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Russian and Soviet Cinema in the Age of Revolution, 1917 - 1932

David Gariff

Notes to accompany the film series
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Fridrikh Ermler, *Fragment of an Empire*, 1929 (Amkino Corporation/Photofest)
Front: Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929 (Photofest)



Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Mother*, 1926 (Photofest)

Of all the arts, for us, the cinema is the most important.

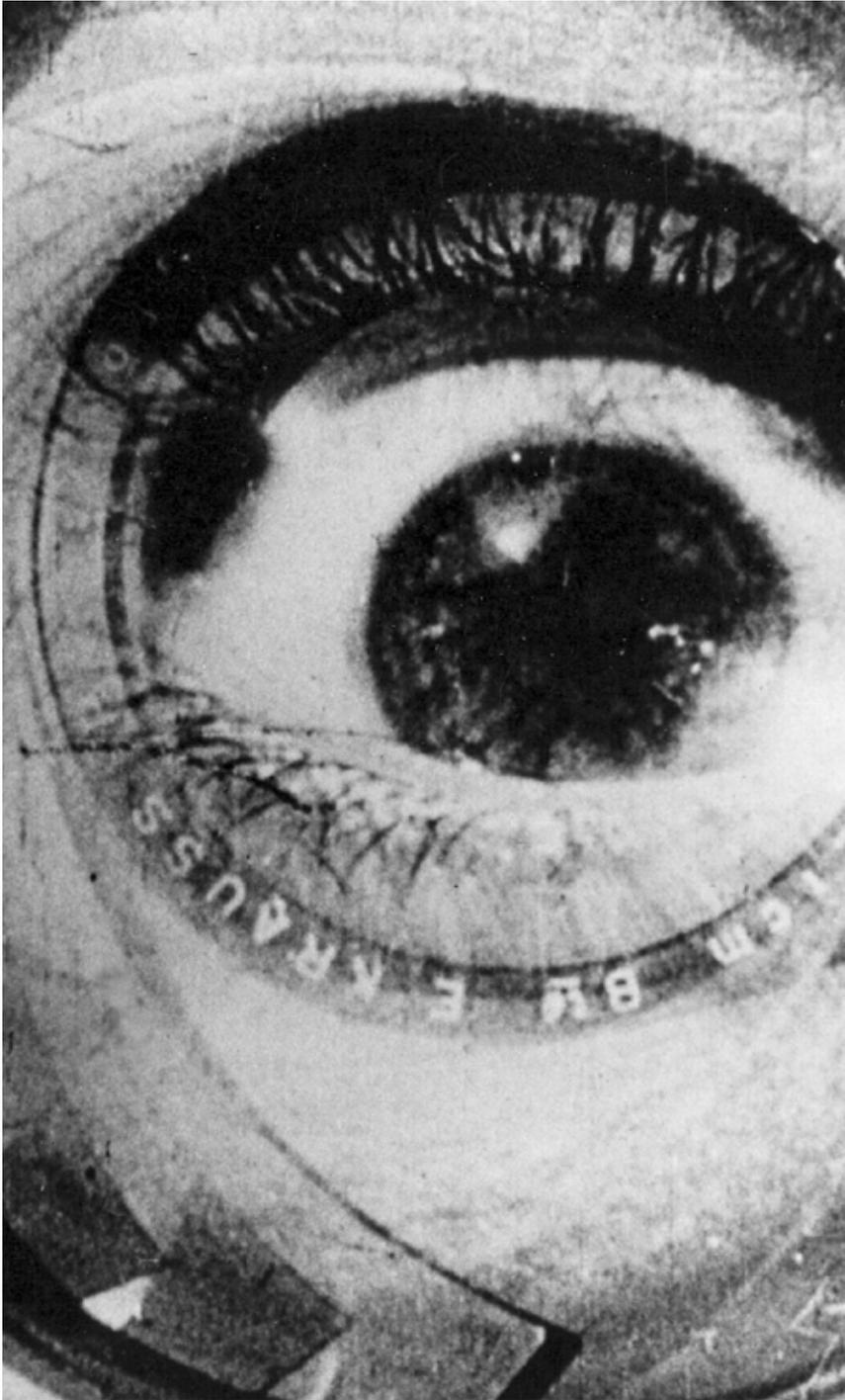
— Attributed to Vladimir Lenin

There are two kinds of art, bourgeois art and proletarian art. The first is an attempt to compensate for unsatisfied desires. The second is a preparation for social change....

