Anti-Genre

New Wave Cinemas and the Liberation of Film Form, 1960-1975

----------*1895*----------Birth of Cinema

1900s Attractions

----------*1902*----------*A Trip to the Moon*

1910s Narrative 1: Continuity Editing

1920s Narrative 2: Classical Film Forms / Montage Theories

----------*1917*----------Tanizaki 'Pure Film'

----------*1924*----------*Aelita*

----------*1924*----------Epstein 'Photogénie'

1930s Sound ←→ Radio & Telecommunications

----------*1932*----------*FP1 Doesn't Answer*

1940s Color & Plasticity

----------*1938*---Imamura, 'Cartoon Film Theory'

----------*1940*-------Eisenstein, 'Notes on Disney'

----------*1941*----------*Princess Iron Fan*

1955-65 Expanded Film Form & Genre ←→ Television

----------*1958*----------*Invention for Destruction*

----------*1960*----------*Silent Star*

----------*1965*---Sontag 'Imagination of Disaster'

1965-1975 New Waves

----------*1972*----------*Solaris*

[PREWAR STUDIO CINEMA] NEW WAVES (From Deleuze)

ITALY — “Italian Neo-Realism”

Rossellini
De Sica
Visconti
Antonioni
Fellini

FRANCE — “French New Wave”

Truffaut
Tati
Godard
Rivette
Bresson
Renais

GERMANY

Herzog

USA

Hitchcock
Altman
Welles

JAPAN

Ozu
Kurosawa
Mizoguchi

[PREWAR STUDIO CINEMA] NEW WAVES

(Revising and adding to Deleuze)

JAPAN

Ozu
Kurosawa
Mizoguchi

Oshima
Matsumoto
Imamura
Teshigahara

INDIA

Roy
Kapur
Chopra

Ray
Sen

Ghatak

RUSSIA

Eisenstein *Tarkovsky*

An Auteur in Space

SF GENRE

At the same time that new wave cinemas were emerging, the literary genre of science fiction was undergoing massive changes.

Stanislaw Lem is often heralded as one of the most important and even paradigmatic figures in this ‘new wave’ of science fiction.

SF GENRE

Recall Suvin's distinction between two kinds of SF, one based on *extrapolative modeling* and the other on *analogic modeling*.

"The highest form of analogic modeling would be the analogy to a mathematical model, such as the fairly primary one explicated in Abbott's Flatland, as well as the ontological analogies found in a compressed overview form in some stories by Borges and the Polish writer Lem, and in a somewhat more humane narration with a suffering protagonist in some stories by Kafka (*The Metamorphosis* or *In the Penal Colony*) and novels by Lem (*Solaris*)."

"…this semantic field is a modern variant of the conte philosophique of the 18th century."

Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris*, on which Tarkovsky's movie is based, is a prime example of analogic modeling.

Suvin's distinction recalls a more common one, between "hard science fiction" and "speculative fiction." But Suvin sought a combination of something like speculative fiction with hard sciences. So did Lem.

SF GENRE

This is what Lem wrote about the novel on which *Silent Star* is based:

“Today I am of the opinion that my first science-fiction novels lack any value (despite the fact that I gained world acclaim through their numerous editions). I wrote them — this was the case with *Astronauci* (The Astronauts) published in 1951 — driven by motives that I still understand today, however the world presented in them radically differs from all experiences of my life.

“Everything is so smooth and balanced; among the heroes we have a positive Russian character and a sweet Chinese; naiveté is present on all pages of this book. The hope that in the year 2000 the world would be wonderful is indeed very childish.... As a very young man to a certain extent I must have resembled a sponge that sucked in postulates proposed by socialism. I was concentrated on making the world more and more positive. In a certain sense I fooled myself, since my feelings and hopes were genuine. Today I am a bit disgusted by this book.”

SF GENRE

Solaris is unusual in that both the original novel and the film are considered masterworks of literature and cinema, respectively.

They are nonetheless very different, and Lem felt Tarkovsky's film completely missed the point of the novel.

As Roumiana Deltcheva and Eduard Vlasov discuss in detail in their essay, the changes made by Tarkovsky to Lem's novel can be attributed to his personal artistic vision, to his profound resistance to artistic techniques associated with genres — not Lem or SF in particular, but to genres in general.

