

# An Interpretation of "Man with the Movie Camera"

Bertrand Sauzier

I attempt here an interpretation of *Man with the Movie Camera* based on an analysis of Dziga Vertov's historical coordinates and of his poetic system (both of which are elaborated in Sauzier 1982).<sup>1</sup> Essentially my interpretation contends that there are two discourses in *Man with the Movie Camera*. The narrative discourse portrays the activities of a cameraman during a working day in a Soviet city.<sup>2</sup> The metaphorical discourse amounts to a poem about the achievements of Man, equipped with a movie camera, from 1917 to the Cultural Revolution of 1928. In particular, it traces the theoretical and social achievements of the kind of films Vertov stood for, the Cine-Eye film (unacted cinema), and attacks what Vertov called cine-dramas (acted cinema).

The title of the film *Chelovek s kino apparatom* should be read, I suggest, at least two ways: *The Man with the Movie Camera*, referring to a certain cameraman and his shooting activities, and *Man with the Movie Camera*, referring to the ability of man, in the generic sense, to reveal the political and emotional behavior of people thanks to a movie camera. In the following interpretive outline I have tried to convey both the narrative and metaphorical connotations of the title.

I do not claim that my interpretation coincides exactly with the views expressed by Vertov about his film. However, it helps explain what Vertov meant when he said that his film was "a dissertation on the theme: One hundred percent cinema language" (Vertov 1929). In the process, my reading also reveals two sides of Vertov, the storyteller and the poet, which he often repressed or subordinated to his politics.

Looking back on *Man with the Movie Camera* in 1940, Vertov felt that it was not only an experiment about film language, but also a documentary about man (Vertov 1972:207). His statements at the time of the German premiere of the film in 1929 also show that, while he considered it to be much more than a city symphony, he felt it belonged to a tradition of documentary films, often structured around the day in a life of a city, which the Cine-Eye group had pioneered (Vertov 1929; 1972:144–145).

The film displays both the Cine-Eye practice of shooting "life caught unawares" and a more traditional newsreel style of shooting; it is equally clear that many of its images subscribe to Vertov's lifelong program "to show 'living man,' his behavior and emotions." Yet, I argue, the style of Vertov's editing neither encourages nor allows us to read the film at a documentary level.

Vertov's idiosyncratic editing is largely influenced by the metaphorical structure of poetry, but it also borrows from the narrative style of fiction films. For example, Vertov's tendency to use different documentary shots taken at different times and places to create the illusion of one action reflects his natural bent for storytelling, for turning documentary images into a narrative. Thus, fake continuity effects can be observed in the football and basketball games; and geographical editing techniques are used in describing the athletes' relationship to the crowd (see Sauzier 1982:408–417). It is this style of editing as well as the overall construction of the film that forces us to read it, at one level, as a narrative.

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## Editor's Note

Dziga Vertov (1896–1954) was a Russian filmmaker, futurist poet, and political activist. Born Denis Kaufman, Vertov along with his brothers, Boris and Mikhail, and other Soviet filmmakers worked to make "Cinema . . . a tool to expand the Soviet people's knowledge of the world and each other and to unite working people the world over. . . ." They believed "that, after the October revolution, the cinema should make it possible for workers to convince themselves that what they saw on the screen was created by them and therefore belonged to them" (Sauzier 1982: 2). Vertov formed a group of dedicated film workers who called themselves Kinoks. They wrote manifestos about the "Kino-Eye" (Cine-Eye) and how it could be used to generate "Kino-Pravda" (Cine-Truth).

Vertov completed *Man with a Movie Camera* in 1928. It was a cinematic exposition of his ideas on revolutionary cinema. Vertov's "Kino-Pravda" became Jean Rouch's "*Cinéma Vérité*." The film as well as its author has had a major impact upon the history of world cinema.



We can talk about *Man with the Movie Camera* being a narrative film in at least two senses. First, it is the story of a character and what happens to him as we follow him during a day in his life; this kind of narrative belongs to the picaresque tradition.<sup>3</sup> Second, the film's narrative—in the sense of events relating causally—describes a series of changes taking place each time the Cine-Eye cameraman appears on the scene: objects become animated, people have their eyes opened, the enemy is denounced. The resolution of the conflict between the "hero" and those who stand for the old cinema and society is that, in the end, his enemies are overcome, and life pulsates with a new rhythm as the Communist city of the future is described to us. This second kind of narrative owes something to both the fairy tale and the science-fiction traditions, traditions that were dear to Vertov. Thus, between 1920 and 1923 alone, Vertov wrote no fewer than eight fictional treatments; while in the 1930s, he wrote several fantastic tales that were not shot either (Vertov 1972:38–44, 369–374, 391–421).

In order to unravel the meaning of *Man with the Movie Camera*, we need to understand clearly this paradox: It is a film made by a poet, a musician, and a storyteller who wanted to do away with poetry, music and storytelling in the cinema. Vertov's 1922 goal—"to free film from all elements that intrude: Music, Literature and Theatre"—is reiterated in the introductory titles of *Man with the Movie Camera*. After the film was made, however, Vertov came to recognize that those three elements—poetry, music, and the fantastic—formed the cornerstone of his creative system: "What seems to us fantastic on this earth will appear as perfectly real on some other planet. . . . We wish to devote a series of films to this association of poetic, musical, and didactic-fantastic world" (ibid.:397–410). These ideas were already at work, I suggest, when he made *Man with the Movie Camera*. Whereas Vertov considered the film to be a documentary and a dissertation, an analysis of its editing reveals it to be, also, a story and a poem. And although the film purports to be the antithesis of the "land of make-believe" (ibid.:380–381), it ends up being a fantastic poem rooted in Vertov's childhood aspirations to educate people by taking them on a journey across time and space. For it was Vertov's genius, sometimes in spite of himself, to document "life as it is" with his camera and then to turn the "pieces of truth" into fiction and poetry on the editing bench.

In arguing that *Man with the Movie Camera* is structured metaphorically, I use the term metaphor in its most general sense: a comparison between two elements. At the level of the overall film, one discourse (manifest) is compared to another (latent). At the level of the structuring of images, one image (known) is compared to another (sometimes known, sometimes

latent). Such a general use of the term metaphor covers some other specific rhetorical terms such as simile or allegory.

In strict terms, the film is structured not only around metaphors, but also around similes and sometimes symbols. Thus the comparison of a woman washing her face and the street being washed in the morning (see illustrations for section 10 of the Narrative Discourse below)<sup>4</sup> might be considered a simile, since the term of comparison is more or less explicit: the new woman is like the new city—clean. And it could be argued that the Bolshoi Theater (see illustrations for sections 14 and 55 of the Narrative Discourse below) stands for bourgeois art and society and should be considered a symbol, since this connotation of the Bolshoi was accepted by many in the Soviet culture of the late 1920s (Fitzpatrick 1978:25), rather than a metaphor, which is more ambiguous and allusive than a symbol and not fixed within a culture. But in the two cases, a comparison is being made, and in each case, two terms are connected by a ground of comparison. The washing of the street and of the woman's face refer to the Revolution bringing about a rebirth; the image of the Bolshoi, in metaphorical rather than in symbolic terms, is associated with the theatrical tradition in film that Vertov abhors. Both present a threat and become the object of attack (see units 6, 18, 59, 74 of the Metaphorical Discourse below).

