



Montage and Architecture

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Sergei M. Eisenstein

Montage and Architecture

Introduction by Yve-Alain Bois

*Translated from the Russian
by Michael Glenny*

Sergei M. Eisenstein (1898–1948) was a
Soviet filmmaker and theorist.

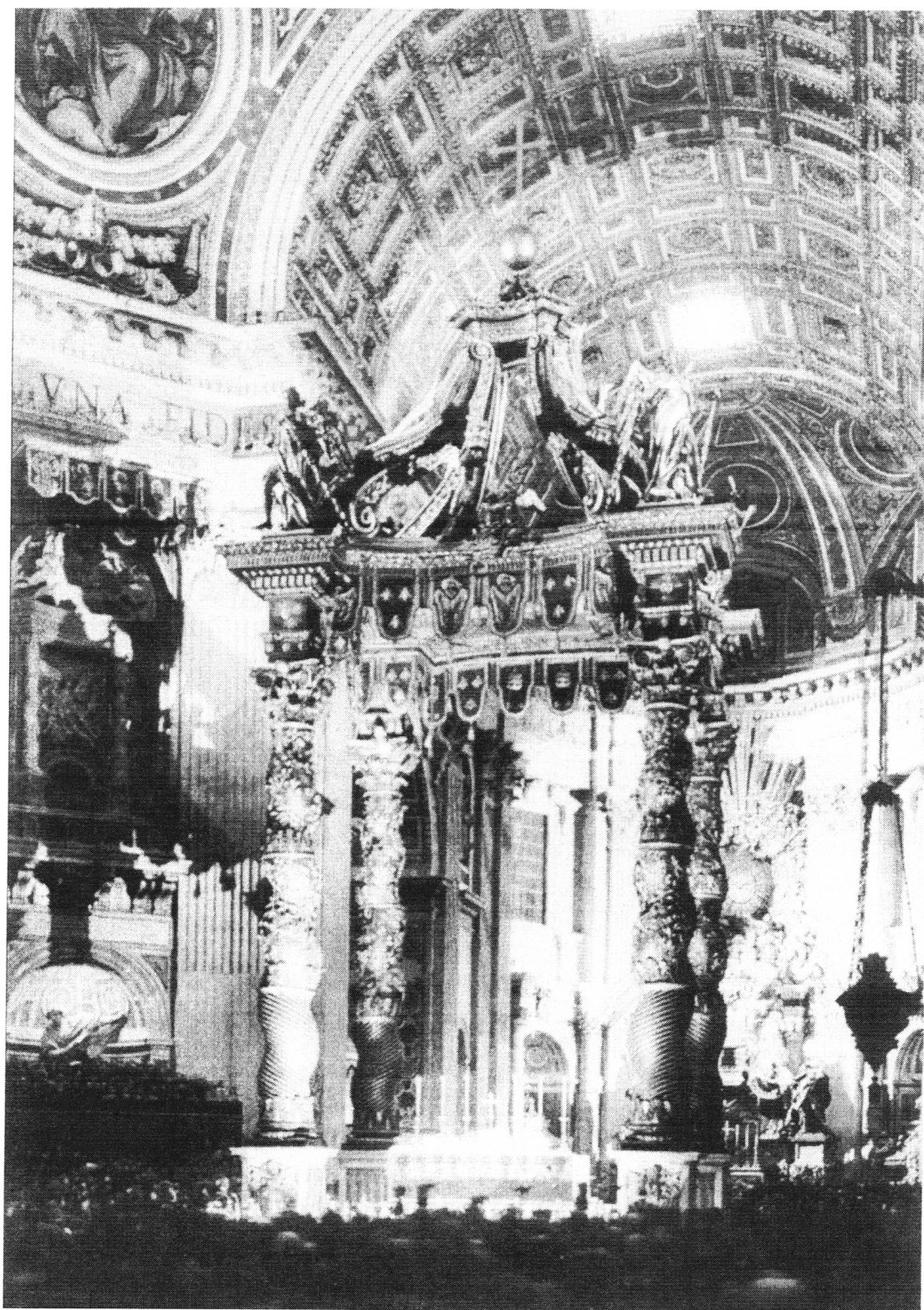
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Discovered a few years ago by Naum Kleiman, the curator of the Eisenstein Museum in Moscow and editor of the director's writings, the text entitled (by whom?) "Montage and Architecture" was to be inserted in a book-length work entitled *Montage*, written between 1937 and 1940.¹ One might suppose that it was written shortly after another long essay bearing a Spanish title, "El Greco y el cine," for Eisenstein refers to it there.

We just presented in detail the issue of montage computation within an architectural ensemble. The Acropolis of Athens was at stake. The notes Choisy devoted to it give a magnificent picture of the construction and the computation of such a montage from the point of view of a moving spectator. But if the spectator cannot move, he has to gather in one unique point the elements of that which is dispersed in reality, unseizable to a single gaze, scattered about, but which the author must absolutely juxtapose, for it is in taking in all these elements that the spectator will obtain an impression of the object or — moreover — the impression which the author wishes to induce in transforming the relationships of reality, that which he wants to inscribe for the perception. Cinematographic montage is, too, a means to 'link' in one point — the screen — various elements (fragments) of a phenomenon filmed in diverse dimensions, from diverse points of view and sides.²

Incidentally, the two texts were separated and the El Greco essay reworked in 1939 to be partly integrated in *Non-indifferent Nature* (1945–47) and in "Vertical Montage" (1940);³ but they should be read as two sides of the same coin, as two symmetrical facets of the vast inquiry that

Frontispiece: Gianlorenzo
Bernini, baldacchino,
St. Peter's, Rome



Eisenstein had begun during the late 1920s into montage and cinematography in the “other arts.”

“It seems that all the arts, throughout the centuries, tended toward cinema. Conversely, cinema helps us to understand their methods,” wrote Eisenstein.⁴ Sequentiality and montage, defined by Eisenstein as the two essential conditions of film as a medium, became for him a grid for the apprehension of literature (Dickens, Diderot, Tolstoy, Zola, Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoyevsky) and, most of all, of painting and the graphic arts. But far from partaking of a search for legitimation — the kind of hunting for “precursors” that became the common occupation of historians of ideas — Eisenstein’s totalizing interpretations jeopardize notions of historical filiations or influences to propose instead a critical loop: the new methods of film can help to explain Gogol or Bach, but the contrapunctal montage of these latter can, in turn, function as a propaedeutic model for the analysis of *Potemkin*.⁵ One of the most remarkable examples of this critical loop can be found in an essay entitled “Beyond the Shot,” written in 1929 as a postscript to a book on Japanese cinema. The opening line, quite exemplary of Eisenstein’s extraordinarily sophisticated use of rhetorical devices, detonates with an oxymoron: “It is a weird and wonderful feat to have written a pamphlet on something that in reality does not exist. There is, for example, no such thing as a cinema without cinematography. And yet the author of the pamphlet preceding this essay has contrived to write a book about the *cinema* of a country that has no *cinematography*.”⁶ Then follows the defusing of the paradox: “Cinema is: so many corporations, such and such turnovers of capital, so and so many stars, such and such dramas. Cinematography is, first and foremost, montage.” Japanese cinema does exist (there are corporations, stars, dramas), but it is “completely unaware of montage,” hence noncinematographic. The distinction between cinema and cinematography serves first to clarify Eisenstein’s avant-gardist stance (this same opposition will be frequently reinstalled in film theory from his time to our own, albeit in various guises). But Eisenstein’s next move overturns the mechanical dualism of the polemical pair and reveals in one leap the heuristic potential of this opposition: “Nevertheless, the principle of montage can be identified as the basic element of Japanese representational

culture. Writing — for their writing is primarily representational. The hieroglyph.” The double movement is hard to perceive, as Eisenstein, taking a shortcut, skips various steps. Initially, he arrives at the pictogram through his search for an explanatory model for what he intends to do in his project of an “intellectual cinema” (what strikes him, particularly, is the pictogrammatic combinatory structure, notably, the possible formation of a sign for an abstract concept from the combination of two signs, whether iconic or not, that refer to a concrete object). But he then reverses the direction of the metaphoric arrow: cinematography is like a pictogrammatic system, hence the pictogrammatic system is cinematographic, and, by extension, the culture that produced it. Thus not only Japanese writing, but also *haiku* poetry, Sharaku’s prints, Kabuki theater, and so on are understood as features of montage, as exemplifications of the cinematographic *per se*.

Obviously, this strategy of the double movement has to be reinscribed in the context of the polemics of the time, and one could read Eisenstein’s numerous texts on painting as a direct answer to the accusation of “pictorialism,” formulated against his films by no less a painter than Malevich:⁷ if my films are pictorial, Eisenstein seems to be arguing, it is because many painters were, unknowingly, practicing cinematography and a whole section of the history of painting should be rewritten in terms of cinematographic analysis. El Greco, but also Utamaro, the Mexican muralists, Chinese and Japanese scroll painters, Posada, Valentin Serov, David Burliuk, Robert Delaunay, Daumier: the list grows almost each time a new essay of his becomes available. But one would be wrong to reduce Eisenstein’s obsession with this search for cinematography outside cinema to a mere tactical hobby or to the return of a nineteenth-century positivist interest in synesthesia or “correspondence between the arts.” And art historians would do well to abandon their contempt for Eisenstein’s readings, for if these are rarely accurate, as far as mere facts are concerned, they provide, more often than not, extraordinary insights.