— Sergei Eisenstein

We discover the souls of the machine, we are in love with the worker at his bench, we are in love with the farmer on his tractor, the engineer on his locomotive. We bring creative joy into every mechanical activity. We make peace between man and the machine. We educate the new man.

— Dziga Vertov



Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929 (Photofest)

The decade of the 1920s in Russian film is considered a golden age. Directors such as Vsevolod Pudovkin (1893–1953), Aleksandr Dovzhenko (1894–1956), Dziga Vertov (1896–1954), and Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) contributed to a period of intense cultural achievement following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. As with their counterparts in the other arts, including Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935), Natalia Goncharova (1881–1962), Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953), Antoine Pevsner (1886–1962), Naum Gabo (1890–1977), El Lissitzky (1890–1941), Aleksandr Rodchenko (1891–1956), and Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930), their desire to create a revolutionary art based on freedom and radical formal innovation was symptomatic of and in harmony with the goals of the new Russian state.

The art of film played a significant role in the strengthening and dissemination of modern Russian, and later Soviet, ideology. El Lissitzky, writing in 1922, stated, “The (painted) picture fell apart together with the old world which it had created for itself. The new world will not need little pictures. If it needs a mirror, it has the photograph and the cinema.”

Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), whose background and interest in film was marginal at best, realized nonetheless the power of film to function as an important didactic and propaganda tool. Unlike painting, sculpture, architecture, theater, and the literary arts, film could reach a mass audience.

Leon Trotsky (1879–1940) echoed these sentiments, writing in *Pravda* on July 12, 1923:

The longing for amusement, distraction, sightseeing, and laughter is the most legitimate desire of human nature. We are able, and indeed obliged, to give the satisfaction of this desire a higher artistic quality, at the same time making amusement a weapon of col-

lective education, freed from the guardianship of the pedagogue and the tiresome habit of moralizing. The most important weapon in this respect, a weapon excelling any other, is at present the cinema.

This art for the masses, however, existed in a complex relationship with aesthetic experimentation and avant-garde theories. Ultimately, revolutionary art succumbed to the control and censorship of the Stalinist regime. By the 1930s socialist realism was decreed to be the official art of the Soviet Union.

In 1919 Lenin nationalized the Russian film industry. He believed that films should serve a variety of purposes, including the dissemination of information (newsreels), education, propaganda, and popular entertainment (for advertising and income from ticket sales). This belief was codified in 1922 in the doctrine known as “Leninist Film Proportion.”

Dziga Vertov embraced many of Lenin’s ideas in this regard (he had started as a newsreel editor). Like many of his colleagues, however, he also believed in the ability of film to raise the consciousness of the masses and to act as a force for social and artistic change. This tension between the commercial aspects of film and the artistic impulses of filmmakers, or between the accessibility of film to a mass audience and its purely aesthetic and at times abstract language, characterized Russian political and cultural debates throughout the 1920s.

Vertov’s film *Kino-Pravda* (Film-Truth), for example, made between 1922 and 1925, is a series of twenty-three newsreel episodes focusing on everyday people and their activities. A basic premise in the series is Vertov’s belief that the eye of the camera captures things that the human eye misses, especially when the camera utilizes a variety of cinematic techniques.

Filmed at times surreptitiously, *Kino-Pravda* seeks to achieve a deeper truth. Early episodes in the series have a straightforward documentary quality, but as the film progresses an experimental and subjective approach is evident — a potent visualization of the debate mentioned above.

At the heart of the avant-garde point of view in the Russian arts of the 1920s was the group of artists, writers, critics, and filmmakers associated with the journal *LEF* (Left Front of the Arts). Published between 1923 and 1925, and again under a new title (*New LEF*) from 1927 to 1929, the artists of *LEF* responded to modernist European theories of cubism and futurism while creating and promoting native-born Russian constructivism. Attracting such differing personalities as Mayakovsky, Rodchenko, Vertov, Eisenstein, and Boris Pasternak (1890–1960), the artists of *LEF* embraced formalism, new technical means of expression (photography and film), and a commitment to a materialist art that addressed the social condition and proletarian revolution (ideas and theories often in conflict with one another).