According to my use of the term, the metaphor, or ground of comparison, can be provided by two images of the film being juxtaposed or by a film image referring to another image outside the film's narrative (to be found in Vertov's history and writings or in Soviet culture of the period). For example, the frames of film strip speeding across the light box and the windows of the train rushing past the camera (see illustrations for section 58 of the Narrative Discourse below, and shots 1615, 1616, 1617) suggest a metaphorical relationship insofar as both the film and the train are forms of communication (see unit 79 below). But this primary metaphor demands further conceptualization, for those images are simultaneously compared to something else. Given what we know of Vertov's writings, and the context of the film's argument, the speeding film strip connotes a certain kind of film, the newsreel or Cine-Eye film; and given what we know of Vertov's history, the image of the train rushing across country refers back to the Agit period of the Civil War, when Vertov discovered cinema. This kind of second-order comparison could be termed epicyclic metaphor in relation to the primary metaphor.<sup>5</sup>



In yet another sense, I use the term metaphor when the appropriate rhetorical term might be allegory, as in the case of the overall interpretation of the film as a metaphor for the evolution of Soviet cinema and society. If we take such an interpretation to its logical conclusion, it contends that a description of a subject (the evolution of Soviet cinema) is made under the guise of another suggestively similar (a day in the life of a cameraman); if this is so, we are dealing with an allegorical film. And we would have to consider the cameraman and the woman asleep as allegorical figures, one representing the revolutionary newsreel cinema, the other the bourgeois fiction cinema (see units 5–10 of the Metaphorical Discourse below).

However, on closer examination, this comparison between the film's manifest narrative and the evolution of Soviet cinema and society is only alluded to; it is not systematically worked out in the film. The threads of an allegorical narrative exist in *Man with the Movie Camera*, but they are loose. The metaphorical discourse does unfold within a rough time framework; and the terminal points of this framework, the Revolution of 1917 (segment 2) and the Cultural Revolution of 1928 (segment 8), can be inferred with some precision. But the period between is alluded to at different points of segments 3 to 7 only imprecisely, as will be gathered from the Metaphorical Discourse in my outline below.

By referring to the narrative discourse as manifest, I imply that the general meaning of that discourse can be arrived at on a first viewing of the film. Since we have been trained to read photographs as documents of the external world, it is likely that, at a viewing, we will probably not follow the images as part of a poetic argument, but as portraying a day in the life of a cameraman or of a city.

However, an analysis of the images in Vertov's body of work shows that they recur from film to film and suggests that the external world comes into play in his encoding system primarily insofar as it acts as material for his poetic intention. For example, the images of the shop window mannequins in section 6 (shots 94, 95, 102, 104) provide an equivalent for Vertov's idea that the dramatic cinema is "a cinema of puppets" (Vertov 1972:76).

From the Civil War (1918–1920) on, when he started to edit incoming newsreel footage, Vertov developed a considerable store of images, which he could have at his fingertips in structuring his poetic arguments. By the time of *Man with the Movie Camera*, most of the documentary images he used had a specific poetic correspondence. Thus, shots of tramways, trains, railway tracks, airplanes, electric pylons, metallic bridges, clouds passing by, trees bristling in the wind, or lamp posts look to most of us like

documents of the external world; but Vertov uses them with a specific metaphorical connotation in mind (see Sauzier 1982:318–336).

I have based my segmentation along the lines of Vertov's underlying poetic argument, dividing the film into a prologue, eight segments, and an epilogue. Although such a segmentation does coincide approximately with the narrative sections, a systematic segmentation of the film considered essentially as a picaresque or fairy-tale narrative has not been attempted here.<sup>6</sup>

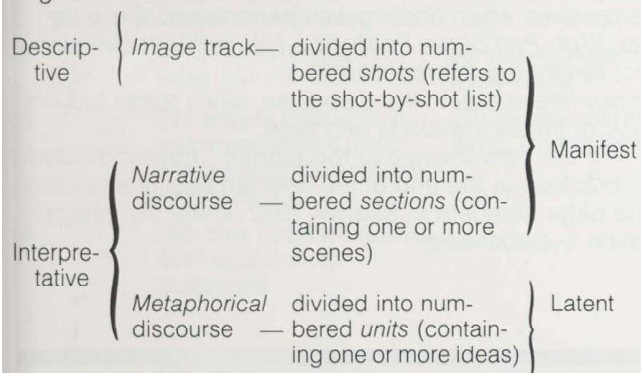
The present segmentation requires some explanation of the terminology used. I have divided the film into "segments" and have subdivided the narrative discourse into "sections" and the metaphorical discourse into "units." These terms serve the purpose primarily of enabling us, in discussing the interpretation, to refer with some precision to various parts of the different discourses. In addition, the metaphorical units and the film segments, as I will argue later on, also correspond, at least approximately, to Vertov's own division of the film into reels.

Feature narrative films are normally segmented into sequences, which are subdivided into scenes<sup>7</sup>—terms that are not very precise but generally useful. This nomenclature would have been adequate had I segmented the film primarily with a narrative discourse in mind, but my segmentation was based on a metaphorical structure. Therefore, the corresponding groups of shots under which the narrative was broken down amounted sometimes to a scene, sometimes to several scenes, sometimes to what might otherwise be referred to as a sequence. Accordingly, I have chosen the term section to refer to these narrative blocks in order to avoid confusion.

The term unit, referring to the metaphors, also lacks precision. Essentially, it provides a way of breaking down and grouping ideas that are all related to the central metaphor of the segment. For example, segment 1, itself a metaphor for the prerevolutionary cinema, contains three main ideas: what the images of the movie house stand for (unit 2), what the images of the audience stand for (unit 3), and what the images of the musicians stand for (unit 4). However, in some cases, a unit refers to a single idea, as in unit 6: the prerevolutionary cinema is like a bourgeois woman asleep. In other cases, a unit can refer to several interrelated ideas, as in unit 7: the old films are like tramps, the newsreel cinema is like a newborn child, and the influence of the theater on the old films leads to a cinema of puppets.



It should also be noted that while my shot-by-shot list is an attempt to describe the images without interpreting them (see Sauzier 1982: Appendix One), my formulation of the two discourses amounts in each case to an interpretation of the shot-by-shot description. The following recapitulation of the terminology might be useful:



Given that I want to remain as close as possible to Vertov's poetic conception of the film, another problem raised by my segmentation is the extent to which it corresponds to Vertov's division of the film into reels. The 35mm print distributed by Gosfilmofond (Soviet State Film Archives), which I used,<sup>8</sup> is divided into six reels. Except for possible slight discrepancies, this division probably conforms to the original breakdown of reels, for which, we assume, Vertov was responsible (see Table 1).

Soviet movie houses and traveling film units in the 1920s were rarely equipped with more than one projector. As a result, filmmakers planned each reel as an independent unit so that there would be no break in the action while the reels were being changed. Sometimes each reel had a title—as in Eisenstein's *Strike* or *Potemkin*—and was considered an independent act (Leyda 1973:198; Oxford Companion to Film 1976:583). Judging from the reel breakdown we have of *Man with the Movie Camera* in the modern prints, Vertov seems to have followed this practice.

According to Seth Feldman, an unpublished shot-by-shot list of the film was made in 1935 by A. A. Fedorov and G. Averbukh, which indicates that the film included animated numbers marking the beginning or ending of reels 3, 4, and 5 (Feldman 1979:109–110). This information confirms the practice of considering the reel as an independent unit. However, the only such animated number remaining in the prints in circulation today, number "1," appears a third of the way into the first reel. Moreover, reels 2 and 5 (both in today's prints and in the 1935 breakdown) end at a point that, according to any kind of segmentation, amounts to an uncompleted sequence (shot 354 of the editor's section in reel 2; shot 1180 of the carousel section in reel 5 [see Table 1]).