In most of his essays on painting Eisenstein searches for sequentiality and montage in pictures and tries to invent, as it were, a new category, “between painting and cinema”

(he calls it *cinematism*), that would enable him to disclose a fundamental level of articulation in images, unspecific to any medium in particular and independent of the “substance of expression,” in the words of the linguist Louis Hjelmslev. This led Eisenstein to numerous reflections about the inscription of time in a static picture and about the sequential nature of aesthetic perception, ideas that were upsetting the very basis of modernist pictorial aesthetics (such as Lessing’s separation of arts of time and of space or Kant’s exclusion of duration as a parameter of aesthetic experience). At the same moment, Klee was founding his pictorial research — counter to Matisse or Mondrian, for that matter, all the major agents of modern painting — on the idea that “the eye must ‘graze’ over the surface, sharply grasping portion after portion, to convey them to the brain which collects and stores the impression.”⁸ There is no room here, of course, to discuss this issue at any length: I simply want to point out that Eisenstein’s cinematographic grid of interpretation led him to a wholly unorthodox conception of the pictorial fact at the very moment that a similar conception was espoused by a painter whose work, it seems to me for that exact reason, remains largely underestimated.

The same pattern can be found in Eisenstein’s discussion of architecture. The problem is different (he is no longer concerned with movement in its virtuality, but with the real movement of a beholder in space); but here, too, the heterogeneity of his point of view allows Eisenstein to pinpoint essential characteristics of architecture that had long been repressed, and this precisely when they were “rediscovered” by Le Corbusier. In a sense, the loop effect is even more productive in the case of architecture. Unlike painting, architecture (whose technicalities he knew well, having studied as an engineer) is one of the underlying motifs of Eisenstein’s films. From *The Strike* on, Eisenstein had to find practical answers to the problem of how to film a building, how to transform it, from a passive setting of the action, into a major agent of the plot. With the solutions came the criteria of judgment: some buildings are more apt than others, cinematographically speaking (Eisenstein’s preference for Gothic architecture is a case in point). But because architecture is nonmimetic, unlike cinema, Eisenstein’s inquiry into its “cinematographicity”

(sequentiality plus montage) was immediately geared toward the structure of perception in one of its most elemental features, namely, the decentering effect of parallax (the change of position of a body, hence with its perception, due to a change of position of the observer). And this concern, in turn, reinscribed a most “concrete” term (the bodily movement of the spectator) into the highly “abstract” field of architecture: leaving aside the issue of representation, the loop produced a return of the repressed, as it were, in isolating one of the architectural “materials” that had been forgotten by architects.

Eisenstein’s text on Piranesi is well known,⁹ and to make a long story short, I will allow myself to refer to an essay that I wrote on the sculptor Richard Serra in which Eisenstein’s piece functioned as an important ally.¹⁰ In this essay, which was intended as a *rappel à MM les architectes* and was following the steps of Peter Collins, Manfredo Tafuri, Vincent Scully, and Ulya Vogt-Göknill, I traced back to Piranesi the involvement of architects with the play of parallax. By his elaborate disjunction of plan and elevation, which leads to a vertiginous fragmentation of architectural space, Piranesi undermines the baroque domination of the a priori, gestaltist ground plan in our apprehension of architecture, depriving the spectator of any center of reference, of any definitive climax, and initiates the rupture of the modern movement in architecture. But in retracing the evolution of this radically new concept of space, the implication of the bodily movement of the spectator in architectural design — through the theories of the picturesque in England and those of Boullée and his circle in France, both highly indebted to Piranesi — I was surprised to see such a concern disappear from the theoretical discussions of architecture almost as rapidly as it had emerged as a fundamental issue. It is at this juncture that Choisy’s discovery of the Greek picturesque intervened. Formulated almost a century after Boullée’s treatise, it appears as a major *coup de force*, whose impact on Le Corbusier, half a century later, played a significant role in the evolution of his architectural conception and the elaboration of his idea of the *promenade architecturale*. I had at my disposal a chronological and logical sequence: Piranesi (Eisenstein), Choisy, Le Corbusier. I was wholly unaware, then, of Eisenstein’s direct involvement with Choisy,¹¹ of Choisy’s

debt to Piranesi, and of Eisenstein's and Le Corbusier's fondness for each other's work:¹² nothing could have comforted me more than my recent discovery of these three confirmations of the logical necessity of my chronological sequence.

Again, it is incidentally that I came upon Eisenstein's essay. Working on a history of axonometry, in which a long chapter is devoted to Choisy, I was trying to understand why, starting from an apparently identical ideological agenda (positivism, rationalism, functionalism), the illustrations of Viollet-le-Duc and those of Choisy were so strikingly different. The former uses any possible graphic system — often combining the most disparate methods of representation in a single image — *but* axonometry; the latter, with a very few exceptions, uses only axonometry. One of the answers lay, in fact, in the most notable exception, so intelligently picked up by Eisenstein: that is, the perspectival storyboard that Choisy elaborates to explicate his discovery that the nonsymmetry of the Acropolis of Athens, which the Beaux-Arts architects failed to understand and even tried to conceal in their surveys, was aesthetically constructed — this principle being enacted in other Greek building ensembles as well. Not that Choisy was the first to speak about the Greek picturesque. Even Viollet-le-Duc, and this is a unicum in an oeuvre otherwise entirely unconcerned by peripatetic vision, had noted that one does not see Greek monuments in “*géométral*” and had spoken in terms of “*pondération des masses*” and “*mise en scène*,” two notions further elaborated by Choisy and Le Corbusier.¹³ But Choisy was the first to take the issue literally, the first to attempt to retrace in its slightest details the aesthetic motivation of the apparent disorder in the placement of buildings on the Acropolis and to link it precisely to the variable point of view of a mobile spectator. Indeed, this endeavor was for him a starting point: although the illustrated sequence exhumed by Eisenstein appeared in Choisy's *Histoire de l'architecture*, published in 1899, his findings about the Acropolis were already discussed (albeit not illustrated) in his first publication, when he was still a student, in 1865.¹⁴

Knowing that Choisy begins with a concern for the cinematic perception of architecture, a theme that constantly

recurs in all his writings, let us turn to the one page he ever devoted to axonometry, in a note that figures as a foreword to his *Histoire*. After having remarked upon the clarity of this graphic mode of representation and the immediacy of measuring that it entails, Choisy writes, “In this system, a single image, agitated [*mouvementée*] and animated like the building itself, replaces the abstract figuration fractioned in plan, section, and elevation. The reader has in front of his eyes, simultaneously, the ground plan, the exterior of the building, its section, and its interior disposition.” *Agitated and animated like the building itself*: for Choisy, axonometry is a mode of enunciating virtual movement. Not only is it a perfect instrument either to express with utmost clarity the temporality of the building process, showing its different stages on a single figure (as in *Art de bâtir chez les Romains*), or to reel off the historical mutations of a building type (as in the *Histoire*) — two concerns that were hardly Viollet's — but it can also serve as a substitute for the storyboard to declare the temporality of perception, precisely because it does not refer to a fixed point of view. A single perspective view of a building — the sort of romantic “*tableau*” favored by Viollet-le-Duc — would have immediately acted as the privileged view, as an obstacle blocking in the imagination of the reader the infinite potentiality of other possible views. A storyboard for each building or ensemble of buildings could, of course, have given an idea of the abrupt transformations in its appearance according to one's point of view, but then Choisy's *Histoire de l'architecture*, for example, which is already 1,442 pages long with 1,700 illustrations, would have become a very fat encyclopedia (not to mention the length of time required to produce it). Thus, for Choisy, axonometry functions, in part, to make possible a cinematic reading. When he sketches a diagram in axonometry, he provides all the elements needed to induce a mental image of the various aspects of the building: its ground plan, its section, its elevation, but also the respective positions of its parts in space. Nothing is easier than to slide one's mental scanner on the diagram and to imagine the perspective view attained at each of its stops. There is no central point in axonometry; it is entirely based on the notion of permutability, of infinite transformations; in itself, the system presupposes constant shifts in

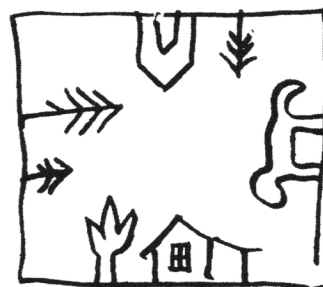
perception. The few other exceptions in the *Histoire* confirm the cinematic function of axonometry for Choisy: when he gives but a single elevation for a building type, it is because he feels that interior articulation is of no interest and that everything lies in the sole façade (Venetian palazzi, French *hôtels particuliers* from the sixteenth century on, etc.). Eisenstein had found certain buildings more cinematographic than others, Choisy certain ones more cinematic than others, and it is no surprise that some of their preferred examples (Chartres, Hagia Sophia) coincide.

