

ON THE CINEMA AND THE DISRUPTION OF THE ARTS SYSTEM

I. THE BORDERLINE PROBLEM

The problem of knowing how to define art, and how to divide it into categories, has always been a serious one for theoreticians and aestheticians. In his major work entitled *The Concept of Art in the Past and in the Present*, Professor Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, a distinguished Polish aesthete, studies the origins of the concept of art and the successive modifications which it has undergone from antiquity to today.

In Greece, Rome and the whole of the West in the Middle Ages, art was considered either as a profession or as a science. Together with grammar, rhetoric or geometry, the second category, known as "*artes liberales*," also included music, which thus became what we call today musicology, or the science of music. The other category—that of "*artes vulgares*"—had a more practical character and included among other subjects agriculture, medicine and architecture. In the 12th century, the

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philosopher Hugh of St. Victor counted among the seven "*artes vulgares*" a discipline to which he gave the name "*theatrica*" and which, Professor Tatarakiewicz tells us, comprised not only the theatre but in a general way the art of amusing the people in public, in fact all stadium games, races and circus entertainment. Poetry came under the heading of philosophy.

Fundamental modifications were made in this classification during the Renaissance. The "*artes vulgares*" ceased to be known as arts, and the theoreticians deigned to accord a character of artistic creation only to the "*artes liberales*." New terms, and a new system of enumerating the arts, were introduced. Marsilio Ficino, director of the Platonic Academy of Florence, proposed towards the end of the 15th century that poetry, painting, architecture, music and singing should be included among the liberal arts, together with grammar and rhetoric. According to Ficino, music was the most important, and though he himself did not employ this particular adjective, it is to be noticed that he considered the "musical" arts as superior to the rest. Two centuries later, the historian and theoretician of French art, Claude-François Menestier, maintained that all the liberal arts "work through the image." In the 17th century, in his lengthy treatise on architecture, François Blondel built up a whole system for classifying the noble arts, or fine arts, among which he counted architecture, poetry, rhetoric, drama, painting, sculpture, music and dancing.

The expression "fine arts" continued until the end of the 19th century, and even today traditionalists are inclined to consider that the concepts of art and beauty are inseparable. The *Vocabulaire de la philosophie* by Lalande defines art as "any product of beauty through the works of a conscious being," and Runes' *Dictionary of Philosophy* mentions "arts whose principle is based on beauty." At the end of his work, Professor Tatarakiewicz says: "Art in our time, starting with the Dada and surrealist periods, no longer—in some of its trends—conforms to the ancient definition. Contemporary theoreticians, or at least those who refuse to ignore the most significant trends of contemporary art, are forced to reject it. In order to define the concept of art, therefore, we must either considerably broaden our notion of beauty or replace it by something more adequate. By what? On this point, there are more ideas than there is agreement."

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So the work comes to a close with a question mark. The concept of beauty, viewed as order and harmony, is no longer sufficient. Certain forms of art, recently emerged, have no place in the former system. Who knows, maybe we will end by re-admitting into the art family everything which the Renaissance had so disdainfully excluded from it, i.e. the "*artes vulgares*." The "*theatrica*"—any form of amusement—would today include not only public entertainments and the circus, but also the mass media of radio, cinema and television. The 20th century has brought with it fundamental changes, particularly since the universal diffusion of the new art of the cinema, known as the "seventh art," or the "tenth Muse."

CINEMA AND THE SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTS

There is nothing new in this dream of a synthetic art, which makes use of the means of expression proper to all traditional artistic disciplines. Towards the end of his life, in one of his conversations with Eckermann, Goethe sang the praises of the theatre as a synthetic art. He said of it: "We are comfortably installed, seated like kings in our chairs, while living pictures unfold before our eyes, offering our minds and our senses all the pleasures they could wish for. Poetry, painting, singing, music, dramatic art—there is everything. When, one day, all these forms of art and all the charms of youth and beauty are combined for our pleasure, that will indeed be a festival and a time for incomparable rejoicing." In his introduction to *Jocelyn* (1840), Lamartine wrote:

"To see one day my written thoughts painted or engraved; to see the creations of my imagination embodied in a poetic etching, and thus popularized for the very eyes of those who do not read; to have a creation of my mind in circulation in the world of the senses..."

Richard Wagner, in his thoughts on the art of the future, used the combination of theatre and music as his point of departure, in the same way as ancient Greek drama which was a unique and universal art. The Russian musician Scriabin dreamed of a "universal art" combining music, painting, poetry and dancing.

The 20th century was to see the realization of these dreams.

