ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ

ΑΡΙΑΔΝΗ

ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΗ ΕΠΕΤΗΡΙΔΑ ΤΗΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΚΗΣ ΣΧΟΛΗΣ

Τ Ο Μ Ο Σ
ΕΝΔΕΚΑΤΟΣ

ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟ 2005

"Influencing the audience in the desired direction...": S. M. Eisenstein's Theatre of the 1920s and his Transition from Theatre to Cinema*

PANAYIOTA MINI

Sergei M. Eisenstein's work in theatre during the early 1920s and his transition from theatre to cinema in 1924 figure in almost every account of the Soviet director's career. Traditional criticism has approached Eisenstein's theatrical experience as a gestation period of ideas that were not fully elaborated until they appeared in his films. Eisenstein's biographer, Yon Barna, for example, regards each of Eisenstein's theatrical productions as a step bringing him closer to the world of cinema[1]. Eisenstein himself favored this interpretation, identifying his first "film tendencies" in the theatrical production of *The Mexican*[2].

Undoubtedly, there is evidence of development and continuity between Eisenstein's theatre and film theory and practice. However, treating his theatrical work as "embryonic" detaches it from its historical context and downplays its importance. Eisenstein's theatre fitted perfectly within the cultural milieu of the young Soviet Union, especially the experimental work of constructivism. Thus, his theatre constitutes a coherent body of artistic creations, elements of which the director transferred to cinema.

This essay seeks to contribute to an appreciation of Eisenstein's theatre and early cinema in their immediate cultural environments by focusing on an issue paramount in the thought of Eisenstein and his contemporaries: the effect of art on the spectator. As we will see, throughout the first half of the 1920s Eisenstein revised and re-adjusted contemporary notions of spectatorial influence, constantly striving to pinpoint the most effective means of shaping the audience's reactions[3]. Eisenstein had considered these notions since the late 1910s through his involvement in agit-art. In that context,

---

* I am grateful to Professor Thodoros Hatzipantazis, who read an earlier version of this essay.

1. Barna 1973, 35-91.

2. Eisenstein 1977, 6.

3. My approach and methodology owe a lot to David Bordwell who has illuminated Eisenstein's ideas of the spectator, especially with regards to cinema (Bordwell 1993).

the issue of the observer/recipient of an artwork was predominant, although understood in rather simple terms, namely as object of mere propaganda. A similar approach to the art-recipient relationship also characterized Eisenstein's experiences at the Moscow Proletkult Theatre and other theatre organizations between 1920 and 1921. Eisenstein then spent late 1921 to late 1922 as an apprentice at Vsevolod Meyerhold's Workshops. There, he had the opportunity to observe Meyerhold's sophisticated experiments with biomechanical acting as a means of influencing the audience. Eisenstein revised these concerns as director of the Moscow Proletkult Theatre from 1922 to 1924. His painstaking investigation of an artwork's effect continued when he moved to cinema and gave shape to his early film theory and practice.

I. Propaganda for the recipients

Eisenstein's serious involvement with the arts began in 1918. Specifically, as a former student of engineering and a Red Army designer, Eisenstein was responsible for decorating agit-trains and freight cars that traveled around the country with images and slogans celebrating the Bolshevik Revolution and communist ideology. Eisenstein organized theatrical plays, painted posters, and executed drawings, all glorifying the revolution or parodying the "bourgeois" world[4].

The main characteristics of the Civil-War agit-art included *typage*, employment of concrete images to convey abstract concepts, use of certain color and costume codes, animalistic representations of human beings, and development of stories in cartoon serial format[5]. Eisenstein's association with the agit-art of the time is apparent in his cartoonish drawing illustrating "A day in the life of a bourgeois family." The drawing caricatures the daily occupations of the bourgeoisie: shopping, exercising, dining, and watching a play. It gives the main characters the faces of pigs or bears and presents other characters—a merchant, a waiter, and a servant—as a fox, a bird, and a dog respectively[6].

With regard to Russian agit-art in general and Eisenstein's in particular, it is crucial to keep in mind its relation to the recipients/observers. This art was intended to expose capitalism, convey information about industry and agriculture, and combat illiteracy. It achieved this by employing easily identifiable features. The agit-posters, for example, needed to "be perceived quickly by the observer" and offered "little time for painstaking analysis of details on various receding planes."[7]

In the initial stages of his artistic career, therefore, Eisenstein addressed the

4. Leyda 1983, 148. Leyda and Voynow 1982, 4-9. Bordwell 1993, 1-2.
5. Reeder 1989, 255-9.
6. Reproduced in Leyda and Voynow 1982, 4-5.
7. Reeder 1989, 258.

observer through the use of broad satire and propaganda. This trend was prevalent during the Civil War, when many artists were engaged in similar activities. This tendency was soon to fit well with the premises of constructivism, which propagated the functional principle of any art and proclaimed that the artist should create utilitarian works[8].