At first, however, there seems to be a striking difference between Eisenstein's and Choisy's point of view. Choisy's interest in peripatetic vision never obscured his main concern, that is, architecture as the pure art of construction. This partly explains the total absence of the baroque in his monumental *Histoire*: for him, it invented nothing as far as construction was concerned, and, moreover, it constantly hid the structures of buildings under various masks. Choisy the rationalist could not stand the illusionism of the baroque. The name of Borromini appears taboo. All that one can find in the *Histoire* is a brief mention of the growing social status of architects from Michelangelo to Bernini. But given Choisy's deliberately modern conception of space, one wonders whether it was not again for aesthetic reasons that he was led to discard entirely the central space of the baroque — just as Piranesi had done already and Le Corbusier would do later.¹⁵ Eisenstein, unlike Choisy, did not base his stance on the Puritan myths of rationalism, but his choice might not have differed so greatly from that of the French engineer: while two-thirds of "Montage and Architecture" are devoted to Bernini's baldacchino in Saint Peter's, nothing is said of its architectural features, nor of the building that houses it. Anyone familiar with Eisenstein's mode of writing — its meanders, abrupt digressions, joyful paradoxes, always directed toward a punch line — would hesitate to stress an antibaroque position for the film director, yet one cannot fail to notice that instead of discussing the "maternal" space of baroque architecture, to speak like Scully,¹⁶ he preferred to turn toward iconography.

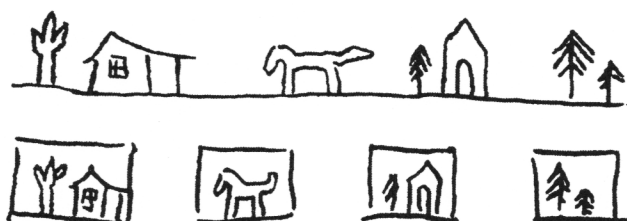
The second part of Eisenstein's essay is thus disappointing from an architectural point of view. I am not familiar

enough with the issue to assert the validity of his story (the most recent interpretation of the *stemme* of Bernini's baldacchino does retain the obstetric reading, but makes no mention of a hidden political charge, on the contrary),¹⁷ but Eisenstein's interest in contextualization should be stressed, for it was certainly not a common feat at the time. Until quite recently, art history was content to analyze individual works of art without checking the significance their spatial placement in an ensemble could entail: again, Eisenstein's heterogeneous approach led the way. His interpretation of the "mystery" of Bernini's *stemme* might be wrong, but the conclusive line remains a "reminder to the architects" as well as to all of us who try to understand works of art: "In themselves, the pictures, the phases, the elements of the whole are . . . indecipherable. The blow is struck only when the elements are juxtaposed into a sequential image."

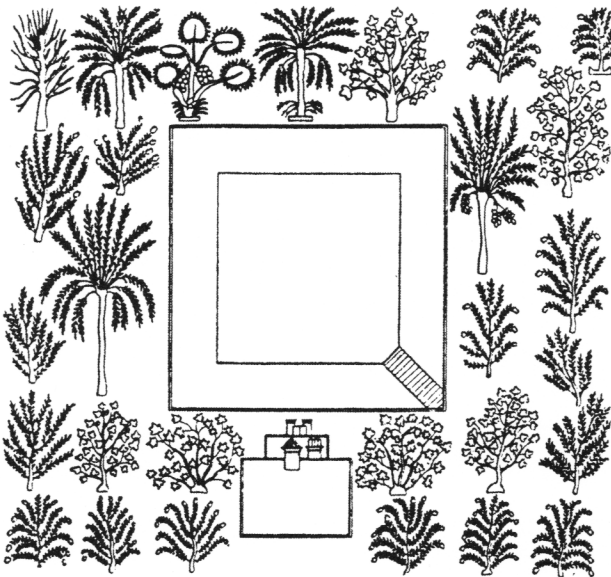
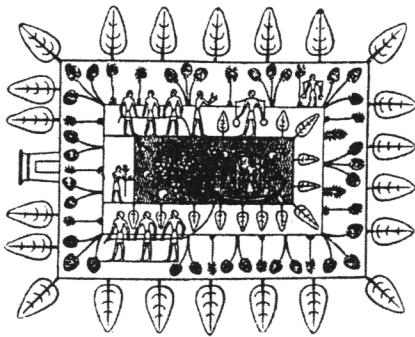
Y.-A.B.



Sergei Eisenstein, illustration in *Nonindifferent Nature of a drawing* by David Burliuk



Eisenstein, decomposition and reframing of Burliuk's drawing



Drawings from the second edition of Heinrich Schäfer's *Von ägyptischer Kunst*, 1922

Montage and Architecture

[When talking about cinema], the word *path* is not used by chance. Nowadays it is the imaginary path followed by the eye and the varying perceptions of an object that depend on how it appears to the eye. Nowadays it may also be the path followed by the mind across a multiplicity of phenomena, far apart in time and space, gathered in a certain sequence into a single meaningful concept; and these diverse impressions pass in front of an immobile spectator.

In the past, however, the opposite was the case: the spectator moved between [a series of] carefully disposed phenomena that he absorbed sequentially with his visual sense.

This tradition has been preserved in any child's drawing. Not only has the movement of the eye been given back to the action of the child himself moving in space, but the picture itself appears as the path along which a number of aspects of the subject are revealed sequentially.

This is a typical child's drawing.¹ As a representation of a pond with trees along its bank it appears meaningless until we understand its internal dynamics. The trees are not depicted from one viewpoint, as adults are accustomed to show them in a picture or in a single frame of film. Here the drawing depicts a series of trees as they are revealed along the path that the observer follows between them. If the line AB represents the path taken by the observer, then at any given point in the sequence one through nine each separate tree is disposed entirely "reasonably": it represents a frontal view of the tree in question at each corresponding point on the path.

Exactly similar are the surviving drawings of old Russian buildings, such as, for instance, the fifteenth-century (?) palace of Kolomenskoye, in which there is an identical combination of "plan" and "elevation."² For here the path is a movement across the *plan*, while the frontal views of the buildings are shown in *elevation*, seen from specific points on the plan.

This can be seen even more vividly in the example of an Egyptian painting, representing a pond with trees and

buildings around it, depicted according to exactly the same principle.³

It is curious that in the period of artistic decadence at the turn of the twentieth century (which reflected the decadence of bourgeois society), in a period marked by every form of regression in the arts (for further comment on this see below), there occurred a curious "renaissance" of a similar kind of archaism. We may interpret it as something like a shriek uttered by painting as a premonition of its metamorphosis into cinematography. Figure 1 shows the scheme for a series of paintings by David Burliuk.⁴ In a slightly different mode, he is pursuing the same aim as Delaunay, whose [pictures] distorted the Eiffel Tower by dislocating [its structural elements].

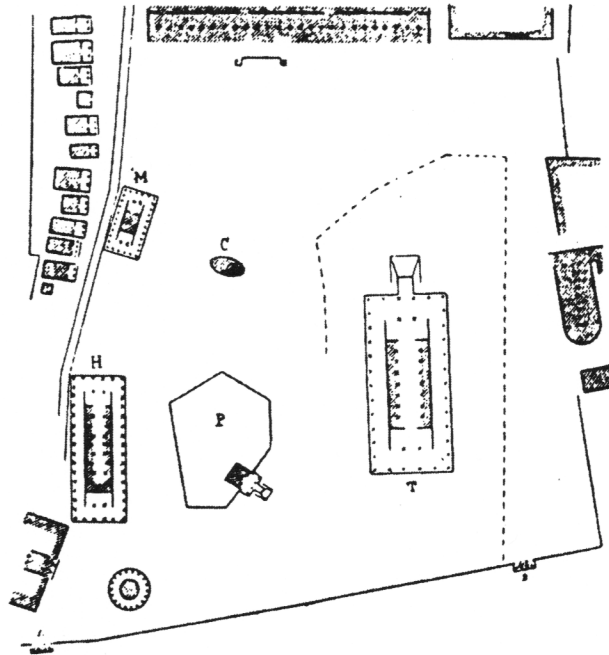
It is also curious that in this final stage before its transition to cinematography, painting turns its representations *inward*, whereas the same aspiration at the dawn of drawing and painting presented objects through *extraversion*. That *intraversion*, of course, contains a profound sense of retreat "into oneself," of regression "away from" reality, unlike the second instance, which is characterized by looking outward into the surrounding reality, into an expansive widening of horizons.

Painting has remained incapable of fixing the total representation of a phenomenon in its full visual multidimensionality. (There have been numberless attempts to do this). Only the film camera has solved the problem of doing this on a flat surface, but its undoubted ancestor in this capability is — architecture. The Greeks have left us the most perfect examples of shot design, change of shot, and shot length (that is, the duration of a particular impression). Victor Hugo called the medieval cathedrals "books in stone" (see *Notre Dame de Paris*). The Acropolis of Athens has an equal right to be called the perfect example of one of the most ancient films.

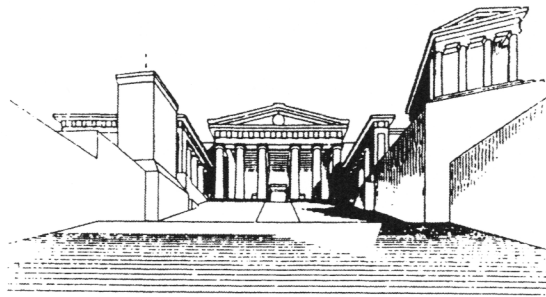
I shall here quote in full from Choisy's *Histoire d'architecture*,⁵ in which I shall not alter a single comma, and I would only ask you to look at it with the eye of a filmmaker: it is hard to imagine a montage sequence for an architectural ensemble more subtly composed, shot by shot, than the one that our legs create by walking among the buildings of the Acropolis (figure 2).



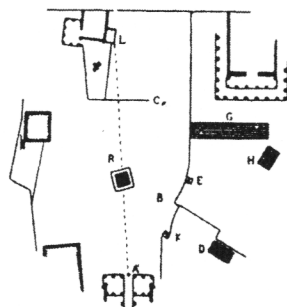
1.