This is how Sergei Eisenstein saw the new art, worthy of this new epoch in the history of mankind: "Even in its outward appearance, this art can never be compared to the art of former times; it will not be new music opposed to traditional music, nor painting trying to supplant the painting of yesteryear, nor theatre replacing the theatre of the past, nor dramatic art, sculpture or dancing in competition with the dancing, sculpture and dramatic art of bygone days, but a new and marvellous form of art, combining in an inseparable whole, in complete synthesis, painting with dramatic art, music with sculpture, architecture with dancing, the background with the man, the visual image with the word."

The greatest success which science and aesthetics have ever achieved in the course of history is to have been made aware of this new synthesis, of this organic unity of the arts which had never existed until now.

This art is known as the film.

Let us try to analyse the synthetic character of the art of the cinema. In the thirty years at least which have passed since the day Eisenstein wrote these words, opponents of a synthetic cinema, such as André Bazin or Siegfried Kracauer, have introduced a new element in this field. Today it seems more correct to consider the "synthetic" not as a mixture or a sum of the arts, but as the double face of Janus which belongs to the film. The film, according to the different angles from which one approaches it, can be either a novel, a theatrical entertainment, a piece of music, or a pictorial or sculptural work.

In its most common form—that of fiction films—it is the continuation of the centuries-old art of narration. In the course of hundreds of years, we have had first of all narratives told by word of mouth, then written and reread, and now we have them in the form of moving and sound images on the cinema or television screen. The age of the image has arrived, exclaimed Abel Gance on announcing the birth of visual literature.

Cinematographic narration, literary though it is, is nonetheless still entertainment. The public is not composed of readers, but of spectators who watch the characters act. The past tense of literary work becomes the present tense of the theatre. But of a specific form of theatre, not restricted by the size of the stage but, on the contrary, having the character of a mass spectacle.

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The French critic, Alexandre Arnoux, was right when he said of the first cinematographic shows in the twenties: "We were in touch with a *spectacle* [underlined by A.A.] in the true sense of the word, in the sense understood by the Greeks and the men of the Middle Ages." And Elie Faure went even further: "It is like theatre, but also like dancing, stadium games, a procession, a collective entertainment with the intervention of actors."

The film is therefore both a literary narration and a spectacle, but because it makes use of visual language it also belongs to the plastic arts, and—contrary to theatre entertainment—it is of a lasting and unchangeable character, like a picture or a sculpture. Elie Faure said: "The composition of the film is fixed once and for all, and once it is fixed it cannot change; this gives it a character that the plastic arts are the *sole* [underlined by E.F.] to possess."

From the very beginning, films have always been accompanied by music. What exactly is the contribution of music to the creation of a work for the cinema? The Italian director, Alessandro Blasetti, says: "In the cinema, everything is subject to the laws of rhythm, volume and tone, which are also the laws of harmony and therefore of music." In other words, the composition of a cinematographic work is governed by the music. An even broader analysis of the rôle of music in films has been given by the Italian composer, Antonio Veretti: "Music instils life and sound into the photography; it is music which *accentuates* certain situations and their outcome; it is music which *creates* an idyllic or tragic atmosphere; it is music which *reawakens* memories, the flashbacks into the past which *act as a link between the different events*; it is music which brings to our minds the *presence of a prevailing tone* or an action, while the image is showing us another; finally, it is music which *expresses the thoughts of a silent character*, or which interprets the *whirlpool of his mind* [underlined by A.V.]."

The foregoing considerations can therefore be summarized in the following way: each of the traditional disciplines of art has left its imprint on the film, has contributed to the determination of its rules of composition. Together with traditional painting, there therefore exists cinematographic painting [on the screen], together with written literature there is an audiovisual literature, together with a stage spectacle there is a spectacle on the screen,

and finally, together with traditional music there is music which governs the construction of the cinematographic work. The borderlines which in former times divided one form of art from another are now fading or, quite simply, disappearing. Yet the deepest and most significant modifications which our modern attitude has undergone in relation to art are not so much the result of the contribution of one traditional art or another to cinematographic creation, but rather the invasion of the sacred universe of art by "*in crudo*" reality, which has become not only raw material but also a means of expression.

ART AND REALITY

In their book *Pioneers of Modern Art in the Museum of the City of Amsterdam*, W. Sandberg and H. J. C. Jaffe make the remark that until the end of the 19th century every painting was both a document and a message concerning some definite and real fact. The invention and perfecting of photography and film caused a reversal in this informative and documentary rôle of the plastic arts. Man had acquired a new method of recording and immortalizing reality.