Table 1 compares my segmentation of the film with the divisions marked by the reels and the animated numbers. Discrepancies among the three kinds of divisions are slight. My segments 3, 4, 5, and 6 coincide with reels 2, 3, 4, and 5 and with the animated numbers 2, 3, and 4, respectively (except for a slight discrepancy between the end of segment 3 and reel 2). The real differences occur in the subdivisions. Thus I subdivide reel 1 into segments 1 and 2 (and a prologue), a subdivision that does, however, correspond to the animated "1" marking a pause within the reel; and I subdivide reel 6 into segments 7 and 8 (and an epilogue). The purpose of my subdivisions is to make the reformulation of Vertov's vision clearer by breaking it down into as many distinctive elements as possible; but they do not depart substantially from the reel division. Thus segments 1, 2, and the prologue could be considered a single theme: the photo-history of the Cine-Eye (reel 1); and segments 7, 8, and the epilogue could be dealt with as a single unit: the present situation of the Cine-Eye and its prospects (reel 6).

Even though the animated numbers 2, 3, and 4 have disappeared from the prints in circulation today, these in fact correspond to structural nodes that were revealed by my analysis of the images and editing. These structural nodes that guided me in my segmentation are of two kinds: prominent images connected with the camera and rapid cutting climaxes (i.e., an increasing tempo in the pace of the cutting of the images). Thus the opening of each segment is always marked by a prominent camera image (except in segment 2, where it is replaced by the animated "1"); this image is often followed by a long panning or tracking shot (of buildings in particular); and, with one exception, all segments close on a rapid cutting climax (see Table 2).

Ultimately, the question of whether or not the segmentation adopted here makes sense cannot be decided by arguing that it corresponds to Vertov's original segmentation, since we cannot be certain of the latter and since the surviving prints all appear to be truncated slightly.<sup>10</sup> But the segmentation will justify itself insofar as the principles behind it and the interpretation it leads to correspond to what we otherwise know of Vertov's poetic vision through his writings and films.



A final note is necessary about my formulation of the narrative and metaphorical discourses below. Whenever possible, I have tried to keep to Vertov's own writing style, the idea being to recapture his own vision. In the case of the narrative discourse, I have borrowed from the telegraphic style Vertov used for his film treatments, as well as his habit of describing the action as if we (the audience) were on the spot (cf. his description of *Kino Pravda* no. 5 and his treatments for *Man with the Movie Camera* and *The Eleventh* in Vertov 1972:22, 375–384).

In formulating the metaphorical discourses, I have used as much as possible the metaphors Vertov himself used in his writings and, on the whole, have kept to the rhetorical style of his manifestos. Although the metaphorical discourse goes back and forth in time, I have used the present tense throughout in keeping with Vertov's habit of writing inter-titles in the present tense even when dealing with past historical events (cf. *Sixth Part of the Earth*, *The Eleventh*). I have also not eliminated the repetitions, recapitulations, and cross-references in the discourse, since these too are part of Vertov's writings and films.

For the convenience of the reader, I have indicated in brackets at the end of the relevant sections or units the page numbers in Sauzier 1982 where my interpretation is elaborated.

**Table 1: Segmentation of *Man with the Movie Camera*<sup>a</sup>**

| Shots     | Segmentation | Themes  | Corresponding Reels                             | Animated Numbers             |
|-----------|--------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1–4       | Prologue     | Going back in time and space: how the Cine-Eye transformed the bourgeois cinema | Reel 1:<br>1–225 (1935)<br>1–202 (1972)         |                              |
| 5–66      | Segment 1    | The cinema experience before the Revolution                                     |   |                              |
| 67–225    | Segment 2    | The revolution brought about by socialism and the newsreel cinema               |   | "1": 67                      |
| 226–397   | Segment 3    | The Cine-Eye cameraman  | Reel 2:<br>226–354 (1935)<br>203–354 (1972)     | End of<br>"2" (after<br>354) |
| 398–583   | Segment 4    | The Cine-Eye camera   | Reel 3:<br>355–583<br>(1935 and 1972)           | End of<br>"3" (after<br>583) |
| 584–957   | Segment 5    | The Cine-Eye editor   | Reel 4:<br>584–957<br>(1935 and 1972)           | End of<br>"4" (after<br>957) |
| 958–1200  | Segment 6    | The historical debate between the Cine-Eye film and the Cine-Drama              | Reel 5:<br>958–1197 (1935)<br>958–1180 (1972)   |                              |
| 1201–1400 | Segment 7    | The Cine-Eye debate today in the context of Socialist Construction              | Reel 6:<br>1198–1712 (1935)<br>1181–1712 (1972) |                              |
| 1401–1514 | Segment 8    | The cinema today as a revolutionary experience for the audience                 |   |                              |
| 1515–1712 | Epilogue     | The cinema of the future: the potential of man with a movie camera              |   |                              |



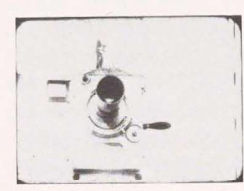


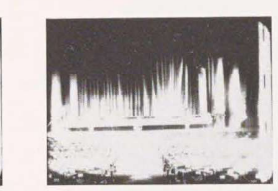




**Table 2: Structural Modes in *Man with the Movie Camera***

| Segment       | Opening Camera Image   | Opening Tracking Shot                                  | Closing Section:<br>Rapid Cutting Climax   |
|---------------|--|--|--|
| Prologue<br>1 | 1: close up of camera, above which long shot of cameraman setting up   | [2: clouds in speeded-up motion, traveling across sky] | 53–66: musicians playing in orchestra pit  |
| 2             | 67: animated number "1" tilting up   | 68: tracking shot on house window at night             | 214–224: window shutter and woman's eye blink alternately  |
| 3             | 225: extreme close up of iris opening and closing (node ending segment 2 or opening segment 3)                 | 226: traveling shot of tree leaves, building façade    |  |
| 4             | 398: close up of camera tilting down against street background   |  | 561–583: ambulance and fire truck rush through streets (other important rapid cutting section: 468–544: eye blinking and street) |
| 5             | 584: close up of lens barrel tilting up  | 585: traveling shots of buildings                      | 793–929: cameraman and machine parts revolving, followed by 932–956: car horn and cameraman in traffic*                          |
| 6             | 957: close up of lens barrel tilting down (node ending segment 5 or opening segment 6)                         |  | 1174–1199: motorcyclists and carousel riders both go round   |
| 7             | 1200: close up of camera mounted on motorcycle driven by camera (node ending segment 6 or beginning segment 7) | 1201: traveling shot of sea by moonlight               | 1290–1400: people enjoying a concert of spoons and washboard music   |
| 8<br>Epilogue | 1402: close up of animated tripod (opening shot, 1401: audience in movie house)                                |  | 1515–1712: the city pulsates with manic energy   |


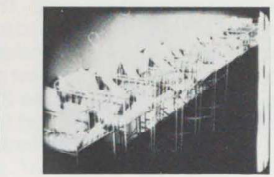




\*In addition to this ending being unusual insofar as it provides a double climax, one should note that they are separated from each other by what I have identified as structural nodes characteristic of a segment's opening: close up of lens, followed by tracking shot of traffic policeman (930–931).