2.



3.



4.

The Acropolis is a cliff, isolated on all sides, whose summit is dedicated to the worship of the national deities. At point T was the mark made by Poseidon's trident, while near to it grew the olive tree sacred to Athene.

In immediate proximity to this sacred spot a temple was built to both gods.

The site being empty after a fire, it was therefore possible to build a new sanctuary on the very spot indicated by legend. The temple was moved to point S and given the name of Erechtheion.

The highest point (P) was the site in this and another era (the time of the Pisistrades and after the Persian War) of the great temple of Athene — the Parthenon.

Between the Parthenon and the entrance to the Acropolis was disposed a series of smaller temples, evidently relating to both the ancient and the new Acropolis. . . . In this same space the colossal statue of Athene Promachos (the Warrior) was erected in the fifth century B.C.

The Propylaeum (M) formed the frontal façade of the Acropolis (in both the old and the new layout). . . .

The two layouts differed only in detail. The first, however, was a collection of buildings of various epochs, whereas the second was laid out to a single plan and adapted to the site, which had been cleared as the result of a fire. The apparent assymetry of this new Acropolis is only a means of lending picturesqueness to this group of buildings, which have been laid out with more art than any others. . . .

[This] becomes clear from the series of panoramas that unfolded before visitors to the Acropolis in the fifth century B.C.

View of the Propylaeum. The general idea of the plan of the Propylaeum can be seen in figure 3. . . .

We see the symmetrical central block and two noticeably different wings — the right-hand one broader and the left-hand one less so. . . .

At first sight, nothing could be more uneven than this plan, but in fact it constitutes a completely balanced whole in which the general symmetry of the masses is accompanied by a subtle diversity in the details. . . . The optical symmetry is impeccable. . . .

First view of the square; Athene Promachos. Passing by the Propylaeum, the spectator's eye embraces the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, and Athene Promachos (figure 4).

In the foreground towers the statue of Athene Promachos; the Erechtheion and the Parthenon are in the background, so that the whole of this first panorama is subordinated to the statue,

which is its central point and which creates an impression of unity. The Parthenon only acquires its significance when the visitor loses sight of this gigantic piece of sculpture.

The Parthenon and its oblique perspectives. To modern thinking, the Parthenon — the great temple of the Acropolis — should be placed opposite the main entrance, but the Greeks reasoned quite differently. The cliff of the Acropolis has an uneven surface, and the Greeks, without altering its natural relief, placed the main temple on the highest point at the edge of the cliff, facing the city (figure 5).

Placed thus, the Parthenon first of all faces the spectator obliquely. The ancients generally preferred oblique views: they are more picturesque, whereas a frontal view of the façade is more majestic.⁶ Each of them is allotted a specific role. An oblique view is the general rule, while a view *en face* is a calculated exception (figure 6).

The central body of the Propylaeum is presented *en face*, just as we head straight for the *pronaos* of the Parthenon, crossing the square of the Acropolis. With the exception of the two examples given, where this effect is deliberately calculated, all the other structures present themselves at an angle — as does the temple of Athene Ergane (*H*), when the spectator reaches its precinct at point *E*. . . .

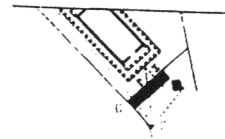
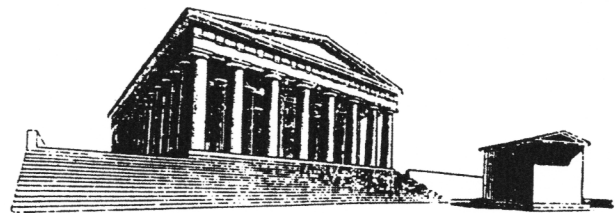
After the first panorama from the Erechtheion, let us continue our way across the Acropolis. At point *B* the Parthenon is still the only structure in our field of vision, but if we move on to point *C*, it will be so close to us that we shall be unable to encompass its shape; at that moment the Erechtheion becomes the center of the panorama. It is precisely from this point that it offers us one of its most graceful silhouettes (figure 7).

The bare wall (*a*) is enlivened by the Porch of the Caryatids, which stand out from it as though against a background specifically created for them.

Thus three pictures have passed before us, corresponding to the three chief points — *A*¹, *B*, and *C* — on figure 4.

At each of them only one architectural monument was dominant: at point *C*, the Erechtheion; at point *B*, the Parthenon; and at point *A*¹, Athene Promakhos. This one, principal motif ensures the clarity of the impression and the unity of the picture.

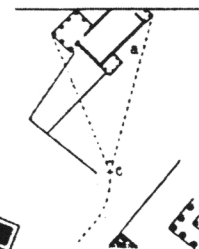
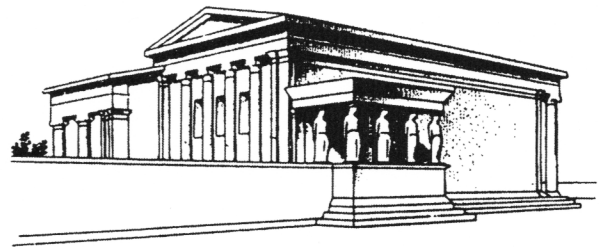
How responsibly and with what careful thought this has been done is witnessed in the following additional comment by Choisy:



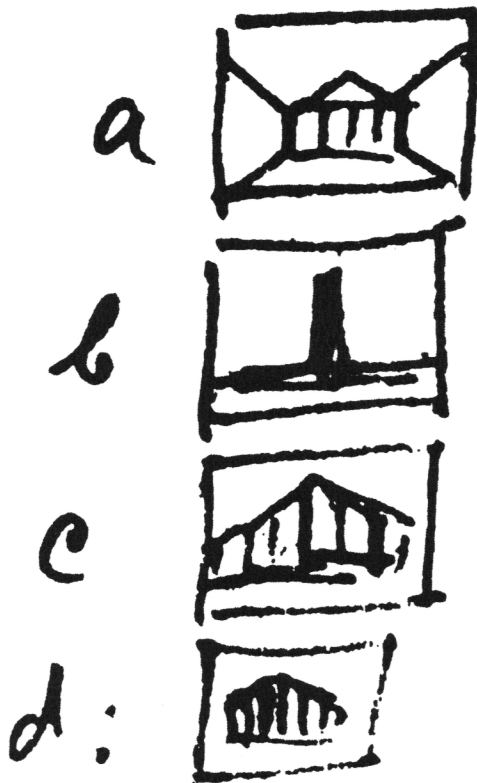
5.



6.



7.



8.

Erechtheion and Athene Promakhos. Let us return to the starting point (figure 4), that is, to point A¹, at which our whole attention was concentrated on Athene Promakhos. The Erechtheion with its caryatids is in the background. One might fear that the graceful caryatids would appear crushed by force of contrast with the gigantic statue of the goddess; to prevent this, the architect sited the base of the statue in such a way that it shut out the view of the Porch of the Caryatids — line A¹RL, which only revealed itself to the eye of the spectator when he was so close to the colossus that he could no longer see all of it, and therefore a comparison became possible only in memory.

Furthermore, Choisy sums up as follows:

If we now recall the series of pictures that the Acropolis has given us, we shall see that they are all, without exception, calculated on the first impression that they make. Our recollections invariably take us back to first impressions, and the Greeks strove, above all, to make it a favorable one.

Both wings of the Propylaeum balance out at the exact moment when the general view of the building opens out in front of us (figure 3).

The disappearance of the caryatids when looking at Athene Promakhos is also calculated on the first impression (figure 4).

As for the Parthenon, the fullest view of its façade, with its asymmetrical flight of steps, is revealed to the spectator when he passes through the precinct around the temple of Athene Ergane.

This creation of a favorable first impression was evidently the constant concern of Greek architects.

The calculation of a [film-] shot effect is obvious, for there, too, the effect of the first impression from each new, emerging shot is enormous. Equally strong, however, is the calculation on a montage effect, that is, the sequential juxtaposition of those shots.

Let us, in fact, draw up the general compositional schemes of these four successive "picturesque shots" (figure 8).

It is hard to imagine a stricter, more elegant, and more triumphant construct than this sequence.

Shots *a* and *b* are equal in symmetry and, at the same time, the opposites of each other in spatial extent. Shots *c* and *d* are in mirror symmetry, and function, as it were, as enlargements of the right-hand and left-hand wings of shot

a, then reforming again into a single, balanced mass. The sculptural motif *b* is repeated through shot *c*, by the group of sculpture *d* and so on and so on.

It would further be of particular interest to analyze the length of time in which each of these pictures was presented to the spectator. We will not go into the details of this here, but only remark that the length of these montage sequences is entirely in step with the rhythm of the building itself: the distance from point to point is long, and the time taken to move from one to the other is of a length in keeping with solemnity.

In the "montage plan" of the Athenian Acropolis we find, of course, the same unsurpassed artistry as in other monuments of antiquity.

From a somewhat different aspect or point of view (and, of course, a different quality and scope!) we can find other elements of montage in Christian (Catholic) cathedrals.