W. Sandberg and H. J. C. Jaffe therefore stress the importance of the means of recording reality represented by the cinema, which has thus taken over from painting. In his work *Philosophy of the History of Art*, Arthur Hauser deals with the same phenomenon, but from another point of view, saying that: "The film is the only one of the arts to use *raw, undisguised* fragments of reality [underlined by A. H.]." Yet it would be wrong to attribute to the cinema the monopoly in the field of the utilization of "pieces" of reality in an artistic production. One should not underestimate the rôle played by the "collages" of Braque and Picasso, nor the experiment made by the futurist Boccioni who, in 1911, incorporated part of a window frame in one of his sculptures. Another step in the same direction was taken by the partisans of "environment"—i.e. the arrangement of space with ready-made elements taken from reality. Mention can be made here of Kurt Schwitter's *Merzbau*, or arrangement of interiors.

The concept of "environment" is connected with the liberation

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of art from its traditional bonds. Pictures leave their frames, sculptures come down from their pedestals. To make the pillars which filled the inside of his house, Kurt Schwitter used scraps of wood. Alexander Calder invented a totally new spatial form with his "mobiles," linking time with space. "Mobiles" are volumes in ceaselessly changing movement, they are the synthesis of plastic movement and of dancing. In the musical field, the futurist Russolo invented "noisiness" [music of noise]. In 1914, he gave concerts in London and Milan in which he introduced an instrument he had made himself and which he called "*intonarumori*," or noise-organs. Our pop art and concrete music of today are simply the slightly ennobled and theoretically based continuations of these experiments carried out by the futurists and Dadaists of the pre- Great War period and the twenties.

The next two stages in the recent evolution of art are the following: the rise of the mass media, with their technical means of reproduction and transmission, and the disappearance of the borderline separating the work created and the very action of creativity. Among the effects caused by the introduction of technical reproduction, certainly the most significant is the narrowing and intensification of our contacts with the products of art. We are constantly "bombarded" by hundreds or thousands of televised or cinematographic images, by posters and photos or cartoons [comic strips] in newspapers and magazines. In the aural field, radios, records, public loud-speakers, tape recordings, juke boxes and, of course, television all blast our eardrums. This simultaneous visual and aural "bombardment" allows of no mental preparation, no reflection. One reads a book while occasionally glancing up at the television screen and while listening to the tape recording whose sound filters through from the next room. In conditions such as these, the borderline separating the arts can only fade away.

What is also important is the obliteration of the limits between the process of creation and its result—the work of art. In the past, the arts of entertainment were the only ones where the spectator saw the actor build up his character, but [with the possible exception of the "*commedia dell'arte*"] the principle of following a sacrosanct text was severely observed. The "happenings" of today are handicapped neither by a text, nor

by any rigid construction in the spectacle, nor—and this is the main point—by the dogma of the actor *playing his part*. The experiments of painters are even more interesting, because they are bolder. In 1959, the review *Art News* published a statement by an abstract painter known by the pseudonym “Woks,” who said, among other things: “In my view, an automatist-painter is split in two when he paints; there are two painters in him, one wanting to act and the other wanting to create an object. That is why painting’s main objective cannot be fully attained. As a result, the aim of painting becomes the very process of painting; one cannot insist that the spectator confine himself to looking at the picture, one has to show him the act of painting that picture.” In agreement with these recommendations by “Woks,” but three years before him, Henri-Georges Clouzot produced his film *Le Mystère de Picasso* [The Mystery of Picasso] which fascinated the spectator by showing him not only the finished work but also the action of painting the picture. Yet one question remains: with which of the arts are we concerned here? Is it cinema, painting, or a spectacle put on by the painter-actor?

FOUR AREAS OF CINEMATOGRAPHIC CREATION

The film—the art partly to be blamed for having abolished traditional divisions and definitions—is no longer, today, the homogeneous phenomenon that it was twenty years ago. In the years 1952-1955, particularly under pressure from television, it underwent a process of differentiation and disintegration. Today we are able to distinguish four major areas of cinematographic creation. The two extremes are the non-professional film and the super-production film. Between these two poles are to be found the film with artistic ambitions and everyday television transmission. A few words on each of them.

Thanks to the extreme technical simplicity of 8 mm and 16 mm cameras, and thanks to the simplicity of sound recording processes on magnetic tape, the non-professional film is making rapid strides all over the world. In the United States alone, there are more than 8 million amateur film producers. Practically the whole trend of the New American Cinema or the Underground Cinema falls into this category. The amateur film producer uses

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his camera in the same way as a writer uses his pen or typewriter and the painter his brush. Films made in this way are always very personal and could justifiably be compared to new forms of poetry. Not written poetry as in the past, but audiovisual poetry expressed through image and sound. These narrow-reel films often also constitute an element of a broader artistic form, such as the "happening."

