movement resulting from a series of such changes organized in a manner conforming to a certain rhythmic scheme, placed the visual form in the position of the dominant factor in the building of cinematic composition. At this instance it is unnecessary to go into a description of the various methods of rhythmic organization of images beyond pointing to the work of Abel Gance, Leger and Murphy, Murnau, Eisenstein and Dovzhenko.

The important fact to be borne in mind is that cinematic rhythm is a form of visual composition which is itself charged with powerful emotional appeal and at the same time, while remaining independent of the image content, conveys and shapes the latter's appeal as well.

The effect of rhythm is to organize sequences of visible beats and accents. It establishes a visual continuity of intermittent images as a function of time. It leaves untouched, however, the problem of spacial continuity, of the spacial relationship of images to one another as elements of the visual cinematic composition. No pictures known to the writer have so far suggested a satisfactory solution of this problem. And yet so long as this problem remains unsolved the motion picture as a medium of dynamic visual art will never reach its complete maturity. The continuity of visual form implies a dynamic composition of which the only existing illustration in other visual arts is found in the moving composition of ballet. Just as in the latter, the cinematic visual form has to be built in time, and its elements of composition should be not static images but lines of forces or movements in definite directions. It goes without saying that movement in this sense includes not only moving objects, nor movement of images in time only, but also their movement in space over the entire surface of the screen. The technical obstacles which still stand in the way of such dynamic composition are likely to be removed in the near future by the various announced devices for enlarged projection. In them therefore lies the promise of the mature cinema whose intellectual and emotional appeal will be the function of its dynamic composition.

Film Problems of Soviet Russia

by HARRY ALAN POTAMKIN

BRYHER, assistant editor of *Close Up*, has just published (under the imprint of Pool, Territet, Switzerland) a book entitled, "Film Problems of Soviet Russia." The title is misleading, for the book is in reality a compendium of synopsis of Soviet Films, with some critical commentary, and data anent directorial personalities, concluding with a chapter, from whose heading the book takes its name, on the British embargo of Russian motion pictures. The sole "problem" of the Russian film considered here is the non-cinematic problem of the British antagonism. Bryher's book is a plea for the recognition of the Russian cinema by England. She stresses not only the artistic merit of the Soviet kino, but urges that vital cinema upon the British intelligence as quite in accord ideologically with the social sentiments of the free Briton. This would seem to characterize Russian ideology as reformatory in its outlook, a quite acceptable middleman's social philosophy. This sums up the Russian social attack as entirely harmless. If that were so, the Russian film, informed by this assertive ideology, would lack the essential vigor which is its physical health. But

the Russian idea is dangerous, decidedly dangerous, to the prevailing acceptations. The dangerous idea creates the dangerous, or heroic, structure—ultimately.

The heroic structure, is not achieved spontaneously from the dangerous or heroic idea. Form is attained only by penetration and perseverance and discipline. By all three and not by any of these alone. The last two may create a style, perseverance a manner, the three together form. Form is the conception constantly *informing* the structure. To understand the problems of form in the cinema of the USSR, we must consider the components of the Russian social attitude.

The Russian social idea is composed of the following: the social-revolution, the criticism of the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the ultimate of collectivism, the re-education of the mass and the individual in the mass, the conquest of the egocentric mind. Each of these is identified with the other. The Russian film, confronting these social intentions, must solve its problems, its construction, with these as insistences and total experience or final "message." That the Soviet kino has been preoccupied with the integral national idea of collectivism is more than evident. The preoccupation has been called too facilely "propaganda," with its negative connotation of counter-art. But propaganda, when profoundly conceived and realized structurally in the form, is art. The Russian cinema, and the Swedish before it, have alone approximated form.

That the approximations have not as yet been extended into a completed structure is due to a number of disturbances, vacillations in the inclusive idea, which induce vacillations in structure. These vacillations are: the concern with the egocentric and the deflection from the relevant method. The latter refers to the failure to discover the correct conversion of a profound and inferential social material into motographic treatment. Or to put it more simply: the Russians persist, generally, in a method ill-suited to their material. The method is the American muscular movie, which served as initial instruction to the Soviet Cinema and which has persisted, in the work of Pudovkin especially, as the Russian medium, perfected beyond naive American uses. However, the Russians have recognized that this technique can go no further and, as Eisenstein has said, cannot satisfy the *reflective* processes. We begin to see the new and intrinsically Russian film in Dovzhenko's *Arsenal*. In this film the early Russian juxtaposition of the individual and his analogy (the simile) become, at least in intention, a structure of integrated symbolism with a new non-verbal continuity or logic. The symbol in the realistic structure—a simplism intended ultimately as a kino language—is substituted correctly by a structure incorporating the symbolic conversion of the realistic detail, such as the human personality. So is one problem of the Soviet cinema being met.

A vexing problem is that of the individual in the film, to what extent shall he be *expressed*? Russia is troubled by this matter, as the criticism dealt Protozanoff's *The Man from the Restau-*

rant testifies. Eisenstein, interviewed in France, has remarked with severity upon what he terms the retrogression in the Russian film, the back-step to the single personage. He adds, however, that this is only a momentary withdrawal for an accumulation of strength toward a further advance. To Eisenstein, the constructor of mass-film edifices, the intellectualist and classicist of the Russian film, complete objectivity is possible. He does not penetrate the individual and there is a question in my mind whether he has penetrated the social inference contained in the mass-expression. I await his rendering of the reflective. But to the other film makers of Russia, the individual is an experience. The problem becomes more simplified when we ask: how can the individual as an experience become the social idea as an experience? The answer is contained in a number of films: from Pudovkin to Dovzhenko. In these the treatment is not concerned with the narrative of the individual caught *pathetically* in the social morass, or fate—the German and American evasion of the social criticism contained in the plight of the individual (see *The Last Laugh* and *The Crowd*). The individual in *The End of St. Petersburg* and *Arsenal*, in *Storm over Asia* and *In Old Siberia*, is the concentration of the social force. For a moment one expected such concentration in *The Man from the Restaurant*, when the walk-out occurs, but the film disintegrates into a palpably American story of the rich villain and the young hero and pure heroine.

A third problem arises from the educational purpose of cinema production in Russia. How can this purpose be rendered cinematically? Eisenstein approaches this problem from the objectivity of the newsreel. A very delicate operation is involved, to subtilize the didactic. Nothing is impossible in the film, everything is its material. The problem is an intellectual one. That is where intellectuality enters the cinema.

A lesser problem, but an important one, is the criticism of the bourgeoisie. Up to the present that criticism has been mostly a too Dickensian caricature of certain gross types, not a revelation of basic errors which are expressed in vicious tendencies. In other words, types have been ridiculed, but the bourgeois ideology has not yet been criticised. An attempt at organizing a critique condemnation is the sequence of two conducts, such as, men dying in battle, the exploiter indulging his appetite. This is, of course, elementary, but it is necessarily so. The first criticism had to be visceral. The criticism of the fundamentals is a development.

(To be continued)

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Film Direction and Film Manuscript

By WSEVOLOD L. PUDOWKIN

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INTRODUCTION

THE foundation of film-art is *montage*. With this password advanced the young cinematography of Soviet Russia. And to this day, it has lost nothing of its (original) significance and effect.

It must be stated, that the concept "Montage" is not always correctly comprehended or judiciously interpreted. Among many people, the naive conception prevails that by montage is to be understood a simple pasting-together of the film-strips in their temporal sequence. Others again recognize only two kinds of montage: a quick and a slow. But they forget — or they do not know in the first place — that the moment of rhythm that is the law, which determines the variation of short and long film-pieces, is far from exhausting all possibilities of montage.

Allow me, by the way of elucidation, to draw upon another art-form, literature, in order to bring the significance of montage and its future possibilities more clearly into focus. For the poet or the writer, the single word represents the raw-material. It can have the most varied meanings, which first become defined through the word's position in the sentence. If, however, the word is dependent upon the potentialities of the composition, its strength and effect will be variable until it is a part of the fully realized art-form.

For the film-director, each scene of the finished film signifies the same as the word for the poet. Hesitating, selecting, discarding, cross-checking, he stands before the film-pictures and only through the conscious, artistic composition are the "montage-sentences" created, out of which, step by step, emerges the definite art-work, the film.

The expression, that a film is "turned"*, is entirely false and must be banished from film-language. A film is not "turned" — it is *built* out of the individual little picture-scenes, which represent the raw-material of the film. When a writer uses a word, for example, *birch*, it registers, so to speak, the protocol of a definite object, but it is void of soulful substance. Only in relationship with other words, only within the frame of a more complicated form, does it receive life and reality in art. I open a book, that lies before me, and read: "The tender green of the birch-tree" — certainly no first-rate composition, but it reveals distinctly and exhaustively the difference between the single word and a word-structure, in which the word "birch" has no longer a protocol-designation, but has assumed literary form. The dead word has been stimulated into life through art.

I maintain that every object which has been photographed from a definite viewpoint and is shown upon the screen to the spectator, is a *dead object*, even if it has moved before the camera. The independent movement of an object before the camera is still no movement on the screen; it is no more than the raw-material for the future montage-structure of the movement, which represents a composition of a number of different film-pictures. *Only when the object is composed out of a multiplicity of individual pictures when it emerges as the synthesis of different individual picture forms, does it possess filmic life.* Exactly as the word *birch*, it transforms itself through this process from a kind of protocol (recording), photographic copy of nature, into *filmic form*.

Every object must be so brought upon the screen through montage, that it receives not photographic, but cinematographic, reality.

We see that the significance of montage and its sphere of work for the director is far from being exhausted by a succession of contents or by the presentation of a time-rhythm. Montage is that primary, creative moment through which, out of a soulless photography, (the individual film-pictures) the living, cinematographic form is created. It is characteristic that in the presentation of a filmic form very different types of material may be used, which, in reality, have reference to entirely different appearances. Allow me to cite, as illustration, an example from my last film, *The End of St. Petersburg*.

At the beginning of the reel, which is devoted to the war, I wished to show a tremendous dynamite-explosion. In order to endow this explosion with the completest authenticity (of effect), I had a great mass of dynamite buried in the earth, and photographed the blast. The explosion was truly extraordinary — only not in the film. On the screen it was a tedious, lifeless affair.

Later, after long searching and testing, I mounted the explosion according to the effect I desired, without, however, using one single piece of the material first photographed. I photographed a flammen-werter, which threw out a thick column of smoke. In order to give the effect of the concussion, I mounted short shots of a magnesium-flame, in rhythmical change of light and dark. In between, I placed a "stock" shot of a river, which seemed to me suitable here because of its particular light-effects. Thus, finally, there came into manifestation the effect I had desired. The bomb-explosion was now *on the screen*: what it corresponded to in actuality might have been any-

thing at all, except a real explosion.

With this example I will say that montage is the creator of filmic reality, and that nature represents only the raw material for its work. That is decisive for the relationship of film and actuality.

This thought leads inevitably to consideration of the actor. The individual who is photographed is only the raw material for the future composition of his form in the film, effected through montage. When in my film, *"The End of St. Petersburg"*, the task confronted me to depict an industrial magnate, I sought to solve the problem by mounting (*associating*) his figure with the rider-statue of Peter the First. I maintain, that the form so composed with an entirely different reality, takes the place of the mimic of the player, which usually smacks of the theatre.

In my earlier film, *Mother*, I wanted to affect the spectator not through the psychological representation of the player, but through the medium of the depiction through montage. The son is sitting in his prison-cell. Suddenly a scrap of paper is slipped into his hand, (containing information) that he is to be set free the next day. It was now a question of how to portray his joy filmically. Merely to photograph the joyously excited face would be ineffectual. So I showed the play of the hands and a huge close-up of the lower half of the face, of the laughing mouth. These shots I mounted together with entirely different material. For instance, with shots of a turbulently flowing spring stream, with the play of sunbeams, which blended with the water, of birds, that played in village ponds, and finally with a laughing child. Thus, the expression of the "joy of the prisoner" seemed to me to have been formed. I do not know how the spectators have taken to my experiment: I myself am profoundly convinced of its effect.

