

Inna Drach, RUSSIAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOR THE HUMANITIES, MOSCOW

The montage novel has been much studied by literary scholars. This genre encompasses novels written in the 1920s and 30s (*Manhattan Transfer*, 1925, by John Dos Passos; *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, 1929, by Alfred Döblin; *The Naked Year*, 1920, by Boris Pil'nyak) and the 1950s (*Tauben im Graß*, 1951, by Wolfgang Koeppen; *La Colmena*, 1951, by Camilo José Cela). While these novels are well-known to readers and literary critics, one can easily notice that the genre of the montage novel is often not distinguished from the various contexts in which it is placed. This also relates to the context of so-called cinematic literature. The montage novel is usually placed in this context as part of another broad field: *modernist literature* that employs the technique of montage. To distinguish the montage novel from cinematic literature (and the cinematic novel), I will first examine the extent of cinematic influence on modernist literary montage during the 1920s and 30s. I will then consider literary montage in the montage novel and how it differs from modernist literary montage, distinguishing this genre from other modernist novels.

One may wonder how to evaluate the influence of the cinema on literature that uses montage devices during the 1920s and 30s, a period marked by rapid developments in the cinema art. To answer this question, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the term montage.

The first thing to be pointed out is the dual nature of montage. On the one hand, montage designates a constructive narrative principle in cinema. In a popular Russian cinema dictionary, it is characterized as "one of the central notions of cinema art" (Weisfeld and Chanyshev 1990: 42), broken down into two basic meanings: 1) the technical process of creating the film out of various parts by resplicing separate shots; 2) the montage form of the film, a principle for creating a unique string of images.

On the other hand, the term montage is also used in a broader sense in relation to other kinds of art. First of all, the broader understanding of the term is connected with Sergej Ėjzenštejn's works. In this connection, the above-quoted dictionary gives a third meaning of the term, this time with reference to Ėjzenštejn: any image, not only cinematic, is created through montage by way of connecting expressive elements.

Later, the term montage began to be applied to different kinds of arts, changing its original meaning. For Ėjzenštejn, this involves juxtaposing two fragments and combining them into a new representation whose sense is equal neither to the sense of each fragment nor to their sum (Ėjzenštejn 1956: 253). Montage thus starts to encompass “all cultural spheres that are more or less related to the idea of recombination and selection of elements. The category of montage appears everywhere where the discreteness of the parts included in the whole is concerned. [...] There is a special interest in combining contrasting ways of expression (collage), different points of view or hyperfragmentation of the text (cubist montage), joining elements from heterogeneous cultures, citations, various subtexts or sources and contaminations of motifs or genres” (Raushenbakh and Iampolsky 1988: 3–4, translation mine).

Thus, as an artistic category, montage starts to be associated with the eclectic parts of the aesthetic whole and its fragmentation rather than with the new artistic whole created through the use of montage. As noted by Valentin Khalizev, writing about montage as a literary category: literary montage that became widespread at the beginning of the twentieth century presupposes not unity but atomism (Khalizev 2004: 290). While montage in the cinema is the basic means of connecting fragments, montage in literature serves to show their dissociation.

A growing aesthetic trend in literary montage, embodied in particular in the genre of the montage novel, was associated by some contemporaries of the authors and in later research with the development of cinema and its influence on writers. Indeed, the authors of montage novels had an intense interest in the cinema. Many wrote scripts and took an interest in the development of the cinema. For example, there are numerous motifs in montage novels of visiting a cinema hall. The Russian scholar Marina Sal'tsina (2001) describes convincingly and in detail how cinema influenced John Dos Passos' work. Moreover, the cinematic nature of narrative in *Berlin Alexanderplatz* has been stressed in many studies, for example, Ekkehard Kaemmerling's article “Die filmische Schreibweise” (1975). This article analyzes the novel using Ėjzenštejn's terms: parallel montage, synchronous montage, etc., viewing Döblin's book as a script. The Russian scholar Alexej Zverev (1982), who has studied Dos Passos' works extensively, also relies on Ėjzenštejn's theory when characterizing polyphonic montage in Dos Passos' novels.

However, studies such as these are not as numerous as those devoted to literary montage. Moreover, the blossoming of montage literature cannot be explained only by the development of the cinema because, for example, the periods when montage

novels were written are the 1920s and 30s and then the 1950s, showing no strict correlation between the genre and developments in the cinema.

Helmuth Kiesel, writing on Alfred Döblin's poetics, notes that giving inspiration to the writer is the only way cinema can influence the montage form of the novel (Kiesel 1993: 292). This observation applies to other montage novels, as well. Kiesel further points out that the montage form of Döblin's novel is not cinematic in nature, but philosophical; nor is the novel a book written in a cinematic style or a script.

As André Bazin contended, the novel is ahead of cinema when it comes to defining modernity. If "the cinema influences the novel [...] we would then be talking about the influence of a nonexistent cinema, an ideal cinema, a cinema that the novelist would produce if he were a filmmaker; of an imaginary art that we are still awaiting" (Bazin 1972: 63). Such Russian film theorists as Sergej Ėjzenštejn or Mikhail Romm find examples of literature whose montage principles are close to contemporary cinematic montage in nineteenth-century prose works. When Ėjzenštejn notices that Dos Passos is difficult to screen due to the cinematic character of his style, this is an example of what is meant by literature getting ahead of cinema. It could be said that the cinematic character of style is an elaborate literary montage whose aesthetic effect cannot be adequately conveyed in a screen version with the help of cinematic montage devices.