Serving the purposes of the new art, Eisenstein began his Moscow theatrical career in late 1920 as a set designer at the Proletkult Theatre. The Proletkult, formed in 1917, had begun "as a loose coalition of clubs, factory committees, workers' theatres, and educational societies devoted to the cultural needs of the working class." By 1918 it had grown into a national movement, with the mission of creating a unique culture for the new society. During the Proletkult's most influential period (1918-1920), many debates appeared, one of which revolved around the question of whether the new proletarian art should adopt a new form[9]. The underlying concern was the impact that an artwork could have on those who saw it. Thus, although artistic experimentation did take place within the Proletkult movement, avant-gardists were accused of having forced culture out of the workers' reach[10]. As intellectual I. Trainin wrote in 1919, proletarian art should be "clear and understandable to everyone."[11]

The 1921 production of *The Mexican* at the Proletkult Theatre, a production for which Eisenstein designed sets and costumes, appeared as a pragmatic blend of simple content and experimental yet readily decipherable form. The play, Boris Arvatov's adaptation of a Jack London story, concerned some Mexican revolutionaries who needed money for their cause. A young Mexican offers to get the money through fixing a boxing match. Specifically, he makes a deal with the champion "to let himself be beaten for a small part of the prize" money. However, once in the ring, he beats the champion and wins the entire prize[12].

Two elements of Eisenstein's participation in the production deserve particular attention: the costumes and his idea of arranging the setting for the last scene as a real boxing ring. Eisenstein dressed many of the characters as clowns. The patterns of the costumes gave hints to the audience about the moral quality of each character. In the scenes set in the establishments of two rival promoters, for example, each promoter and his props were starkly different — one wore full circular costume, while his rival's was cubic. Props, costumes, and makeup gave these characters grotesque features. However, the hero of the play, "the Mexican" of the title, doffed his costume upon entering the stage and appeared without makeup as a sympathetic and human figure, unlike the caricatures surrounding him[13]. Eisenstein conceived of the figures in terms similar to those endorsed by the agit-artists of the Civil War — the figures' qualities

8. For the principles of constructivism, see Lawder 1975, 66-7.
9. Mally 1990, xviii, 129-59.
10. Mally 1990, 123.
11. Mally 1990, 145-6.
12. Seton 1978, 42.
13. Barna 1973, 50.

were relayed through easily understood codes. Not surprisingly, contemporary people compared the production to an "agit-poster."[14]

The second interesting aspect of the production was one that never materialized. Eisenstein wanted the boxing ring to occupy the center of the auditorium, thus bringing the audience into the event[15]. Eisenstein's proposal, which was overruled because of fire regulations, has been discussed as evidence of his concern for authenticity, which was to be developed in his films[16]. However, *The Mexican*'s authenticity should be linked to constructivism's advocacy of "real things in art." In fact, the performance was highly stylized, and only the boxing scene was designed to be staged in authentic terms.

The motives behind such an 'authentic' staging were rooted in the desire to elicit an intense response from the audience. In other words, a boxing match taking place in the middle of the auditorium would produce strong spectatorial reactions. During the bout between the Mexican and his rival, the spectators would presumably celebrate the victory of the revolutionary cause through their personal involvement. Eisenstein's eventual staging of the boxing scene further reveals his eagerness to involve the spectators. The ring was transferred into the pit, and performers played the roles of spectators. The performers interfered with the action in the ring, communicated their enthusiasm to the auditorium, and provoked comments from the theatre spectators[17].

In the first years of his theatrical career, Eisenstein also participated in productions of the Foregger Workshop. When Eisenstein arrived at the Workshop in 1922, Nikolai Foregger had already elaborated his notion of *typage* by using six masks as well as his techniques based on the French medieval court farce and the *commedia dell' arte*. Foregger focused on satire and designed performances as a series of sketches[18], an organizational method that may have had some influence on Eisenstein's conception of the montage of attractions. In the Workshop, Eisenstein, with Sergei Yutkevich, co-designed *The Parody Show*, an ensemble of three sketches ("For Every Wiseman One Operetta is Enough," "Don't Drink the Water Unless It's Boiled," "The Phenomenal Tragedy of Phetra") that satirized current theatrical productions[19].

Though Foregger may have influenced Eisenstein in relation to the episodic organization of a production and an emphasis on the eccentric[20], there is no evidence

14. Seton 1978, 42.

15. Barna 1973, 50.

16. Seton 1978, 43.

17. Zolotnitsky 1995, 2-5.

18. Gordon 1975, 69.

19. Gordon 1975, 69.

20. In Foregger's Workshop Eisenstein also "gleaned the idea of the 'noise band,' which expressed the sounds of a mechanical epoch" (Wollen 1998, 17). At the time, the idea of "eccentric art" was also promoted by the FEX (Factory of the Eccentric Actor). In 1922, Eisenstein met Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg of the FEX group in Leningrad, attended their unconventional staging of Nikolai Gogol's *Marriage*, and shared their enthusiasm for "Eccentrism." The term meant "a performance style mixing grotesque clownishness with mechanized acrobatic stunts in the manner of American cinema" (Bordwell 1993, 5. See also Barna 1973, 58-9).

that within the context of the Workshop Eisenstein came across an elaborate theory of spectatorial effects. Foregger's notes do not reveal a profound theoretical consideration of the issue of the spectator[21]. Eisenstein seems to have encountered rather inchoate ideas regarding this issue at Tikhonovich's group as well, where he worked as a set designer in a 1922 production of *Macbeth*[22]. It was in Meyerhold's Workshops that Eisenstein became familiar with an elaborate theory of spectatorial influence.