If we adopt Tarkovsky's perspective, his film should be considered a Tarkovsky film, a Tarkovsky genre, not a science fiction film.

But we can also read it as Deltcheva and Vlasov do, as radical deformation of science fiction that pushes it to its limits.

They write, "Tarkovsky's main approach in screening Lem's novel can be defined as *the overcoming of genre constraints*. While the verbal narrative is a fairly canonical science-fiction writing, the film presents problems with regard to its generic description." (533)

SF GENRE

Deltcheva and Vlasov:

“Lem constructs his narrative along a straight, unidirectional spatial axis.”

“Tarkovsky introduces a ring composition.”

“The main distinctive feature of the spatial organization of the film, which differentiates it from the novel, is the introduction of the obvious opposition, House versus Station. This opposition manifests itself on two levels. On a purely technical level, we are presented with the images of the cozy, earthly house and the distant, impersonal experimental station. On a symbolic level, we can identify the juxtaposition of the familiar, safe world of the home with the alien, mysterious interiors of the "foreign territory." Following Bakhtin, we are faced with two distinct chronotopes: the idyllic chronotope and the chronotope of the castle.”

SF GENRE

HOME

Deltcheva and Vlasov cite Bakhtin to characterize the idyllic chronotope of home:

“Idyllic life and its events are inseparable from this concrete, spatial corner of the world, where the fathers and grandfathers lived.... This little spatial world is limited and sufficient unto itself, not linked in any intrinsic way with other places, with the rest of the world. But in this little spatially limited world a sequence of generations is localized, that is potentially without limit.” (Bahktin)

STATION:

“The motif of the quest and the character’s penetration into an alien world evoke the chivalric romance and one of its inherent chronotopes, the castle where the hero's actions necessarily occur within closed, confined spaces. These spaces are totally detached from their outer surroundings and they function according to intrinsic ‘magic’ laws. These isolated topoi—although outwardly resembling home by virtue of their closed volumetrics—are always hostile to the hero. This feature of the chronotope determines the peculiarity of the chivalric romance and the Gothic novel.” (Deltcheva and Vlasov)

SOME OTHER EXAMPLES OF ‘NEW WAVE SF CINEMA’

RUSSIA

Tarkovsky	— *Solaris* (1972)
	— *Stalker* (1979)

JAPAN

Teshigahara	—*Woman in the Dunes* (1964)
	—*The Face of Another* (1966)
	—*The Man without a Map* (1968)

FRANCE

Goddard	—*Alphaville* (1965)
Renais	—*Je t’aime, je t’aime* (1968)
Marker	—*Sans Soleil* (1983)