To sum up, the influence of cinema on the literature during the 1920s and 30s, as far as the montage technique is concerned, is often overestimated. This is only the influence that encouraged the renewal of certain novelistic devices. It must be pointed out, however, that not only the renewal but also the use of devices that are typical for cinema become especially extensive in the age of the cinema. Thus, "the noise of time," the characteristic attributed by Alexej Zverev (1982) to montage in *Manhattan Transfer*, can be compared to "life at the moment," the principle of reproducing life in *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) by Dziga Vertov. When montage fragments collide in a montage novel, one can see what is meant by "the Kuleshov effect"¹ in cinema theory.

On the whole, an explanation for the rise of the montage technique at the beginning of the twentieth century lies beyond the field of literature and can be provided only with reference to the cultural context. This is what Zverev, for example, writes about

¹ The Kuleshov effect is the montage effect discovered and described by the Russian film director Lev Kuleshov in the 1920s. He juxtaposed the same shot of an actor with the shots that were markedly different from one another, and each time the viewers perceived the actor's expression in a different way. The Kuleshov effect showed that montage fragments depend on each other and constitute a new meaning.

in his articles "The Twentieth Century as a Literary Epoch" and "Montage" (Zverev 2002a, 2002b). Lost faith in the values of the previous century, the crisis of the world outlook and a growing feeling of the absurdity of being are expressed in the fragmentary montage technique. Cinema served to inspire the writer, but when writers used the montage technique in literature, it would function differently than in the cinema. The main narrative principle in cinema, montage, becomes one of the ways to make the story fragmentary and even incoherent, profoundly altering the narrative fabric of literature at the beginning of the twentieth century.

At the same time, montage in literature can be a narrative means that resembles cinematic montage. This is the main reason for differentiating, in particular, between cinematic novels and montage novels. The montage novel deploys both specifically literary montage and cinematic-like montage, while the cinematic novel deals only with the second type.

Scholars find it difficult to define the cinematic novel as a genre. This is why one of the investigators of the problem, Steven Kellman (1987), says that "cinematic novel" has become such a broad notion that it has practically lost its meaning. The term is used as though it were unnecessary to explain what is meant by cinema and by novel, as can be seen from the many observations bearing on this "hybrid." The notion is based on the analogy between cinema and literature and the idea of cinematic influence on literature. The meaning changes according to what is meant under this influence. As Kellman further observes, one could define the genre by taking as a starting point Sergej Ėjzenštejn's, Lev Kuleshov's and other Russian theorists' views according to which the core of the cinema art is montage. In this case, the cinematic novel is a novel whose parts and chapters are organized in a "non-linear" way. However, Kellman points out that literary forms cannot be identified with cinematic ones in terms of both technique and style. Thus, the main problem of the definition is that no matter what analogies might be drawn between cinema and literature, the mechanism of transplanting cinematic devices to literary ground remains unclear. This also relates to the analogy between montage in cinema and in the novel.

It would be fruitful to view the cinematic novel in the context of cinematic literature which has already become an object of special research. Thus, the Russian scholar Irina Martyanova (2002), using several cinematic classifications, develops her own system of attributes of cinematic prose such as montage and its types (consecutive, parallel, vertical), the dynamics of the text, visual and spatial characteristics, extensive use of dialogue, etc.

It is interesting to look at the contradictions in the ways cinematic novels have been characterized. On the one hand, peculiarities that make them belong to cinematic literature are successfully described, such as a frequent change of point of view and perspective. On the other hand, there are writers whose style has been described by literary theorists as “cinematic” but who criticize “cinematic” literature and analogies between literature and the cinema (Virginia Woolf, Marcel Proust). It is clear that there is a need to set apart literature that uses montage as a specifically literary technique and literature that employs a “cinematic” device. Thus, the works by Woolf or Proust would belong to the first type, while these authors could criticize the second type.

As already noted, the montage novel is different not only from cinematic literature but also from modernist novels due to the montage techniques it employs. To use the terms “narrativity” and “non-narrativity,” cinematic-like montage is a means of creating narrativity in the text. It can be found in the montage novel, but this is not its essential characteristic. Literary montage, by contrast, can be a means of creating both narrativity and non-narrativity. In the second case, the spirit of the beginning of the twentieth century is expressed, with its emphasis on the irrationality of life and lost faith in traditional values, which distinguishes modernist literature, including the montage novel, from literature of the pre-World War I era. The first case is represented by the montage novel, where literary montage can create narrative effects that distinguish it from other modernist novels employing the montage technique. This kind of montage shows the author’s hidden will to structure the material and to express his/her own point of view through structure (through regularities in the arrangement of episodes, for example, as in John Dos Passos’ *Manhattan Transfer* or in Boris Pil’nyak’s *The Naked Year*). Thus, the montage novel puzzles the reader with its fragmentary structure, but at the same time the author conveys his/her understanding of the logic of events and characters, presenting a certain system of values which shows that the montage novel is connected with the traditions of the classic nineteenth-century novel (Tamarchenko 1991).

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