II. Influencing the theatre spectator through elaborate means

In the autumn of 1921, Meyerhold was appointed director of Moscow's newly formed State Higher Theatre Workshops. The Workshops opened in October, and among those accepted for the first course were Yutkevich and Eisenstein[23].

Eisenstein's most notable contribution to the Meyerhold Workshops was his designs for George Bernard Shaw's *Heartbreak House*[24]. The production remained uncompleted, though a number of drawings survives, revealing Eisenstein's conceptions of the setting as "mechanical," but at the same time organically unified, and of the costumes as indicative of a character's personality. The significance of Eisenstein's apprenticeship at the Workshops was not limited to his encounter with a sophisticated version of theatrical constructivism in the execution of setting and costuming. Eisenstein also had the chance to appreciate the power a performance may have to elicit certain reactions, especially shock. The lessons that Eisenstein learned in working for Meyerhold can be measured against the latter's production of *The Death of Tarelkin*, in which Eisenstein participated as an assistant director. Varvara Stepanova's setting was a typical constructivist one consisting of several free-standing constructions[25]. In addition, Meyerhold employed the 'knockabout tricks' of clowns and strolling players. "As though all this was not enough to tax the spectator's nerves," Edward Braun writes, "an assistant director (or "laboratory assistant," as they were called) seated in the front row announced the intervals by firing a pistol at the audience and shouting 'Entrrr-acte!'."[26] As an assistant director for this production, therefore, Eisenstein might have been appointed to the specific task of arousing the spectators' reactions to a maximum.

Meyerhold's methods of spectatorial influence go well beyond the employment of such instantaneous provocations. His biomechanical acting style bears the most

21. Foregger 1975, 74-7.

22. Barna 1973, 56.

23. Braun 1995, 170-1.

24. Braun 1995, 187. Earlier, in December 1921, Meyerhold had assigned the staging of a short production to three of his students, giving Eisenstein Ludwig Tieck's *Puss in Boots* (Barna 1973, 56).

25. Leach 1989, 99.

26. Braun 1995, 185.

significance for both the actors' training and performance and the spectators' experience. Meyerhold conceived of the human body as a machine with its own laws. By knowing these laws an actor could control his or her movements, using them to convey emotional states. Influenced by Taylor's studies of industrial movements, Meyerhold proclaimed that "the actor must train his material (the body), so that it is capable of executing instantaneously those tasks that are dictated externally."[27] Echoing contemporary notions of reflexology, Meyerhold defined the relation between the actor and the audience as follows: "All psychological states are determined by specific physiological processes. By correctly resolving the nature of his state physically, the actor reaches the point where he experiences the *excitation* that communicates itself to the spectator and induces him to share in the actor's performance."[28]

The influence of Meyerhold's ideas on Eisenstein can be traced in the latter's immediate career at the Proletkult Theatre[29]. Eisenstein returned to the Moscow Proletkult Theatre in 1922 to be its co-director along with Arvatov. Eisenstein and Arvatov drew up a "director's workshop," teaching a variety of theoretical and practical subjects[30]. Eisenstein's notes for his lectures indicate the attention he paid to biomechanics. "The raccourci position is the only position of the actor's body which dynamically acts on the spectator. In this lies the meaning of Biomechanics for the spectator," he stated[31]. Answering a question of how a biomechanical movement acts on the spectator, Eisenstein declared that an imitative movement is evoked in the spectator[32].

Eisenstein's emphasis on the role of imitation in the communication between actor and spectator was based upon the findings of Vladimir Bekhterev, who contributed to the notion of "collective reflexology." According to Bekhterev, the individual's conditioned reflexes were both affected by society and became, through imitation, a part of the collective experience[33]. Thus, at the Proletkult Theatre, the individual actor's movements were considered to be capable of shaping a certain collective experience via the spectators' imitation of them.

Turning to Eisenstein's practice at that time, we might characterize the experience

27. Excerpt from a 1922 lecture, published in Braun 1995, 173. For a detailed account of Meyerhold's biomechanics see Leach 1989, 52-84. See, also, notes by Meyerhold and others in Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 99-162.

28. Braun 1995, 173.

29. For this influence see Bordwell's judgment (1993, 4): "Eisenstein's belief in controlling the spectator through the performer's bodily virtuosity; his emphasis on rhythm and pantomime; his interest in Asian theatre, the circus, and the grotesque; (...) –all were initiated or strengthened by the association with Meyerhold."