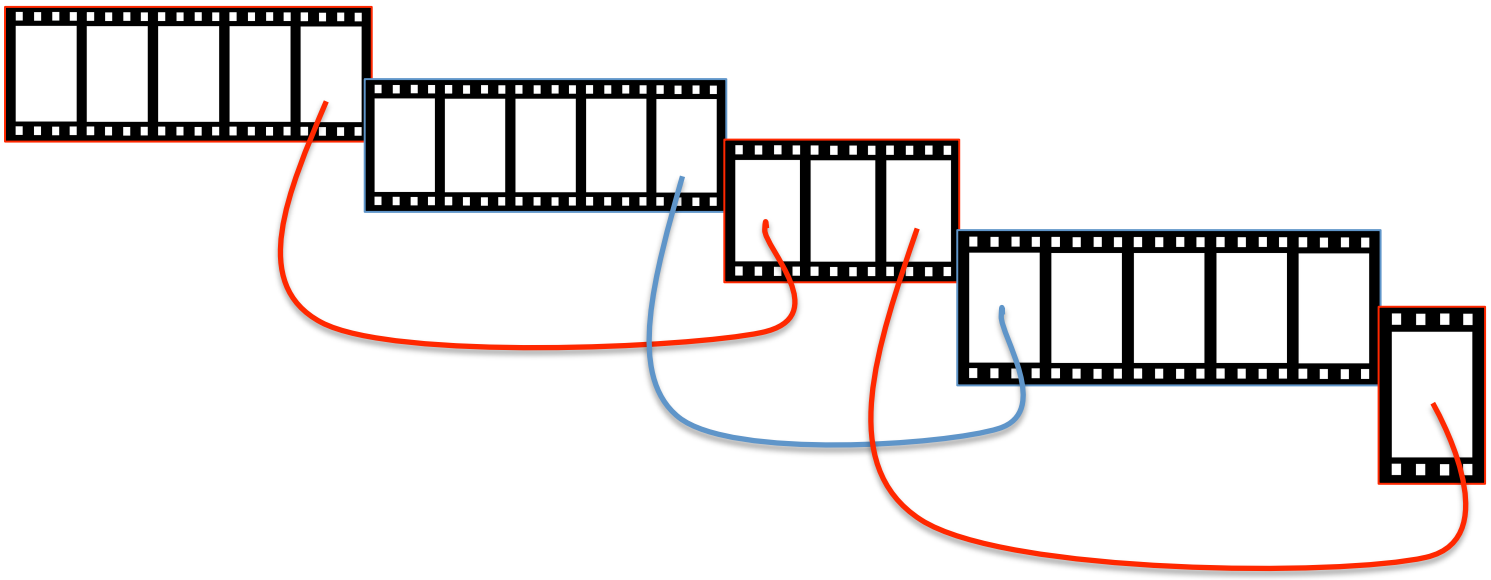
HISTORY OF FILM FORM

CONTINUITY EDITING

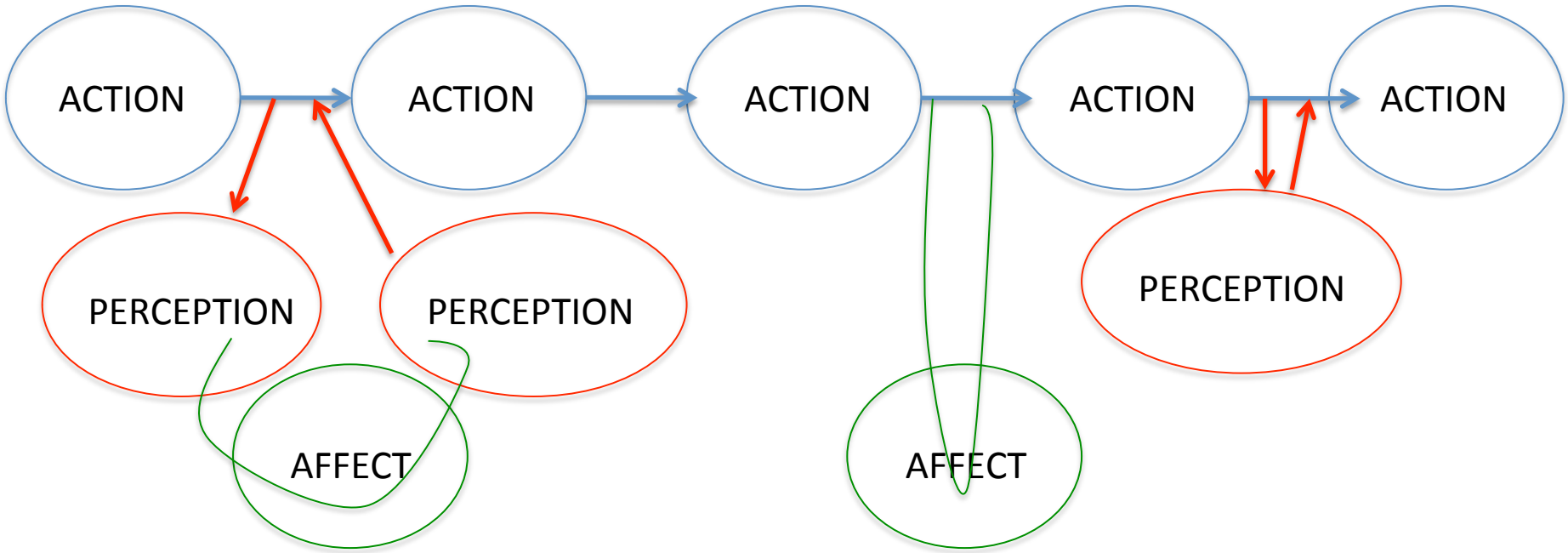
CLOSE SHOT
AFFECT
non-conscious
sensation/feeling