Cinematography strides forward at a rapid tempo. Its possibilities are inexhaustible. We must not forget, that it is only now coming into its own as a true art, since it has only now been freed from the dictatorship of alien art-forms, for example, the theatre. Now it stands on the feet of its own methods.

The will, to suggest thoughts and emotions from the screen to the public through montage, is of emphatic significance, as it dispenses with theatrical (*sentimental, maudlin*) titles. I am firmly convinced that this is the path along which this great international art of the film will continue to progress.

Berlin, June, 1928

W. Pudowkin

FORWARD

The manuscripts that are submitted to production-companies have usually a very heterogeneous character. Almost all of them represent the primitive rendition of some fictional content, with which the authors have obviously troubled themselves only in order to relate some action, and utilizing for the most part, literary methods and not stopping to consider whether the material submitted by them will be interesting in cinematographic treatment. This question, however, is

very important. Every art possesses its own type of material-formation. That naturally applies also to the film. To work on a manuscript without knowing the working-methods of the director, without knowing the methods of shooting and cutting the film, is just as senseless as to give a Frenchman a German verse in literal translation. In order to convey the correct impression to the Frenchman, one must re-form the verse with due recognition of the peculiarities of the French poetic metre. In order to create a manuscript suitable for filming, one must know the methods through which the spectator can be influenced from the screen.

Sometimes, however, the view is advocated that the author has only to give the general, primitive outline of the action. The entire filmic adaptation (*according to this view*) is the concern of the director. But this view is entirely false. One must always bear in mind, that in no art can the creative process (formation) be divided into isolated stages, independent of one another. If one reflects on the theme, the final form of the film will certainly appear only in unclear outlines. But the manuscript-writer must have an image-conception (*Vorstellung*) of this form; he must create material sufficiently suitable to provide the director with the possibility of creating a production of filmically powerful effect. Usually, the result is entirely otherwise. There generally emerge out of the first scenario-attempts of the author a great deal of uninteresting, verbal, insurmountable hindrances that present obstacles in the path of filmic adaptation.

It is the task of this study to offer an elementary knowledge of the fundamental methods of work on the manuscript. A manuscript can be built as drama, and then it will be subjected to the laws which regulated the construction of a drama. In other cases, it can approximate the novel, and accordingly it will be defined by other construction-principles. But in the present work these questions can be only hastily touched upon, and readers who are particularly interested in them, must have recourse to special works.

PART I

THE MANUSCRIPT

What Is Meant by the Continuity?

It is generally known, that the finished film consists of a whole series of more or less short scenes, which succeed one another in a definite sequence-series. In the development of the action the spectator is transported to one or the other place, or, even more than that: he is shown a scene, a situation or a player not as totality-appearance,—but the camera selects single parts of the scene or of the human body. This style of the building-up of a picture, which divides the material into elements and then builds out of them a filmic whole, is called the *cutting of the film* or the "*Montage*". More will be said about that in the second part of this work. For the present, it is only necessary to allude in passing to this essential form of film-work. In filming the manuscript, the director is not in position to take the shots according to sequence, that is, to begin with the first scenes and to follow the shots through to the end in logical order. The

reason is very simple. If a decoration (set) is built, it almost always develops that the scenes playing within this decorative frame are scattered throughout the manuscript. If the idea should occur to the director to proceed after the shot of this scene to the following scene in the manuscript, which takes place in an entirely different location, it would be necessary from the start to build an extra-ordinary series of settings, which would consume an inconceivable amount of space and an equally inconceivable amount of material. Finally, a whole mass of sets would stand there, but it would not be possible to have one or the other pulled down.

To work in that fashion is naturally impossible. Neither the director nor the player, therefore, has the possibility to work in continuity-form. Through the loss of this possibility, at the same time, the unity, the style of the work and, with that, its effect, are imperilled. In order, therefore, to assure this structural (*spiritual*) unity, a method must be found, which, despite the fragmentization of the individual shots, will warrant a unified form of the whole. Above all, it is necessary to work out the manuscript in advance in the minutest detail, and the director will only then achieve positive results if he forms each single detail filmically, the final goal always before his eyes. In this preparatory work the style must be created, which conditions the value of the art-work. All individual, separate placements of the (camera)—apparatus—far, near, close up, above-angle, etc.—all technical properties, which connect a shot with the preceding and the succeeding shots, everything that constitutes the inner contents of a scene, must be precisely established, otherwise in the filming of a scene picked out of the middle of the manuscript, irremediable mistakes will occur. Thus, the continuity, that is, the finished shooting-form of the manuscript, represents a new and final-definitive establishment of every single detail, with provisions for all technical methods that are requisite for the shooting of the scenes.*

To require of the authors, that they write their work in such form, (virtually) means to make directors out of them. But this work must be accomplished even if the authors do not furnish a finished shooting-*"Stahlmanuscript"**, in which case they must provide the director with a series of essential stimulative items. The more technically detailed the continuity is worked out, the more possibilities will be at hand to realize on the screen the visual appearances which the author has presented.

The second chapter of Part I of Pudowkin's book will appear in the next number of EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA, and further translation of the entire book will appear serially thereafter.

*I. e., "cranked" or revolved.

*This sentence defines what is meant by a *"Stahlmanuscript"* (steel-manuscript). — C. G.

Analytical Treatise on the Dreyer Film, "The Passion of Joan of Arc" with Appendix of a Constructive Critique.

(Translated from the German Original by Christel Gang of Universal Pictures Studio).
by WERNER KLINGLER

MORE correctly stated, the film should be inasmuch as the montage-form and the called "The Trial Day of Joan of Arc", technique, which director Dreyer employs here, grow out of the embodied material and subject: the conflict between the clergy and the primitive, but faith-exalted, individuality, Joan.

Apart from its political significance, the collective belief-form of the church is shaken, by this simple ecstatic girl, to its foundations.

As with Bernard Shaw, it became an absolute necessity that Joan should suffer death. To express it in terms of Dostoevsky (Grand Inquisitor*), the returning savior would be once more nailed to the cross.

Viewing it in such a light, Dreyer selected the rhythmical, raw structure. He had to develop the film in such a way that Joan represented the combatible almost static center-point of the image-whole, and the judging council around her had to stand out in sharp, active contrast. Slowly, but surely, the circle narrows closer and closer upon her, straining towards a verdict.

Therefore, the seeming monotony of the film-rhythm up to the torture-scene has been consciously planned, for the exhaustive legal quibbling, the length and the monotonous form of conducting such a trial can in itself forcibly lead to the desired testimony. This torturous procedure on trial is not only medieval, but is still in our modern era applied successfully by the police.

A great deal of comment was made against the close-up treatment of this film, without anyone's really offering a convincing argument.

This close-up technique evolved, and it was postulated for this film, as already mentioned, out of the material that had to be embodied, and it is this particular film's own style inasmuch as the theme is not conveyed by abstract pantomimic action, but rather by a more spiritual one.

PRINCIPLE:

The impression produced through such a type of picture-and-montage form depends upon the association of expression from close-up to close-up, plus dynamic rhythm.

To determine more clearly the necessity of the close-ups here, I should like to state that the psychological characters in their strong divergence had to be absolutely kept apart from one another, as every psychological type in this film represents a world in itself. Understood in a purely optical way, these types had also to be separate and dis-

*In *The Brothers Karamazoff*.

tinct (particularly Joan) and a reciprocal mental, as well as physical, contact takes place across the frame of each scene and across the intercut of the scenes of the picture.

A typical example of this conflict-contact of types is the scoffing-scene: An English soldier tickles Joan with a long straw. If Dreyer had taken the two, that is, the soldier and Joan, and placed them into the same frame, Joan would have lost (suffered) (for the spectator) in formal significance. The director therefore keeps the two strictly separate, and goes so far that he does not even show us the soldier's hand, but only the moving long straw as it tickles Joan's face.

By this cut, all physical elements (of the soldier) have been eliminated from the shot of Joan, and only the base conduct on the one side, and the emotional reaction of Joan, on the other side, dominate the scene. That is, — absolute concentration on the head of Joan. Then, when Dreyer cuts back to the soldier, the latter strikes us as doubly raw in his coarseness.

Elucidation of the picture-composition: MED. CLOSE SHOT: The soldier's body is turned towards the camera. His head and glance are turned towards the right frame. His extended arm and hand with the long straw begin moving towards the lower right corner of the frame. Fully aware of his power, the soldier grins sadistically.

In contrast: CLOSE UP of JOAN. Moving from out of the lower left corner, the long straw appears upon her face, without the soldier's hand.

Through this compositional structure, Joan is reflected in the glory of martyrdom, similar to that of Christ in the Scoffing-scene.

Dreyer no doubt was fully aware of this and deliberately chose the Christ-motif, but, as the symbolical parallelism did not lie so close at hand, it had to be first creatively "discovered" as "plastic material."

Once more to emphasize the necessity of the close-up in this film, I should like to mention that the close-up is used to express emotion. The most sensitive mimical values are given their full worth. Thoughts, even the most hidden psychological functions, which speech and a theatrical performance have never been, and never will be, able to convey, become revealed to the audience.

If I wished to classify Dreyer's special film-style, I would use the formula:

PSYCHOLOGY TRANSFORMED RHYTHMICALLY INTO PICTURES.

It is self-evident, that this particular psychological note in a film presupposes, first, exceptionally trained acting material, and secondly, an intellectual spectator, as only in such a spectator, who possesses a wealth of association-conceptions, can this filmic quality and potency evoke its fullest response.

Certain it is, that such a film is not for the masses, because for the unschooled, primitive spectator the significance lies in action, in rhythmic and atmospheric presentation. Thus, the torture-

scenes and the burning at the stake in *Joan* will make the fastest and strongest impression. The inspired, superb performance of Mlle. Falconetti is universally acknowledged.

Before the first significant rhythmical highspot, the torture scene, the curve of action leaps several times abruptly, upward and downward. The change in the curve of action occurs in those moments in which Joan becomes increasingly helpless in the face of the questions directed at her by her judges, who press proportionately closer.

In such scenes Dreyer diminishes the camera-distance from his object, while through quickened action and a lightning-like change of pictures, the broad rhythmic structure becomes interrupted.

Beast-like, the heads of the priests from out of the depth of the picture, drive into the foreground.

A brilliant example of this montage-treatment is the following scene:

CLOSE UP: The head of Joan, front view.

To her right —

The head of a priest in profile.

The priest scolds at Joan.

SINGLE

FLASHES; Head of Joan—Head of priest

" — — — — — closer

" — lower face, priest

" — — — — — closer

" — Mouth of priest, very large.

Upon her cheek the spit of the priest. Joan in such scenes actually steps out of her static reserve and moves with purely pantomimic gesture and emotion within the frame of the picture.

As already mentioned, with the scene of torture starts an important acceleration in the rhythmical structure.

Without appealing to the lower instincts of the spectator, this scene carries an immense, impressive power. The spectator receives, so to speak, "an aesthetic emotional shock." He is swept away by the rhythmic action and he experiences the swooning of Joan.

Just as the complete scenic architecture has been maintained throughout in white, so also has the torture chamber been kept in white. Any kind of medieval, mystically shrouded atmosphere has been carefully avoided.

Through a compelling door, Joan steps into this glaring white, cruel reality.

For the psychology of the inquisitors Dreyer finds the most eloquent plastic material. To be sure and not to miss anything of the approaching spectacle, a priest, amidst the repressed excitement, gets a chair from the farthest corner of the room. Holding it high, he swings it across the heads of the others and places it in the front row.

The age of torture becomes completely revealed in its blunderings and its perversity, and stands clearly condemned.

(The camera follows the chair as it is being carried through the room).

A flash-shot displays the torture chamber in its totality. Fantastic machines and large wheels (black against the white background) create a foreboding of something dreadful. As quickly as

this static scene is withdrawn from the eye, nevertheless as forcefully the impression is held. The future proceeding in all its horror is foretold. Immovable in the foreground stands the attendant of the torture instruments. Significant in his insignificant corporality.