30. Kleberg 1993, 75. See also Szczepanski 1987, 12.

31. Eisenstein 1996a, 164-5. Meyerhold and Eisenstein used the term "raccourci" to mean "an instantaneous, expressive moment pulled out from the general movement, a point of break between two movements": Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 258.

32. Eisenstein 1996b, 168.

33. Kleberg 1993, 85.

evoked in the spectators of *The Wiseman* —Eisenstein's first theatrical direction— as "shock." The play was Sergei Tretyakov's adaptation of Alexander Ostrovsky's *Enough Simplicity in Every Wise Man*. Eisenstein's circus-like setting included a vaulting horse, a trapeze, a tightrope, and a platform with several steps. The actors performed acrobatic stunts and even expressed emotions by crossing the auditorium on the high wire and executing a *salto mortale*[34]. The shocking effect reached its climax at the end of the production, when firecrackers exploded underneath the spectators' seats.

The method of employing any means to elicit a desired response was theoretically heralded by Eisenstein in his 1923 article "Montage of Attractions." "The objective of every utilitarian theatre," Eisenstein declared, "is to guide the spectator in the desired direction (frame of mind)." To achieve such a guidance, Eisenstein justified the incorporation of any "attraction," any aggressive moment that subjects the spectator to emotional or psychological influence, "experimentally regulated and mathematically calculated to produce in him emotional shocks which (...) enable the spectator to perceive the ideological side of what is being demonstrated."[35] The attractions could be independent of any particular composition or thematic connection with the actors, but with the precise aim of a final thematic effect.

When put into practice in *The Wiseman*, these theories fell neatly within the contemporary avant-garde method of employing "arbitrarily chosen" formal features derived specifically from the circus, the music-hall, and the variety show[36]. Nevertheless, in addition to alluding to constructivism's favorite popular forms, *The Wiseman*'s circus-arena setting bore an added significance when compared to the remaining popular theatrical devices. A circus's circular design might be considered symbolic of an increased participation of the audience. In fact, Eisenstein tried to take the maximum advantage of circular design by having the audience face three fourths of the setting. The supreme emphasis that Eisenstein put on the audience's reactions has been described by his assistant Aleksandr Levshin in his recollections of *The Wiseman's* rehearsals:

> *Usually directors look at the stage during rehearsals and observe the work of the actors. Eisenstein wanted to sit with his back to the stage, facing the audience, and proceeding from the dramaturgy of the production to observe the spectators in order at the proper moment to give them a portion of tears*

34. Barna 1973, 64. For the production see also Gerould, 1974.

35. Eisenstein 1974, 78. The article first appeared in *Lef* (June/July 1923). Its translation in *The Drama Review* is followed by a supplement to Eisenstein's list of twenty-five attractions of *The Wiseman*'s epilogue and by photographs of the production.

36. It has been argued that Eisenstein's montage of attractions had been employed at least five years earlier by Meyerhold (Rudnitsky 1981, 253-4. Leach 1989, 164). From my perspective, what is important is not whether Eisenstein was the first to use attractions, but how he reworked current practices into a coherent theoretical schema.

or an armful of laughter, and occasionally force them to leap out of their seats in horror[37].

The Wiseman's production proved unsuccessful. According to Huntly Carter, who attended the performance and praised its originality, the pace was "almost too quick for some spectators."[38] This testimony seems reasonable if one considers that the production's epilogue alone consisted of as many as twenty-five attractions illustrating disparate themes, a few of which were suicide from despair, enmity, the New Economic Policy, departure from Russia, and paying for a wedding.

The experience with *The Wiseman* led Eisenstein and Tretyakov to reconsider their theory and practice. Their first objective was to retrain the Proletkult actors. The concept of "spectator's influence through imitation of the actors' movement" was analyzed and reworked into a broader framework which brought together Meyerhold's biomechanics, Bekhterev's reflexology, and Rudolf Bode's Expressive Gymnastics. Eisenstein and Tretyakov outlined the principles of the new acting style in their 1923 article "Expressive Movement." They defined the most appropriate acting style for their theatre as that which is based on a principle of conflict. This conflict was to take place between the reflexive movement, which "has as the point of application of force the center of gravity of the body as a whole," and the voluntary movements of the limbs. At the same time, this conflict should occur in an overall state of organic unity, both for the actor's body and the performance's desired purpose. Eisenstein and Tretyakov stated that any stylized movement not necessarily related to the plot was permitted under the condition that it could function as an attraction for the total purpose of the work. From the other end of the spectrum, the audience—following the reflexological laws—would physically imitate these movements, emancipate emotions, and presumably grasp the notion of conflict itself, perceived in its organic totality[39].

It is easy to find similarities between "Montage of Attractions" and "Expressive Movement." Both pieces justify elements not related to the plot. In addition, both texts stress the guidance of the spectator. "Expressive Movement," however, takes the foundations provided in "Montage of Attractions" further. It emphasizes the notion of "organic unity" and introduces the element of conflict in acting. In addition, it implies that the spectatorial reaction is a process that goes through the stages of physical imitation of the actors' movements, emotional involvement, and cognitive grasping of the concept of "conflict," as initially capsulated in the actors' movements.