Russian manifestos and theories of art and film abounded during the first decades of the twentieth century, including: *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1911) by Wassily Kandinsky; *Why We Paint Ourselves: A Futurist Manifesto* (1913) by Ilya Zdanevich and Mikhail Larionov; *From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting* (1915) by Kazimir Malevich; *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste* (1917) by David Burliuk et al.; *WE: Variant of a Manifesto* (1919) by Dziga Vertov; *Realistic Manifesto* (1920) by Naum Gabo; *Literature and Revolution* (1923) by Leon Trotsky; and Aleksandr Dovzhenko’s *Toward the Problem of the Visual Arts* (1926). Eisenstein’s theories of montage later collected in *The Film Sense* (1942) and *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (1949) can themselves be

traced back to the theories and experiments of Lev Kuleshov (1889–1970) in the 1910s and 1920s.

Kuleshov demonstrated that meaning in film derived from the interaction of two sequential shots rather than from a single frame in isolation. The so-called “Kuleshov effect” would become the theoretical basis for the dramatic innovation of Soviet montage cinema. It would also inspire the technique of future generations of filmmakers throughout the world.

For Naum Gabo the Russian Revolution ushered in an opportunity for a renewal of painting, sculpture, architecture, and human values in general. Writing in *Realistic Manifesto*, he stated:

The attempts of the cubists and the futurists to lift the visual arts from the bogs of the past have led only to new delusions... The distracted world of the cubists... cannot satisfy us who have already accomplished the Revolution or who are already constructing and building up anew.

Vertov had preempted Gabo’s revolutionary enthusiasm a year earlier with regards to cinema in his *WE: Variant of a Manifesto*:

WE proclaim the old films, based on the romance, theatrical films, and the like to be leprous... WE affirm the future of cinema art by denying its present... Our path leads through the poetry of machines, from the bungling citizen to the perfect electric man.

Vertov’s masterpiece and one of the most original films in world cinema is *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929). Building on the documentary style of *Kino-Pravda*, the film “documents”

twenty-four hours in the life of a large city. The film required three years to shoot. The anonymous city in the film is a compendium of locations from four Soviet cities: Kharkov, Kiev, Moscow, and Odessa.

Man with a Movie Camera, like most revolutionary films of the period, addresses contemporary Soviet reality. It is an urbanscape of trams, buses, trains, planes, automobiles, ambulances, fire trucks, carts, and bicycles. The city is populated with people of all types: miners, textile workers, steel workers, policemen, firefighters, phone operators, street cleaners, derelicts, athletes, dancers, entertainers, and peasants. Daily life unfolds in its quotidian matter-of-factness: dressing, undressing, washing, brushing one’s teeth, applying makeup, having a manicure and one’s hair styled. Births are juxtaposed with deaths, marriages with divorces. Amid this daily rush of events we see children, seniors, lovers, families at the beach, as well as the injured, the sick, and the lonely.

Most important, however, is the man we follow and his movie camera. As Vertov’s surrogate, he is the connecting thread and leitmotif of the film. We realize from the start, as we watch an audience file into a theater and a film being threaded for projection in the booth, that this is a film about film, or more specifically, it is a film about *this* film being made. To this end, Vertov foregrounds almost every modern film technique and camera shot known at the time: split screen; freeze-frame; Dutch angles (camera tilts); slow, fast, reverse motion; jump cuts; superimposition; double exposure; tracking shots; cross-cutting; high and low angle shots; and symmetrical and asymmetrical compositions. Most of these effects are achieved directly with the camera, not through the editing process. As a result, *Man with a Movie Camera* is hardly a straightforward documentary, but a self-referential, self-reflexive exploration

of filmmaking. The man is shown throughout with camera and tripod in hand climbing towers, trestles, and bridges, lying on railroad tracks, precariously poised in a speeding car to capture a tracking shot of others in a speeding horse-drawn carriage, racing to a fire aboard a fire truck, suspended over rivers, deep within coal mines, and at the beach strolling into the water with camera and tripod on his shoulder. The camera for Vertov is a machine. It is the star in the film leading to a famous sequence toward the end when it raises itself up on its tripod legs and takes a bow. Referring to the lens of the camera as the *kino-eye* (film-eye) Vertov states:

The main and essential thing is: The sensory exploration of the world through film. We therefore take as the point of departure the use of the camera as a kino-eye, more perfect than the human eye, for the exploration of the chaos of visual phenomena that fills space. The kino-eye lives and moves in time and space; it gathers and records impressions in a manner wholly different from that of the human eye.