## Outline for an Interpretation of *Man with the Movie Camera*

|  | Image Track<br>(shots)  | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections) | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Prologue: Going Back in Time and Space: How the Cine-Eye Transformed the Bourgeois Cinema</b> |   |                                   |  |
|                 |    | 1-4                               | <p>1. Standing on a mound in the image of a giant camera, a cameraman films a building and clouds going past it. A lamppost indicates that it's getting late. The cameraman leaves.</p> <p>1. The Cine-Eye cameraman appropriates the bourgeois cinema and transforms it by putting it to a new use. Exploring space and time metaphorically, he traces back the evolution of socialist cinema and society (324-325, 339-346).</p>   |
| <b>Segment One: The Cinema Experience before the Revolution</b>                                  |   |                                   |  |
|                 |    | 5-21                              | <p>2. At the end of his day's work, the cameraman goes into the movie house where everything is being readied for the evening screening: the projectionist threads the film, the entrance curtains are opened, seats open on their own.</p> <p>2. The cameraman goes back in time to the movie house as it is used before the Revolution. It is an ornate movie house where everything happens by magic—as mysteriously as a cinema seat opening on its own (424-426).</p> |
|               |   | 22-31                             | <p>3. The members of the audience take their seats, already opened for them.</p> <p>3. The prerevolutionary audience fits in this magical surrounding in an uncritical fashion (424-426).</p>  |
|               |   | 32-66                             | <p>4. The musicians and their classical instruments are ready in the orchestra pit. The film starts. The orchestra plays with energy (437-438).</p> <p>4. The audience has to watch films drowned under heavy musical accompaniment, for the cinema is not yet 100 percent cinema and is therefore not free of intruding elements such as music (23-24).</p>   |
| <b>Segment Two: The Revolution Brought About by Socialism and the Newsreel Cinema</b>            |   |                                   |  |
|               |  | 67-77                             | <p>5. Day breaks in the city. We see a woman with an ornate ring asleep, intercut with images including a movie poster advertising a dramatic film.</p> <p>5. The prerevolutionary cinema is like a bourgeois woman asleep (228, 351-353, 383).</p>  |







| Image Track<br>(shots)   | Image Track<br>(shots)  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|---|------------------------|---|--|
|    |    | 78-105                 | 6. Buildings are still closed. The streets are deserted, except for tramps asleep. Babies sleep in a maternity ward. Shots of mannequins in shop windows alternate with shots of buildings (412-413).   | 6. The old films, the artistic dramas, are infectious, like tramps in rags, and lifeless, like a dead city. Amidst this dead society is a newborn hope, the newsreel cinema. This new cinema, built as solidly as buildings are built with bricks, is the opposite of the window-dressing cinema—a cinema of puppets influenced by the theater (319, 326, 374, 378, 421-422).  |
|   |   | 106-126                | 7. Machines in factories and offices are still waiting to be used. Shots of inanimate objects such as an abacus, a stuffed dog (327-328).   | 7. The prerevolutionary society and cinema are as primitive as an abacus, as inert as a stuffed dog, as inefficient as dead machines. But there are already signs that life, and not the theater, could become the subject of film (327).  |
|  |  | 127-187                | 8. The woman with the ornate ring is still asleep. Shots of a movie poster advertising a dramatic film. The cameraman goes to work. He travels by car to a railway line outside the city and films an early train coming in. Meanwhile, the woman wakes up and gets dressed to go to work (429, 445). | 8. 1917: a new kind of filmmaking, the newsreel cinema, bursts in on the scene and wakes up the cinema out of its sleep. Movement is brought to a static world (353-355, 383, 399-400, 427).<br><br>9. This upheaval accomplished by film in the early days of the Revolution is paralleled by the Agit trains reestablishing communications during the Civil War throughout the Soviet Republics (227, 325-326).<br><br>10. The new cinema transforms the old one just as the new society transforms the status of women (367-369). |
|  |   | 188-201                | 9. The cameraman films tramps in the street as they now wake up, dazzled by the early morning sun and disturbed by the presence of the camera.  | 11. In the early days of the new society, the Cine-Eye confronts the old trampoline cinema with the truth, piercing through it like a ray of sun (383-428).  |










|   |   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|---|---|------------------------|--|--|
|  |  | 202–225                | 10. The woman now washes herself while the city streets and buildings are also being cleaned. She opens the venetian blinds, which let in the light from the street. | 12. Thanks to the Revolution and to the Cine-Eye, cinema and society emerge from the past purified. People start to see the world with new eyes and to concentrate their attention on everyday life (56, 337, 383, 401). |



### Segment Three: The Cine-Eye Cameraman

|   |   |         |   |  |
|---|---|---------|---|--|
|    |   | 226–243 | 11. The cameraman films the life of the city as it awakens: buses, trolleys, airplanes coming out of their sheds. He walks by a movie poster advertising a dramatic film. An unemployed woman is still asleep on a bench in the street. Exterior of a department store. Increasing traffic in the street. | 13. The Cine-Eye cameraman brings out cinema from the closed world of movie studios to the arena of everyday life, forcing the cine-drama to give way to the newsreel cinema (355–356).  |
|  |  | 244–281 | 12. The cameraman climbs up a factory smokestack to obtain a panoramic view while the factory machines are set in motion by the first shift of workers. He films a mining complex (199, 412).   | 14. After the Civil War, the Cine-Eye cameraman acts as a catalyst in the reconstruction process and as a witness to the reactivation of factories and mining industries (365, 423).   |
|  |   | 282–289 | 13. The cameraman films an early market scene: peasants from the countryside come to the city to sell their produce and wares.  | 15. The Cine-Eye cameraman helps to promote the alliance between town and country, workers and peasants (276–277).   |
|   |   | 226–289 | (See sections 11, 12, 13.)  | 16. The Cine-Eye cameraman is like an omnipresent eye in everyday life, using all his agility to keep up with the speed of life, observing and capturing all the facts of life relevant to the workers (289–290, 384).<br><br>17. The Cine-Eye cameraman is part of the masses, a worker among others. As he films them in order to connect them with each other, he is careful not to disturb them in their work (334). |









|  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)   |
|--|------------------------|--|---|
|       | 290–303                | 14. Increasing traffic on the streets: traffic policeman, storefront windows open up, window shutters open up, a demonstration of workers, the Bolshoi fountain. Inside, those not yet at work brush their teeth.  | 18. The old life, epitomized by the Bolshoi theater, is so stifling that one needs to open all the shutters to freshen up things.<br>The Cine-Eye cameraman and the Socialist workers bring a breath of fresh air (20–21).  |
|       | 304–319                | 15. The cameraman films the reflection of a poster advertising a dramatic film on a glass door. The postman rides a bicycle on his rounds. The traffic policeman operates a signal. Animated mannequins in shop windows: riding a bicycle, working at a sewing machine. Trolley cars (320, 367). | 19. The cinema too is being aired as it moves outdoors. Thanks to the Cine-Eye, the static cinema of puppets has given way to the cinema of movement that is 100 percent cinema (356–357, 431).   |
|    | 320–387                | 16. The cameraman films a train on its way to the city. At the railway station, well-dressed passengers hire horse cabs to take them home. The cameraman, from a car, films these passengers on their ride home across the city (293, 412).  | 20. Carrying the spirit of the Revolution forward, the Cine-Eye cameraman denounces those who, like the NEP people, live by prerevolutionary standards: using old-fashioned, private means of transport, relying on others to drive them around and carry their suitcases (290–293, 430).   |
|   | 345–384                | 17. A woman editor at work. She classifies footage made up of shots that include some from a market scene (cf. section 12) and images of children from the magician scene (section 40) (282–283, 367–368).   | 21. The cameraman works closely with the Cine-Eye editor to tell the truth. Together they have demiurgic powers: freezing images from real life and then breathing life into them by juxtaposing and projecting them. They use this power not to play with emotions and illusions as the cine-drama does, but to inform, denounce, educate (113–114, 329, 359–360, 412, 430–431). |