MEDIUM SHOT
PERCEPTION
seeing, listening, talking
intersubjective

LONG SHOT
ACTION
cause and effect
action and reaction

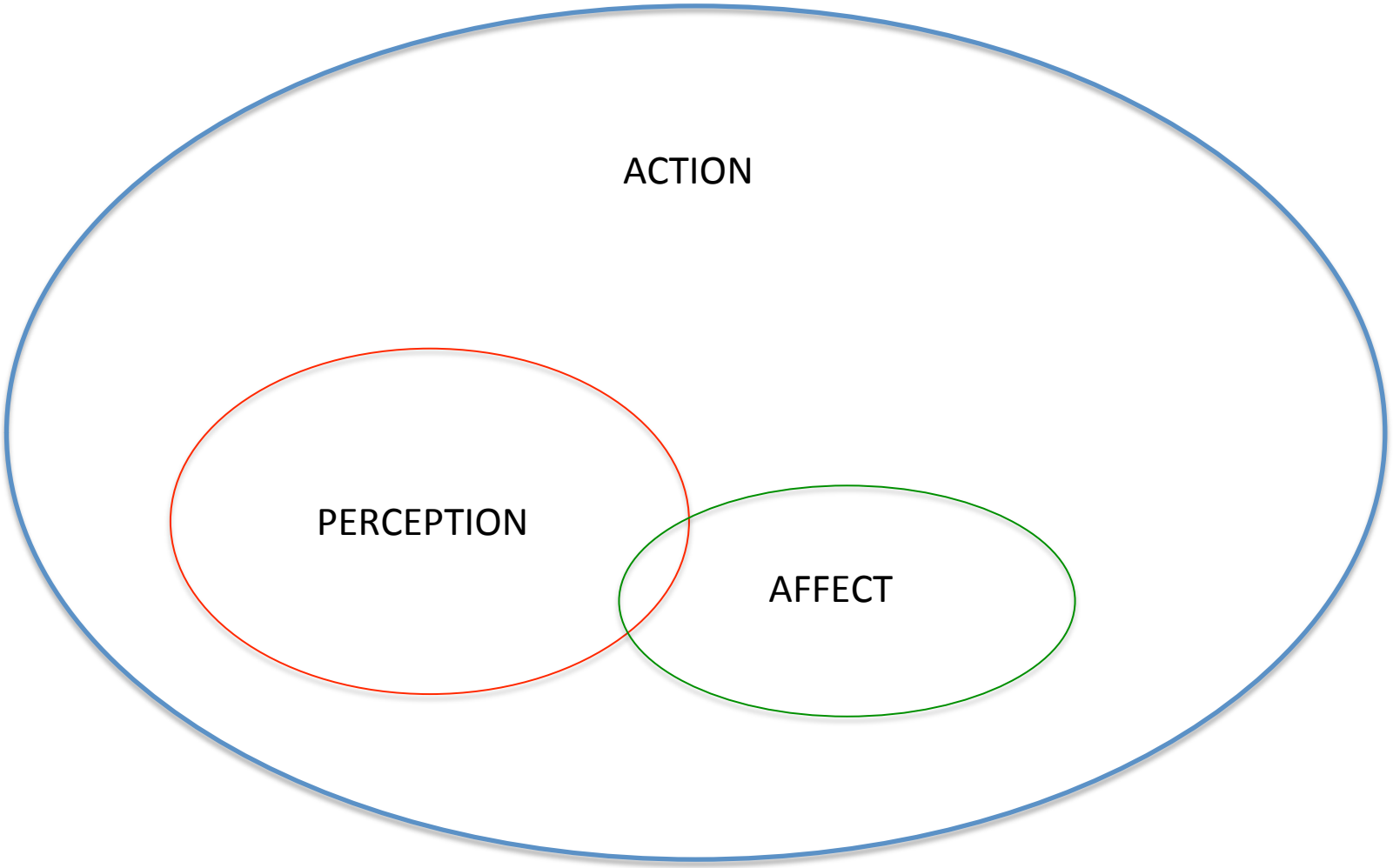


CONTINUITY EDITING