At the other extreme is to be found the super-production film, projected on huge screens, in cinemascope, cinerama or even circarama, on a 70 mm reel. Here the aim of the author is to create around the spectator an audiovisual atmosphere, an "environment." The spectator feels invaded and dominated by the spectacle which encompasses him like an artificial world. The impression on the spectator of taking part in the events shown on the screen becomes extremely intense. In opposition to the non-professional film—a field in which individuals can express themselves in a personal and intimate way—super-production films, like *Cleopatra* or *War and Peace*, are a sort of new, technically perfect version of the former mass spectacles such as religious processions, the English "tattoo," or circus shows.

Artistic films are distributed through a special network of cinemas, known in the United States as "Art Theatres" and in France as "*cinémas d'art et d'essai*." As far as performance is concerned, this type of film is closer to a theatre spectacle of the German "*Kammerspiel*" type. It is intended for an initiated public. According to the author's intentions, the artistic film is a close relation of the novel, not the traditional novel but what is known as the "new novel." Here is what two famous pioneers of the new intellectual film, Alain Resnais and Jean-Luc Godard, have to say. Alain Resnais: "For myself, I believe in a form of cinema that resembles the novel, without the rules governing the latter... I would like to make films which can be looked at like a sculpture, and which are written like an opera. When you get close to Brancusi's *Seal*, you can look at it from any angle and it is always good. In the same way, I dream of a film of which no one would know which was the first reel." And Jean-Luc Godard: "Cinema is becoming more and more like sculpture and music. That is, something which is fixed, something solid, yet which at the same time has movement and which is absolutely elusive."

The fourth area is that of television transmission, which more and more often includes filmed material. Here again, as in the other categories, the boundaries of the traditional arts are disappearing. For the televiewer, the theatre and film shows which he sees on the screen have become so much alike that they are almost identical. News and entertainment programmes are also becoming more and more alike.

What lessons can be learned from this necessarily brief outline of cinematography today? Firstly, the film is beginning to take the place of the traditional works of other artistic disciplines such as literature, theatre, the plastic arts, etc. Secondly, thanks to the film, the differences between the products of traditional art and news of reality are being levelled off and abolished. And finally, the boundaries not only between the arts but between different sorts of the same art are also being erased and disappearing. Stanley Kubrick's film—*2001, Space Odyssey*—is, turn and turn about, a detective story, a lesson on cosmic flights and, finally, a philosophic debate on the future of the human race. There is even one scene which is nothing but abstract painting in movement.

II. THE PROBLEMS OF AUTHORSHIP

In the field of art and of letters, the most frequent cases are those where: (1) the author of a work is one person only, or (2) there are several authors of the same work. The first case is typical of literature, painting and music; the second, of the arts of entertainment: theatre, cinema and radio, as well as dance and architecture.

Independently of the problem of the unity or plurality of authors, mention should also be made of the identification of the author, whether singular or plural, with a work of art. The author of a book, a painting or a musical score—the first of the cases mentioned above—is usually known. When it is a question of a theatrical performance, of a film or of any other sort of entertainment, we have to deal with a certain number of co-authors: the author of the text, the creator of the spectacle—usually the producer or director—the composer of the musical accompaniment, etc. In cases such as these, the public picks out

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the *principal author*, whose name he will usually associate with the whole. In cinema and television, it is not necessarily the author of the text or the director, but more often the performer in one of the parts, and most often of course the leading rôle.

In fact it was only during the second half of the 19th century, at the time when the diffusion of works of art through printing, lithography and, later, photography, created problems of a juridical nature, that it was begun to be considered essential to have a clear and precise identification of the author of a work of art. From that time onwards, authors began to concern themselves with the effective protection of their material and moral interests. Publishing houses and record manufacturers, who acquired copyrights, also took up their defence. As a result, the names of authors and co-authors became more and more widely known.

Yet we would venture to assert that such a state of affairs, where the author personally looks to the protection of his rights and his popularity, seems to be an exceptional and probably short-lived phenomenon in the history of the arts. For centuries, the names of authors of works of art were either unknown or known only by a very small circle of people in close contact with the artist. Apart from experts who occasionally succeed in identifying the builders of châteaux or cathedrals, the splendid architecture of the Middle Ages, both Roman and Gothic, is anonymous to the average contemporary visitor. In Renaissance days, painting and sculpture ceased to be anonymous. The patrons of the arts saw to it that their *protégés* were known and suitably remunerated. Music underwent a similar evolution. As far as literature is concerned, as we have just seen, the invention of printing contributed to the identification and popularization of authors' names.