|   |   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|---|---|------------------------|--|--|
|  |  | 387-397                | 18. After he has left the passengers at their home, the cameraman walks down the street, his camera on his shoulder. People enter a building. The traffic policeman operates a signal. A woman picks up the phone (293). | 22. The Cine-Eye cameraman and editor, a man and a woman, working together, guide the audience inside the movie house, just as the traffic policeman guides the movement of the crowd on the street (287-289).               |
|   |   | 226-397                | (See sections 11 to 18.)   | 23. In the early days of its work, the Cine-Eye shoots and classifies pieces of film truth before moving on, at a later stage, to organize those pieces in a way that in itself tells the truth about Soviet life (331-335). |

#### Segment Four: The Cine-Eye Camera

|   |   |         |  |  |
|---|---|---------|--|--|
|  |  | 398-443 | 19. The cameraman films couples being married and divorced at a registry office and others being married in a church. He also films funeral processions and women weeping on graves.   | 24. The camera can document social transformations taking place in different times and places as easily as it juxtaposes in one moment birth, marriage, divorce, and death (406).  |
|  |   |         |  | 25. Thanks to the camera, the Cine-Eye can record historical processes on film, such as progress achieved in Civil Law (the new marriage and divorce laws as opposed to the old church weddings) (233, 405-406).   |
|  |   | 437-449 | 20. At the same time that the funeral processions are taking place, a woman gives birth to a baby in a maternity ward, and the cameraman films high-rise buildings (413).  | 26. The task of the Cine-Eye is to document the death of the old society and the birth and growth of the newborn Soviet organism (274, 412-413, 421-422).  |
|  |  | 450-467 | 21. The cameraman films various activities in the entrance hall of a hotel: the elevator goes up and down, people go in and out of the hallway, people use the telephone box. We also see activities in the street: trolleys cross each other. | 27. The camera is a "communication box" carrying (images of) people, connecting people with each other. Similarly, the elevator, the trolley car, and the telephone are "communication boxes" carrying people (or their voices) and establishing connections between them (322-323). |





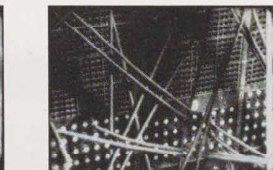


| Image Track<br>(shots)  | Image Track<br>(shots)   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|---|--|------------------------|--|--|
|   |   | 468–544                | 22. Traffic increases on the street. The cameraman's eye can hardly keep up with the chaos of movement on the street (383).  | 28. The camera extends our field of perception in a way the human eye—dependent on the limitations of the human body—cannot do. The camera makes us see the world anew and explores phenomena unknown to us until now (168–170, 384–385, 401). |
|   |   | 545–584                | 23. The chaos in the street leads to a traffic accident. An ambulance is called, and the cameraman follows it closely in his car. The victim is brought on a stretcher in the ambulance (410).   | 29. The Cine-Eye camera and cameraman can report on life as rapidly as an ambulance or fire brigade reaches the place of an accident (364–411).  |
|  |  |                        | 24. In the meantime, a fire station is alerted. A fire truck rushes out to the spot of the fire, accompanied by the cameraman. Meanwhile, the ambulance rushes the victim to the hospital (410). | 30. The camera and cameraman play as responsible and vital a role in modern society as the ambulance, the fire truck, and their crews (384).   |
|   |  | 468–584                | (See sections 22, 23, 24.)   | 31. The true function of cinema is to capture life on the spot as quickly as possible. Speed brings out truth: it catches people unaware and penetrates their thoughts (384).  |





### Segment Five: The Cine-Eye Editor

|  |                     |   |  |
|--|---------------------|---|--|
|  | 585, 642<br>931–938 | 25A/31A. The cameraman films the traffic policeman operating the traffic signal amid a crowd in the street. | 32. The role of the Cine-Eye editor is to guide the spectators just as the traffic policeman guides the crowd in the street. |
|--|---------------------|---|--|

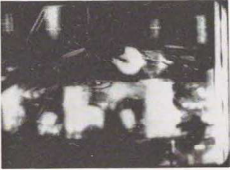



| Image Track<br>(shots)  | Image Track<br>(shots)  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)   |
|---|---|------------------------|---|---|
|    |    | 585–620                | 25. Various forms of everyday manual activities, such as construction work, washing, haircutting, camera cranking, manicuring, film splicing (29).  | 33. Like manual workers, and unlike the bourgeois, the editor and the cameraman work with their naked hands (380–382).<br><br>34. Unlike beauty-parlor activities, editing fulfills a socially useful public service and not a purely aesthetic purpose (380–382).<br><br>35. In the Soviet society of the 1920s, there are still class differences between those who live off the manual labor of others (the new NEP bourgeoisie) and those who earn their wages by working with their hands (the proletariat). The Cine-Eye is on the latter's side (380–382). |
|  |   | 621–641                | 26. Women workers are busy making cloth and garments in the factory, while the editor works at the editing table (367).                             | 36. The process the editor goes through in organizing the filmed material from life is comparable to that of the workers manufacturing a garment, from the initial manufacturing of the cloth at the textile factory to putting the final stitches to a dress (371–374).  |
|  |  | 642–696                | 27. Women workers package cigarettes in the tobacco factory, while telephone operators work at the switchboard in the telephone exchange (368–369). | 37. Editing is building with pieces of film in the same way a factory worker makes cigarette packages out of pieces of paper (374).<br>38. Editing is making connections and leading people to make connections, an activity that can be compared to that of the telephone operator plugging in and out different lines of communication (146, 374–375).<br>39. In editing, manual and mechanized labor complement each other.  |


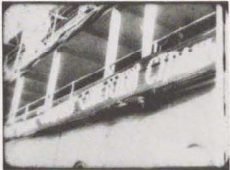





| Image Track<br>(shots)   | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)   |
|--|---|---|
|      | <p>697-734</p> <p>28. Various forms of connecting gestures, such as typing, lifting a telephone, registering cash, playing a piano, and cocking a pistol. Meanwhile, the editor classifies film rolls.</p>                          | <p>40. Editing is both establishing communication and creating a visual and rhythmic whole. Editing is the continuous transposition of film pieces until these fit with each other both on a semantic and visual level, until the film becomes an organic and semantic structure (375-377, 407-408).</p>  |
|   | <p>735-793</p> <p>29. While the editor goes on classifying and numbering shots, the cameraman films miners inside coal and iron mines and workers inside steel plants. He then goes on to film a hydroelectric power dam (401).</p> | <p>41. Editing, like filmmaking, is a process of comparison of two different realities. The cinematic reality of an event lies in the interaction between that event and how the camera filmed it. Film is not an imitation of life, nor is it life itself; but it is a parallel activity, as vital as life but with its own pulse (420).</p> <p>42. The editor depends on the cameraman as the iron and steel works depend on the hydroelectric dam for energy.</p> <p>43. The cameraman acquires his material as the miner digs the ore from the mine. And the editor weaves this material together as the spinning machine in the textile factory weaves the cloth (364, 407).</p> <p>44. Editing, as a process of observation, classification, analysis, and synthesis, goes on at every stage of the filmmaking process. Editing and recording life are part of a continuous process, which, like the water of the hydroelectric dam, must be kept in constant flow to produce energy (407-408).</p> <p>45. The Cine-Eye is coming of age in 1928. So is Soviet society, which is now being industrialized on a large scale, as is shown by the Dnieper Dam hydroelectric project (424).</p> |