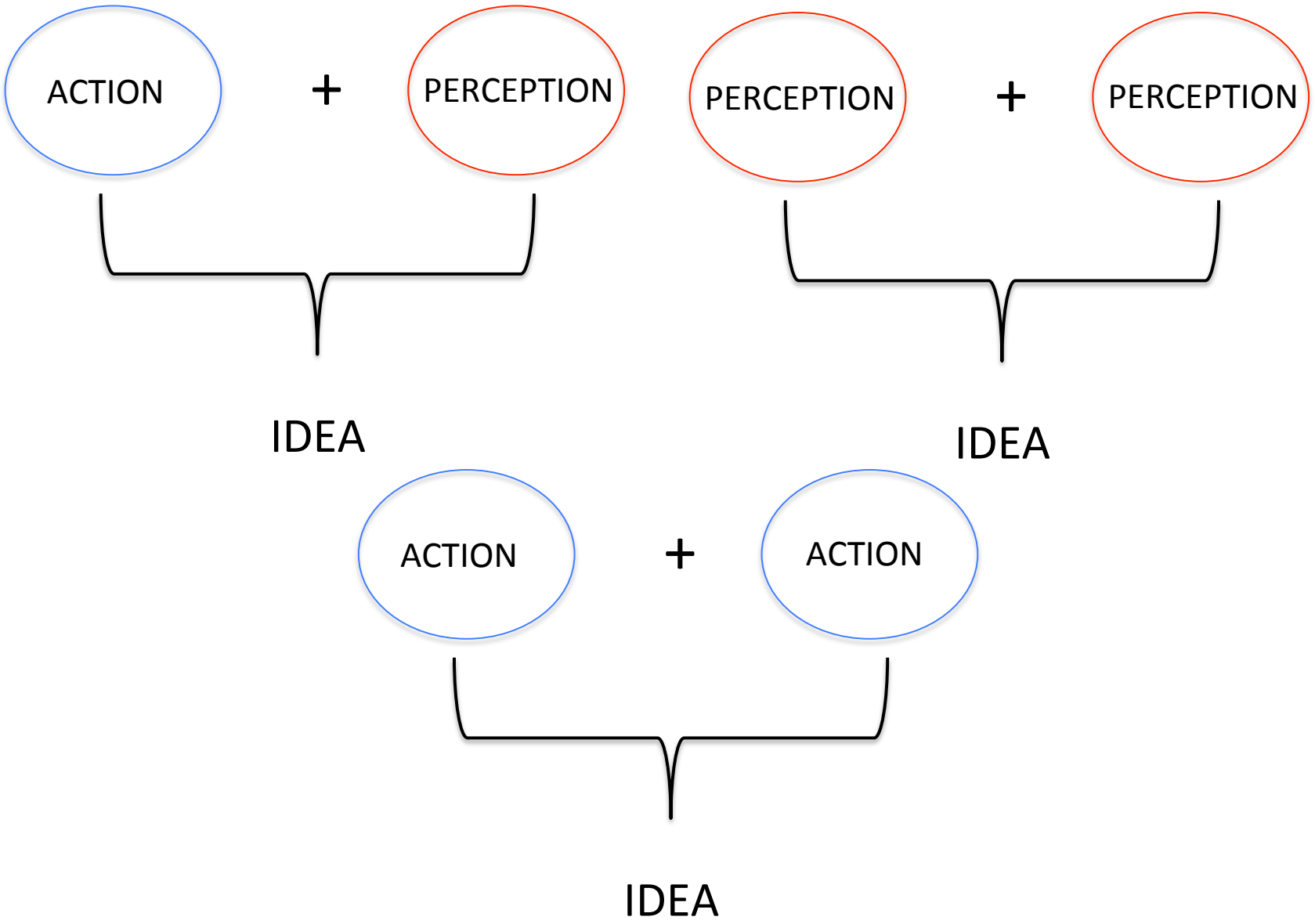
Action assures overall continuity and direction for editing the sequences of images. It makes it easier to do crosscutting or parallel editing, too.