Given the ephemeral nature of theatrical performances, it is not possible to test whether the actors of Eisenstein's next production, *Do you Hear, Moscow?*, were able to comply with the new principles. However, these principles do seem to have informed

37. Levshin 1996, 170.

38. Carter 1925, 93. See also Gordon 1978, 107.

39. Eisenstein and Tretyakov 1979, 30-8.

other aspects of the play, such as the construction of the plot and individual scenes. Compared to *The Wiseman*, *Do you Hear, Moscow?* is much more unified[40]. The plot juxtaposes "the bourgeoisie" and the working class and proceeds with a demonstration of a class struggle leading to proletarian victory. The play is constructed around a reduced number of attractions (approximately twenty), some of which depict the notion of conflict. "Bourgeois" Marga's hatred of the working class, for example, was presented by her whipping a worker in an attraction designed around the "theme of sadomasochism." The play's escalation towards unity (and proletarian victory) was evident at the very end, when the attraction was none other than a huge portrait of Lenin.

The play's construction indicates that its aim was to educate the audience about the conflicting social forces that would lead to a unified (communist) political and social order. Not accidentally, the actors' final address to the audience was "Unity! Unity! Moscow! Do you hear us now, Moscow!!" The importance of the audience's reactions for the producers is revealed in an article written by Tretyakov and published in *LEF* in 1924. Tretyakov broke down the composition of the audience into percentages according to class and occupation, estimated the registering of the attractions in the spectators' memory, and described certain responses, which ranged from an offended middle-class woman exiting the theatre to a soldier's willingness to assist the revolutionaries on stage[41].

In his article, Tretyakov appeared skeptical about the heterogeneous composition of the Proletkult Theatre, which prevented an absolute demonstration of the effectiveness of the theatre of attractions; as Eisenstein had written, such a theatre targeted an ideologically homogeneous audience. To correct this weakness in the production of *Do you Hear, Moscow?*, Tretyakov and Eisenstein composed their next production, *Gas Masks*, on new grounds. They depicted workers in their factory, arranged performances for selected audiences, and staged the play in the Moscow Gasworks instead of at a theatre. The audience was seated among turbines and catwalks, heard real factory sounds, and smelled the same fumes that actual factory workers did.

As Kleberg suggests, the explanation that staging *Gas Masks* in a real gasworks was indicative of Eisenstein's abandonment of the theatre for cinema is only partially true[42]. The production of *Gas Masks* stands as an avant-garde theatrical act, which aimed at the maximum spectatorial moulding in a desired direction[43]. In any case, although the factory was real, the actors' movements remained highly rhythmical, and the non-theatrical environment provided a ready-made constructivist design. Furthermore, just as Eisenstein was transferring the action to a real factory, Meyerhold was bringing actual motorcycles, field telephones, and automobiles in his theatre. In

40. Tretyakov 1978, 113-23.

41. Gordon 1978, 110. Kleberg 1993, 137.

42. Kleberg 1993, 88-9.

43. See also Oliver 1994, 303-16.

Mel Gordon's words, "The notion of real, not imitative, art, the use of real materials, were basic foundations of artistic Constructivism, and the theatrical Constructivists constantly sought solutions to provide "realness."[44] The production of *Gas Masks* met the constructivist demand for real materials and the particular desire to address the working class audience in its own environment.

Theatrical chronicles refer to the production of *Gas Masks* as a failure, on the grounds that the blend of fiction and reality disturbed audience and critics alike. However, Doona Oliver has demonstrated that people who actually saw the production commented favorably on how well fiction and reality complemented each other. The reviewers' criticism referred to ideological flaws in the presentation of the revolution and Eisenstein's reliance on biomechanical acting. The real factory as a setting in which the audience could witness workers' problems was a promising idea and helped to shape Eisenstein's first film, *Strike*[45].

Beginning with his agit-art during the Civil War, passing from the early Proletkult Theatre to other theatre groups and Meyerhold's Workshops, and returning to the Proletkult as a director, Eisenstein accumulated experiences which led him to a constant re-adjusting of the notion of spectatorial influence. He was not an isolated figure in this regard. On the contrary, the composition and the reactions of the audience were under the empirical and theoretical gaze of many artists. The issue found its real proportions in 1924, when a series of articles devoted to the role of the audience met publication, and continued to preoccupy artists and critics throughout the decade[46]. By 1924 Eisenstein had shifted artistic media, shooting *Strike*[47]. The issue of the spectator, however, remained central to his art.

III. Influencing the film spectator

Continuities between Eisenstein's theatrical period and his first attempt in cinema are evident on many levels. *Strike's* production crew included Proletkult actors with whom Eisenstein had worked in the past. In addition, the film took up the theme of the latest Tretyakov's play, turning a mass of workers into the hero of the story[48]. *Strike* also employed representational codes that Eisenstein and other avant-garde artists had used earlier. The factory's bosses appeared as bloated caricatures, and the police spies were

44. Gordon 1978, 112.

45. Oliver 1994, 310-5.

46. Kleberg 1993, 94-102.

47. Before *Strike*, Eisenstein's experiences in cinema included his brief attendance of Lev Kuleshov's Workshop during 1922-1923; the preparation of a short film, *Glumov Diary*, for *The Wiseman*; and his collaboration with Esfir Shub in editing Fritz Lang's *Dr Mabuse der Spieler* for Soviet distribution (Bordwell 1993, 7).

48. Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 85. Oliver 1994, 316.

paralleled —through montage— to animals. We have seen how the latter practice had already appeared in the Civil War agit-art in general and Eisenstein's cartoonish drawings in particular[49]. In addition, *Strike* exemplified constructivism's infatuation with technology, setting the action in a factory and providing views of production machines. Moreover, *Strike's* narrative is characterized by a unity already established at the Proletkult Theatre with *Do you Hear, Moscow?* As Bordwell suggests, *Strike's* experiments are held together by a rigorous structure that illustrates the phases of a typical strike[50].

Nevertheless, as *Do you Hear, Moscow?* combined a unified plot and a number of attractions, similarly, in *Strike*, certain scenes are organized around loosely story-motivated elements whose purpose is to endow the scenes with a specific mood. A worker's bribery by the police administrator, for example, takes place in a music-hall where two midgets tango on a table. The midgets' presence and dance create an aura of decadence, which will presumably affect the spectator's perception of the worker's deed. When spies beat the remorseful worker, an excited bourgeois woman witnesses the scene, in a manner that recalls the attraction of sadomasochism in *Do you Hear, Moscow?* Eisenstein's theatrical practices are further invoked in *Strike's* depiction of the lumpen proletarian world. In our introduction to this world, the beggars who are used by the police to sabotage the workers' cause pantomime a vignette, illustrating their filthy habits. In "The Montage of Film Attractions," an article in which Eisenstein expanded upon his earlier theory, the notion of filmic attraction is not directly associated with scenes such as these. I suggest, however, that it is fair to understand these scenes as equivalent to Eisenstein's theatrical attractions and as elements of a cinema which will be "free from narrowly plot-related plans."[51]

Nevertheless, cinema's possibilities taught Eisenstein new ways to construct the kind of attractions that would be impossible on stage. As Eisenstein stated, "the application of the method of the montage of attractions... to cinema is even more acceptable than it is to theatre (...): montage (in the technical, cinematic sense of the word) is fundamental to cinema."[52] Cinematic montage could bring together separate elements and angles of an event. In addition, it could encourage associations between two apparently unrelated events. Thus, in *Strike* the capitalist's squeezing of a lemon was followed by a scene of the workers' being "squeezed" by the police cavalry, a pictorial association which produces the idea of "capitalism suppressing the working class."

Furthermore, Eisenstein employed montage in an even more unconventional way, by incorporating non-diegetic material into the plot. For Eisenstein, this was the exemplary method of montage of attractions in cinema. In *Strike's* final sequence, shots of

49. For *Strike's* links to its preceding graphic art see Reeder 1989, 262-76.
50. Bordwell 1993, 50-1.
51. Eisenstein 1988, 41.
52. Eisenstein 1988, 41.

the workers being killed by the police were juxtaposed with shots of a non-diegetic event — the slaughtering of an animal. Aiming at a specific thematic effect, Eisenstein disregarded story motivation and constructed this sequence not from the perspective of the narrative's linear logic but of the audience's intellectual trajectory while watching the film.

With *Strike*, Eisenstein led his earlier theories of theatrical montage of attractions to new paths. In addition, the theoretical and practical foundations set in *Strike* remained under re-consideration, giving rise to the notion of "intellectual montage" and the accomplishment of the highly experimental *October* (1928). During the period between *Strike* and *October*, Eisenstein re-defined the concept of conflict (in relation to a film's graphic lines, lighting patterns, and camera angles), aiming at suggesting the dialectical nature of things. As we saw, the first serious consideration of this notion had appeared in the "Expressive Movement" article, where Eisenstein sought to identify the most effective way of influencing the theatrical spectators.

Eisenstein's theory and practice after *Strike* goes well beyond the purposes of this essay, which traces the director's early efforts to address the audience. As we have seen, Eisenstein's theatrical experiments were not steps inevitably leading to cinema, but interesting experiments in their own right. As is always the case, the director transferred some of these experiments to cinema when he shifted artistic media, but he also developed new methods. In this trajectory, one issue remained central to his thinking and helped shape his art: the spectator. As he wrote immediately after shifting artistic media, "Theater (...) is linked to cinema by a common (identical) *basic* material—the *audience*—and by a common purpose—*influencing this audience in the desired direction* through a series of calculated pressures on its psyche."[53]

Panayiota Mini
Department of Philology
University of Crete
GR-741 00 Rethymno
e-mail: pamini@mail.otenet.gr

53. Eisenstein 1988, 39 (emphasis in the original). For Eisenstein's understanding of the spectator as his material see Bordwell 1993, Chapter 3, especially 115-23.