This occurs in one version of what is invariably found in any [Catholic] church: the so-called Stations of the Cross, that is, the twelve sculptural groups representing the twelve stopping places that legend ascribes to the procession to Golgotha. The twelve "stations" are placed at certain distances from each other, usually around the outer ambulatory of the cathedral. That is how I have seen them in Chartres Cathedral and a number of others. But in places of pilgrimage, especially those of mass pilgrimage, they may also be placed outside the cathedral. I had occasion to see this type of disposition in Mexico — in the pilgrimage center of Amecameca. As with the majority of Catholic churches in Mexico, this church had been built on the site of an ancient pagan temple. The wise colonizers and missionaries did this so that the new faith should not lose the popularity of an already familiar spot and to use the well-trodden paths of pilgrimage to other gods for its own, Catholic purposes. Therefore this church, as many others, was sited on a high pyramidal hill. The hill is pyramid-shaped for the simple reason that it is nothing other than a genuine, but crumbling and overgrown pyramid, artificially created as prescribed for the construction of places of worship in the era of paganism. A winding road has been laid out around this fairly steep hill, and it is along this

road that the "twelve stations" have been placed, the ultimate destination ("Golgotha") being the church at the top. From "station" to "station" the road ascends a certain number of meters. The business of climbing that distance is particularly impressive because it is the custom to go from "station" to "station" and on up to the very top — on one's knees. The emotional reaction from stopping place to stopping place thereby increases with the pilgrims' ever-increasing physical exhaustion. At another place of pilgrimage (Los Remedios, near Mexico City) this is done not only kneeling but "blind" — with the eyes blindfolded. The blindfold is only removed (symbolizing "spiritual insight") at the very top.

Having thus turned our attention to Catholicism, via the pilgrims of Amecameca and Chartres Cathedral, I cannot help recalling another example of a montage structure standing in the center of the Catholic religion, in Rome, at its very heart: St. Peter's, and in the very heart of that cathedral, under the famous canopy with its eleven-and-a-half-meters-high columns that tower above the high altar of the cathedral, the altar at which the pope alone may celebrate Mass and then only on the most solemn occasions.

I refer to the eight representations in relief of the coat of arms of the Barberini pope, Urban VIII, adorning the two outer sides of the four plinths of those gigantic columns that support the canopy. Erected in 1633 during the pontificate of Urban VIII and in his honor, the canopy, the columns, and the coats of arms that decorate the plinths form one of the most spectacular compositions of that great master Bernini.

These eight identical coats of arms, apparently meaningless, are in reality not only not identical but far from devoid of significance.

These eight coats of arms are eight shots, eight montage sequences of a whole montage scenario. Identical in their general design, they differ in their component details; and taken together they represent a whole drama that unfolds step by step. Both the subject of the drama, which closely concerned Urban VIII, and the location of its depiction within the holy of holies of Catholicism, of which he was

the head, fully justify its description as *satira marmorea tremenda* (a tremendous satire in marble).

What is happening on these coats of arms?

It has been described by several scholars:

Fraschetti, *Vida de Bernini*.

Gaetano Dossi, *El Baldaquino de San Pedro*.

G. E. Curatolo, Professor Libre de Obstetricia y Ginecología en la Real Universidad de Roma, *El arte de Juno Lucina en Roma: Historia de la obstetricia desde sus orígenes hasta el siglo XX, con documentos inéditos* (Rome, 1901). (I only know the full title in Spanish).

Also in the article by Dr. P. Noury in *Chronique médicale* (Paris, 1903).

In the book by Dr. G. J. Witkowski, *L'Art profane de l'Eglise, ses licenses symboliques, satiriques et fantaisistes* (Paris, 1908).

And, finally, the voluminous work by Guillermo Dellhora, *La iglesia Católica ante la crítica en el pensamiento y en el arte* (Mexico City, 1929).

N. B. All the above-cited authors also refer to much earlier descriptions. Each one describes the same thing, although each from his own point of view and with a completely different purpose.

The first two try to play down the whole story. The third, Professor Curatolo, writes in order to demonstrate the state of seventeenth-century knowledge of — gynecology.

P. Noury writes his 1903 article from a medical standpoint. And G. J. Witkowski, in his 1908 pamphlet, attacks the Roman church — an attack, it must be said, that shows greater interest in shocking stories and mockery than in more serious matters, although the author does possess a certain degree of genuine antireligious free thought.

Finally there is Dellhora, for whom this matter is the culmination of his whole book, which is entirely devoted to the anticlerical and antireligious struggle of modern, intellectually based atheism.

In *Monde*, 17 May 1930, Henri Barbusse wrote as follows:

In this work Guillaume Dellhora has brought together a large quantity of written and iconographical documents against clericalism in Mexico, in Latin America in general, and all over the rest of the world. He supplies the reader with a complete arsenal against the Catholic religion. . . .

This anticlerical struggle, which should be conducted everywhere . . . , is particularly necessary in Spanish-speaking countries. No one can deny that the progress of the Spanish peoples has been checked by the fact that the Catholic religion has planted itself especially deeply in Spanish soil. In Spanish America there have been deeds of fanaticism and obscurantism that recall the Middle Ages. In Mexico in 1926 we have seen black-clad hordes, tools of the priests, bathing the country in blood to cries of 'Long live Christ the King!' and there are no crimes that these fanatics have not committed, fanatics who at one time numbered thirty thousand and who raged over the country for three years. That is why Guillaume Dellhora's courageous, avenging work is of particular value in those regions where the tragic wave of clericalism has not yet subsided. One must rejoice at the great success that this work has had in Latin America and specially in Mexico. (In June 1929 sales amounted to 2,000 copies; in September, 6,400; in December, 10,300).⁷

I think the reader's curiosity will have been sufficiently aroused by all these preliminaries, so I will therefore proceed to describe the montage drama of eight sequences (shots), which the caustically ironic stone carver Bernini engraved in the eight coats of arms on the four plinths of the magnificent columns that support the canopy in St. Peter's, Rome, over the altar that surmounts the tomb of the saint.

The dimensions, design, and disposition of each coat of arms are identical (see figure 9). They display the heraldic device of the Barberini family to which Pope Urban VIII belonged: three bees. Above the shield, in the conventional decorative curlicues around it, is a woman's head. Beneath the coat of arms is a no less conventional piece of ornamentation, whose swirling strands form themselves into the head of a satyr. The whole is surmounted by a papal tiara ("the triple crown"), placed over a huge pair of crossed keys ("the keys of St. Peter") (see drawing in figure 10).

Such is the general layout of all eight coats of arms.

Thus far they are all identical and in no way remarkable. If, however, we start to examine them more carefully, we shall see that, starting with the left-hand front plinth, the expression on the face of the female head above each shield changes sharply from shield to shield. From being calm and contented it passes through all the stages of pain and terror, until above the eighth coat of arms it returns to an expression of tranquility (although with a slightly different cast of character). But that is not all. Above the sixth shield in the sequence the woman's head suddenly disappears and is replaced by a no less traditional Renaissance ornament — a child's head (*putto*) with wings. Over the seventh and eighth shields the woman's head returns with new and different facial expressions on the face. The mask of a satyr on the lower part of the shield also undergoes a marked deformation. On the shield the same occurs with the three bees of the Barberini family.

Figure 11 is a plan view of the canopy, showing the layout of the coat of arms on the plinths of the columns. The distance along the line *a* is approximately six meters.

The deformation that occurs on the surface of the shield itself is the most curious of all. Flat at first, beginning with the second shield its lower part starts to bulge outward, until with the sixth shield it "subsides" and remains flat on the last two shields. . . . What can this mean? In the literal sense, what sort of an allegory is this?

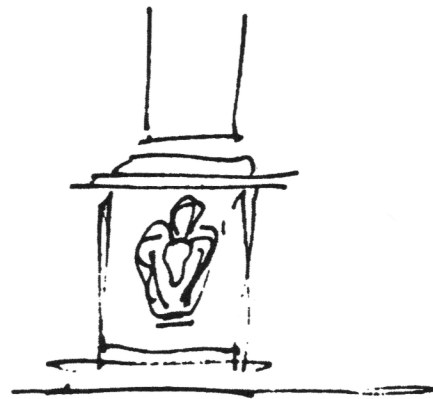
For an explanation, let us turn to any one of the authors listed above. We shall see that the first two, while not denying the fact itself, try to brush it aside with the querulous remark that "these decorations, taken in conjunction with the coat of arms, could cause some people to weave fantasies and create mysterious allusions."

What, in fact, are those "allusions," which far from being mysterious, were intentional and evident?

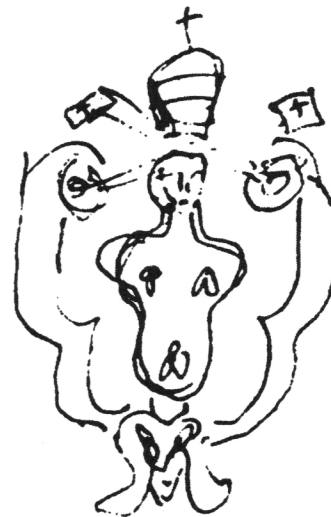
What do these eight shields represent "taken in conjunction"?

The answer is given by, among others, Witkowski.

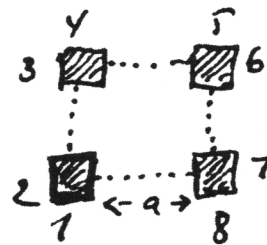
[These eight shields are pictures] that express, through the physiognomy of a woman, the various stages of childbirth. She relaxes as the womb releases its burden.



9.



10.



11.

The shield is topped by a life-sized woman's head, above which are the potential crossed keys surmounted by the tiara.