In the 20th century, thanks to the intensification of mass diffusion methods, the question of the exact identification of the author of a work arises once again. In his fundamental work *The Work of Art in the Era of Mechanical Diffusion*, Mr. Walter Benjamin tackles this delicate problem and states that at the present day an artistic product has definitively lost its unique character. The public no longer believes that it is an original product straight from the artist's studio, nor that it is unique in the material sense of the word. The immense profusion of

artistic works which assail both our eyes and our ears through the intermediary of cinema, television, radio and press, etc., leads us to neglect, if not totally forget, the question of knowing who is the author. And it is only when a work becomes exceptionally popular, and as a result is frequently retransmitted, that one begins to perceive the character of the author. In most cases, nevertheless, it will be the performer: the singer, actor or virtuoso, and not necessarily the author of the text or music. We should also note that folklore, both in the past and today, is totally disinterested in the personality of the author.

So let us repeat that if one approaches the problem of the author, or authors, from the point of view of the public, it can be seen that: (1) in the majority of cases the identification of the author is of no importance for the spectator, reader or listener, who simply ignores it; (2) as far as the arts of entertainment are concerned, where there are several authors, the spectator chooses the one whose contribution seems to be the most important and who, for him, represents the whole. Often, perhaps more often than not, it is the person playing the leading rôle; (3) when it is a question of choosing the principal author among several, the industrial production machine also has its word to say. The producer, the person who finances the execution of the work, designates or suggests the principal author, for publicity reasons and often on the basis of the contract. Thanks to the mass broadcasting media, these suggestions of the producer have their effect on the public. We will come back later to points (2) and (3) of our classification when we go into a detailed study of film and television—two fields of artistic creation where the phenomenon of the collective author is almost the rule.

THE ORGANISER OF THE SPECTACLE

The character of the producer or director considered as the author of the whole spectacle is relatively new. In fact it was not until the second half of the 19th century that producers were first spoken or written about. Beforehand, the paternity of a theatrical entertainment was shared between the author of the text and the actor. Usually one of the actors was given the task of organizing the show, deciding on the order of appearance of his colleagues, the times for the intervals, etc. It was only thanks

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to the production and all the artistic activities of Adolphe Appia, André Antoine, Gordon Craig or Constantine Stanislavsky that the public began to realise that independently of the author of the text there was an organizer of the spectacle who was responsible for the translation of a literary view to an autonomous stage reality.

The cinema's development started at a time when the importance of the stage producer was already well established, so the rôle of the cinema producer or director—the organizer of the cinematographic spectacle—had no difficulty in asserting itself. One of the first was Georges Méliès, whose activities date to the beginning of our century. The artistic rank of a cinema director was considerably enhanced by D. W. Griffith of the American production firm "Biograph," thanks particularly to his films *The Birth of a Nation* (1914) and *Intolerance* (1915). Afterwards came the Swedes: Mauritz Stiller and Victor Sjöström; the Germans: Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, Fritz Lang and Georg Wilhelm Pabst; the French: Abel Gance, René Clair and Marcel L'Herbier; the Russians: Sergei Eisenstein, Alexandre Dovjenko, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and many others. (The above names are given only as examples.)

The cinema director who was the organizer—in the fullest sense of the word—of the spectacle shown on the screen was always dependent on the help and collaboration of several co-authors. His dramatic material was mostly drawn from literature, and he adapted it himself or had it adapted by a cinema writer, known as a scenario writer. Then there were the actor-performers, the cameraman shooting the film, and later—when talking pictures came into being—the sound engineer who recorded the dialogue. Once the filming was finished, it was the turn of the compositor and the editor who did the assembly of the episodes which had been filmed separately. Nor should one forget the designers of the décor and the costumes, the make-up experts, and finally the whole army of technicians and their assistants. The director commanded this whole army and, according to his own skill and temperament, left more or less initiative to his collaborators.

This is just a summary description of the technology of producing a cinematographic work. It can clearly be seen that the director, as in the theatre, is the real author of the spectacle, but

in the film world his field of activity is broader than in the theatre. Yet in some countries in the past there were times when the rôle and the artistic independence of the cinema director were very restricted.

Let us try to outline these successive changes, up to the nineteen-fifties; the more recent period, already marked by the influence of television, will be examined below. Before 1939, nearly all the capitalist countries imitated the cinematographic production pattern elaborated and experimented in Hollywood. Quite often it was known as the "Hollywood machine," which stressed in a pertinent fashion the process of industrialization to which cinematographic creation had been subjected.