|   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|---|------------------------|---|--|
|  | 794-929                | 30. The cameraman films pieces of machinery rotating at an increasingly faster pace (437-438).      | 46. The Cine-Eye editor educates the New Man through an understanding of the rhythm and speed of the machine (332, 510).   |
|  | 930-957                | 31. The cameraman films the traffic policeman, trolleys, heavy street traffic, and car horns (416). | 47. The editor turns the apparent visual chaos of everyday life into an ordered world, just as a horn makes way for the car amid the chaotic traffic of the street.<br><br>48. Just as the Cine-Eye cameraman is omnipresent, and the Cine-Eye camera ubiquitous, so the Cine-Eye editor is always at work in everyday life. |








#### Segment Six: The Historical Debate Between the Cine-Eye and the Cine-Drama

|   |   |         |  |   |
|---|---|---------|--|---|
|  |  | 958-976 | 32. End of working day. Machines stop in factory. Workers wash. A steamship arrives at a seaside resort. Shots of clouds and tree leaves.                                | 49. Having almost reached the term of its retrospective about the evolution of Soviet cinema since 1917, it now remains for the Cine-Eye to recapitulate one further aspect of that development, namely, the recent debate opposing unacted and acted cinema, that is, the Cine-Eye films to the cine-dramas (385-386). |
|  |   | 977-991 | 33. Activities at the end of a summer's day. Some people lie about lazily on the beach, play with each other in the sun.   | 50. NEP people watching dramatic films behave like the actors they see on the screen: flirting, telling each other secrets, exhibiting their bodies, and giggling (293-294, 360-363).   |
|  |  | 992-996 | 34. Suddenly, a swimming class goes through swimming movements, a magician prepares tricks to entertain children, the tarpaulin of the fair's merry-go-round comes down. | 51. In that kind of film, everything appears by magic. The montage of images depends on the whim of the editor-magician. We are not told how things come about, how swimmers can swim (362).  |



|  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|------------------------|---|--|
|       | 997–1004               | 35. Details of the sports wall journal refer to the ongoing debate over the question of youth participation and records in sports (289, 369, 412).                  | 52. Just as there is a rift between the Trade Union and the Youth Communist League over the sports question—the former encouraging individual record breaking, the latter collective participation—so there is a division between acted and unacted films, the former encouraging the star system, the latter turning the masses into actors in their own film.<br>This debate points out the different class interests existing in the Soviet Union between those who want to educate and inform the masses and those who want to mystify them (369–370). |
|   | 1005–1032              | 36. Individual athletes gracefully perform high jumps and pole vaults while the crowd watches, dazzled (168, 328, 415).   | 53. Actors in the dramatic cinema, the kings and queens of the screen, are like sports stars performing individually in slow motion under the gaping eyes of the audience (369–370, 430).  |
|   | 1033–1042              | 37. A fashionable woman under a parasol laughs as she watches racing horses and carriages. The movement of the horses running is arrested and frozen on the screen. | 54. Cine-dramas lead their audiences to gape like a fashionable woman admiring horse races. Cine-Eye films educate the audience by stopping the images so that the latter can be explored.   |
|    | 1043–1055              | 38. A man dives from the high board. The class of swimmers is now taught the crawl stroke in a systematic way (177, 230).   | 55. The Cine-Eye film teaches the audience to understand the process behind what they see, just as the swimming instructor teaches the swimmers how to swim correctly (362).   |







|  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|------------------------|--|--|
|    | 1053–1079              | <p>39. The cameraman comes down from the steamship, adorned with a banner in the style of the Civil War agit ships, and goes ashore to the seaside resort. There some are still basking in the sun and playing on the beach, while others are having sulphur and mineral baths. The cameraman joins the latter, taking his camera with him even while he is in the water (361, 431).</p> | <p>56. The difference between the Cine-Eye films and the dramatic artistic cinema is the same as that between the workers who use the beach as a health resort, as a repair shop, and those who use it to laze about (293–294, 360–363).</p> <p>57. The Cine-Eye—which has its origins in the Civil War newsreel cinema—enlightens the people about the divisions underlying society's structure and takes sides with the masses, not the elite (293–294).</p> |
|    | 1080–1096              | <p>40. Little boys and girls, amazed and delighted, watch a magician performing tricks: hooking and unhooking two slitless metal circles, making a mouse appear and disappear (282–283).</p>   | <p>58. The invisible editing used in the dramatic cinema mystifies its audience like a magician galvanizes children by performing tricks for them (328–329, 359–360).</p>  |
|    | 1097–1160              | <p>41. Obese women undergo therapy to lose weight, while ballerinas practice at the barre, and athletes throw the javelin and put the shot. Women play a game of basketball and men play a game of football, both as recreational activities, without spectators (199, 385, 416).</p>  | <p>59. The construction of dramatic films is as heavy, predictable, and cumbersome as overfed people, and as grandiose and theatrical as Bolshoi ballerinas. In contrast, the unfolding of Cine-Eye films is spontaneous, alert, unpredictable, like a lively game of basketball or football. Instead of being static and decorative, Cine-Eye editing opens up new spaces, new possibilities, and expands our horizons (117, 370–371).</p>                    |


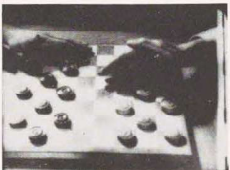









|   |   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)   |
|---|---|------------------------|---|---|
|   |  | 1161–1189              | 42. The cameraman films a motorcycle race from a motorcycle on the track, while people enjoy themselves on the wooden horses of a merry-go-round.   | 60. Life inspires the script of the Cine-Eye film, whereas the cine-drama imposes its preestablished script on life. The Cine-Eye tracks down live images from nature itself, and so the cameraman follows a motorcycle on the racetrack itself. In contrast, the cine-drama creates an artificial world preordained by a scriptwriter, just as the fun-fair carousel goes round under the mechanical music of a puppet conductor (160–161, 390). |
|  |   | 1190–1200              | 43. Now the motorcycles and the wooden horses travel in opposite directions on their respective circular tracks, clockwise and counterclockwise. The cameraman rides his motorcycle—on which the camera is mounted—toward us, the audience. | 61. The cine-drama and the Cine-Eye are moving in two radically different directions. The audience must choose which one to follow. The former is a reactionary form of entertainment, as slow and primitive as wooden horses on a merry-go-round; the latter is a revolutionary means of communication, as fast and progressive as the racing motorcycle.  |