At each crisis in the labor, the expression of the face changes. The scene begins on the face of the left-hand front plinth; the woman's face begins to contract; on the second and following plinths the features pass through a series of increasingly violent convulsions. Simultaneously, the hair becomes increasingly dishevelled; the eyes, which at first express a bearable degree of suffering, take on a haggard look; the mouth, closed at first, opens, then screams with piercing realism. Zola must have been unaware of this archaeological curiosity, otherwise he would not have failed to make use of it in his *Rome*. It would have been at least piquant to see the master of literary naturalism in the presence of such a shrieking example of artistic naturalism.

Calmness returns for a moment in between the pains, but the face still remains in pain, as though numbed, stupefied; then the pains come back with greater intensity, the features contract again, she looks terrifying. . . .

Finally, comes the delivery: the belly subsides and the mother's head disappears, to give way to a cherubic baby's head with curly hair, smiling beneath the unchanging pontifical insignia. . . .

But that is not all. Below the papal shield, which the artist has sculpted in the shape of the torso of a pregnant woman, there is the head of a satyr, whose lower part represents the external female genital organs, the anatomical details of which are quite complete and which undergo changes that occur throughout the stages of labor. (*L'Art profane*, 1:255–56)

At this point let us break off Witkowski's overextensive description dealing with the lower part of the ornament, and, in place of his ribald comments, let us rather turn to the words of Professor E. Curatolo, who deals with the astounding pictorial accuracy of the entire picture — which can perhaps only be appreciated in all its subtleties by the experienced eye of a gynecologist. This is also his explanation for the whole story being little known among the wider public.

The title will perhaps arouse the admiration of those who, despite knowing the great masterpieces of the seventeenth century with which Rome is adorned, are ignorant of one of its most original creations, revealed by the ingenious artist to those who have some knowledge of the science of obstetrics.

There are few, indeed, who know this original creation by Bernini that is to be found in the basilica of the Vatican. Many

people, including some of the most distinguished lovers of archaeology and the fine arts, are ignorant of it, in part because it is an insignificant detail of a great work of art — the canopy of St. Peter's — and in part because its conception cannot be fully understood except by obstetricians. (*El arte de Juno Lucina*)

The same anatomical precision is confirmed by the drawings of the head of the satyr that Dellhora reproduces.

What is it all about? Whence came the idea for this monumental piece of mockery, placed under the pope's very nose in the holy of holies of Catholicism in Rome, which contains an obvious attack on the Barberini pope, executed alongside the eight coats of arms of his family? And what is the "secret" behind this marble representation of a woman giving birth in eight montage sequences at the base of the canopy of the high altar of St. Peter's, Rome?

The zealous defenders of Catholicism, of course, immediately have to hand an explanatory interpretation of this "symbol." One such version is put forward by Witkowski: it came to him immediately after the first publication of these observations in France in 1903. The pen, indeed, is barely capable of copying these lines — such is the saccharine emotion with which they are written that the ink positively runs and smudges the paper.

Compare the papacy to a woman who, in great pain, is giving birth to souls for God; for a pope, as for the rest of the Church, it is sometimes a pregnancy and a birth that are truly painful. What disappointments, what opposition, what struggles, what suffering do the pope and the Church not endure in order to bring into the world children of Grace, in accordance with holy writ! . . .

The Church is a mother — a sacred metaphor that She ceaselessly affirms; why, therefore, should it be any surprise that the artist should have personified Her as a woman, and that he should have clothed her in the pontifical insignia, since the pope incarnates and personifies her on earth? (*L'Art profane*, 262)

Popular legend, however, has preserved a quite different account of this story. Here it is, as it has been recorded by Dr. P. Noury of Rouen, quoting the words of Lamberto Lelli:

While Urban was commissioning the canopy from the great architect [Bernini], it happened that a nephew of the pope, probably Taddeo — later to be a cardinal, a generalissimo of the

Church, and Prince of the Palatine — fell in love with a sister of one of Bernini's pupils and made her pregnant.

As a result of this family misfortune, the girl's brother could think of no other solution than to implore his Master to intercede with the pope and to save the situation by a marriage.

Bernini, confident and sincere, believing that among the children of Christ differences of social class ought not to prevail, went to the pope to ask for justice.

Urban not only rejected the request, he scolded the artist for his gross presumption: 'How, Bernini,' said he, 'could you entertain such an idea? The pope's nephew marry the sister of a stonemason! Not only must you never mention it again, but this woman must be prevented from importuning my nephew.'

Indignant, his conscience affronted, the artist returned to his work, and when he witnessed the pain of the unhappy mother and heard the whimpering of the newborn infant, he swore this solemn oath: 'The pope refuses to recognize his own flesh and blood — the son of a member of his family! Very well. For the rest of his life, around the altar at which he says Mass, in the midst of the church from whence goes forth the word of Christ, he shall have the innocent victims forever beneath his eyes: the mother and the child, nay the very act of their martyrdom.'

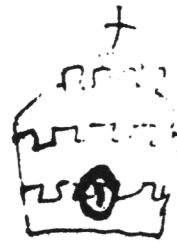
Se non è vero è ben'trovato one might say about this colorful anecdote.⁸ There is, however, one more detail that may serve to put the finishing touch to its satirical accuracy and verisimilitude. Professor E. Curatolo writes,

But there is more. A minute examination has shown us that in the papal tiara on the first of the sculptures, which begins the sequence mimicking a woman in labor, there is a small baby's face (which should not be confused with the large face carved in relief on the sixth shield) and which does not figure in any other of the seven tiaras.

This baby's head (placed as indicated on the sketch in figure 12), which is not interpreted by Professor Curatolo and is mistakenly seen by Witkowski as a miniature version of the woman's head,⁹ might be read as something like a chapter heading or an introductory epigraph about the birth of a new scion of the family that was crowned with the papal tiara.

Dellhora prefers a more gracious interpretation.

The explanation is logical and provides an interpretation of the satire itself.



12.

After sculpting the last shield, which in place of the mother's head bears the head of the newborn infant, Bernini reproduced this in miniature, placing it above the papal tiara, precisely where a being born of the Barberini family should find its logical placement.

The pope — on behalf of his nephew — had repudiated the offspring of his family, and the great sculptor, assuming the role of minister of justice and of morality, positioned the bastard's head above the papal tiara, exactly where it deserved to be. (*La iglesia Catolica*, 357)

Moreri, in his *Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* (Paris, 1759), expresses his amazement: "It is surprising that in a city where the authorities know so well how to shut men's mouths, they have not yet found the secret of forcing a piece of marble to be silent."

There were, however, attempts to do so: M. A. Gazeau, in his book *Les Bouffons* (Paris, 1882), shows a picture of the statue of Pasquino in Rome (p. 181), but he claims that its original was not a tailor but a shoemaker, and writes about attempts that were made to stop the "marble mouth."

Several popes tried without success to suppress the unbridled scurrilousness of these satires, which at times degenerated into defamatory libels. Among others, Adrian VI (1522–23), who was strongly attacked for a parsimony that verged on avarice, resolved to have the statue removed and thrown into the Tiber. He was dissuaded only when it was pointed out to him that Pasquino would not be made dumb by drowning, but would rather make himself heard even more loudly than the frogs in the Pontine marshes. Adrian VI had the good sense not to put his plan into effect.

This was the same Pope Adrian whom the Romans hated so much that on the day after his death crowds of the populace gathered outside the house of his greatest enemy and adorned its entrance with the inscription "To the liberator of the Roman people."

Apart from those already mentioned, Pasquino's attacks on Pope Urban VIII were extremely numerous; Laffont cites a whole series. The targets were the pope, his family, and especially his nephews. Thus he proposed that Don Taddeo, the culprit in the "affair" depicted on the plinths of the canopy, should be castrated: "Castrate Francesco,

Antonio, and Don Taddeo . . ." is to be found in the pamphlet *Il grosso e idioto Pasquino*. In another pamphlet, entitled *Pasquino's Answer to the Beggar who Asked him for Alms*, he scourged the avarice of the pope.

*Ohimé! Io non ho quattrino
Tutto 'l mio è da Barberino!*

[Alas, I have not a farthing;
Barberino has everything I possess!]

In the rhymed pamphlet *Pasquino e le api* he attacked the bees that formed the heraldic emblem of the Barberini family.

To the Pope and to his nephews, who go by the name of those bees that they bear on their coat of arms:

Pasquino: Oh Bees, whom heaven has sent down upon the soil of Rome to gather nectar to your hearts' content, show me now your wax and let me taste the sweet honey that you have made.

The Bees: How greedy you are! Barbarous war and the blood that you have shed on the earth for our sake — those shall be your wax and your honey.

If Pasquino himself was an out-and-out antipapist, his name was, however, used by the Catholics themselves for their own pamphleteering purposes. There are, for example, some no less biting pamphlets written by Catholics attacking the Calvinists, collected under the general title *Passevent Parisien respondant à Pasquin Romain: De la vie de ceux qui sont allés demeurer à Genève et se disent vivre selon la réformation de l'Evangile: faict en forme de Dialogue* (Paris, 1556). These were written in the form of dialogues between Pasquino and Passevent, attacking the Calvinists in every possible way and "*les gros paillards de leur Eglise, comme Calvin, Farel et Viret*."