I am kino-eye, I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, show you the world as only I can see it. Now and forever, I free myself from human immobility, I am in constant motion, I draw near, then away from objects. I crawl under, I climb onto them. I move apace with the muzzle of a galloping horse, I plunge full speed into a crowd, I outstrip running soldiers, I fall on my back, I ascend with an airplane, I plunge and soar together with plunging and soaring bodies. Now I, a camera, fling myself along their resultant maneuvering in the chaos of movement, recording movement, starting with movements composed of the most complex combinations.

Vertov's reference to the kino-eye "in constant motion" is a hallmark of *Man with a Movie Camera*. Few films in history are as frenetic and fast-paced, something greatly affected by the different musical scores that can accompany the film. (Vertov specified a fast moving score.) The film is a nonstop, frenzied excursion through a modern industrial city. With no dialogue, no story, no intertitles, and no actors or characters, one is carried away by the sheer speed and visual cacophony of the images. The rhythms, juxtapositions, and cuts in the film leave one mesmerized, if not giddy. Vertov's commitment, singular purpose, dedication, and joy at capturing every chaotic pulsation and fleeting movement of the city have rarely been equaled in modern cinema.

There is, however, one point in the film when the crescendo of speed and motion comes to an abrupt halt in a freeze-frame. At that moment we are introduced to Vertov's wife, Elizaveta Svilova, the film's editor. We see her cutting, splicing, and cataloging the more than 1,700 shots of the film, reminding us once again that we are witnessing a film being made (i.e., constructed). Vertov anticipated that the experimental nature of *Man with a Movie Camera* might be viewed unfavorably by Soviet film authorities, critics, and the public. As a preemptive measure, therefore, he begins the film with an explanatory disclaimer stating his formalist goals:

ATTENTION VIEWERS: This film is an experiment in cinematic communication of real events

WITHOUT THE HELP OF INTERTITLES
(a film without intertitles)

WITHOUT THE HELP OF A STORY
(a film without a story)

WITHOUT THE HELP OF THEATER

(a film without actors, without sets, etc.)

This experimental work aims at creating a truly international language of cinema based on its absolute separation from the language of theater and literature.

Mother (1926), directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin, recreates the abortive Russian revolution of 1905, the same revolution that inspired events in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925). As with Eisenstein, Esfir Shub (1894–1959), and Aleksandr Dovzhenko, all of whom made trilogies, *Mother* is the first film in Pudovkin's "Revolutionary Trilogy," along with *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927) and *Storm over Asia* (1928). Based on the 1906 novel *The Mother* by Maxim Gorky (1868–1936), *Mother* tells the story of a woman's political radicalization and struggle against the oppression of Tsarist rule as she attempts to save her son's life.

For Pudovkin, like his mentor Lev Kuleshov and his peers Vertov, Shub, Dovzhenko, and Eisenstein, filmmaking was synonymous with editing. Like Eisenstein, he developed his own theory of montage defined by five principles: contrast, parallelism, symbolism, simultaneity (cross-cutting), and leitmotif. In his collected writings on film, *Film Technique and Film Acting* (1929/1933), Pudovkin writes about the construction of a scene in *Mother*:

I tried to affect the spectators, not by the psychological performances of an actor, but by the plastic synthesis through editing. The son sits in prison. Suddenly, passed in to him surreptitiously, he receives a note that the next day he is to be set free.

The problem was the expression, filmically, of his joy. Photographing a face lighting up with joy would have been flat and void of effect. I show, therefore, the nervous play of his hands and a big close-up of the lower half of his face, the corners of the smile. These shots I cut in with other and varied material—shots of a brook swollen with the rapid flow of spring, of the play of sunlight broken on the water, birds splashing in the village pond, and finally a laughing child. By the junction of these components, our expression of "prisoner's joy" takes shape.

Pudovkin is especially sensitive to the power of the close-up to convey meaning and specific emotional states of being. He often confronts us with tight shots of clenched fists, shuffling feet, or expressive facial reactions—details we might miss in a long shot. Pudovkin constructs narrative by linking these individual frames, unlike Eisenstein whose close-ups, when they appear, conflict with long shots of swarming and teeming masses to disrupt narrative flow.