In American firms, film production was clearly divided into several stages, each one belonging to a different specialist. The director had control neither over the different stages leading up to the filming in the studio, nor on those which followed. Instead of a scenario, he was given a ready-made plan which fixed each movement of the camera and the length of each sequence. His work was restricted to directing the actors, whom he could not even choose himself. Once the filming was finished, he took no part in the montage, which is justifiably considered as one of the basic elements of cinematographic creation. Within the framework of such a system, the director ceased to be the author and organizer of a spectacle, and became one of its co-authors—and by no means the most important. At the most, his rank was comparable to that of the scenario planner or the editor.

But who had taken his place as the principal organizer, coordinating all the complicated steps of film production? It was the producer, who organized the spectacle from not only the material and administrative point of view but also—and above all—the artistic angle. It was he who chose the literary subject, who entrusted it to a writer of his choice to produce a scenario, it was he who hired the actors, decided on the location for filming, employed the team of technicians and—finally—chose the director to supervise the actor's work. It is obvious that such a producer was the real master and organizer of the spectacle, its author or at least its uncontested inspirer.

The directors, who had acquired great artistic independence during the twenties, protested against this treatment which placed

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considerable restraint on their liberty. Some of them, such as Erich von Stroheim and Robert Flaherty, succumbed to the unequal struggle. Stroheim's antagonist, the young and dynamic producer of Universal, and subsequently of Metro Goldwyn Mayer—Irving Thalberg—was capable a few years before his death in 1935 of directing the production of fifteen films simultaneously. Other more compliant directors had submitted to the new system, at the most reserving for themselves the right to accept or refuse the first version of the montage. Finally, the third not very large group, the aristocracy of directors, enjoyed the prerogatives of producers. In America they were known as "producer-directors." Such was the case of Ernst Lubitsch, King Vidor or John Ford.

Apart from the producer, the most formidable rival of the director was the actor. A special type of actor known as a film "star." Even at the beginning of the twenties—hence during the period of the all-powerful directors—some actors and actresses who had won enormous popularity wanted to take the business into their own hands and become producers. Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and the director David Wark Griffith became co-proprietors of the United Artists production firm (1919), and therefore were producers themselves. In other cases, a famous "star," knowing that his name had a great power of attraction, claimed and obtained the right to accept the scenario and to choose the other performers in the film. In this way, actors were placed above other co-authors of the film and their authority in the determination of the final form of the work became preponderant. So the actor became co-author, and often the principal author of the film.

As we have just seen, within the framework of the system applied in the United States and Western Europe, the rôle of the organizer of a cinematographic spectacle, the one to dominate the other co-authors, could be taken by: (1) the producer, (2) the director, (3) the actor. In the Soviet Union and in countries where, after 1945, the film industry was nationalized, the director retained his rôle as the principal author of the film and his only serious rival—with the introduction of sound—was the scenario writer. Soviet theoreticians have always maintained that the scenario is the fundamental basis of a cinematographic work, and that the moral and artistic values of the future work depend on the scenario.

However, independently of whether it is the director, the producer or the actor who, in any given period, dominates the other co-authors of a film, it is unquestionable that in the cinema there have always been teams of authors. It is only by common agreement and in order to simplify matters that one speaks of one sole author (leading actor or director) of a film. In fact there are always several. The only person to have been an exception to this rule of plurality was Charlie Chaplin, who was the only one to carry out the tasks of producer, director, scenario writer, actor and compositor. Only the camera did he entrust to a specialist, he himself assuming the responsibility for everything else throughout the various stages of production and in all its aspects. In the whole history of the cinema, with the exception of some avant-garde and experimental films, this was the only case of there being a sole, not only principal, author.

THE PRESENT SITUATION—IN THE TELEVISION ERA

The immense popularity that television has acquired—as well as the fact that it now holds first place among the mass media—have, as we know, brought about basic changes in modern cinematography. Cinematographic spectacles were divided into several types. Besides super-production films—historical, musical and even espionage, such as James Bond—there is the type of film with pronounced intellectual and artistic ambitions, mainly but not exclusively distributed through the Art Theatre networks, and, finally, there are the television series.

In each of these categories the problem of the author, in the singular or plural, arises in a different way. As far as super-production films are concerned, the producer is the uncontested author. An example is to be found in the character of Darryl Zanuck, one of the last Hollywood old-guard producers and President of Twentieth Century Fox. He likes to refer to himself as “basically a picturemaker and an administrator.” This order should be noted: first the creation of films and only after that the administration of a huge commercial undertaking. Zanuck is accustomed to supervising personally all the work involved in the creation of a film, and is not afraid of taking what are often

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drastic decisions. Cinema reporters will never forget how, in 1962, he made the director Joseph Mankiewicz withdraw from the direction of the film *Cleopatra*, with Elisabeth Taylor, after which he personally brought to a successful conclusion work which had been dragging on for months. The semi-documentary film on the Allied landings in Normandy, *The Longest Day*, in spite of the interminable list of directors, cameramen and actors, is the work of Zanuck. The two Italians, Dino de Laurentiis and Carlo Ponti, are also the authors of their major spectacular works. Not only do they see to the indispensable financial aspects, and to contracts with their associate American or European distributors, but they themselves also choose the subject, hire the actors and, in the course of production, supervise the progress of the work and personally intervene whenever it is necessary.