Bernini, too, was equally uninhibited in the scope and extent of his ideas and in the means of putting them into effect. Both the boldness of his satire and the central feature of St. Peter's, into which he was not afraid to plunge the arrow of his sarcasm, are typical of the man. We have only to recall how, in the guise of portraying the mystic ecstasy of St. Teresa (again in the holy of holies of a church, in this case Santa Maria della Vittoria),¹¹ [he created] an image of the orgasmic rapture of the great hysteric that is unsurpassed in its realism. This was a malicious

joke, aimed at [Pope Urban], who nine years later (by a decree of 15 March 1642), under a resolution of the Council of Trent, issued an instruction *urbi et orbi* "to banish from every Christian house all images that are obscene, lascivious, and immodest." For all the friendship that existed between these two brigands, this [statue of St. Teresa] was entirely in character with the one — Bernini — who was also a great artist. We should not forget that both of them were responsible for the vandalistic plundering of "one hundred eighty-six thousand, three hundred ninety-three pounds of bronze" (Larousse, *Grand dictionnaire universel*) from the portico of the Roman Pantheon. "Urban stripped Flavian bare in order to enrobe Peter" was the ubiquitous Pasquino's jocular comment. It was perhaps in "compensation" for this that Bernini, aided and abetted by Urban, disfigured the Pantheon of Agrippa with two Renaissance campanili, or bell towers. Whichever way one considers it, they thoroughly deserved their nickname of "Bernini's asses' ears." Later, artistic good taste prevailed, and these two "dovecotes" no longer exist, having been demolished; but in 1725 they were still in place, as albums of architectural drawings made in that year bear witness. History, however, has fixed a much worse pair of asses' ears on the head of Urban VIII — the twin vices of obscurantism and repression. Mankind will never forget the year 1633, the year in which the canopy over the high altar in St. Peter's was built. For in the year of its construction occurred one of the most shameful moments in the history of Rome and the papacy: in that same year — on 22 June 1633 — there took place the enforced public recantation of the "prisoner of the Inquisition," Galileo Galilei, at which he was made to renounce the "heretical teachings of Copernicus"!

It is natural that the question should arise, How was it that no one noticed Bernini's malicious practical joke? How was it that for many, many years Pope Urban VIII celebrated the liturgy while beneath his very nose was this marble lampoon directed against the whole Barberini clan? Again, legend has preserved a reference to the fact that certain rumors and suspicions may have arisen. It is in this connection that the pope is said to have questioned Bernini about the decoration of the plinths. P. Noury writes of it thus:

When Pope Urban VIII asked him to explain his work, Bernini replied ambiguously: 'It concerns your family.' The pope assumed that the artist was alluding to the coat of arms of the Barberini family, but in the artist's mind that phrase had a different meaning.

The coat of arms remained untouched.

The extent to which this "hint" remained undetected, and thus preserved the ornamental coat of arms undamaged, is confirmed by eyewitnesses. Dr. H. Vigouroux, for instance, informed Dr. Witkowski of a letter on this subject from the former's brother, the Abbé Vigouroux, written from Rome.

The drawings published by the *Chronique médicale* are quite exact, but one must be a physician to see what he [the correspondent] saw in those escutcheons. I have often noticed them, because they are placed immediately adjoining the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul, only a meter or so above ground level, and everyone can see them; but it is certain that no one suspects anything unless he has been forewarned. When I went there, men and women were leaning against these escutcheons, to hear the Mass that was being said nearby, and they saw nothing more in them than someone or other's coat of arms. (*L'Art profane*, 262)

How these "men and women" behaved, who had noticed nothing until the Roman magazine *L'asino* (famous for its anticlerical caricatures) seized upon the material published in the *Chronique médicale* and opened their eyes to those ill-fated shields, we may gather from a few of the headlines printed in that weekly magazine during the year 1903:

Consequences of Revelations on Significance of the Bernini Sculptures

Incredible Influx of Curious Visitors from all over the World in Irreverent Pilgrimage to the Cathedral of St. Peter

The Prime Basilica of Christianity turned into a Theater of Comic and Grotesque Scenes

Demonstrations, Tumults, Violence

The Holy Temple in a State of Siege

Measures taken by the Vatican

The Roman Curia intends to cover Bernini's carved Escutcheons

If we want to find the solution of the riddle as to why this hurricane, these tumults were not unleashed earlier, and

why the secret of Bernini's satire in all its fullness was not revealed sooner, we shall seek the answer in vain from the popes, from St. Peter, from doctors Noury and Witkowski; nor shall we find it beneath the canopy or the boards, with which, apparently, the Roman Curia never did cover up the ill-starred escutcheons of the Barberini family.

The answer to the riddle lies entirely in that the full picture, the true "image" of this montage statement only *emerges* in the sequential juxtaposition [of its constituent "frames"]. Each shield, in itself means nothing. Viewed in isolation, it is dumb. But in the joint combination of all eight of them and taken together with the tomb of St. Peter and the basilica as a whole, they ring out across the centuries as a devastating pamphlet against the plunderers and brigands concealed beneath the papal tiara.

In themselves, the pictures, the phases, the elements of the whole are innocent and indecipherable. The blow is struck only when the elements are juxtaposed into a sequential image. The placing of the shields — or rather their "displacing" — around the four plinths, at right angles and at six meters distance from each other, together with the need to walk round the whole vast quadrilateral of the canopy and to begin from one particular corner (the left-hand front pillar) — these are the factors that make up the cunning separation of the eight montage sequences. Such is the method by which, in the very heart of Catholicism, a most venomous satire on its triple-crowned head has managed to remain in encoded form for centuries.

The separation of its elements is the best means of concealing an image that emerges, or should emerge, from their sequential juxtaposition.

Here I cannot help recalling an analogous instance. Admittedly it is to be found at the other end of the continent, almost three hundred years later, and in a totally different class context. In one thing, however, it resembles the foregoing: here as there it was a means of avoiding the vigilance of censorship — a censorship no less corrosive than that of the Tsarist government in 1905. In both cases the method of pulling the wool over the censor's eyes was the same. In both cases the principle was the dissociated display of images that only acquired significance through

the montage technique of sequential juxtaposition. In this instance, the medium was not carved marble intended to last for centuries, but printer's ink on the pages of a satirical magazine — one of those that, like the clouds of arrows of a light advance guard, were showered down upon the enemy, accompanying a great popular upsurge, the first wave of the movement that was to overthrow autocracy.

I am describing this from memory, on the basis of memoirs that I read somewhere, written by an old journalist who was active in 1905, when it was strictly forbidden to make any reference to such events as the dispersal of a crowd by armed force. How, then, could such a scene be conveyed in a magazine? A way around the ban was found: two unrelated pictures were drawn, in the form of an initial illuminated letter and a pictorial endpiece to an article. In one — a purely cinematographic frame! — were shown the legs of a rank of soldiers marching in step; in another, a confused mass of civilian legs in disorderly retreat. The pictures were shown to the censor separately, and he saw no objection to passing these vignettes, each of little significance and in any case "harmless" in themselves, which were, furthermore, shown to him on different days. On the pages of the magazine, however, they were placed in such a way that they merged into a single image — the dispersal of a crowd — that instantly sprang to life. The censor had been circumvented. The hint went home. The issue of the magazine was confiscated after its appearance. But too late. The name of the censor was Savenkov; the magazine was called *Zritel* (The spectator).

Shebuyev's magazine *Pulemyot* (The machine gun) introduced "montage" of this kind as an integral part of its makeup. Over many issues, the role of such montage shots was played by the front and back covers. The meaning of what they depicted and their full graphic significance were largely revealed by the juxtaposition of the first and last pages.

The cover of issue three showed "A Russian Sailor" with the caption "Russia's freedom was born on the sea." The back cover had the caption "The God-Fearing Warriors" and showed a galloping detachment of maddened Cossacks. The juxtaposition of the two spoke for itself. The

cover of issue four showed Father Gapon, with a crowd of typically Russian faces behind him. The caption was "Follow me!" On the back cover was the same caption, "Follow me!" but the picture above it showed a crowd of injured people limping away from a demonstration — and so on.

Zritel also used "montages" of a kind more complex in the mental juxtaposition linking them. One drawing, for instance, showed twenty-five dark figures, among which it was fairly easy to discern Nicholas II, Alexander III, several grand dukes, Father John of Kronstadt, and a number of ministers. The caption read "25 Silhouettes," followed by a multiplication sign, then the figure 4. The censor passed the drawing, having failed to notice that it was a cryptogram: the twenty-five black figures multiplied by four made a hundred black figures — a "Black Hundred." The expression *Black Hundred* thereafter passed into general use, although it was strictly forbidden to use it in print.

Where architectural interiors are concerned, one might adduce more "direct" examples, taken from other pages in the history of architecture, such as the system of rising vaults in Hagia Sophia, which reveal their scope and magnificence step by step, or the interplay of arcades and vaulting in Chartres Cathedral, whose calculated magic of sequential montage I have myself admired more than once.

These examples not only link montage technique with architecture, they vividly underline the even closer, immediate link, within montage, between *mise-en-cadre* and *mise-en-scène*. This is one of the cornerstones without which not only can there be no understanding of either sphere, but still less can there be any planned, consistent teaching of the art of montage.

Notes

Eisenstein's "Montage and Architecture" will be included in *Towards a Theory of Montage*, vol. 2 of *S. M. Eisenstein: Selected Works*, ed. Richard Taylor, forthcoming from BFI Publishing and Indiana University Press. It is published here with the kind permission of the British Film Institute. Citations in the text are as given by Eisenstein.