In close range, one beholds how a certain fluid is poured through a funnel. An array of funnels is shown graduating in size. Next, an array of saws, in the same order. The arrangement in its gradation indicates the degrees of torture (montage-type of association).

At the sight of these instruments Joan impresses upon her judges that "even if she should confess under torture, she would later recall everything."

And now the attendant turns one of the big wheels of a kind of revolving machine.

From a new angle one sees the broad side of the large wheel, spiked with hundreds of nails, turning from the upper side of the picture towards the lower.

By way of a masterful montage-construction Dreyer pulls the emotional-condition of the spectator into a mad whirl. He cuts continuously back and forth, from the revolving wheel to Joan; in each montage-picture the large wheel turns faster and faster, simultaneously drawing closer and closer into the frame, until finally, covering the whole screen, it reaches the point of culmination when Joan faints away.

And here the filmic rhythm falls back into a broader line.

In the bleeding scene that follows I would like to point out an important moment.

With one hand the surgeon stretches the skin of Joan's arm. The other, holding a knife, he raises to cut.

The blade-point of the knife is set tight against the skin, so that the spectator expects to see a cut and the blood oozing, — but — the hand holding the knife stops short, — in order to make immediately another attempt.

At this instant, Dreyer cuts into a new scene, i. e., to a priest, followed by the camera which moves from right to left as he passes along a hallway.

It is seldom that Dreyer chooses from a traditionally-optical horizontal angle.

The possibilities of a photographic apparatus were applied by him to their fullest creative extent. Our eyes which are governed by certain laws of association, are being educated here to an entirely new sight, and actually the vision gains significance, plasticity and depth.

One is astonished at the variety and power of these new, optically created forms.

For example, the first exterior shot is taken slantwise, downward at a stone-paved surface. In the foreground only legs, walking, are seen. In the background, in perspective shortening, the people become visible, into full view.

The atmospheric weight of this scene lies in the legs on the ground, on their way to the cemetery.

The polaric dramatic tension of the scene at the cemetery is held by the executive priest and Joan.

Slantwise, looking upwards, the priest is caught standing behind a high desk in such a way, that

the edges of his desk where they run together form a triangle, facing the camera.

Figuratively speaking, Dreyer also, carries the action to extremes.

Quickly, facing the camera, the priest directs his questions at Joan and places her at the choice between life and death.

He points to a grave that is being dug. She glances over, and beholds a row of flowers, as they are blown by the wind. (Moving shot to the flowers in opposition to the static shot of the grave).

With this comparative reflection (contrast-montage) Joan decides to save her life by abdication, and becoming for the first time, unfaithful to herself, she signs the document.

The crowd, having gathered around this scene, rushes back to the county-fair.

Taken back to her cell, Joan has to submit to the cutting of her hair.

Parallel with this action one sees again the county fair, the masses in their yearning curiosity for change, for a spectacle. Already they have forgotten Joan.

And now, in the cell upon the floor, Joan's hair is being swept up by a servant, with the hair also her selfwoven crown of cord.

Her kingdom being swept away thus, before her eyes, suddenly she realizes what she has done, and she screams for revocation.

Resultant verdict: Death at the Stake.

From now on, the rhythmic structure of its line of motion mounts in steep ascendancy towards the highpoint, towards the solution, towards the end.

All of a sudden Dreyer's camera becomes extraordinarily mobile. The following scenic construction is drawn into the rhythm of the flames.

After the preparation for the burning has been completed, (such as carrying of stones, wood, raising of pole, nailing of the parchment with the accusation to the pole), and after the crowd has deserted the county-fair and comes rushing once more towards the stake, *Dreyer divides*, with Joan's walk to the square of execution, to the wood pile and stake, the scenic structure into different actions and movements, each of which falls into a shorter and quicker tempo the faster the burning process advances.

The 5 elements of motion, above mentioned, are mounted within each other.

- (1) Doves
- (2) Fire
- (3) Priest
- (4) Crowd
- (5) Joan as the centre.

(1) — In the plastic material of the *DOVES*, Dreyer finds for Joan a continuous psychological process, a most expressive and moving symbol.

As Joan walks to the place of execution, a frightened flock of doves soars upward.

Thereupon, after some other scenes mounted in between, the doves light on the highest cross of the church tower.

Further scenes of the process of burning are mounted in between.

In formation a flock of doves flies up into the sky.

Further scenes of the burning-process in between.

The formation of doves flies higher.

Further scenes of the burning-process in between.

The doves fly still higher.

Further scenes of the burning-process in between.

The doves are high, at a vast expanse from the earth; they are visible merely as little specks.

The "pure soul" is carried by the doves (deliverance) into infinity. Simultaneously they represent for Joan a medium of overcoming the agony. From the cross and the doves she receives the capacity of overcoming.

(2) — The FIRE, the process of burning, represents the rhythmical counterpoint.

The higher the doves soar, the faster the flames devour, and the whole procedure is enveloped in an earthiness.

Later on, when Joan has disappeared from the stake, when the parchment, as if in anguish, has burned, its ashes blown to the winds, and when only the bare pole with the nail remains in sight, then all human arrogance of judgment stands stripped to its basest nakedness.

The camera shows the burning stake from all angles. In constant repetitive back-and-forth movements it catches the flames.

(3) — and

(4) — PRIESTS and CROWD plus FIRE (2) form together a rhythmic collective.

Again and again the priest is shown. The tall cross held by him towards Joan, becomes like Joan, smoke-enveloped, and is smoked out.

With frantic entreaty he screams his prayers to drive out the devil that is not there.

The action here starts its development *moving into a regulated function of antithesis*, (Heraclitus), as the crowd is itself, with the beginning of the insurrection, goaded by the devil.

The brutal mass, the people, are caught here specifically, in that Dreyer continuously cuts in with varied types in their reaction to Joan.

Camera movements to right, to left, upwards and downwards.

(5) — To all this, JOAN remains the center. Everything reacts towards her. Optically to her head.

Stirring, how she lifts her own shackles! The camera follows the movement exactly as she ascends the stake.

Joan then becomes the personification of the "God forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Up to the start of the fire, she feels the sedative of a drink, which a peasant woman had extended to her on her way to the stake.

Her trembling nostrils betray the first sign that the stake is burning. Then the fire itself becomes evident.

Her last words are:

"OUR FATHER"

(The length of this title is held at such a short tempo that it appears as if these words had escaped her mouth with her last breath).

With her last words, a spark of intuitive realiza-

tion strikes the mass of people. One of them turns around and screams:

"YOU HAVE KILLED A SAINT!"

And with that, the devil whom they wanted to drive out from her, turns into them, and destruction revolt, chaos follow. The eternal struggle over belief, over the Deity.

Dreyer shows the course of the struggle in an optical distortion. The eye is forced to follow the discordant change of black and white. The thought-response of the spectator becomes difficult. The scenic confusion also bewilders the spectator.

Demonstrated graphically, the sequence at the stake represents upon the screen 5 major points of motion.

The pole with Joan as middle-point (5) creates a vertical, which moves from the screen-center, Joan's head, partly upward, into the irrational, the doves (1), and partly downward, towards the burning pile (2).

The mad-house, the world, the county-fair (4) and the church (3) move in the rhythm of the blazing flame (2) rotating faster and faster around the pole where Joan is bound.

This film is no doubt the most completely attainable form of the "silent era."

A masterpiece, such as *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, has a right to be called a classic, for it possesses lasting merit.

As the "film" represents in itself a collective art-form, and depends entirely upon technique, the "talkies" today present the antithesis.

With relentless logical necessity, however, we are stepping out of the present-day forms and dilemma of styles into the purest and most complete film-form, the filmic synthesis.

With the harmony of light (picture) and tone-value (music) we come to the

SYMPHONIC SOUND-FILM

APPENDIX

Constructive critical comment on the collective montage of *Joan of Arc*.

In the first part of the film, in order to break down somewhat, the justified monotony, the distances of *close-ups* from Joan to the priests should have been from the very beginning increasingly widened.

Then, with the idea of advancing towards a circularly diminishing enclosure, the possibility lies open to lessen by degrees the distances, i. e., in gradually drawing the priests closer and closer to the camera.

Simultaneously with the advance of the circle, straining to close in on Joan, more and more the priests should have been shown collectively, in order to emphasize in contrast their basically psychological difference.

The screen-surface thus, first, through the constant closing-in of the camera upon the single heads, would become gradually filled, and secondly, at the same time, by the increasing number of heads at the final encircling of Joan, the surface would become completely covered, so that no open space would be left.

This type of montage would permit a greater play of tension, and upon this path of the purely "optical" (not rhythmical) the monotony of the rhythm would become released.

Constructive critical comment on the Individual Montage.

MEDIUM SHOT: Pantomimically a priest, with his lifted forefinger, gives significance to the words:

TITLE: "We, the church, gather the sheep that have lost their way."

CLOSE-UP of the hand with the pointed index-finger should have been cut in at this point, to symbolize the collective church-idea.

THE MODERN SPIRIT IN FILMS

Motion: The Medium of the Movie

By BARNET G. BRAVER-MANN

THE limitations of an art give to it individual character. In the limitations of the medium, the artist finds a means of stimulating rather than of restricting his expression. With every medium for art expression the mechanics through which form is realized are inherent in the nature of the medium itself. The dramatist thinks in terms of speech, the sculptor in terms of clay and marble; the composer and musician in terms of sound; the writer in terms of words; the maker of motion pictures in terms of motion and light. To express an idea belonging to a particular medium through the mechanics of another medium results in the negation of both forms. To apply, let us say, sound, speech, color and text or words to the medium of filmic motion subjects the mechanics of these various media to an arbitrary, false technic which emphasizes its limitations as weaknesses rather than as potentialities. A relation between the thought to be conveyed and the means used to express it does not exist. The result is a hybrid form.

For the most part producers in American studios have been content to adapt the mechanics of other arts to the films rather than to develop to the utmost the possibilities of filmic motion as a medium. Thus, they have borrowed from the stage, from literature, from music, from painting. By borrowing from other art forms the picture makers have hindered the logical development of the movie, insofar as they have consciously or unconsciously repressed the creative impulse in the industry towards the development of the motion picture as an art. When the medium is impeccably handled, whether in painting, music, the theatre or the cinema, there is no separation between the idea expressed and the medium through which it is expressed. In view of the misunderstanding that has been caused by novelties such as the talking and sound films, it behooves all of us who are in any way identified with or interested in the motion picture to ask ourselves critically, "What is filmic motion as a medium?"

Ever since the producers deserted the early manifestations of motion in slapstick and old-fashioned melodramatic action in the movie for the dubious practice of adapting the mechanics of other media to that of the motion picture, the American silent film has remained, artistically speaking, in a rut. To be sure, the picture makers naively hoped to improve the films by reason of these literary, theatrical and statically pictorial embellishments, but they succeeded merely in increasing the difficulties of production. Unhappily, they failed to recognize the most significant element in the films: *The mounting of filmic motion*—without which there could be no motion pictures . . . no images, patterns, masses or lines in motion.

Since motion breaks down the static scene, the static visual composition, it has no connection with the laws of design and movement as applied to painting and pictorial composition. However much painting may suggest movement of pattern and line, mass and volume, it is static whereas the movie gives continuous mobility to these elements.

Since filmic motion conveys thoughts by means of a succession of flowing images, it has no connection with the medium of words.

* * *

Since the images in motion are silent, then motion as a medium has no connection with nor relation to music and the mechanical devices for the reproduction of sound. Objects and images in motion can graphically suggest sound in the mind of the spectator as has been proved by every motion picture true to the medium, from Mack Sennett's slapstick comedies to the more sophisticated films like *Potemkin*, *The End of St. Petersburg*, *The Crowd* and *The Last Laugh*.

The medium of motion has nothing in common with the medium of speech nor with the conventional movements of the stage in the expression of human emotion.

Since motion is the only medium which tells a story or conveys thought and feeling by means of flowing images, the conjunction of pieces in a film strip, the organization of sequences, and the variation of their tempo, it is *self-sufficient* like any independent art form.