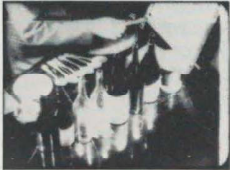
### Segment Seven: The Cine-Eye Debate Today in the Context of Socialist Construction

|  |   |           |   |  |
|--|---|-----------|---|--|
|  |  | 1201–1204 | 44. The sea by moonlight, interrupted by a torn film image of that same shot. Leaves of trees blowing in the wind.  | 62. Today, the cine-drama is like a film image of moonlight reflection on water, which the Cine-Eye film (and the Cultural Revolution) tears apart (378, 385–386).   |
|  |  | 1205–1222 | 45. The cameraman films a cine-drama poster showing cowboys, a gypsy dancer, and a love scene; he then shoots men and women drinking excessively in a beer hall, and a church outside the hall (288, 296, 496). | 63. Yet the Cine-Eye debate still goes on, and cine-dramas still exert their bad influence. They keep the audience in an unconscious state, just as alcohol has a demoralizing influence on workers: both take away the workers' capacity to think and act clearly. Cine-dramas are a kind of cine-vodka, also comparable to the influence of religion, which excites and intoxicates workers (378–379). |



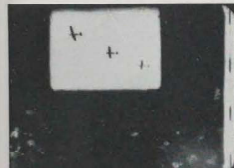



|   |   | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|---|---|------------------------|--|--|
|    |    | 1223-1226              | 46. Workers' recreational activities in a Lenin Club. Games of chess and checkers. A man and a woman read the newspaper (276).   | 64. In contrast, the influence of the Cine-Eye films today can be compared to that of the workers' clubs, where healthful and invigorating activities take place. Cine-Eye films address themselves above all to the audience's conscious faculties; they are led to interact with film through a process of reflection comparable to that involved in playing chess and reading (378-379).                        |
|   |   | 1227-1267              | 47. A fun-fair shooting gallery. A woman shoots down beer bottles and targets depicting a fairy-tale scene and a puppet with a swastika on its hat (236-237, 296).                                     | 65. The greatest source of danger for the Cine-Eye films are the cine-dramas imported from abroad, especially from capitalist Germany; the latter is responsible for much of the intoxication of the Soviet people through its fairy-tale movies, its beer, and its fascist propaganda. This nauseating influence of cine-dramas must be wiped out, just as targets are shot down in a fun-fair gallery (103-105). |
|  |  | 1268-1289              | 48. The cameraman leaves the beer hall for another Lenin Club. There he films a bust of Marx, men playing chess, women playing checkers, radio control knobs, sound lamps, loudspeakers playing music. | 66. Film has marked a revolutionary step in organizing and communicating the visible world to workers. Now the Cine-Ear will work toward organizing the audible world for workers. Sound must be organized along the same principle as image. Sound is comparable to the image in the same way that a game of checkers is to a game of chess and a woman to a man (424-426).                                       |
|  |  |                        |  | 67. The Cine-Eye film is a socialist means of communication. Ever since Marx, communication among proletarians has grown more extensive. The advent of socialism and the progress of communication in the U.S.S.R. went hand in hand. Both led to a new kind of analytical perception, based on reflection and in keeping with the analytical principles of Marxism.   |
|  |   |                        |  |  |



|  | Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|------------------------|--|--|
|   | 1290–1400              | 49. Workers are shown outside laughing and enjoying a concert improvised with homemade rhythmical instruments, including spoons, bottles, saucepans. | 68. Sound and image in the Cine-Eye films address themselves not only to the audience's political consciousness, but also to its subliminal consciousness. Their rhythmical organization has a liberating effect (165–166, 439–441). |

### Segment Eight: The Cinema Today as a Revolutionary Experience for the Audience

|  |           |  |   |
|--|-----------|--|---|
|       | 1401–1421 | 50. In the evening, at the end of their day's work and recreation, the Soviet people now watch the films made of them. They watch with amazement and joy a scene where, through animated motion, the tripod walks on its own and the camera head swivels as if taking a bow (177, 235, 411). | 69. Today, Soviet audiences can experience 100 percent cinema—that is, the kind of film like the Cine-Eye, which has no need for theatrical, literary, or histrionic elements, but has a cinematic life of its own (23–24, 119).  |
|  | 1422–1425 | 51. We, as an audience, are made to watch what the Soviet audience sees on the screen, in particular, a shiny strip or cable winding around a spool.   | 70. Film is an illusion: a process of winding and unwinding a strip of plastic that creates the illusion of unwinding time and space. But film is also a reality: thanks to the Cine-Eye film, a new revolutionary cinema room is created in which the audience can understand the process behind film and society (420).   |
|   | 1426–1442 | 52. The audience reacts strongly to what it sees on the screen: to the jazz dancers and the ballerinas moving in rhythm to music and to a gunman shooting down enemy planes.   | 71. Instead of swallowing everything they are shown, as if under the spell of an illusion, today's audience can experience film both as a rhythmical structure and a political act. It is by empathizing with the rhythm of images that the audience finds the appropriate reaction to the excesses of the NEP dancers and to the heroism of the Socialist gunman defending his country (309, 439–441). |



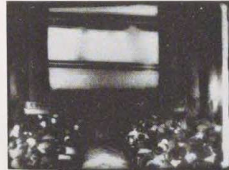

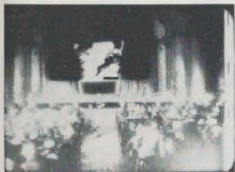
| Image Track<br>(shots)   | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)  | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|--|--|--|
|   | 1443–1454<br><br>53. The audience now watches various activities of the day gone by: working at the telephone exchange, typing, traveling by trolley.  | 72. Working-class audiences watch a film by connecting images as fast as a telephone operator connects lines, or a typist types, and as comprehensively as trolley cars link different locations (427).  |
|   | 1455–1506<br><br>54. The audience sees the Cine-Eye cameraman on the screen filming from a motorcycle on a racetrack, and then again various other activities of the day: people like them traveling by carriage, trolley, bicycle, car, and bus.    | 73. Cine-Eye, by making films about everyday people, enables the audience to become its own hero on the screen. People thus come to realize that what they see on the screen was made by them and therefore belongs to them. And so the Cine-Eye establishes a cine-link between the people of the Soviet Union, just as all the progressive means of communication act as a catalyst for social organization (234–235). |
| <br> | 1507–1514<br><br>55. More excerpts from what the audience sees on the screen: trains rushing by at top speed, the cameraman becoming one with the crowd, a clock pendulum ticking increasingly faster, and the Bolshoi Theater collapsing on itself. | 74. After the Revolution of 1917, which saw the agit cinema and the agit trains working hand in hand, and which was made by the very people in this audience, a Cultural Revolution is in progress. Once again, the bastions of the ruling class such as the Bolshoi Theater, are being stormed (20–21, 323–324, 358, 427).  |



Image Track  
(shots)Narrative Discourse  
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(units)**Epilogue: The Cinema of the Future: The Potential of Man with the Movie Camera**

1515–1584

56. Inside the movie house, the screen curtain opens up for a penultimate recapitulation of the events of the day. The cameraman is seen filming fashionable passengers in a horse and carriage from a car (which moves in the opposite direction from the carriage). He also films clouds passing behind a railroad bridge and an airplane taking off (451–452).

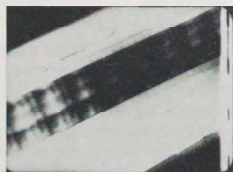
75. As we look ahead, we realize that the cine-drama, like the NEP people, is fated to disappear. Meanwhile, the Cine-Eye, like the airplane, has an unlimited future.



1585–1610

57. People are shown going around town at an increasingly faster pace: in the hallways, along the street, via trolleys and trains. The cameraman films them from an equally fast-moving car. And the audience is shown watching these images flashing at them at an ever quickening tempo.

