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Film Theory

10/30/13

<div align="center">Part 1: Short Answers</div>

<div align="center">1) Inner Eye (Munsterberg)</div>

Hugo Munsterberg was a German psychologist who is known for his stage theory of cognitive development suggesting that the cinema was the art of the mind. In the reading of Hugo Munsterberg on Film: The Photoplay: A Psychological Study and other Writings, Munsterberg presents the theory of The Photoplay, and explores how the inner eye can be incorporated on the stage and in the world of the cinema. He explains how the Cinema objectifies a spectator's attention with sights and ideas, supplying these images with feelings and emotions; some come Voluntary, and others come involuntary. Voluntary attentions are limited within the world of film, as we are forced to watch our favorite performer/entertainer close-up. Involuntary attention comes more from the stage, and gives the spectators a choice to choose what exactly they want to look at (38).

Munsterberg explains that the spectator becomes the 'Passive perceiver' and such images on the screen can begin with a suggestion (perception), which can manifest into a belief, ultimately shaping our attitude (ideology). Because our inner eye is drawn to particular images with depth and movement, these images can create a strong and emotional meaning to the story and its characters. By using The Photoplaythe audiencetakes in the Inner and Outer developments of the

moving picture that is captured on the lens of the camera. Photoplay within cinema obeys the laws of the inner mind instead of the outer world, as it objectifies the spectator's attention through memories, flashbacks and flash-forwards within time (90).

Munsterberg explains how editing plays into the way our inner mind works, and that elements of suggestion link separate shots of the picture. For instance, the rapid editing and movement of the images that is presented through the camera projector stays on the retina of its audience, which ultimately links these suggestions and after images through a form of perception (46). Emotion is also a central key of The Photoplay, and how specific actors can give the spectator a wide range of emotions and sensations that can be expressed without words. (51)

2.) Conflict (Eisenstein)

Sergei Eisenstein was an avant-garde filmmaker who established the use of thorough-going realism by creatingexpressionistic camera angles, visual metaphors, and rapid montage, which was greatly akin to the Marxist idea of dialectic (13). Soviet Montage is a Japanese synonym for a form of editing which was practiced by Soviet filmmakers Lev Kuleshov, Vesvolod Pudovkin, Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein around the 1920s at the Kuleshov School of film-making. Each filmmaker incorporated their own forms and ideologues of Soviet Montage differently into their films under the teachings of Lev Kuleshov, placing these ideas into political concepts.

Eisenstein called these different forms 'Cinema of Attractions' and experimented with a form of film editing which attempted to produce the greatest emotional response in a viewer by conflicting two different shots side created from juxtaposition. Soviet Montagists took the work of editing away from mere exposition and focused on materialization of ideas, motifs, symbols,

metaphors, themes, and concepts through editing. Eisenstein describes this as a dialectical process, in which a synthesis is born from the interaction of a thesis and its antithesis (29).

The development of Intellectual Montage would make the viewer think more deeply about the connection between two separate images within direct conflict with one another, having them form new ideas, metaphors or symbols to the shots. The general trajectory between Intellectual Montage is Perception, Emotion, and Cognition. Eisenstein's theory was based on a Japanese ideogram in which he created a third meaning within two separate shots which were the sum of all greater parts. For instance, a shot of a bird and a mouth would form a third meaning to the viewer which was to sing. The shots of an eye and water would form meanings of crying and the shots of a baby and a mouth would form the meaning of screaming (15).

Eisenstein distinguished between ten different types of dialectical conflict at the level of shot composition alone, most famously his style of Intellectual montage. Eisenstein's style of Intellectual Montage is very similar to Kuleshov's original theory called the Kuleshov Effect. The Kuleshov Effect was an experiment demonstrated in the 1910s and 20s where filmmaker's recutted old footage of a close-up of actor Ivan Mozhuchin and repeatedly cut shots of other material like a bowl of soup, a crying baby or a dead woman's body.

Audiences would look at the same footage of Ivan Mozhuchin followed by a different shot and would bring a different conclusion to what they had to say about the scene. Eisenstein's Intellectual Montage brought the power of editing to an even greater level and not only had the audience create different conclusions on what they saw on the screen, but they would create deeper symbolic meanings and metaphors that went outside the context of the film.