A decade and a half ago the motion picture seemed to be on the right track. At that time the movie dealt in motion—in the medium true to itself. It gave small heed to the stage, particularly to a stage out of tempo with its age; it gave no heed to literature, nor to any of the other independent art media.

* * *

Producers with aspirations, box-office and otherwise, sought to improve the screen by imitating the narrative manner of the stage play. This imitation of theatre transferred the slow tempo of the stage to the movie and interrupted the logical flow of images inherent in the nature of the medium of motion. On the screen, space is complementary to motion. Space implies depth and is necessary for the movement of objects and bodies in any given direction, thereby imparting to the motion picture a scope of visual appeal that cannot be achieved by the necessarily slower tempo and restricted movement of the stage or of the talking film. The slow tempo of dialogue films and of the stage production is due to the slow movement of objects, to static patterns, and to limited command of depth, pace and space for the extension of movement. Whenever a film, as frequent-

ly happens in the case of the dialogue films, slows down to a degree which makes it possible for the eye deliberately to take in an object or image on the screen, and when the mind is conscious of the passage of time in the act of optical scrutiny, then the film is too nearly static to be a motion picture. Motion does not permit the eye to focus on an image for a long period of time. That is what precisely happens on the stage or in the talking film. This absence of motion limits the degree of emotional and visual appeal, for it is the never ending patterns in motion moving through space on different planes, and, building up to, a totally concept that heighten the dynamics of the silent screen.

* * *

Farsighted, prophetic directors and technicians of the theatre, like Adolphe Appia, Oskar Strnad and Adolph Linnebach, have tried to adjust the mechanics of the theatre to the tempo of our times by seeking to solve the limitations of space on the conventional stage (which producers of dialogue films have brought to the screen) only to realize that no theatre stage can ever be spacious enough for the depth and variety of motion necessitated by the motion picture. Several years ago, Linnebach at the Prinz Regenten Theatre in Munich predicted that the technique of stage production would have to adapt a quicker tempo by a rapid shifting of scenes similar to, but not like, that of the movie. Thus, while the best technicians in the modern European theatre seek to overcome the spatial limitations of the stage, American producers of dialogue films have brought to the screen the limitations of the conventional speaking stage.

When Griffith achieved his phenomenal success with *The Birth of a Nation*, producers seemed as blind then to the reason for the success of this film as they are to-day to the dynamics of the movie. If they had been sensitive of the drama of motion as it is revealed in this Griffith epic, and which method of mounting Griffith himself has abandoned, they would have seen that it was the way in which the director had organized the sequences of patterns, the short scenes and quick cuts and particularly the fragments of objects and images in motion, which imparted such dynamic power to *The Birth of a Nation*. Producers did not observe that the motion of the patterns and images, their building up to an idea or concept, rather than Mae Marsh and the Gishes, served to develop the emotional appeal — that the same motion, if enacted by other players, would have been just as effective. People who were spectators of *The Birth of a Nation*, remember the motion, but have forgotten the players. However, for purely box-office reasons Mae Marsh, the Gishes and other players were made stars by the producers. The fact is, that if Griffith had mounted *The Birth of a Nation* in the later narrative manner of most conventional films, neither that picture nor the players in it would have created a lasting impression.

* * *

The development of stars brought about the exploitation of personalities — and the exploita-

tion of personalities arrested the development of films true to their medium *Motion*. Scenarios and photoplays were adjusted to the star, with the result that requirements of the medium received secondary attention. The medium was debased to enhance the player, instead of the player being fitted to the medium and the creative demands of mounting. Thus has motion as a medium suffered neglect.

That Charles Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks have held their own in American pictures longer than other players is due chiefly to the fact that they have been truer to the nature of the medium and pursued their own course independent of producers who never understood motion as an art. Intellectually and artistically blind to the magic of motion, most producers and directors have utilized the close-up with abandon — the producer because the high salaries paid the stars warranted much exhibition of their faces; the director because it was an escape from the difficulties of thinking in terms of motion, and building up an idea through the composite effect of non-narrative images. With most stars as indifferent to the medium as the producers, of course they agreed to the non-cinematic use of the close-up, and as is known in the industry, many stars insisted that contracts specify a certain number of close-ups in each picture.

* * *

The more close-ups there were without dramatic reason the greater was the neglect of motion. For years, the film has been kept from functioning in accordance with its own inherent nature until audiences tired of the lazy, narrative technic and its sentimental absurdities. They began to find more drama in motion by driving cars, dancing, watching ball games, attending prize fights, football games, horse races, aeroplane meets, than in observing the picturization of stage scenes in front of stage sets and reading the explanatory titles that the movies have offered. When people discovered they could get the drama of motion elsewhere than in the movie house, the film merchant thought that the public had wearied of motion pictures. The truth is that comparatively few pictures have been made which were mounted in harmony with the medium of motion. The public never tired of *motion pictures* because there never has been an over-supply of such films. Rather they had grown weary of pictures not true to the medium and of photographed "kitsch" determined by the sanctified taboos of Will H. Hays.

Instead of realizing the situation, correcting it by adjusting production to the demands of the medium, or better yet, by developing directors from the ranks of artists who think naturally in terms of images and patterns, and by encouraging writers to plan scenarios in terms of motion and life, the producers continued to go from bad to worse and in their last extremity adopted the dialogue film.

* * *

To attribute the spiritless quality of many motion pictures to the mechanical characteristics of

the camera and the projector is an empty excuse for the inability to create significant, powerful patterns and images in the medium. Especially is this true when we note that the camera can be used to create and distort forms as well as to take them realistically, and that the projector can heighten moments of drama by increasing the tempo of the images as well as the dimensions of the screen. But these, although important factors, including three dimensional effects, reflecting surfaces, the elastic screen, flexible lens and other devices, are incidental to the one basic principle of the motion picture: *Motion*. To brand the mechanics of the motion picture as limitations in the way of its remaining a creative art is on a par with decrying the piano because its limitations are copper wire and ivory keys; or painting because its tools are oil, turpentine, color, canvas and brushes of pig bristle.

The application of thought and feeling to the mechanics of an art medium determines the quality and degree of artistry in the finished product — whether a sonata, a portrait, or a motion picture. Among the followers of every art there are hacks, inevitably; and in the cinema it is the hacks among directors and producers who are most vociferous about the mixture of speech, sound and color with motion. They are vociferous because they have shown themselves unable to cope with the magic of motion and have produced shadows of animated puppets instead of real motion pictures. Shall we confuse the limitations of the motion picture with the incapacity of directors and producers? It is as if a pianist blamed the wires and ivory keys of the instrument for his inability to play like a Paderewski.

* * *

Since the principles of each art medium are the same as regards structure, flow, rhythm and imagery, they function in such a way as to give purity to each medium. The more completely anything creative is done in its own medium, the less satisfactory it will be in any other medium. There is no order in an art form made to absorb the mechanics of other art forms. The motion picture is the only art medium which gives expression to emotion and ideas through images in motion, light and space, thereby reflecting the dynamics of our period. That these images ordinarily appear on a film as the result of having been recorded by a camera and transferred to the screen by means of a projector, is wholly secondary to *motion*. The makers of motion pictures will find they must return to these first principles:

- 1—The medium of cinematic art is *motion*.
- 2—Motion as an art medium is *self-sufficient* and has no affinity to such media as words (away with explanatory subtitles), music (sound), speech (spoken titles), or painting (color and static design).
- 3—Motion applied to a succession of images can transmit thought, stimulate emotion, indicate time, place, character, sound, speech, atmosphere, physical sensation and state of mind.

- 4—Motion, when utilized as an art medium by artists, has proved the motion picture a major art form, logically independent, inevitably self-sufficient and utterly free of intrusion by the mechanics of any other medium.

Chaplin has done it. Fairbanks at times has done it. Murnau, Pabst, Dupont and others have done it. And the Russians, Eisenstein, Dovshenko and Pudowkin, with the application of their principles of montage, are carrying the art of motion further than anybody to-day. The motion picture — the picture based on motion and the calculated mounting of images that command spectator attention — has never failed to be impressive, even when built upon themes of simple content. The medium of motion as rhythmically applied to patterns, images and themes, demands the control by artists. The necessity of the motion picture is obedience to the characteristics of its medium, — a medium which only artists in imagery can use with creative, stimulating effect for the enrichment of the screen and Man's imagination.

THE NEW CINEMA

A Preface to Film Form

The Cinema, a medium capable of aesthetic expression, sensitive and profound as any of the arts, is deliberately going to waste through the trickeries, fictions, criticism and conventions, in the jargon and definitions of the other art media. Very little that is original in the cinema's exclusive mode of truth or beauty has as yet been unreel'd; and by truth or beauty in the cinema sense, I mean immeasurably more than the composition (or tone) of a pictorialism, or the pulchritude of a marionette.

In America the cinema has become a parasitic medium conditioned for sex nomads and day-dreamers. Its plastics are projected upon the most melodramatic aspects of behavior; a fetish is made of the cinema's fact recording powers, and its celluloid marionettes are deified. Sociologically the American film is superficial; its environments are entombed in sentimental implications, and the conventions of its relations (psychological as well as cineplastic) are an imposition.

The men who direct these films have been recruited from their associations with the other arts; theatre, literature, painting. These novices to the film medium, instead of defining its hard differences and unique capabilities, instead of allowing the plasticities of its instruments to limit and govern their visions, project their celluloid results in concocted plastics (funded from their previous aesthetic pilferings) and moral recipes suited to the evanescent demand of the many. To their (directors) abusive treatment of the medium's properties for expression can be blamed the cinema's stunted aesthetic growth, its 'particular' lethargy.

It was not until the projection of the Soviet film "Potemkin" that the cinema became aware of its individuality. "Potemkin" was the first film to break away from the multitude of static reproductions of lighted scenes, of idiotic facial distortions, of declamatory emotions, and of unrelated and over-emphasized projections. Eisenstein, the film's director, replaced the usual nebulous movie manikins, with characters from real life; ludicrous sets, with direct setting; arty photographic effects, with a *cinematic flexibility of camera organization*. Eisenstein achieved his results not by any emphasis of actor or acting, plot or setting, but by an *arithmetical relationship* of the projection of images in *time, movement and image content*; each projection of *image in movement and time* paralleled and reverted and carried the component projections in a rhythmic, and psychological relation to one another, and at the same time unreel Eisenstein's 'theme' in cadences strictly cineplastic. As a result the spectators' reactions arose from this *organized relation of the cinematic* (thence structural) elements in the film, *movement, image and time*, in preference to the usual relations such as acting, decor, dynamite plot, or pictorialism, but which would not have as valid an aesthetic cinema significance.

Omitting the few abstract films for the moment, "Potemkin" was the beginning of aesthetic form in the cinema insofar as it was the first instance of a film which expressed the essential idea (theme) in terms of cinema and came into existence only and entirely through the particular of its medium — the film.

The cinema's particular means, the language that distinguishes the cinema from other media of expression is inherent and intrinsic to the motion picture camera and projector. Its vocabulary is generally known (fades, dissolves, pams, tilts, lense changes, masks, iris, slow motion, cuts, etc.). Each of these cinematic factors contain values for psychological and cineplastic progression in a film, and unite to project a whole which consists of and exists by them all. They are the structural units for film form, cineplastic form, and unless they are used for purposes other than a mere reproduction of people or things, nothing of aesthetic value will unreel. The arrangement and content of as well as in the cinematic units, is part of the cineplastic idea. In proportion as these cinematic units embody the essence of a thing or situation, and the director's knowledge of symmetry composition, synthesis, in the cineplastic sense of those terms; the film will be good. *Cineplastic form then is produced by the arrangements and co-ordination of the differentiation of the cinematic units, and not of the cinema contents, such as acting, setting, or pictorialisms.*

The arrangements or the relations of the content factors before "shot" is not necessarily a sign of cineplastic value. A director must be able to understand the mutual dependence of the successive content factors and to co-ordinate them with cinematic units into a unified whole. The first relationship is established by *MOVEMENT* (mo-

bile camera, pams, tilts, lense changes, cuts, dissolves, tempo, camera changes), *TIME* (speed, interval and duration of objects, cinematic units and movements). The second coherence is dependent upon *IMAGERY* (subject matter in its highest organization, cinematically, psychologically, compositionally). A cineplastic ensemble is established by the introduction of organization, rhythm, design. The laws of such cineplastic arrangements are identical with the laws which govern all psychological and physiological activities.