CONTINUITY EDITING

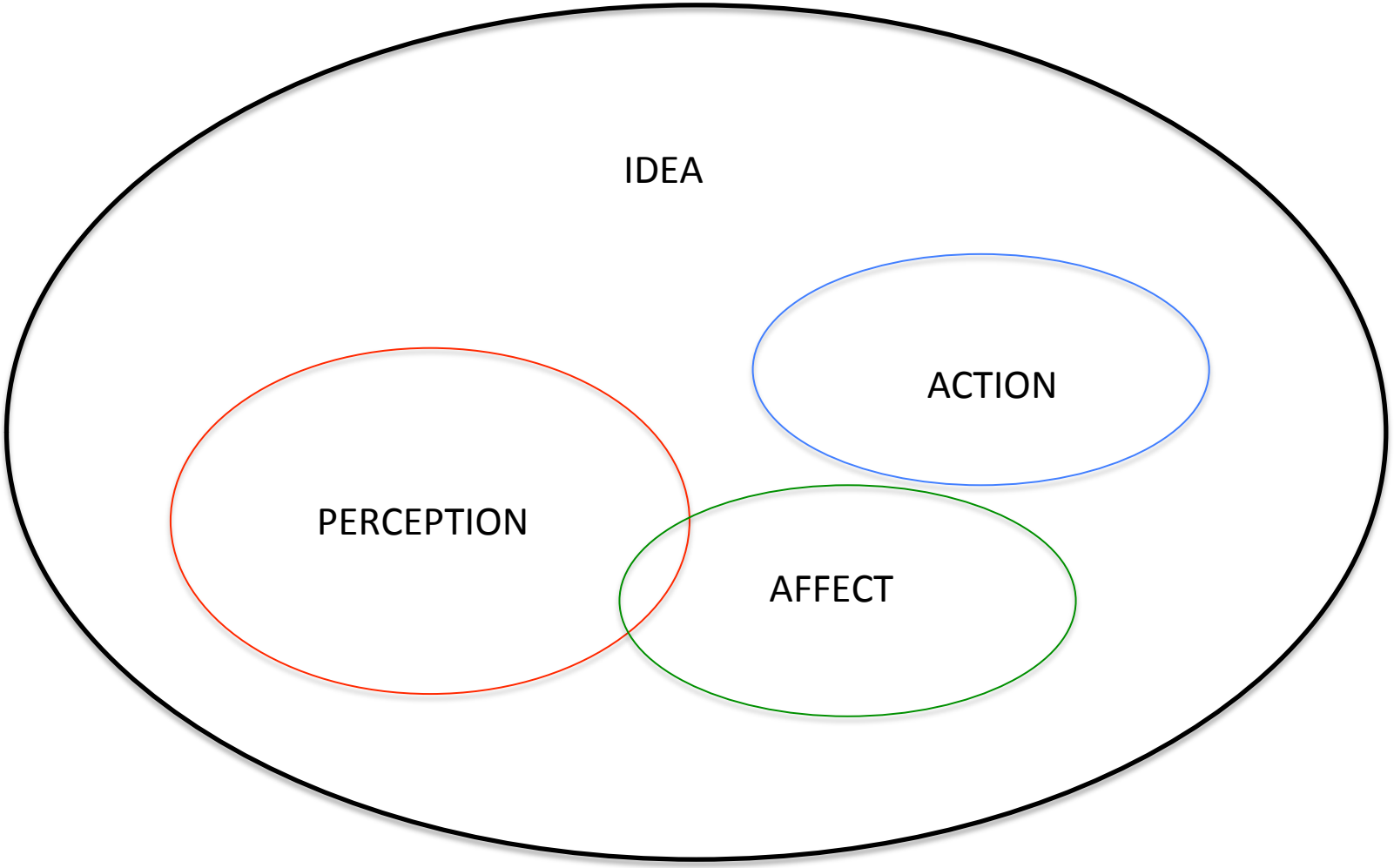


Overall, perception-images and affect-images are subordinated to action to assure narrative continuity.

MONTAGE THEORY



MONTAGE THEORY



Similarly, montage theory, in its initial form, tends to subordinate perception and affect and action to ideas (or symbolic relations).

TARKOVSKY — SCULPTING TIME

Tarkovsky cannot accept the "montage cinema" of Sergei Eisenstein, which he feels imposes an indirect and artificial experience of time on cinema:

"'Montage cinema' presents the audience with puzzles and riddles, makes them decipher symbols, wonder at allegories, appealing all the time to their intellectual experience" (118).