Part 2: Essay

Realism: Andre Bazin & Sergei Eisenstein

I want to compare and contrast the Realism between two different theorists which are Sergei Eisenstein and Andre Bazin. At first the film theories of Eisenstein and Bazin seem to be fundamentally different from one another. For instance, Eisenstein creates a series of montage by juxopositioning particular images together all the while Bazin creates anaesthetic world of Italian Neorealism with the use of location shooting and non-actors. And yet when delving deeper within both theories they're several obvious differences between both claims and how they relate to the world of reality. Bazin's primary claim about the relationship between film and reality is rooted with the use of photography.

Bazin explained how the origin of the plastic arts began with the painting and sculpture which he called 'The Mummy complex.' The Mummy Complex is a metaphor which shows the different stages of the representation on life and death, as the camera would be able to mummify and preserve a particular space and time (159). Bazin believed this analogy proved that the creation of the ideal world was in the likeness of the real and therefore the painting and sculpture was torn between two ambitions: The primarily which transcended its model and the other is purely psychological, which was what he used to specifically prove the reality it replicated from the world outside. (160).

The development of the camera and photography is the first modern invention in which the lens succeeds in creating a form of reality that painting and sculptures could never achieve. The lens was the bases of the photography which in French is called the 'objectif' and it was the

first time in which the image of the world was formed without the creative intervention of man. The purpose and distinctive personality of the photographer enters into the object that is being photographed and is described as something that affects us in nature like a flower or a snowflake of earthly like beauty (162).

Any painting, sculpture or drawing will never have the power of the photograph, as the lens gives us an image that is a reproduction or transfer, which is why we adore family albums. Photography is a mechanical process as it does not create eternity that art does, but instead rescues it from a form of human corruption. Photography contributes something to the order of natural creation instead of providing a substitute for it, as the image is seen as an object and every object as an image. Photography is than mummified in its purist form and remains timeless in its duration and meaning, making it the most important event in the history of the plastic arts.

Eisenstein's theory of montage is rooted by constructive realism and not photography. Unlike Bazin whose film realism breaks away from its image and intoanaesthetic time and space in reality, Eisenstein's theory of montage instead comes together and gets constructed in its own form of realism. At the center of Eisenstein's idea of reality stems the idea of dialectic, as his style draws heavily on politics such as Marxism. The theories of Montage follow the same principles as reality itself, and function as tools for political propaganda.

These theories of realism were greatly used in *Strike*, as Eisenstein cuts between the poor and determined faces of the citizens getting raided by police officers, to the meetings of the greedy fat corporate shareholders drinking wine, laughing and clenching their cigars with their fat fingers, creating an contrasting realism for the injustice that the poor workers are receiving by the greedy higher class. The film is most famous for a legendary sequence near the end of the

film which cross-cuts with footage of the Soviet police shooting and killing civilians that are trying to retreat from them off-screen, while the scene cuts back and forth to a slaughterhouse where a butcher is holding a knife to a cow's throat right before slaughtering it.

Those two images juxtapose to form a third meaning between the cow and the civilians as the series of shots of the deceased and murdered civilians sprawled on the ground runs parallel to the cow's throat being brutally slashed open with a knife, as the cow slowly bleeds to death. Eisenstein's theory of Intellectual Montage has the viewer make anemotional connection between the murder of the civilians and the cow, which creates a third meaning for the viewer. This third meaning adds to the gritty aesthetic of realism, now suggesting that the massacre of the civilians was more like a helpless slaughter. These violent and intense juxtaposed montage sequences can be looked at as the aesthetic starting point which inevitably led to other realistically violent sequences, most famously with villagers ceremonially slaughtering a water buffalo in Frances Ford Coppola's war epic *Apocalypse Now*.

Despite the differences between the 'reality' theories of Bazin and Eisenstein, their fundamental similarities present to the spectator a gritty essence of reality. These theories can be greatly limiting as well, since both of them don't present reality as authentic as possible. It instead presents to us the fact that reality is a 'form of art' and we as a viewer can accept what we find is not authentic to reality or not authentic as we seem fit.   While Bazin uses reality as a form of photography which presents the world as a mummified space in time, Eisenstein uses reality as a political weapon which is built upon with the edited use of juxtaposition and montage. Either way, they both project an image of reality within their own context of the cinema.