An analogy can be made with the painter who from his element of color, produces line, light, space, solidity, and other color. He makes a pattern of each of these factors and relates each to the other in a complete design; lines are related to other lines, light to other light, space to space, solids to solids, (all by the intermediary of color) and from the interrelations the painter achieves a quality known as form; plastic form. This plastic form is rated in proportion as the integration between subforms and content is complete, original, a personal unification to express universal values.

In a similar manner the film director proceeds, relating *Time to Time* (speed, interval and duration of objects, movements and cinematic units) *Movement to Movement* (mobile camera, pams, tilts, lense changes, cuts, dissolves, tempo, camera changes) and *Image to Image* (subject matter in its highest organization, cinematically, psychologically and compositionally); a certain number and kinds of cinematic units arranged and ordered at specific *Time* and projecting specific *Images* produce a cineplastic movement. A periodic variation or accent of a number of such cineplastic movements interrelated, produce a cineplastic rhythm; other rhythms different with regard to specific images or combinations of movements or time values, but related in general psychological order, further diversify and amplify the cineplastic structure. *Censorship note:* An alteration of any unit in such an ensemble would destroy the existing relations and ruin that particular psychological and cineplastic unity. It is this combination of all forms that constitutes value, aesthetically important in proportion as the synthesis is complete; and despite the so-called limitations of the 'mechanical medium' there does exist the greatest latitude for a director to integrate his content (subject matter, theme) into cineplastic forms (organization of *movement, time, imagery*) in which the only limitations are his experience and imagination.

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Principles of the New World-Cinema

By SEYMOUR STERN

"Man is moved by his images, and only values experienced as an image are cogent to move him."

— Waldo Frank.

Being a Continuation of the Aesthetic and Structural Principles of Soviet Cinematography, Including New Forms of Film-Montage.

I — — Form and Purpose

THE present is a period of emergence for the world-cinema. Everywhere, except chiefly in Hollywood and in England, the old structural forms are disappearing, and new ones, indigenous to film-art and no longer to literature and the other arts, are emerging. To use a somewhat different figure, the world cinema-ball, traveling through a new, self-created space-time, has experienced a sudden great burst of momentum imparted through the shock of Soviet impetus. The two Anglo-Saxon countries, true to the character of the present Anglo-Saxon decadence, that is boring like a deadly cancer through the Western world, have been cinematically unaffected by the film-technical revolution that started (pre-eminently) with *Potemkin*. But except for these backsliding nations, throughout the world the film may be noted as vastly (though of course not totally) freed from the lunacy of the Hollywood tradition.

In particular, the year now closing has been significant for the fresh and startling accomplishments of Bolshevik cinematography. The Soviet film-artists have in this year not only surpassed their previous efforts, but established, in every point of formal structure and every concept of film-methodology, complete emancipation from the tyranny of the former world-conquering Hollywood film-methods. In every sphere, thanks to Soviet attainments, we can at last record the disestablishment of that false, commercially inspired American technique which, for fifteen years, has dominated and retarded the entire conception and technique of film-construction throughout the world. Artistically and technically, thus far, Moscow has vanquished Hollywood. Not only in the domain of "realism" have the Soviet cinematographers demonstrated the American "school" to be composed of frauds and liars, but in every department of cinematic construction, - - - in direction, photography, cutting, thematic structure and all subsidiary departments. In fact, it is a vital feature of Soviet film-triumph that the "department" (that is, the departmentalization of creative activity) no longer exists: Although recognizing the film as a collective art-form, the Russians, by grace of that inborn artistic character which makes the Slav at once superior to the Anglo-Saxon, has solved the problem of the creative dominance of the film by one master, by one master's vision and organic genius. (This, it is almost unnecessary to add, holds every bit as true of collaborative direction as of direction by one man. A powerful religious social understanding welds into a single dominant mind, such as Pudowkin's, into the film-

structure). Bolshevik cinematography has in this year enormously freed the world-screen from the commercial enslavement of Hollywood. More than that. It has outdone the splendid achievements of its own first period.

Taking a perspective-view of the period of Soviet cinematography now closing, Eisenstein observes: "I believe that only now can we begin to hazard a guess concerning the ways by which will be formed a genuine Soviet cinematography, i. e. a cinematography which not only in respect of its class attributes will be opposed to bourgeois cinematography, but which will also be categorically excellent in respect of its own methods*. *Ten Days That Shook the World*, although in certain ways, which I shall discuss, consummating this period of the Soviet screen, in certain other ways bears the germ — and even the first fruit! — of this self-transcendence. As perhaps the most dynamic application known to date of a highly advanced montage-form, it challenges the film-students of the world to burrow deep into the problems of the ideological film-culture that the Bolshevik cinematographers have developed. And in this connection, probably nothing represents a more explosive liberation from the fettering notions of the Hollywood producers than the *Arsenal* of the Ukrainian director, Dovjenko.

By way of introducing the more advanced problems of film-montage to American and English readers, I consider it necessary to present a few of the outstanding elementary principles of film-construction formulated by W. L. Pudowkin in his manual entitled *Film Regie Und Film Manuscript — Film Direction and Film Manuscript*. This manual, which was translated for me by Miss Christel Gang of Universal Studios, Universal City, California*, is indispensable to film students as the primer in the approach to cinematic technique and philosophy.

Montage, emphasizes Pudowkin, does not mean merely what its literal translation implies: "mounting". Neither does it mean simply "cutting". The notion that montage is merely "a pasting to-

*From an article by Eisenstein, *The New Language of Cinematography*, published in *Close Up*, May, 1929.

*The kindness and efforts of Christel Gang, exercised through her sensitive and meticulous translations of technical literature from German into English, have made it possible for film-students in Hollywood and along the West Coast to become acquainted with a great deal of material that would otherwise still be inaccessible to them. Her translation of Pudowkin's book was made privately, for purpose of immediate reference, but arrangements are now being completed to publish it for the American market. Wherever material translated from the German appears in this paper, the translation, unless otherwise indicated, is Miss Gang's.

gether of the film-strips in their temporal succession," writes Pudowkin, "is naive." Many times in this book Pudowkin offers definitive guiding notes on the particular powers, functions, and peculiarities of montage-construction. These laws and general principles, which constitute the basis of Russian film-ideology, form the very crux and essence of the correct construction of films; they also give us a vision of the present emergence of the screen into an art of colossal power.

Page 59—"Basically taken, montage is a forceful steering of the thoughts of the spectator. If the montage is a simple, unguided binding of the different pieces, it tells the spectator nothing."

12—"Montage is the creator of film-reality, and nature represents only the raw-material of the work that makes film-reality. This is the most decisive point in the relationship between film and actuality."
(Italics mine).

54—"The picture is built out of the totality of small pieces."

"THE BUILDING UP OF A SCENE OUT OF PIECES, OF AN EPISODE OUT OF SCENES, OF A SEQUENCE OUT OF EPISODES, OF THE PICTURE OUT OF SEQUENCES, IS CALLED MONTAGE."

55—"There is no breaking-down, or interruption, but only a systematic, lawful building up."

(This has reference to the close-up, which, Pudowkin states, when correctly employed as part of the montage-structure, is never felt as an interruption of the action, but, on the contrary, as a highly geared building-up of the action and the line of movement).

101—"The emotion can doubtless be conveyed through the specific rhythm of the montage."

(He cites Griffith as the only American director to have accomplished this to any appreciable extent).

"The necessity, which guides the changing glance of the eye, coincides exactly with those laws which regulate the correct building-up of the montage."

(This forms the optical, and therefore purely descriptive, basis of montage).

102—"MONTAGE is the HIGH POINT OF the CREATIVE WORK of the DIRECTOR."

115—"The director organizes every single scene; he analyzes it through reduction (solution-analysis) into its elements, and at the same time, he already visualizes the union of these elements in montage."

"Change of placement" montage is one of the cardinal points in the construction of the Russian film-dynamic. It is a two-fold means of camera utilization and optical attack. The conventional, well-known form is simply the shift of camera in plane, angle or general line of vision, taking the same action. It requires the photographing of two or more "shots". But there is another, more radical, form of placement-change montage, which the Russians have brought to a high degree of powerful effect. At the highest tension-points (study the film-strip of *Potemkin*, *Mother*, *Ten Days*, etc.), they "break" the individual image-element into a number of separate placements (but not into separate "shots"), which evidently, to judge from sections of the film-strip I have seen, is accomplished not by cutting (the "shot" is a constant: it is always the same "shot") but probably by a stop-watch camera. The important consideration for this type of construction (which is really an *analysis* of the single scene, within itself!) is that the "shot" is constantly itself, that is, the same "shot", and that it *runs continuously* on the strip *without a patch* (until, of course, the next scene begins). The effect is that of an analytical totality and very strong. I shall deal more thoroughly with the structural precepts of the film-dynamic in my remarks on analytical montage.

I rehearse these points only because I realize how impoverished is the film-ideology of radical American cinematography, and because I am concerned to provide in a short space an adequate introduction to the elementary precepts of montage-construction before proceeding to the principles of the new cinematography.

In an article, I expressed the view that "this book is to film-technique what Aristotle is to logic and Euclid to geometry — the first clear word and the first systematic document that is likely to be studied generations after its appearance." This opinion has been richly substantiated by the subsequent emergent development of Bolshevik cinematography from the elementary principles here defined into a domain of abstract cinematography which will ultimately lead the film to the very door of mind and fourth-dimensional representation. "To say the truth," writes Pudowkin, "I fear my book has grown old. Incessant experimental cinematographic work, which progresses in U. S. S. R., has led us to new principles of montage, or, more correctly put, to a new development of old principles.**"

Perhaps this is true. But no beginning is complete without a perusal of at least the optical foundations of montage which his book presents.

*Not to be confused with the "abstract" cinematography of the French cinema, — that is, with technical laboratory exercises, however important from certain points of view, such as *Rien Que Les Heures*, *Ballet Mechanique*, *A Quoi Revent Les Jeunes Films*, etc. The abstract film, according to my ideology, belongs outside the working-sphere proper of mass-cinematography and can be of value only to limited groups of students who need cinematic "piano practice".

**From a letter to me.

The foundations of the new cinema that leads to mind carry us to the consideration of *radical principles of vision* (image-bases and fundamentals), *organization* and *construction*. The deepening connection between film-theory and film-practice not only justifies, but actually *necessitates*, such ideological structure and terminology as I have here built for the advancement of cinema throughout the world.

We may see from the foregoing interesting and significant observations that the making of a film, after the basic underlying theme** has been decided upon, is not a matter of romantic intuition, of helter-skelter shooting of haphazard putting-together, or of cutting according to impulse, but is rather a matter of working out the mathematics of filmic form based on the calculation of the neural and psychological perception-reactions of the audience to optical sequences which are *mounted in the order of an ever-heightening tension*. The whole is an entity evolved out of the montage of its parts; therefore the "vision of the whole" must be always in mind.

Definition:

MONTAGE, TAKEN IN ITS BROAD-EST PHILOSOPHICAL SENSE, IS THE CONCEPTUAL AND STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION OF THE MOVEMENT-FORMS OF THE FILM, TOGETHER WITH THE VISUAL CONSTRUCTION OF THESE FORMS, TOWARDS THE END OF A PERFECT REALIZATION OF DYNAMIC HARMONY AND THE CREATION OF A DOMINATING RHYTHM.

And with less stress on the structural, and more on the metaphysical side:

MONTAGE IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE IMAGE-IDEA THROUGH THE FILM IN DYNAMIC AND VISUAL FORM.