In the films which we have referred to as ambitious—in the intellectual and artistic sense of the term—the return of the principle of a sole author is to be noted. The main stress is laid on the fact that the task of director and that of scenario writer are assumed by one person alone. The concept of “author’s cinema” has been popularized by the French “new wave” and its leading theoretician, André Bazin, as well as by critics writing in the *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Young directors, who had often started by being film critics, rebelled against the Hollywood production pattern which, as we know, required that the director be totally subjected to the producer and that his rôle be restricted to adapting to the screen texts of which he was not the author.

In such a system, any free artistic activity was simply impossible. Jean-Luc Godard, leader of the new wave, defined his task as director in the following terms: “I consider myself an essayist: I do essays in the form of novels, or novels in the form of essays: only I film them instead of writing them.” This comparison, or rather this similarity, between director and writer is significant, since it clearly underlines that a cinema director—although he uses different means of expression—is the author of his work to the same degree as a writer. The only author, solely responsible for what he does, Claude Lelouch goes even further than Godard since he alone fulfils the tasks of director, scenario writer (although his subjects are sometimes borrowed from others) and operator. This is what he says: “I have no cameraman. I cannot understand directors who stand beside the

camera and count on someone else's view." The young Polish director, Jerzy Skolimowski, is the author of the scenario and director of his films, and in the early ones he also played the leading part. The idea of an author's film has been adopted without hesitation by representatives of independent cinema in the United States (New American Cinema and American Underground Cinema).

It is obvious that apart from producers or directors who are the sole authors of their films, there still remain quite a number of directors of the old school who, having very little literary ambition and entrusting to specialists the task of preparing their scenarios, nonetheless seek to preserve their artistic independence vis-à-vis the all-powerful producers. It is to this group of directors, who can be compared to the "producer-directors" of the pre-1939 period, that belong Roman Polanski and Mike Nichols among American directors; in France there are René Clair, Claude Autant-Lara, René Clément and a few other representatives of the old generation; and, in Italy, Michelangelo Antonioni and Luchino Visconti. Most of the Soviet and Polish directors also belong to this group. Among Czech and Hungarian directors, there are a few partisans of "author's cinema," such as Jan Nemeč, Milos Forman or Miklos Jancso.

The importance and the rôle of film actors have also changed. The period of the "stars" already belongs to the past, although there are still many actors and actresses who have their word to say about the production and can dictate their conditions to the producers and directors. But that exotic aura which formerly surrounded a Pola Negri, a Rodolfo Valentino or a Greta Garbo has disappeared forever. Another important remark: those who enjoy the greatest popularity have for the most part won their laurels in other fields—such as the Beatles a few years ago, or Barbra Streisand who was a Broadway star before becoming a film star. It also happens that the character that an actor plays on the screen manages to eclipse the actor himself. The best example of this is James Bond, whose name is much better known than that of Sean Connery, who played the part. This phenomenon is even more noticeable on television.

The moment has come to consider the problem of the author—individual or collective—in television. In programmes of a theatrical nature, which are becoming more and more rare on

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the small screen, it is the director who remains the author, just as in the theatre or traditional cinema. In a television serial, the question of knowing who is the author becomes more complicated. In the eyes of the great majority of the public, it is the protagonists who come to the fore and who, one could almost say, take the responsibility for the programme. Two particularly significant examples go to illustrate this thesis: we will mention the American series *Bonanza*, which has been shown for years by the television networks of several dozen countries, and the Polish serial *Stakes Higher than Life*, which has become more popular than anything yet seen in Poland and which is now being shown by the television networks of all the Socialist states.

