**Transition to Sound in Film**

电影声音的演变

The shift from silent to sound film at the end of the 1920s marks, so far, the most important transformation in motion picture history. Despite all the highly visible technological developments in theatrical and home delivery of the moving image that have occurred over the decades since then, no single innovation has come close to being regarded as a similar kind of watershed. In nearly every language, however the words are phrased, the most basic division in cinema history lies between films that are mute and films that speak.

电影史上最为重大的一次过渡——电影从无声到有声的跨越发生在 1920 年的年底。尽管在戏剧和家庭成像的多元化方面更高级的视觉技术在之前已经发展了十年，依然没有一项类似的发明出现可以被归入这次转折。但是在所有语言中几乎都是这样描述的：电影史上最基本的分水岭就是从默片到电影中语音的加入。

Yet this most fundamental standard of historical periodization conceals a host of paradoxes. Nearly every movie theater, however modest, had a piano or organ to provide musical accompaniment to silent pictures. In many instances, spectators in the era before recorded sound experienced elaborate aural presentations alongside movies' visual images, from the Japanese benshi (narrators) crafting multivoiced dialogue narratives to original musical compositions performed by symphony-size orchestras in Europe and the United States. In Berlin, for the premiere performance outside the Soviet Union of The Battleship Potemkin, film director Sergei Eisenstein worked with Austrian composer Edmund Meisel (1874-1930) on a musical score matching sound to image; the Berlin screenings with live music helped to bring the film its wide international fame.

这项历史周期中最基础的的标志性事件却隐藏在一系列的矛盾中。尽管在几乎每

家庄重的剧院中，都有一架钢琴或是其他乐器来给无声的画面提供配乐。在一些

实例中，录音时代之前的观众都亲历过那种在电影放映画面的同时旁边是复杂的

音效呈现，从日本的 benshi(口技)的多点音效的对话演绎到欧洲和美国由管弦交

响乐乐队演奏的专门为电影谱写的曲谱。在柏林，为了能在露天公演的关于苏联

的波利金战役，该片导演 Sergei Eisenstein 与奥地利的作曲家 Edmund Meisel 合作创作与电影相匹配的音效；柏林的放映电影的同时现场演奏音乐让这种电影形式有了国际影响力。

Beyond that, the triumph of recorded sound has overshadowed the rich diversity of technological and aesthetic experiments with the visual image that were going forward simultaneously in the 1920s. New color processes, larger or differently shaped screen sizes, multiple-screen projections, even television, were among the developments invented or tried out during the period, sometimes with startling success. The high costs of converting to sound and the early limitations of sound technology were among the factors that suppressed innovations or retarded advancement in these other areas. The introduction of new screen formats was put off for a quarter century, and color, though utilized over the next two decades for special productions, also did not become a norm until the 1950s.

除此之外，录音的辉煌还是使 20 世纪 20 年代同时百家争鸣的视觉影像方面的技术和审美实验的进步相形见绌。在这期间充斥着新技术的发明或者提出，有一些甚至取得了成功，新的色彩处理，更大的和不同尺寸的屏幕，多屏放映的设计，甚至是电视。声音转化的高成本和早期声音技术的局限成为了抑制或妨碍了这些发明的在其所在领域的优势。新型屏幕设计的引进被推迟了 25 年，彩色，在接

下来的 20 年除了用于特殊生产外，一直到 1950 年都还不是标准。

Though it may be difficult to imagine from a later perspective, a strain of critical opinion in the 1920 s predicted that sound film would be a technical novelty that would soon fade from sight, just as had many previous attempts, dating well back before the First World War, to link images with recorded sound. These critics were making a common assumption—that the technological inadequacies of earlier efforts (poor synchronization, weak sound amplification, fragile sound recordings) would invariably occur again. To be sure, their evaluation of the technical flaws in 1920 s sound experiments was not so far off the mark, yet they neglected to take into account important new forces in the motion picture field that, in a sense, would not take no for an answer.

虽然这件在事后很难想象，但是在 1920 年一个倾向性的批判性观点预测有声电

影仅仅作为一项新奇的技术将会迅速从视线中退去，就像之前的许多试图将图像

与录音连接在一起的尝试一样，而这可以追溯到一战之前。这些批评家都持有一

个共同的假设，那就是早期成果的技术缺陷仍将不可避免的发声（较差的同步性，

微小的音量和断断续续的录音）。为了证实这个观点，他们在 1920 年的声音试验

中所估测的技术缺陷仍然很大，之后他们就不再对这一电影范畴内的重要力量进

行考虑了，从某种意义上说，是不再特意的关注结果。

These forces were the rapidly expanding electronics and telecommunications companies that were developing and linking telephone and wireless technologies in the 1920s. In the United States, they included such firms as American Telephone and Telegraph. General Electric, and Westinghouse They were interested in all forms of sound technology and all potential avenues for commercial exploitation.

而在 1920 年，这个了力量急速的扩张发展出了连接电话与无线电工艺的电子公司和电子通讯公司。在美国，他们包括了像美国电话与电报这样的公司。通用电器公司，威斯汀豪斯都对声音技术的各种形式和一切商业开发潜力表示感兴趣。

Their competition and collaboration were creating the broadcasting industry in the United States, beginning with the introduction of commercial radio programming in the early 1920s. ■With financial assets considerably greater than those in the motion picture industry, and perhaps a wider vision of the relationshamong entertainment and communications media, they revitalized research into recording sound for motion pictures. ■In 1929 the United States motion picture industry released more than 300 sound films—a rough figure, since a number were silent films with music tracks, or films prepared in dual versions, to take account of the many cinemas not yet wired for sound. ■At the production level, in the United States the conversion was virtually complete by 1930. ■In Europe it took a little longer, mainly because there were more small producers for whom the costs of sound were prohibitive, and in other parts of the world problems with rights or access to equipment delayed the shift to sound production for a few more years (though cinemas in major cities may have been wired in order to play foreign sound films). The triumph of sound cinema was swift, complete, and enormously popular.

在 1920 年的早期，这些竞争与合作开创了美国的广播产业，开始引入了商业广播节目。由于财富贡献明显的比那些电影工业的多，而且他们在娱乐与交互媒体之间的关系上有一个更广的看法，他们重启了电影配音的研究。一个粗略的统计表明，1929 年美国的电影产业放出了超过 300 部有声电影，同时还有一定数量的默片音轨，或者为电影准备两个版本以照顾一些还没有声音部件的电影院。美国在生产环节的转换最终完成与 1930 年。欧洲要稍微晚一点更多是因为他们有很多小型的无法负担音效成本的生产商，另一部分原因是对于专利权和许可领域问题而使设备的配备拖延了声音产业的转变很多年（尽管很多大城市的电影院为了播放外国电影可能已经添加了设备）。有声电影取得了胜利，并迅速，完全，广泛的流行起来。