To abide by so important a philosophical evaluation of the essence of cinematography, requires, as may be instantly realized, (1) a mind sensitively attuned to the *tone* of the *image-music* which, pictorially, expresses the image-reality of *cinema*, and (2) a methodology of *practical film-construction* that follows the path already so brilliantly blazed by the Bolshevik producers. Perhaps no one has more finely sensed or more succinctly expressed the immense implications of the above point of view, in its relation to the new methodology of film-construction, than my friend and confrere, H. A. Potamkin. In the first of a series of important essays on the *Phases of Cinema Unity**, he wrote as follows:

**By theme "I understand, and mean, the same thing that Pudowkin, Potamkin, Bakshy and others of this persuasion mean: i. e., not 'story' (especially as 'story' is understood and obeyed in the putrid, damaging, un-filmic tradition of Hollywood), but *intrinsic subject-matter* — fundamental, underlying, intellectual content — in a word, what I later in this essay name "the essential, radical, underlying image-idea."

"The entire film must be preconceived in anticipation of each detail! A curve or an angle, a close up or a fade-out, must not be recognized as an isolated detail, but as an inevitable part of an inevitable pattern. The whole disciplines the detail, the detail disciplines the whole. There is a more demanding logic than the logic of the psychology of a character at any moment or the logic of the dramatic moment. There is the rhythmic structure of the unit determining the moment. No such thing as a "shot" exists in the aesthetic sense of the cinema, whatever one may call the immediate taking of a scene. Films are rhythms that commence and proceed, in which — ideally — every moment, every point, refers back to all that has preceded and forward to all that follows. A stress or a deformation, an image or an absence of image, has validity only if it is justified by the pattern up to point, and if it leads again to the pattern from that point."

Words freighted with the Mosaic thunder of law! Words rich in explicit injunctions of unity, universe-logic, universe-necessity, universe-majesty, that few will apprehend and fewer find possible of attainment Out of such words will emerge the images that will conquer man

This definition of montage, and the appended comments, may be accepted as the axiomatic beginning-point in the entire ideological system of cinematography. They may be taken as the synthetically defined basis upon which rest all super-structural aesthetic and metaphysical considerations in the art of filming.

The sphere of cinematographic work, so defined, may seem to circumscribe the field of practice to the exclusion of the so-called intuitive artist. This is precisely a state of affairs Eisenstein has willed and has striven to inaugurate. He has violently banished intuition from the creative realm and absolutely denied it a single claim to existence in cinematography. His well-known statement, "I am an engineer by training, strictly utilitarian," etc. . . . My slogan is, "Down with intuitive creation!" is expressive of the general tendency of Bolshevik cinematography. Pudowkin does not share this view. If they can achieve this long-sought goal, if they can rid creative cinematography of the handicap of intuitive "inspiration" and thus remove the film-structure from the constant danger of the creeping-in of intellectually foreign elements, they will have accomplished another great thing. I cannot enter further into this phase of the matter. It would take me too far into the vital matter of the relation of the unconscious mind to the objective image-reality of the film, a subject I shall treat separately. Let it suffice here to conclude that the creator of the film-reality, in order to fulfill these principles, must have a profound working-knowledge of the mathematics of film-form. By the mathematics of film-form, I mean, specifically, the analytical and synthetic treatment of the picture in its sequences and individual parts.

In Eisenstein we find a master of the mathema-

*Close Up, May, 1929.

tics of film-form, and the first to master it by an intensively intellectual, non-intuitive method. While it has been said that Pudowkin is "traditionless", (in a sense that is outside the scope of my essay), it is really Eisenstein, who, in this direction at least is traditionless. Pudowkin, while he is far above the rank and wildly unconceptual intuitionism that furnishes the American, English and German producers their sole means of ("technique"), leans towards Griffith in certain intuitional phases of image-construction*. But in Eisenstein, we find the completest and most radical departure from anything resembling these methods. The insistent, religious reliance of Eisenstein on the general principles of modern science and mathematics for every structural point, for every characterization, for every movement, — in a word, for everything in the nature of cinematic effect and montage-expression, is one of the wonders of the film-culture of U. S. S. R. This tendency may explain the accusation of a certain hardness and dis-individualized impersonality in his works, but according to my viewpoint all such charges are untrue, or, at best, superficial and therefore inaccurate. Eisenstein chooses to project the tragedy of the mass, rather than that of the individual, in whom, as a result of a religious belief in a strict Marxian materialism, he does not believe. But the emotional force is there as much as in Pudowkin. The irony is equally savage, the bitterness equally vitriolic, the hatred of the Western bourgeois world equally fierce, the will to expose the lying decadent peoples of the West, is equally developed and expressive. All the elements are there, and all of them are satisfying. The result of Eisenstein's ideology is the "explosive montage", of which *Ten Days That Shook the World* is the readiest and most significant example. *Potemkin*, which proceeded along an image-graph of more compactly woven texture, contains the rudiments of Eisenstein's montage in the October film. *Ten Days*, experimentally however unfulfilled in the abstract domain, is, by the least appraisal, a world-revelation in the montage of "movement-explosions" scientifically established.

My digression on the directorial beliefs and intentions that are making for the re-formation of the new world-cinema would be incomplete in this phase if I neglected to mention perhaps the most interesting particular of all, the method of the world-famed Bolshevik director, Alexander Room. Room has himself stated his general method and intention.

"I want my camera to be like Roentgen, whose rays pierce through to the innermost of our being. I want to project on the screen the very foundation of man in order that the analysis of determinate sensations, of acts and thoughts, are translated into luminous images. The academic professor Bescherew, who died recently, taught

*It is interesting to note that Pudowkin's films, which are emotionally more violent than Eisenstein's, are the more popular. They concentrate more on the individual, and hence are more sympathetic.

me long ago the science of human reflexes. "I devoted several years to the study of determinism, of psychic states, of the theory of repression, of Freud in particular and of diverse manifestations of fear, anguish, sorrow and love. All that I learnt has actually been of great service to me in the preparation of my actors."

Could there be a clearer picture of the intent, seriousness and purposiveness of Soviet film-methods? With this I am content to conclude my remarks as to the factors of intuition and intellect in relation to the preparation of the montage.

Analysis of montage-construction leads to a division of the entire sphere. I establish it as a matter of categorical expediency to attack *all* problems of montage-construction on either of two paths of construction: Labor on the film is labor on either the MONTAGE OF VISUAL ELEMENTS or on the MONTAGE OF DYNAMIC ELEMENTS. Briefly, the basic working-categories of montage are *dynamic montage* and *visual montage*. There are no other divisions. There is no simpler way of handling the situation of film-construction.

Under the montage of visual elements may be grouped the following items of artistic labor:

- Photography
- Lighting
- Set construction
- (Scenic architecture)
- Composition
- Tonalization
- Printing (laboratory)
- Cleansing and preservation of the celluloid strip.

Under the montage of dynamic elements may be grouped the following items:

- Movement (tempo, rhythm, motion-analysis, etc.)
- Continuity (and cutting)
- Camera operation.

Under this may also be classified all other forms and functions of movement on the screen.

The total montage-organization of the film is the result of the harmonization of visual montage with dynamic montage. To "mount" a film means, in its entire sense, to mount visual film-elements in *unity* (co-ordination) with *dynamic film-elements*. A film may have a good (dynamic) montage. It may be, in continuity, cutting and in individual movement-forms, a fine piece of work. But the final montage-result will be spoiled or destroyed if the visual elements (the lighting, photography, printing, etc.) are not in harmony with the pattern of the whole. But this condition of "harmony" (or unity) is not attained according to the methods of the present Hollywood photographers who imagine they have only to flood every scene with light and have crystal-clear printing in order to make their films photographically (optically) "appealing". On the contrary, the scheme for the working-out of the visual montage must be carefully planned in joint consultation of director and photographer. The exact degree of tonalization, the general distribution of light and shade throughout the film, (each scene envisioned

in-relation to the *whole* vision), and the particular quality of this light and shade for the particular film at hand, are montage-matters of as vital concern to artistic cinematography as the problems of continuity and movement-montage. It is a montage of *cinematic chiaroscuro* that, in particular, is required.

The montage of a film, therefore, is *not only* a montage of movement (dynamics): *it is also, and equally, a montage of optical and visual effects (visuals)*. The Russian photographers have best understood these laws. To realize how much they have understood them, witness the astonishing work of such photographers as Tisse, Feldman, Golownia and Demutzki.

The chief domain, however, of a film-ideology concerned with the fulfillment of form, is movement. The present period of world-cinematography, which has yielded so much of significance in Soviet production, marks the complete and almost universal establishment and recognition of the nature of cinematography as *plastic form*, — as *movement*. (A recognition that comes almost too late). To us today the axiom of *movement* seems *a priori* understood. Such an attitude, however, is still actually without justification. We are in danger of forgetting that for fifteen years, most of the world has persistently failed (or refused) to think of cinema in its native terms and that this error of judgment (which, more than anything, caused the premature corruption of the production-mind and hence of the art), has been honored with perpetuation by the long-dreamed of triumph of the talking-film in the most conventional theatrical tradition. But among the world-minority who have best understood the film, the condition of movement and all its implications are acknowledged. The whole weight and testimony of the radical critical tradition of the past fifteen years apotheosizes this concept into the holiest law of the film. The father of film-aesthetics, fifteen years after having expressed the first principle of cinematography, again develops a statement on movement as an article of undying cinematic faith:

"The only real thing in the motion picture is movement . . . It is the failure to appraise at its true value the part played in the motion picture by movement that has been responsible for the obsession with realistic effects which have dominated the greater number of film-directors since the early days of film-art.

"Assuredly, the material of the motion picture must be organized, but its organization should be of the nature of a dynamic pattern, in which each separate pictorial subject is balanced in relation to all other subjects while the component parts of each remain fluid in relation to one another. To enter as an element into a mobile form, the static picture has first of all to break down its equilibrium. It ceases therefore to be a 'picture', and, with this, has no further use for the principles of design and

composition as these are employed in the easel painting."* (Italics are mine).

Death to every form that violates this law, the life-law of cinematography!

Death to the talking-film if its formal structure intrinsically threatens the film's chief means of illusion-power, which alone creates the new reality!

Death to any and every new form, invention or synchronization that destroys, or renders impossible, the *montage-dynamics* of cinematography!

The past year has yielded a more analytical and more conclusive statement on movement than any within my knowledge, by one who is perhaps Mr. Bakshy's most worshipful disciple — Potamkin. I offer it for consideration as the final essential preliminary to the study of my categories of dynamic montage:

"Movement is not succession of motions. In cinema movement, no motion may actually take place, but an interval may occur, an interval of time, between two images and that is movement. In other words, movements are two: the actual movement of a body, and the constructed movement attained through time and space-successions (in montage).

"The movement of a film is not cinematic unless it is plastic . . ."

"Dynamics is just another name for the climacteric construction and organization of these various elements. It refers to the accumulative forward march of the film." (Italics mine).

To use a filmic metaphor, the Bakshy-Potamkin statements on movement are one and the same scene photographed from different angles and joined in montage. If the Potamkin statement is a far-flung extension of the father's original, bearing cinema closer to the distant horizon at a furious rate of speed, the father's words, that "(film) organization should be of the nature of a dynamic pattern (etc.)", are holy law, to be defied only at the peril of demolishing the film entirely.

We are only now at the point of determining just what are the *forms* by and through which the movements of the film (i. e., the movements of its physical action, the movement of the film in continuity-progression, the movements of its individual, fragmented parts which constitute an integration of its single major movements, etc.) may be mounted in order (1) to describe events and (2) to express image-ideas. The Bolshevik cinematographers have suggested some of these montage-forms. It is my purpose to submit and to discuss new categories in the light of the present world-advancement of expressive cinematography.

*From *The Road to Art in the Motion Picture* by Alexander Bakshy, published in *The Theatre Arts Monthly* of June, 1927, — an essay for every film-student in the world. The appearance of this man twenty years ago as the first and classical film-aesthete is an early, infallible indication of the priority of the Russians to mastery of the film.