WORKS CITED

Barna, Y. 1973. *Eisenstein.* London: Secker & Warburg.

Bordwell, D. 1993. *The Cinema of Eisenstein.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Braun, E. 1995. *Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre.* Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

Carter, H. 1925. *The New Theatre and Cinema of Soviet Russia.* New York: International Publishers.

Eisenstein, S. 1974. Montage of Attractions. *The Drama Review* 18(1): 77-84.

Eisenstein, S. 1977. Through Theater to Cinema. In: *idem*, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, ed. and trans. J. Leyda. New York and London: A Harvest/HBJ Book, 3-17.

Eisenstein, S. 1988. The Montage of Film Attractions. In: *idem*, *Selected Works,* 1. *Writings 1922-1934*, ed. and trans. R. Taylor. London: BFI, 39-58.

Eisenstein, S. 1996a. Notes on Biomechanics. In: Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 164-166.

Eisenstein, S. 1996b. What is a 'Raccourci' and What Is a Pose? In: Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 168-169.

Eisenstein, S. and S. Tretyakov. 1979. Expressive Movement, trans. A. H. Law. *Millennium Film Journal* 3: 30-38.

Foregger, N. 1975. Experiments in the Art of the Dance, trans. D. Miller. *The Drama Review* 19(1): 74-77.

Gerould, D. 1974. Eisenstein's *Wiseman. The Drama Review* 18(1): 71-76.

Gordon, M. 1975. Foregger and the Dance of the Machines. *The Drama Review* 19(1): 68-73.

Gordon, M. 1978. Eisenstein's Later Work at the Proletkult. *The Drama Review* 22(3): 107-112.

Kleberg, L. 1993. *Theatre as Action: Soviet Russian Avant-Garde Aesthetics*, trans. C. Rougle. London: MacMillan.

Law, A. and Mel Gordon (eds.). 1996. *Meyerhold, Eisenstein and Biomechanics:Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia.* London: McFarland & Company Inc.

Lawder, S. 1975. Eisenstein and Constructivism. In: P. A. Sitney (ed.), *The Essential Cinema,* 1. *Essays on Film in the Collection of Anthology Film Archives.* New York: Anthology Film Archives and New York University Press, 58-87.

Leach, R. 1989. *Vsevolod Meyerhold.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leyda, J. 1983. *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Leyda, J. and Zina Voynow. 1982. *Eisenstein at Work.* New York: Pantheon Books/The Museum of Modern Art.

Levshin, A. 1996. At Rehearsals of *The Wiseman.* In: Law and Gordon (eds.) 1996, 170-172.

Mally, L. 1990. *Culture of the Future: The Proletkult Movement in Revolutionary Russia.* Berkeley, LA: University of California Press.

Reeder, R. 1989. Agit-Prop Art: Posters, Puppets, Propaganda and Eisenstein's *Strike*. *Russian Literature Triquarterly* 22: 255-278.

Rudnitsky, K. 1981. *Meyerhold the Director*. Ann Arbor: Ardis.

Oliver, D. 1994. Theatre without the Theatre: Proletkult at the Gas Factory. *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 36(3-4): 303-316.

Seton, M. 1978. *Sergei M. Eisenstein*. London: Dennis Dobson.

Szczepanski, T. 1987. The *Wise Man* Reconsidered: Some Notes on the Performance. In: L. Kleberg and Hakan Lovgren (eds), *Eisenstein Revisited: A Collection of Essays*. Stockholm: Almiqvist & Wiksell International, 11-24.

Tretyakov, S. 1978. "*Do you Hear, Moscow?*", trans. Liudmilla Hirsch. *The Drama Review* 22(3): 113-123.

Wollen, P. 1998. Eisenstein's Aesthetics. In: *idem, Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*. London: BFI, 10-47.

Zolotnitsky, D. 1995. *The Mexican*, as Visualised by Sergei Eisenstein. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 4 (1): 1-9.

«Επηρεάζοντας το θεατή προς την επιθυμητή κατεύθυνση...» Το θέατρο του Σ. Μ. Αϊζενστάιν στη δεκαετία του 1920 και η μετάβασή του από το θέατρο στον κινηματογράφο

ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΑ ΜΗΝΗ

Το άρθρο εξετάζει το θέατρο του Σ. Μ. Αϊζενστάιν κατά τη δεκαετία του 1920 και τη μετάβαση του σκηνοθέτη από το θέατρο στον κινηματογράφο μέσα στη σύγχρονή τους πολιτισμική πραγματικότητα. Οι πρώτες θεατρικές και κινηματογραφικές αναζητήσεις του Αϊζενστάιν φωτίζονται σε σχέση με ένα από τα σημαντικότερα καλλιτεχνικά ζητήματα της εποχής του, την επίδραση του έργου τέχνης στο θεατή. Οι απόψεις του Αϊζενστάιν, που γίνονται φανερές τόσο από τα θεωρητικά κείμενά του όσο και τις καλλιτεχνικές δημιουργίες του, πέρασαν από τρία στάδια. Στο πρώτο στάδιο (1918-1921) χρησιμοποίησε πρακτικές της σύγχρονής του τέχνης της αγκιτάτσιας, δημιουργώντας σχετικά εύληπτα έργα που στόχευαν στην άμεση πολιτική προπαγάνδα μέσω της χρήσης του «τυπάζ», ευανάγνωστων χρωματικών και ενδυματολογικών κωδίκων και συγκεκριμένων εικόνων για τη μετάδοση αφηρημένων εννοιών. Κατά το δεύτερο στάδιο (1922-1924) ο Αϊζενστάιν ανέπτυξε πιο εκλεπτυσμένες απόψεις για την επίδραση στο θεατή, μαθητεύοντας δίπλα στο θεατρικό σκηνοθέτη Μεγιερχόλντ. Ο Αϊζενστάιν έβαλε σε εφαρμογή τις μεθόδους του δασκάλου του ως σκηνοθέτης του θεάτρου Προλετκούλτ της Μόσχας, διαρκώς αναθεωρώντας τις πρακτικές του, εξοβελίζοντας αναποτελεσματικές μεθόδους και δοκιμάζοντας νέες, όπως αποδεικνύουν οι παραστάσεις και τα θεωρητικά του κείμενα. Στο τρίτο στάδιο συντελείται η μετάβασή του στον κινηματογράφο με την ταινία *Απεργία* (1925). Σε αυτήν, ο σκηνοθέτης επαναχρησιμοποίησε στοιχεία της προηγούμενης καλλιτεχνικής δουλειάς του (με χαρακτηριστικότερο το «μοντάζ των ατραξιόν») αλλά έβαλε σε εφαρμογή και νέους τρόπους που του αποκάλυψε η ιδιαιτερότητα της κινηματογραφικής τέχνης, όπως η ενσωμάτωση εικόνων ανεξάρτητων από το διηγηματικό κόσμο της ταινίας.

Η μεθοδολογία στη φεμινιστική θεωρία

ΑΝΤΩΝΗΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΟΥΛΑΣ

Εισαγωγή

Στις τελευταίες δεκαετίες του 20ού αιώνα οι νέες και κριτικές τάσεις της κοινωνικής θεωρίας επικέντρωσαν κυρίως στο πρόβλημα της διαφοράς και της κυριαρχίας, εγκαταλείποντας ή βάζοντας σε δεύτερο πλάνο αυτό της εκμετάλλευσης και της ισότητας που κυριαρχούσε νωρίτερα. Το άμεσο αποτέλεσμα της αλλαγής προσανατολισμού ήταν η σύνδεση της επιστημονικής γνώσης με την ηθική. Η διεκδίκηση της ισότητας αντικαταστάθηκε από αυτήν της αναγνώρισης της διαφοράς και η διεκδίκηση μιας πολιτικής ηθικής από αυτήν που αφορά την ηθική της υποκειμενικής επιλογής.

Τούτη η μεταστροφή θα μπορούσε να αποδοθεί τόσο σε δομικούς παράγοντες όσο και σε ιδεολογικούς. Για την ακρίβεια, θα μπορούσε να αποδοθεί στη συνάρθρωση δομικών και ιδεολογικών παραγόντων, κάτι που σημαίνει ότι οι νέες τάσεις προσδιορίζονται σε μεγάλο βαθμό από τη συγκεκριμένη συνάρθρωση.

Ως δομικοί παράγοντες θα μπορούσαν να κρατηθούν αυτοί που οδήγησαν στην «τριχοτόμηση» της κοινωνίας και την εμφάνιση της «πολιτισμικής αστικής τάξης» (Gouldner 1979). Το Πανεπιστήμιο της πρώτης μεταπολεμικής περιόδου γνωρίζει μια πραγματική πληθυσμιακή έκρηξη, κατά κύριο λόγο στις σχολές ανθρωπιστικών και κοινωνικών επιστημών. Η τεράστια αύξηση του αριθμού των φοιτητών —και άρα των επιστημονικών επαγγελμάτων— οφείλεται κυρίως στη διαγενεακή πανεπιστημιακή πρόσβαση ομάδων που μέχρι τότε ήταν σχεδόν αποκλεισμένες: περισσότερο άνδρες και λιγότερο γυναίκες λαϊκής καταγωγής, γυναίκες αστικής καταγωγής, άνδρες και γυναίκες με μειονοτική προέλευση στις πολυφυλετικές κοινωνίες που δημιουργήθηκαν για διαφόρους ιστορικούς λόγους (ΗΠΑ, πρώην αποικιοκρατικές χώρες, κλπ.).

Θα μπορούσε να συγκρατήσει κανείς δύο δέσμες ιδεολογικών παραγόντων. Στην πρώτη θα μπορούσαν να ενταχθούν αυτοί της ψυχροπολεμικής πόλωσης. Η ψυχροπολεμική ωστόσο πόλωση, η οποία αποτελεί και το ηγεμονικό μόρφωμα της