

parallelism and “counterpoint”—and we might add concord and dissonance—are only defining points along a whole spectrum of meaning, tonality, interpretation, and application. If this is the case, since this is the case, then there is a confusing terminological incompatibility in the Statement on Sound, which most later discussions have also left unresolved. The problem is contained in the following question: *Does a cinematic montage predicated on dialectical oppositions have any correlation to the flowings of musical counterpoint?* Intellectual montage forms concepts through cutting, through the juxtaposition of images, and later of images and sounds, but counterpoint and its musical lines do not cut or collide—they flow.

“Counterpoint, with its emphasis on the linear or horizontal aspect of music, is sometimes contrasted with harmony, which concerns primarily the vertical aspect of music embodied in the nature of the simultaneously sounding combinations of pitches employed.”⁴⁹ This simple distinction had been largely unremarked in film sound theory, until Chion pointed out that “many cases being offered up as models of [audiovisual] counterpoint [are] actually splendid examples of *dissonant harmony*, since they point to a momentary discord between the image’s and sound’s figural natures.”⁵⁰

This is a fundamental weakness in the counterpoint analogy: counterpoint implies horizontal movement, while harmony (or dissonance) is a vertical correspondence of simultaneous tones. A conceptual clash of sound and image creates a kind of multi-sensory chord and not a flow of intertwining melody. In other words, notwithstanding Chion’s observation, in film and film sound discourse there has been and continues to be a confusing elision of montage and counterpoint, which, though taken to be otherwise, are not the same thing. The fact is that sound-image interactions are not just a matter of opposition through juxtaposition, but of simultaneous striking, with overtones that follow and increase.

This does not invalidate the counterpoint analogy, nor its many elaborations. In an analogy one object is only *like* another, and certain discrepancies are quite natural.⁵¹ What I want to suggest is that an overliteral interpretation of the Soviet analogy has muddied montage discussions as they relate to sound and to