The six categories which I propose are:

(1) SYNTHETIC MONTAGE*

Ideational

(Individually, Sequentially, Episodically, Organically, Compositionally).

- (2) Montage of Static Group Combinations
- (3) Montage of the Transition from the Static to the Dynamic (and reverse)
- (4) Montage of the Continuance and the Direction of Movement, which includes the dynamics of the moving camera.
- (5) Montage of Objectification
- (6) MONTAGE OF THE MOVEMENT-FORMS OF THE FILM.

The progress of contemporary cinematography is towards a greater and greater, and deeper and deeper expressiveness. In its march towards mind, the film has increasing recourse to image-symbols, which are drawn from the deep well of the psychologic image-experience of the race of man. In grinding harder its scientifically found material, and in digging deeper into the experiential consciousness (the unconscious mind) of man, the film seeks to find those images, those symbols, those visual forms which may be useful in the task of re-conditioning the mind and soul of man. For this task, the cinematographers of our day (mainly, if not only, the Bolsheviks), have recruited for their fighting image-forces the vast army of data and truths established by modern science. Pavlov, Freud, Adler, Jung, Bescherew, all schools and prominent "free lances" in the field of psychologic research, not to mention in the spheres of Psychopathology, clinical psychiatry, "chemistry, physics, mathematics, anthropology, ethnology, ethnography, etc., have been drafted for this stupendous educational war against superstition, religious dogma, patriotic "idealism", nationalistic war propaganda (the concomitant of patriotism) and against the money-cults of the West. In a word contemporary cinematography resorts to the great reserve of modern education in order to combat the socially retrogressive factors which, throughout the world, are preparing the world for another catastrophe.

In thus seeking to establish a language that will be felt, understood and accepted by the simple, elemental image-mind of man, cinematography is perforce traveling in the direction of a profounder, yet (for that very reason) more simply and intelligible abstract image-form. The words of Pudowkin are here to remind us again of this vitally significant trend:

"Now, our work is directed to the development of methods of "expressive montage."

*When this essay was first written, last April, it was submitted for critical examination. In criticizing it, David Platt suggested that Naive or Detailed Synthetic Montage (a purely descriptive concept which originally formed the second division of the category of synthetic montage), "be subsumed under Analytical Montage (the decorative as opposed to the structural)." Among numerous other modifications, this suggestion has been followed.

This (new montage-form) means that the joining of the (film)-pieces will express and give the spectator the abstract "conception" or immediate emotional state. This principle also extends to the joining of sound and visual pictures (sound pictures).

The category of synthetic montage may, in certain notable aspects, be considered as identical with the expressive montage-ideology of U. S. S. R. Under it, therefore, I group four other montage-forms, as being, although individually independent, collectively variations of the many *methods* of creating a synthetic montage. But, while all these forms may be utilized to attain a significant expressive montage, synthetic montage, on the other hand, implies also something distinct and specific in the language of cinematography.

Synthetic montage is expressive montage. But, deeper, synthetic montage is also the root and basis of new structural elements that function as means towards the creation of a *philosophical synthetic imagery*.

THE SYNTHETIC MONTAGE unites a number of single images in *immediate sequence*, in order to form the effect of a single "action" (image) and to build that action up in its individual parts, *if the action (image) truly represents the synthesis of an image-idea*.

Differently expressed, the synthetic montage gives the parts or fragments of an image-idea in immediate sequence in order to form the effect of an image-whole and *thus to express its essence*.

The synthetic montage, broadly understood, is the montage of the image-idea of the sequence, of the episode or, as in the case of its broadest philosophical application, of the entire image-structure.

This type of montage has already been confused with its hypothetical antithesis, the analytical montage. In my original essay on this subject, I maintained "naive or detailed" synthetic montage to be a variation of the entire category of synthetic montage. The above definition then stated that, "synthetic montage gives the fragments or parts of a *scene*, etc." But the term "scene" had to be changed in accordance with my acceptance of David Platt's suggestion (referred to), and also if a mere descriptive synthesis of fragments (details) were not to be confounded with the purely abstract or expressive character of my concept of synthesis. The entire trend and striving of the Soviet screen, as a matter of fact, has been a herculean intellectual effort to get *away* from purely descriptive, literal synthesis (naive or detailed synthesis). Manifestly, this type of "synthesis" belonged under a different category, and this category, as Platt has said, is analytical montage.

Another remark I find it is necessary to make is that the necessity of synthetic imagery "*in immediate sequence*" is determined by reference to the structural basis of the film, the limitation of immediacy vanishing, and the nature of "sequence"

undergoing relative changes, according to whether the film is pronouncedly contrapuntal or not. The more contrapuntal in structure the visual-motor graph of the film is conceived, (this means also, the more violently it breaks with the stupid Hollywood tradition of "story-structure"), the less "immediate" is the progression in which the particular image-fragments forming a synthetic image-idea occur in the "sequence" that they create.

There can be true understanding of the two montage-forms, synthetic and analytical, only by studying the distinctions between them and assigning to each its proper useful function in the construction of the film. These distinctions are not arbitrary, but are based on analysis of the actual structure of film-works. It is more than expediency: it is a real aesthetic determinant that requires sharp lines to be drawn here for the guidance and empowerment of the film-workers.

The synthetic and analytical montage-forms are two distinct kinds.

An analytical montage is any montage which analyzes the *continuum* of a single action and builds it up by dividing it into its salient *progressive points of movement*.

Though it breaks up, it builds up. Its breaking-up is its building-up.

The analysis may or may not include intermediate scenes. If no other scenes cut in between the analytical points of the action analyzed, it is a simple, straight analytical montage.

But if there are scenes between the points of the analysis of the single action, the object committing (or the person performing) this action on the screen is called, for reference and technical analysis, the "point of analysis". The basic object of analysis (that is, the particular "image-action" analyzed) is the *structural point of analysis*, and the parts (pieces of image-fragments) of the analysis made of this initial object, are the *functional points of analysis*. (This terminology, of course, is strictly utilitarian, based on method and the stipulations of technical analysis).

Here we may avail ourselves of a useful analogy. We may at this point remark the interesting and useful parallelism between this analysis-division of a scene made in order to build up film-reality, and the idea of Aristotle, in that part of his *Metaphysics* which treats of the divisibility of motion, — a suggestive analogy that will, in course of time, carry cinematography into more universal territory.

Motion, according to the Greek philosopher, is divisible in two respects:

- (a) in respect of the time it occupies
- (b) in respect of the separate movements of the moving body.

If we apply this primitive division of motion to the material which at the present time is the major film-stuff to be dealt with, and consider the relationship between the laws respectively governing each, we see that *the motion of every montage-scene has two points of structure from which to be analyzed*, — temporal and spatial. A scene may be analyzed according to the tempo of

- (a) the action, or
- (b) the time-cutting, or

- (c) according to the points plane-space of the movement.

a and *b* are temporal divisions, *c* is spatial.

It must be borne in mind that I am not trying to construct a parallelistic metaphysic with Aristotle as its starting-point. Such adherence to the cine-metaphysics of Aristotle's universe (governed as it is by a motionless God, the product of the unfulfilled psycho-graphic experience of the Hellenes), would be unjustified if only out of consideration of the wealth of analogical instruction that a Bergson's motion-deified universe yields. I am merely attempting to suggest the way towards a true formulation of analytical montage-methods, and towards film-methodology in general. It will be recognized that between the divisibility Aristotle found in the motion of the world-stuff and the divisibility of the motion of film-reality, as stipulated, there exists only a temporary analogy of identity, and the time is not far distant when the analogy between these two divisibilities will no longer suffice as suggestions of *method*, for the emergence of cinematography into spheres of hitherto unknown reality will extend the field, and create new possibilities, for complicated space and motion analyses. But now, although the mathematical philosophers of the present time have gone immeasurably beyond this, cinematography develops aesthetically, despite the colossal Bolshevik achievement, with a wearying slowness, due chiefly to the international effect of the damaging, retrogressive Hollywood influence. Without ignoring the world-significance of Griffith's early work, and particularly of the structural lessons of *Intolerance*, the film-revolutionary movement is confronted with the enormous task of combatting and vitiating this influence in every sphere of cinematographic work

On the foregoing basis, an example of a simple analytical montage is the following:

(From *Potemkin*)

A sailor angrily smashes a plate which bears the words "Give Us Our Daily Bread". In this action he is photographed in three or four quick, successive flash-cuts, each of which shows us his hand as he raises it above his head, in the 3 or 4 points in the progression of its movement:

- (1) plate upraised above his head.
Flash-shot.
- (2) plate descending, face wrathful.
Flash-shot.
- (3) plate as it crashes on the table,
sailor's face tense with anger.
Flash-shot.

This is a remarkable study of the description of the sailor's emotion in its swiftly mounting stages. The smashing of the plate bearing the traditional religious slogan, has behind it many scenes of an opposite state of affairs, and a great many social overtones. The sailor's sudden, frenzied desire to *smash*, is expressed in a powerful movement-analysis: the analytical montage of the entire action.

An example of an analytical montage which includes several different scenes is the following:

(From *Potemkin*):

In the episode of the massacre on the Odessa steps, there is a sequence which shows the death of a young mother. She is first seen in a medium shot, standing against her baby carriage, trying to shield it from the downcoming Cossacks. But their guns find her, and a bullet pierces her stomach. The close-ups of her hands clutching at the abdomen, of her face rolling in agony, of her tottering form, of her sudden fall and death, and, finally, as a consequence of the fall the accidental releasing of the brake on the baby-carriage, which starts bouncing down the steps, are separated in the montage-continuity of this sequence by long shots of the Cossacks and by close-ups of groups and faces in the fleeing masses.

The girl is the structural point of analysis. The intercut images of the mass are the functional points of the entire image-analysis. The girl's death-movement is not mounted as a constant, unvaried unit, but each cut back to the girl's sinking body shows another section of the body.

This is also an example of the division of movement according to time-cutting: an analytical montage in which each cut back to the girl reveals her nearer to her death, nearer to sinking completely on the stone steps. The last cut, following flash long-shots of the Cossacks, shows her just as she has fallen to the ground.

Another example of an analytical montage in which the points of analysis are intercut by other scenes, and where the time-cutting of a single movement is forceful, is the following:*

(From *Potemkin*):

THE SCENE IS:

The Marine Guard is called out on deck.

The marines line up in two rows, one behind the other.

THE ANALYTICAL TIME-CUTTING GOES:

- 1.—A marine at the end of the second line, near the lens, is sad and pensive.
- A.—The marines are at ease while the sailcloth is thrown over the group of their comrades to be shot.
- 2.—The sad marine steals a slow glance over his shoulder.
- B.—The sailcloth is thrown and settles down over the heads of the unfortunate men.
- 3.—The sad marine gazes down by his side—thinking.
- C.—Two or three "shots" of "business" elsewhere on deck. The tempo of the film at this point is decelerated. There is hardly any movement. The tension, the expectancy, mounts high.

*In a sense it is not fair to offer this sequence as an isolated instance of analytical montage, just for the reason that it is isolated and not considered as a factor in the total image-structure of the massacre-episode. But for purposes of illustration of my percept, it is perhaps the best single example that I know or remember of a powerful time-cutting analysis. Isolated in this manner, it exemplifies a principle. But actually, it derives its technical and aesthetic value from its position in the organization of the entire episode.

- 4.—The sad marine with his nose pressed against the barrel of his gun. In the time-elapse between this cut and cut no. 3, the sad marine has turned his head forward again and raised it.

D.—More "business" on deck.

- 5.—The sad marine with his head bent low, his eyes cast down, before him.