Tarkovsky also wants to counter the subordination of perception to action:

"The dominant, all-powerful factor of the film is *rhythm*, expressing the course of time within the frame. The actual passage of time is also made clear in the characters' behavior, the visual treatment and the sound — but these are all accompanying features, the absence of which, theoretically, would in no way affect the existence of film" (113).

TARKOVSKY — SCULPTING TIME

He thus proposes to work directly with the pressure of time :

"…rhythm is determined not by the length of the edited pieces, but by the pressure of the time that runs through them" (117).

"The consistency of time that runs through the shot, its intensity or 'sloppiness,' could be called time-pressure: then editing can be seen as the assembly of the pieces on the basis of the time-pressure within them" (114).

"Editing does not engender, or recreate, a new quality; it brings out a quality already inherent in the frames it joins" (119).

TARKOVSKY — SCULPTING TIME

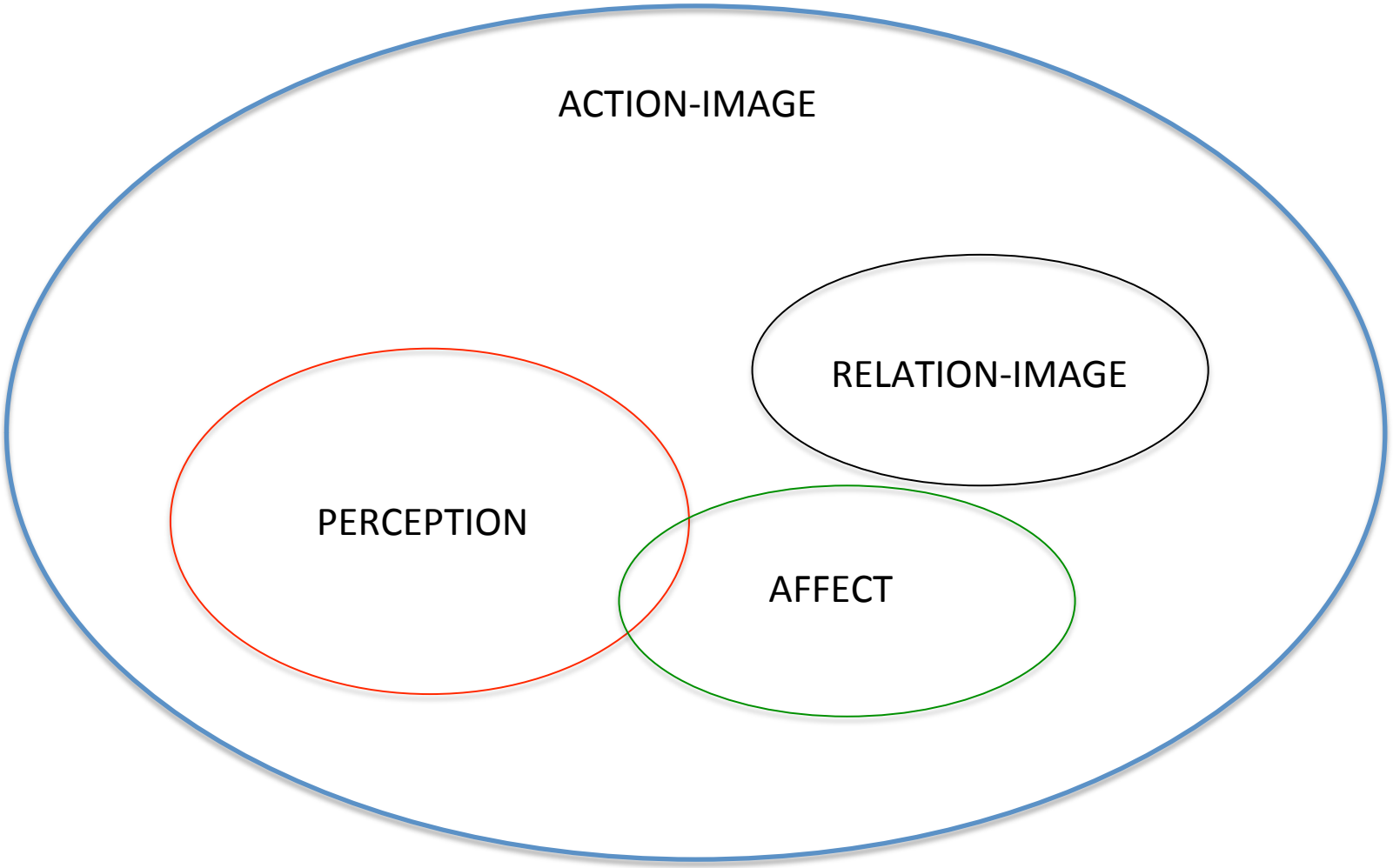
NO:	YES:
montage/continuity editing	rhythm/pressure of time
perception subordinate to narrative	narrative is secondary to temporal experience
genres	auteurs
‘rational cut’	‘irrational cut’