1. This drawing has not been traced, but a similar argument, leading to a work by David Burliuk that was clearly marked by his fondness for children's drawings, can be found in S. M. Eisenstein, *Non-indifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 247–48.
2. Kolomenskoye, now in the southeastern suburbs of Moscow, became the summer residence of the Grand Princes of Muscovy in 1532. The wooden palace referred to here was begun in 1667 but has not survived.
3. The Egyptian painting has not survived. Eisenstein, however, obviously refers here to representations dating from the New Empire, which were discussed at great length by Heinrich Schäfer in *Von ägyptischer Kunst: besonders der Zeichenkunst* (Leipzig, 1919); see *Principles of Egyptian Art*, English translation of 4th ed., ed. Emma Brunner-Traut and John Baines (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), fig. 190. On spatial rendering in such representations, see Erwin Panofsky, *Le Perspective comme forme symbolique*, French ed. of *Perspektive als symbolische Kunst*, trans. Guy Ballangé (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1975), 83.
4. Burliuk, painter and poet, was one of the most important members of the pre-revolutionary Russian avant-garde. His text of 1912 on cubism provides probably one of the first purely formalist interpretations of the art of this movement; it also had some influence on the formation of the tenets of the Russian formalist school of literary criticism (trans. in John E. Bowlt, *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism*, rev. ed. [New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988], 69–77). On Burliuk and his relationship with Mayakovsky and other members of the Russian avant-garde, see the memoirs of Benedikt Livshits, *The One and a Half-Eyed Archer*, ed. and trans. John E. Bowlt (Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977).
5. Auguste Choisy, *Histoire de l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1889).
6. This can often be tested in the film shots that are not taken "head-on" but from an angle or on the diagonal. — S.M.E.
7. The topic in Dellhora's book that interests me is set out with a wealth of detail and is supplied with an exhaustive quantity of photographs and drawings. I recommend this book to readers that are interested in such details, which can be recalled here only in very abbreviated form. — S.M.E.
8. "It may not be true but it's a good story." Italian in the original.
9. The woman of the first shield has her mouth closed and is almost smiling; furthermore, the tiara above her is the only one that bears in the middle of it a female face that is also displaying a gracious smile. — S.M.E.
10. "What the barbarians did not do, the Barberinis did." Latin in the original.
11. The façade of this church was decorated at the expense of Cardi-

nal Scipione Borghese in exchange for the statue of a hermaphrodite, which was found in the nearby gardens of a Carmelite monastery and which adorned a gallery of its courtyard. — S.M.E.

Notes to Introduction

1. Fragments of *Montage* have already been published in English, under the title "Montage 1938," in *The Film Sense*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1942), and in S. M. Eisenstein, *Notes of a Film Director* (1958; New York: Dover Publications, 1970). A more substantial section was published in S. M. Eisenstein, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964). "Montage and Architecture" first appeared in the Italian edition of Eisenstein's writings, *Teoria generale del montaggio* (Venice: Marsilio, 1985), 78ff. I am grateful to François Albera for locating and providing me with Eisenstein's text while I was working on Choisy.
2. "El Greco y el cine" (ca. 1937), in S. M. Eisenstein, *Cinematisme: Peinture et cinéma*, ed. François Albera and trans. Anne Zouboff (Brussels: Editions complexe, 1980), 16–17. Hubert Damisch mentions this essay (and the reference to Choisy) in connection with Le Corbusier's "storyboards" for his plans for Algiers and Rio in his *Précisions sur un état présent de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme* of 1930 and *La Ville radiieuse* of 1935. See Damisch, "Les Tréteaux de la vie moderne," in *Le Corbusier: Une Encyclopédie* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1987), 253–55.
3. "Vertical Montage" was first published in *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* in 1940. It is translated by Leyda as the second, third, and

fourth parts of *The Film Sense*, with the respective titles of "Synchronization of Senses" (which bears the El Greco passage), "Color and Meaning," and "Form and Content: Practice."

4. From the draft of a preface for *Cinematisme*; quoted by Albera in his introduction, 7.
5. Cf. "Le Mouvement de la couleur" (1939–40), in Sergei Eisenstein, *Le Mouvement de l'art*, ed. François Albera and Naum Kleiman (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1986), 67. The book is a collection of essays dealing with the relationship between literature and cinema.
6. Although I use the correct title given to the essay by Richard Taylor in the new English edition of Eisenstein's writings, *Selected Works*, vol. 1, *Writings 1922–1934*, ed. and trans. Richard Taylor (London and Bloomington: BFI Publishing and Indiana University Press, 1988), 24, I prefer to cite Jay Leyda's translation in S. M. Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1949), 28, as it is more available to readers.
7. See Kasimir Malevich, "And Images Triumph on the Screens" (1925), trans. Troels Andersen, in Kasimir Malevich, *Essays on Art* (New York: Wittenborn, 1971), 226–32.
8. Paul Klee, *Pedagogical Sketchbook* (1925), trans. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1960), 33.
9. S. M. Eisenstein, "Piranesi, or The Fluidity of Forms," trans. Roberta Reader, *Oppositions* 11 (Winter 1977): 84–110. See also Manfredo Tafuri's commentary in the same issue, "The Dialectics of the Avant-Garde: Piranesi and Eisenstein," 74–80, and Mario Gandelsonas's short postscript, 81.
10. Yve-Alain Bois, "A Picturesque Stroll around Clara-Clara," *October* 29 (Summer 1984): 33–62. This essay has been reprinted in *October: The First Decade* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), and, with a postscript, in Ernst-Gerhard Guse, ed., *Richard Serra* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988).
11. Jean-Louis Cohen has noted that "Russia is the only country where a translation of Auguste Choisy's *Histoire de l'architecture* was undertaken" (Cohen, *Le Corbusier et la mystique de l'URSS: Théories et projets pour Moscou* [Brussels: Mardaga, 1987], 52; English translation forthcoming from Princeton Architectural Press). The first volume of the translation appeared in 1906, the second in 1907, and this book, which was Le Corbusier's bible, had some impact on the formation of constructivist architects. Eisenstein was, in fact, not the only Russian member of the avant-garde to be struck by Choisy's analysis of the Acropolis: again according to Cohen, Moisei Ginzburg redrew the illustrations in his *Rhythm in Architecture* of 1923. In 1938 *L'Art de bâtir chez les Romains* was also translated into Russian, but Cohen has convincingly argued that this time the move was in part directed, oddly enough, against Le Corbusier (*Le Corbusier*, 259): This late edition of Choisy's work formed part of a strategy of the global presentation of French rationalism intended to demonstrate that Le Corbusier, who had played a major role on the Russian architectural scene, was not the sole voice (cf. the translation of Viollet-le-Duc's *Entretiens sur l'architecture* in 1937; the translation of Giedion's *Bauen in Frankreich*, which presented Perret as its hero, in the same year; and the republication of Choisy's *Histoire* in 1935).

12. Choisy borrows directly from Piranesi in his *L'Art de bâtir chez les Romains* of 1874. On this issue and on Le Corbusier's interest in Choisy, explicitly stated in his *Sur les quatre routes* of 1941, see my *History of Axonometry*, forthcoming from MIT Press. On the relationship between Eisenstein and Le Corbusier, see Cohen, *Le Corbusier*, 72–74, 150–52, 240–41.

13. For an account of the historical context of Choisy's discovery, see Jacques Lucan, "The Propylaion of the Acropolis in Athens: An Architectural Mystery," *Daidalos* 15 (March 1985): 42–56, and Richard Etlin, "Le Corbusier, Choisy, and French Hellenism: The Search for a New Architecture," *Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (June 1987): 264–78. Viollet-le-Duc's statements about Greek dissymmetry can be found in the first volume of his *Entretiens, Lectures on Architecture*, trans. Benjamin Bucknall (New York: Dover Publications, 1987), 88–90, 252–55.
14. Auguste Choisy, "Note sur la courbure dissymétrique des degrés qui limitent au couchant la plate-forme du Parthénon," in *Compte-rendu des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (Paris, 1865), 413–16. Choisy's presentation was favorably received by Hittorff.
15. Cf. the famous passage from Le Corbusier's *Oeuvre complète* that deals with the *promenade architecturale* and the Villa Savoye: "Arab architecture has much to teach us. It is appreciated while on the move, with one's feet; it is while walking, moving from one place to another, that one sees how the arrangements of the architecture develop. This is a principle contrary to Baroque architecture" (*Oeuvre complète 1929–1934* [Zurich: Editions Girsberger, 1964], 24).

16. "It is . . . an architecture that is intended to enclose and shelter human beings in a psychic sense, to order them absolutely so that they can always find a known conclusion at the end of any journey, but finally to let them play at freedom and action all the while. Everything works out; the play seems tumultuous but nobody gets hurt and everyone wins. It is . . . a maternal architecture [that] creates a world with which, today, only children, if they are lucky, could identify" (Vincent Scully, *Modern Architecture: The Architecture of Democracy* [New York: Braziller, 1965], 10).

17. See Philipp Fehl, "The 'Stemme' on Bernini's Balacchino in St. Peter's: A Forgotten Compliment," *Burlington Magazine* 118, no. 880 (July 1976): 484–91. For Fehl, who does not dwell on any of the authors mentioned by Eisenstein, Bernini's sequence "celebrates the advent of the Barberini papacy."

Figure Credits

Frontispiece: Photograph by Leonard von Matt.

Figures 1–12 are reprinted from Eisenstein's original essay. Figure references in the text are as given in the original.