

tage cinema, especially as it related to its intended audience. I will show how, although the audience was ostensibly the whole key and point to montage aesthetics, that audience's real nature and real rights were largely misunderstood, or even ignored. My chapter three suggested how the misunderstandings continue. By revisiting a movement away from strict montage geometries we will see, in an interpretive sense, how the audience can take its place in the cluster of montage, contrapuntal, and programmatic equations existing within film source music.

We know that Soviet film discourse is responsible for many "counterpoint" confusions. Significantly, artist/audience confusions are also contained in that same discourse. The polemical period of the first Soviet republic was characterized by vigorous debates over artistic issues, with the film front being perhaps the most furiously disputed. Along with the familiar formalist manifestos about increasing the expressiveness and fulfilling the high destiny of film art, 1920s debates also considered formalism in terms of social responsibility, the propagandizing of the proletariat, and the very serious problem of the popular inaccessibility of montage products.

Although we properly celebrate and concentrate on the standard milestones of early Soviet cinema, they don't give us all of the pertinent details. As had been the case during the silent period, in the early Soviet sound period the imports and potboilers, the more conventional narrative films, were simply more popular with the cinema audiences. Though its relevance remains, in terms of mainstream effect, the influence of the avant-garde has been considerably overestimated.⁵⁸

There were important sound experiments, such as *Enthusiasm* (1930) and *Deserter*, but as with the earlier period of apparent plenitude, there was a feeling, and likely a valid one, that the filmmakers were using the situation as testing ground for their own erudite and inaccessible theorizing instead of for addressing the needs of the mostly illiterate people. The Communist Party's push at this time for "mass intelligibility" aimed, quite legitimately, given its avowed priority to indoctrinate the citizenry, to shift from an avant-garde more appreciated abroad to things the people and the state needed and could understand at home. In addition to pure villainy,⁵⁹ many Soviet film officials were inde-