Who, apart from the specialists, would be capable of saying that the producer of *Bonanza* is called David Dort and that the successive episodes of the series were directed by Robert Brees and James W. Lane? Who knows the names of the actors playing the leading rôles? Lorne Green, Dan Blocker or Michael Landon? Among the film's millions of fans, there are probably very few who would be able to reply correctly to questions about the director or the actors. Everyone, on the contrary, knows the characters Ben Cartwright, Hoss or Little Jo. The same is true of *Stakes Higher than Life*. The whole of Poland knows Captain Kloss, the hero of the Polish Secret Service during the Second World War, who fights behind the enemy lines wearing a German uniform. But fewer people would be able to say without hesitation that the part of Captain Kloss is played by Stanislaw Mikulski, an actor from one of Warsaw's theatres. The number of people who know that the film is directed by J. Morgenstern, a cinema director, and A. Konic, a television director, is minimal. And practically nobody knows that the scenario of this best-seller was written by Z. Safian and A. Szypulski (under the pseudonym Andrzej Zbych).

Television has contributed to the creation of a new type of entertainment author-organizer, that of the host of a variety programme or the moderator of a debate. This new form of entertainment was born in America, where television took over the invention introduced a short time earlier on the radio. The "host"—for that is the best name for him—presents to the public the guests who are to take part in the show, introduces them and chats with them. He is also responsible—but this is

done behind the scenes—for making out the list of “guests” and for deciding on the order of their appearance. In the spectators’ eyes, the “host” is the author of the programme, the principal character whom one meets every time, whereas all the others appear only sporadically in the programme. For twenty years the CBS variety shows have been conducted by Ed Sullivan, and for five years, five times a week on the NBC television network, Johnny Carson has discussed with prominent personalities questions which are of topical interest to American society.

The last category of authors, to be found as much in television as in the cinema although they owe their popularity principally to television, is that of the “commentators” or “reporters” whose ambition is not to create fiction entertainment but to present recorded visual and sound material drawn from reality. The movement which is known in France as “*cinéma vérité*” and in the United States as “direct cinema” came into being towards the end of the fifties. The pioneers were Jean Rouch, Chris Marker and Mario Ruspoli in France, Richard Leacock and David A. Pennybaker in the United States, and their protoplast was the great master, Robert Flaherty.

This is how Edgar Morin defined the work of his friend Jean Rouch: “A film-maker-cum-diver plunging into reality.” Kizimierz Karabasz, representative of the Polish “direct cinema” trend, describes how this “dive” is done. “It’s a question of catching your heroes in the most natural situations, letting them forget the presence of the camera and directors, and return entirely to their normal occupations.” Further on he says: “You have to tame the group. For a long time I live with them without filming at all. When I feel that they are used to me, that they have ‘absorbed’ me, that I am no longer a stranger, I start filming.”

There is yet another type of film for which reality serves as raw material. They are “montage films,” where fragments of real life, portraits of famous people, recorded on film in the past, and extracts from newsreels and documentaries, allow the director to “resurrect” the past. Frédéric Rossif, the author of the film *Mourir à Madrid* [Die in Madrid], collected thousands of yards of film on the Spanish Civil War: official newsreels or the filmed evidence of amateur cameramen from France, Great Britain, the USSR, the United States or South America, which amounted to

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80% of everything which was filmed in Spain between July '36 and March '39. He speaks of his goals and his methods in the following terms: "I think there is a place for souvenir cinema, films drawn from archeology and dreams. I want to make films which, according to Gaston Bachelard's formula, make use of all the images of memory." The archeologist-directors are all entitled to be called the authors of their films. It is they who choose the material and who assemble it. But in such cases there is always the supreme co-author known as reality.

CONCLUSION

In the field of entertainment arts, and particularly in that of film and of television, the case of several authors of one sole work is almost the rule. It is impossible for one man alone—like a writer or a painter—to put together by his own means a cinematographic or television spectacle. Total independence of the author is possible only in the short film.

Artists who want their ideas and opinions to reach the spectator without the slightest deformation try to maintain a predominant rôle vis-à-vis their assistants and collaborators. This led to the birth and development of the trend of "author's cinema."

In the eyes of a public accustomed to mass-produced films and television serials, the question of knowing who is the author has lost nearly all its significance. A book is "recognizable" by its author, whereas a film or show is recognized through the most outstanding character—the easiest to identify—taking part. It can be an actor, though more often it is quite simply the hero of the film; sometimes it is the organizer, the programme's "host."

Modern art which makes use of the mass media is not unlike certain aspects of folklore, having the same anonymity and allowing to be easily forgotten the name of the creators and co-creators of its works. Tales, legends, television serials and comic strips have no authors, they have only heroes.

The law, feeling slightly lost in the midst of these complications, has ended by adopting the opportunist principle whereby

the author is the person who passes himself off as such. Other claimants must bring proof to substantiate their claims. As the French jurist, Maître Lyon-Caen, has wittily remarked: "The paternity of a cinematographic work is as difficult to ascertain as physiological paternity. The method of legal presumption is used here, as it is in civil law for legal paternity."