76. The future of the Cine-Eye film and Soviet society lies in increasingly extensive communication, greater speed, faster perception, and growing subliminal awareness both among cinema audiences and among people in the street (169–170, 383–384).



1611–1712

58. The editor's face and eyes (juxtaposed with the traffic signal and projector's beam) scan every bit of information on the film strip (juxtaposed with trains rushing across the country, with street crowds and trolleys) (369, 424).

77. Thanks to the vision of the Cine-Eye filmmaker—epitomized here by the piercing and vigilant eyes of the Cine-Eye editor—the chaos of life can now be conceptualized and mastered, and a synthesis of the Communist city of the future—pulsating with life—can now be conveyed (236, 431).



78. The filmmaker's power to scan the world, to penetrate nature, and to synthesize observations can be compared to the projector's light beaming through the dark movie house, to the trolley finding a path through the crowd, and to the signal guiding traffic (383).

79. The film strip, like the train rushing across Soviet land, heightens people's perception by rushing through the landscape created within the space of the movie house (57, 227, 353–354).





| Image Track<br>(shots) | Narrative Discourse<br>(sections)   | Metaphorical Discourse<br>(units)  |
|------------------------|---|--|
| 1697–1712              | 59. As the clock's pendulum ticks at a maddening tempo, the film's rhythm reaches a climax, until finally the cameraman's eye is revealed behind the camera's shutter. The camera's iris closes down, but behind it the cameraman's eye remains opened, ready to film another day's work (449). | 80. The decoding and encoding of the world is an activity which, like the ticking of a clock, is in perpetual motion. The phenomenal era of transformation and progress begun by the first decade of socialist construction in the Soviet Union is not over. Like a perpetual revolution, like the Cine-Eye which never goes to sleep, the work of socialism goes on, and there is an unlimited potential for Man, equipped with a movie camera (323–324). |

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This excerpt from my dissertation, "Dziga Vertov and *Man with the Movie Camera*," was not meant to be published separately. It was meant to provide an outline summing up my interpretation of the film to be read in conjunction with the rest of the thesis. The reader will not find in the present article any elaboration on this outline.

Nor will the reader find here a discussion of the method I used to decode the film. The thrust of my dissertation is to show that there is a key to decoding each of the 1,712 images in *Man with the Movie Camera*. This key is to be found, I argue, in an analysis of Vertov's poetic system, elaborated before he came to the cinema, and fully developed in conjunction with his filmmaking practice and his work as a political activist.

According to my analysis, the images of *Man with the Movie Camera* are linked in four different ways: (1) through a metaphoric process (inspired by poetry and elaborated in Vertov's use of montage and special-effect photography); (2) through an analytical process (inspired by Marxist philosophy and elaborated in Vertov's inductive mode of editing); (3) through a narrative process (inspired by fantastic literature and elaborated in Vertov's continuity editing borrowed from fiction film); and (4) through a rhythmical process (inspired by music and elaborated in Vertov's sound experiments). At the same time, the film is a political tract, and the images need elucidation at that level too. A large part of the thesis is devoted to the political situation that grew out of the October Revolution and to its shaping of Vertov's arguments in *Man with the Movie Camera*.

The images accompanying the interpretation outline here were chosen especially for this article and are not a part of the thesis. They are meant to serve as visual references and do not represent a systematic illustration of the narrative and metaphorical discourses. For example, there are few illustrations of the special-effect photography that plays such a large part in the film and in helping us decode it.

The translation of Vertov's writings was made for the French and German editions, since at the time my thesis was written, the English translation, edited by Annette Michelson, had not yet been published. I wish to thank the editors of *Studies in Visual Communication* for their patience and care in publishing this excerpt and its many illustrations. My thanks also go to Alfred Guzzetti of Harvard University for his guidance and support throughout my

years of research on *Man with the Movie Camera*, and to Vlada Petric, of the Harvard Film Archives, whose appetite for Vertov proved infectious.

<sup>2</sup> The film was shot in Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev, but edited in such a way as to create the illusion of one city. On this kind of editing, see Sauzier 1982:415–417. For an account of the film that attempts to describe it neither as a systematic narrative nor as a metaphorical discourse, see Feldman 1979:98–109.

<sup>3</sup> See Tuch 1975:36–38:

*Man with the Movie Camera*, in the tradition of the picaresque, details the "adventures" of a travelling cameraman, who encounters and coordinates his diverse impressions of everyday life . . . while simultaneously exposing differences between social classes. . . . The cameraman "hero" travels through this world of material economic activities and social classes with the critical spirit of the *picaresque* hero, observing with self-conscious detachment and affection the events of daily existence.

<sup>4</sup> Mention of shot numbers in what follows refers to my shot-by-shot description of the film in Appendix One of Sauzier 1982.

<sup>5</sup> See Luke 1967:110–128. I am indebted to Luke's essay on Rilke's *Duino Elegies* both for the terminology and for providing a model of systematic reading of a poem in metaphorical terms.

<sup>6</sup> The only published segmentation of the film I know of is that of Crofts and Rose (1977:15–16), which is based on the themes of "A Day in the Life of a Soviet City" coupled with that of "The Film Construction Process." Following is their breakdown of the film (the shots refer to their own unpublished shot list):

1. A Credo, or, in Barthes's analysis of classical rhetoric, an Egressio, designed to show off the orator's, or in this case the film's, capacities (shots 1–4).
2. Induction: The Audience for the Film (shots 5–67).
3. Section One: Waking. This comprises the whole series beginning and ending with the Waking Woman (shots 68–207).
4. Section Two: The Day and Work Begin. This concludes with the introduction of the first editing segment (shots 208–341).
5. Section Three: The Day's Work (shots 342–955).
6. Section Four: Work Stops, Leisure Begins (shots 956–1399).
7. Coda: The Audience for the Film (shots 1400–1716).

<sup>7</sup> Even these terms are interchangeable, and some would argue that it is the scene that is subdivided into sequences. For the conventional terms, I have followed the nomenclature adopted by Monaco (1977) and by Bordwell and Thompson (1979).



8 The prints I used for my analysis are (1) the 35mm print of the Cinémathèque Québécoise, Montreal (acquired in 1972 from Gosfilmofond); (2) the 16mm print of the Museum of Modern Art; and (3) the 16mm print of the Harvard Film Archives. These three prints are identical, except for minor differences such as one white frame that appears one third of the way in segment 3 (shot 288B in my list); this appears to be the overexposed end of a reel and does not appear in the Harvard Film Archive print.

9 All shots in this table refer to my own list. Under the column "Corresponding Reels," "1935" refers to the 1935 shot-by-shot list by A. A. Fedorov and G. Averbukh, as reported by Feldman (1979:100–104, 109–110). "1972" refers to the Gosfilmofond print acquired in 1972 by the Cinémathèque Québécoise. The prints in distribution in the United States started to circulate, it seems, in 1966. Steven Hill (1967:28) notes: "This fascinating and controversial film was restored a year ago for 16 mm distribution in the United States by Brandon films."

Under the column "Animated Numbers," it should be noted that whereas the surviving number "1" tilts upward (implying the beginning of a segment), the numbers "2," "3," and "4," as described by Feldman, "fall away from the camera"—implying the end of a sequence (Feldman 1979:102, 103, 104).

10 The standard length of the prints in circulation in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain is approximately 1806m. According to M. Makhlina (1936), the original film was 1889m long (as reported in Feldman 1979:109).

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