

lie in the propagandistic impulse, or at least the Soviet articulation thereof. There is in the discourse of the period a tone, and thus an implied conception about the viewer, that says much about the inadequacy, or at least the incompleteness of the Soviet montage model. "The spectator *is made* to traverse the road of creation the author traversed in creating the image."⁶² All through these early statements we find that which has made post-modernity so suspicious of totalities from John Knox to Karl Marx. Everywhere is coercion and inevitability, the idea of audiences forced down certain paths to the only correct conclusions.

Pudovkin speaks similarly:

One must always remember that the film, by the very nature of its construction (the rapid alternation of successive pieces of celluloid), requires of the spectator an exceptional concentration of attention. The director, and consequently the scenarist also, *leads despotically* along with him the attention of the spectator. The latter sees only that which the director shows him; for reflection, for doubt, for criticism, there is neither room nor time, and consequently the smallest error in clearness or vividness of construction will be apprehended as an unpleasant confusion or as a simple, ineffective blank.⁶³

Beyond the discomfort of this despotism, of "*forcing* the spectator to compare the two actions all the time," there is here a problematic picture of a passive and helpless audience.⁶⁴ This may or may not have been true of Russia's rural cine-illiterates, but when Pudovkin speaks of Pavlovian attempts to create certain emotional states through, it would seem, intrinsically expressive camera techniques, through things that invariably mean certain other things, then this totality trembles.⁶⁵ The underconsidered agent in the montage equation was the individual receiver.

Emphasizing reception may jeopardize the author's authority. It also destabilizes an author's message, but there are salutary effects to this destabilization. Too often the struggle for comprehension leads automatically to the assumption that comprehension can be, or must be, obtained. Godard counters, saying of his *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* that "basically what I am doing is making the spectator share the arbitrary nature of