Here we see how a movement is marked off and rendered meaningful by the time-cutting. While the foregoing is not a precise duplicate of the actual continuity at this point (the letter-cuts for the most part consisting of several individual "shots" of the intermediary action), it none the less exemplifies the principle of the time-cutting analytical montage as Eisenstein uses it. Each time we see the marine, he has performed a certain part of the turning of his head in its course from side to front. The letter-cuts alternate with the number-cuts as the tension of the entire sequence mounts to a point of exciting stillness and momentary, foreboding cessation. When the previous hurried movement-rhythm stops, the movement-sensation (*Gemutsbewegung*) experiences an instantaneous concentration, which "reflexes" in the spectator (the law of reaction-contrast), and the tension-point of stillness — (at this famous tension-point in *Potemkin* the action is suddenly abandoned and there flash before the spectator's eyes, "still" shots of a bugle against a sailor's hip, the flag of the *Prince Potemkin*, the prow of the ship, the flapping of the sailcloth above the heads of the doomed and various other important elements that mount the image-structure here into a profoundly significant and ominous pause) — the tension-point of stillness (1) checks the preceding rush of movement, and (2) prepares both the image-structure and the spectator for the outburst of fury that descends at the crucial moment, in which all currents of movement are mixed together and the rhythm-line steps out of any previously sustained pattern whatsoever Thus this turning-around of the marine's head (together with the above-mentioned scenes that follow) is not only a true analytical montage, but also an imagistic emphasis on the total structural suspense at this point.

These thoughts give us a concise idea of what is meant by analytical montage. The analysis and differentiation of movement-forms is one of the most important instruments at the command of cinematography for the manipulation of optical and emotional attention. We now see that, no matter into how many points of analysis the continuum of a movement may be divided, the montage of analysis only superficially implies the purely descriptive mounting of different pieces in succession. The montage of analysis is the point at which begins the study of the mathematics of film-technical analysis.

This establishes the fundamental distinction between the analytical and the synthetic montage. The synthetic montage, as already mentioned by way of revision, is concerned not with a mere uniting of detail-pieces in succession, nor with the analysis of movement, but with the synthesizing of all images which collectively form a single image-unit expressing the essential, underlying,

radical, abstract, meaning-full image-idea.

The connection between synthetic montage and film-symbolism is immediate, direct, axiomatic. To resort to this figure: Synthesis is a fruit whose core is a symbol. This symbol stands in intermediary relation between the fruit itself (the structure) and the *forming principle* which makes the fruit itself. What, after all, is synthesis but *construction in montage* to make immediately apprehensible to mind the *radical, abstract image-idea*, which is the genetic conception of the film-work? But if the mechanics of the medium changes, if a Bakshy magnified screen comes into utilization, if a highly complex art of orchestral counterpoint emerges out of the progressive studios of U. S. S. R., will, then, synthesis still be possible of attainment? The answer is: Obviously, it will be more possible of attainment than ever before, nor will its intellectual root-character change. (Radical abstract ideas are constant, however much mechanical instrumentation may change or industrial production multiply). Only the montage-form, and not the radical aesthetic conception, will have to be transposed into a new formal structure. Method will change; but synthesis, which is more than method, though less than end, — synthesis, the construction-force that makes the abstract image-idea apprehensible to mind — will not suffer as an aesthetic concept. Whatever the method, whatever the mechanics, synthesis will still be the intermediary "station" between the abstract image-idea and the spectator (the receiving brain). In order to keep this clear, and in order to anticipate, and thus to guard against, possible confusion should the mechanism undergo further change (as undoubtedly it will), and to assure this sphere of cinematography a certain degree of safety from the inevitable frauds and charlatans who will corrupt these doctrines, I will postulate here a number of fundamental (radical) principles of the image-idea, which are valid for the film in any sphere whatsoever as regards its intellectual motivation and meaning.

PRINCIPLES OF THE IMAGE-IDEA

- 1.— The image-idea is the intellectual and metaphysical essence of the image-whole.
- 2.— The image-idea underlies the image-structure and governs it.
(This law is completely Spinozic in its implications).
- 3.— The image-idea radically determines the image-structure (sequentially and organically), and definitively necessitates the image-montage (visual and dynamic).
- 4.— The image-idea is the abstract, synthetic expression of the *secondary raw-material* (as distinguished from the raw-material, out of which the secondary is selected, photographed and creat-

ed*. This secondary raw-material signifies *all the images of the film* as they are mobilized in the brain of the creator to form the *new image-structure*. The new image-structure (as distinguished from the "raw" image-structure of the creator's brain, to which, no matter how ultimately it may be developed, photography and the laboratory invariably add some new element of tone or composition), signifies the *cinematic reality*, compounded out of the primary raw-material (actuality) and the secondary raw-material (of the brain of the creator). Of this cinematic reality, the image-idea forms the *tertiary cinematic material*, but this tertiary material is not a "raw" material (as are the primary and secondary raw materials, which, unlike the tertiary, are either incompletely formed or not formed at all), *since nothing in the film can be metaphysically deeper or more radical than the fundamental image-idea*.

- 5.— The image-idea is explicit in the entire structure of the film. It is implicit in all the film's sequential (and episodic) phases, and in all its individual manifestations. It is violently and pronouncedly explicit in its purely symbolical manifestations. It is implicit in all manifestations of minor or indirect image-symbolism, and in images of referential or inferential value, pertinent to other elements in the film-structure (of deeper value) or to other elements not directly expressed in the film.
- 6.— The image-idea may never be expressed in the image-structure by a *word*, unless that word be of imagistic value, containing within itself the rudiments of an image or an image-composition, as in the cases of Hebrew, or of Japanese or Chinese script. Only such image-words possess the potentiality of becoming a part of the image-structure, that forms the image-whole and of these, the one bearing the greatest potentialities and the most radical significance, is the Hebrew.
- 7.— The image-idea is the sole intellectual, aesthetic determinant of the unity and solidarity of the image-structure. It is the dominating *cause* of its montage (visual and dynamic, sequential, episodic and organic).
- 8.— The image-idea expresses the philosophy of the theme.
- 9.— The image-idea is the jealous God of the cinematic intellect. All deviations from its true and logical transmutation into the projected film-stuff, and all extraneous elements that are permitted to enter (or that perversely creep into)

*I use the term "primary raw material" to mean the same as the term "raw material" in Pudovkin's book. That is, the actuality-stuff that the director selects and the camera photographs.

the final filmic expression of its meta-physical essence, will cause havoc with this expression and fail to communicate its essence to the spectator. Hence, the supreme importance of perfecting the mechanical aspects of the medium and of deciding upon the legitimacy of various current forms of cinema. (For instance, I exclude the speech-film from my aesthetic of cinematography. According to the viewpoint of my doctrine, color is an abhorrence, — a cheap, commercial corruption of the purity and integrity of the film's simple, elemental black-and-white. I have always fought against it, using the Ladd-Franklin optical experiments as a basis of my arguments concerning optical attack and visual appeal).

I hold these principles to be inviolate law of cinema, the mass-art.

It is, of course, not for many film-works that any of these principles hold good, and for still fewer films that *all* of them hold good. These constitute a body of *ideal* doctrine. More than that. I recognize that not even every artistic film can have a radical, philosophical image-idea!

But I also hold that to ignore these principles as a matter of course must, and will, result ultimately in the stagnation and fatal decadence of cinematography as an expressive medium and as an instrument of capturing the mass-mind. The full realization of these principles will no doubt be rare in the history of cinematography. So far, such realization has never been attained, but the cinematographers of U. S. S. R., particularly these world-creators — Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Alexandroff, Room, Dovzhenko, Konzintsoff and Trauberg — masters of montage, have come remarkably close to such realization. In U. S. S. R., I believe, it has not been lack of genius, but lack of mechanical resources, that has made perfection impossible. And then, ultimate and absolute perfection will ever remain an elusive goal, because the mechanization of the medium (despite the greed-inspired efforts of the Americans), is, and will long be, in an inadequate stage of accomplishment. It pleases and excites me to anticipate, however, that the realization of these principles will approximate the highest degree of attainment in Eisenstein's film-interpretation of Marx's *CAPITAL*. Here, the image-idea is already powerfully suggested in the very title!

As a rule, it may be said, any sequence, into which scenes unrelated in physical content are structurally incorporated in order to form the abstract, expressive idea (significance) of the sequence, is an instance of ideational synthetic montage. Eisenstein in a crude way was successful in a precocious experiment with this form in the sequence of *Ten Days That Shook the World*, where the figure of Kerensky mounting the stairs, the bust of Napoleon and the peacock spreading its tail, alternate in a time-cutting synthesis of astonishing power and emotional effect. Again, in the same work, there is the episode of the rising bridge, the massacres in the streets, the advancing riflemen and the hanging of the horse from the drawbridge, — a synthesis of scenes the inconceivable force of which is outmatched only by the stark and terrible idea that unites them and gives them their vital meaning. In every case, the quality of symbolism is inescapable.*

It is here, in this domain, (Ideational synthetic montage), that the real conditioning-process of cinematography must operate. Cinema, to an extent never imposed upon any previous art-form, is confronted by the task of a stupendous revolutionary mass-conditioning. In the work of disestablishing the slave-values of Western civilization (values of ethic, aesthetic, human behaviour, human 'ideals', etc.), it has to draw its fighting-forces and ammunition from the arsenal of Western scientific research. It must utilize the despised and relatively neglected science-achievement of the West (which hitherto has been used purely for money-purposes or for the advancement of the war-makers), in order to attack and dethrone the slavery-dogmas of the West . . . Western knowledge to smash Western slavery! And this, too, in application to every society infested with these slavery-principles. In the new methodology of human behavior for which many great isolated spirits of the West have sought (Waldo Frank among them), cinema, by the aid of the ingenious utilization of the ideational synthetic montage, to create radical revolutionary image-ideas philosophically founded, has the dominant place, the most important function. No other art has this responsibility. No other art bears the burden to this extent . . . To establish the radical image in the mass-consciousness, and to impress the image constantly once it is implanted, in order to *give root* to a new, great, beautiful human society — this is the task of the new world-cinema.

Ideational synthetic montage is the least developed, most difficult and altogether the most significant of all montage-concepts. The problems of cine-metaphysics, the problems of expressive montage-construction, and the problems of ideational synthetic montage . . . these are enduringly interconnected. Ideational synthetic Montage opens the door to the contrapuntal method cinematography. "Synthesis suggests to me the power of reconciling opposites in space-time." —David Platt). Not only are counterpoint and synthesis mutually aidful in the montage of cinematic effects; not only do counterpoint and synthesis bestow boundless power and possibility on the explosion-montage which Eisenstein has developed (his mightiest contribution to cinema!); but, the conjunction of these radical intellectual image-necessities emancipates present-day cinematography from the embarrassment of a temporary standstill in its reliance on montage-effects that have been created as a result of *limitations* (of the medium), rather than through positive, *radical creation*. As a forceful, participant aid to synthesis, sound too must be admitted into the army of force utilized by the contrapuntal method. Sound-image counterpoint will be — is already, thanks to the Moscow creators, the most powerful coalition of conditioning-forces of the present world-cinema.**

Counterpoint and synthesis (montage- put into the hands of the world cinema-creators the power to express the deepest radical image-ideas of human existence — in fact, to express the radical, dominant image idea, basically underlying Creation, — the image-idea of the *One*).

The second part of Principles of the New World-Cinema, which treats of the Problems of Method, will appear in the March issue of Experimental Cinema.

*It is remarkable how the critics and public of the bourgeois world can glibly and happily ignore the intense, bitter social significance of this vivid symbol. How even the "best-establishment" of the various emeritus-critics, so-called, can refuse to see in the hanging horse the symbol of the martyrdom of the Russian masses, murdered by a labor-exploiting government. Perhaps an explanatory title at this point, calling attention to the situation, might have penetrated to the bourgeois critical "brain!"

**The Bolshevik creators from the beginning pronounced "the new orchestral counterpoint of sight-images and sound-images", "a new and enormously effective means for expressing and solving the complex problems with which we have been troubled owing to the impossibility of solving them by the aid of cinematography operating with visual images alone." (Quoted from the Manifesto on the Sound Film issued by Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Alexandroff in the Fall of 1928). This statement must not be accepted in connection with the destructive and confounding use of sound practised in the Hollywood studios.