Andrei Tarkovsky, *Solyaris* (Solaris, 1972; Soviet Union)

DELEUZE: THE MOVEMENT IMAGE

0	1	2	3
PERCEPTION-IMAGE	AFFECTION-IMAGE	ACTION-IMAGE	RELATION-IMAGE

DELEUZE: THE MOVEMENT-IMAGE



Deleuze defines the movement-image in terms of an overall subordination of perception-images, affect-images, and relation-images to the action-image. He see such a subordination happening in different ways in the national prewar studio cinemas of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan, and the USA.

DELEUZE: THE TIME-IMAGE

In “Beyond the Movement-Image,” Deleuze addresses Italian neo-realism, French New Wave, and Ozu Yasujirō as prime examples of cinema going beyond the movement-image. Let’s consider his overall contrast between the movement-image and the time-image, somewhat schematically.

“…in everyday banality, the action-image and even the movement-image tend to disappear in favour of pure optical situations – connections of a new type – senses are in direct relation with time and thought.”

“The movement-image has not disappeared, but now exists only as the first dimension of an image that never stops growing in all directions.” (22)

	MOVEMENT-IMAGE	TIME-IMAGE
Character:	agent, actant	seer, voyant sensory-motor helplessness
Space:	establishing shot action situation	empty space/landscape & still life purely optical or sonic situations
Camera:	follows action subjective versus objective shots	fixed shot 'camera autonomy' (doesn't follow action) subjective and objective shots
Editing:	dissolves/fades montage perception subordinated to action rational cuts	montage cuts (hard cuts) sequences floating actions irrational cuts
Continuity:	sense of rupture with the everyday contradictions, opposition action-reaction, plot indirect relation to time	sense of continuity of everyday, series continuity, contrast absence or suspension of plot direct relation to time
Geopolitical:	the people are there (nations)	the people are missing
Example:	*Silent Star*	*Solaris*

MOVEMENT-IMAGE TIME-IMAGE

"… the character has become a kind of viewer. He shifts, runs and becomes animated in vain, the situation he is in outstrips his motor capacities on all sides, and makes him see and hear what is no longer subject to the rules of a response or an action. He records rather than acts." (3)

…the child is affected by a certain motor helplessness, but one which makes him all the more capable of seeing and hearing." (3)

"…the character does not act without seeing himself acting…" (6)

"The space of a sensory-motor situation is a setting which is already specified and presupposes an action which discloses it, or prompts a reaction which adapts to or modifies it." (5)

"…it is as if the action floats in the situation, rather than bringing it to a conclusion or strengthening it." (4)

"What might appear to be a return to 'primitive cinema' [early cinema] is just as much the elaboration of an astonishingly temperate style: the montage-cut, which will dominate modern cinema, is a purely optical passage or punctuation between images, working directly, sacrificing all synthetic effects." (13)

"…the fixity of the camera does not represent the only alternative to movement. Even when it is mobile, the camera is no longer content to sometimes to follow the characters' movements…." (23)

"This is the triple reversal which defines a beyond of movement. The image had to free itself from sensory-motor links; it had to stop being action-image in order to become a pure optical, sound (and tactile) image. But the latter was not enough: it had to enter into relations with yet other forces, so that it could itself escape from a world of clichés. It had to open up to powerful and direct revelations, those of the time-image, of the readable image and the thinking image" (23).

Andrei Tarkovsky, *Solyaris* (Solaris, 1972; Soviet Union)