In the films of Ukrainian director Aleksandr Dovzhenko, most notably *Earth* (1930), part of his "Ukraine Trilogy" along with *Zvenigora* (1928) and *Arsenal* (1929), we witness a painterly sensibility drawn from a rich variety of art historical sources. Dovzhenko responds to Byzantine art, primitivism, symbolism, and surrealism. Unlike *Man with a Movie Camera*, *Earth* is driven less by formal and technical aspects of montage and camera movement. The film is set against the volatile backdrop of Ukraine's collectivization and the rising tensions between peasants in favor of the new system and the so-called *kulaks*, the more affluent landowners. Despite a story rooted in Ukrainian history, culture, and politics, *Earth's* power resides in the



Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929 (Photofest)

sheer beauty and poetry of its images. Virtually every frame can stand alone as an autonomous picture. Like Pudovkin, Dovzhenko relies less on Eisenstein's "collision of shots" theory of montage, and instead lavishes time and attention on wheat fields, fruit-laden trees, sunflowers, and most especially, on the weather-beaten and worn faces of the peasants. Dovzhenko had studied painting in Berlin before embarking on his career as a filmmaker. His tendency to reference pure painting in *Earth*, however, was for many avant-garde critics a *retardataire* flaw, undercutting the social and political content of the film.

Figures appear frontal, in close-up, against blurred backgrounds. They are "iconic." At other times, a dreamlike, soft focus creates enigmatic images of subtle beauty. The hard truths in this story of political turmoil, subsistence living, and murder never subvert what is essentially a hopeful and uplifting message conveyed through the fecundity of the earth. Dovzhenko's choice of the poetry of nature over the prose of politics in *Earth* is expressed in the director's own words: "If it's necessary to choose between truth and beauty, I'll choose beauty. In it there's a larger, deeper existence than naked truth. Existence is only that which is beautiful."

In 1927 the director Esfir Shub began her film trilogy meant to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The completed trilogy comprised *Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* (1927, covering the years 1912–1917); *The Great Road*, (1927, covering the years 1917–1927); and *Leo Tolstoy and the Russia of Nicholas II* (1928, covering the years 1896–1912).

Shub was born in Ukraine and one of few women to play a significant role in Soviet film history as both a filmmaker and editor. Her name is associated with the concept of "compilation editing" and the "compilation film." Simply defined, compilation filmmaking is based on the compiling and combining of differ-

ent types of preexisting film footage (stock, newsreel, historical, archival, or personal) into a documentary film.

For *Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* Shub meticulously pieced together found footage, including home movies by the Imperial family's cameraman. Shub scoured archives, vaults, and private collections in search of film fragments. She discovered historical footage long believed lost. She examined an estimated three million feet of film from which she selected her images, restoring, editing, and combining them to document the story of the Revolution. Other films commissioned for the tenth anniversary of the Revolution included Pudovkin's *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927); Boris Barnet's *Moscow in October* (1927); Shub's *The Great Road* (1927); and *October (Ten Days That Shook the World)* (1928) by Sergei Eisenstein and Grigori Aleksandrov.

Comparisons between *Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* and Eisenstein's *October* varied among Soviet critics and authorities. Those associated with *LEF* declared Shub's film superior to Eisenstein's for the simple reason that it was more factual, straightforward, and honest. Shub's documentary approach to the subject made for a better propaganda tool. Eisenstein's vision was deemed too personal, his filmmaking techniques and effects more self-conscious.

In Shub's editing, for example, we find clear visual and linguistic oppositions between the oppressor and oppressed, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. A wealthy landowner and his wife sip coffee while peasants harvest his wheat fields. Intertitles (written by Shub) reinforce these often ironic juxtapositions between word and image.

Eisenstein's *October* is a documentary-style film shot, in part, on the original locations but employing actors and a large cast of extras. *October*, the final film in his "Revolution Trilogy"

that also includes *Strike* (1925) and *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), recreates the revolutionary events in Petrograd from the end of the monarchy in February 1917 to the end of the provisional government and the decree of “peace, bread, land” in November. Eisenstein had worked as Shub’s apprentice in 1924 when most of her work consisted of re-cutting foreign films to make them acceptable for a Soviet audience.

By 1927–1928, Eisenstein’s revolutionary ideas on montage had been formulated and put into practice, most notably in *Battleship Potemkin*. Eisenstein, like Pudovkin, also defined five types of montage: metric, rhythmic, tonal, overtone, and intellectual. In *October* it is “intellectual montage” that is most striking: juxtaposing disparate and unrelated objects to convey deeper meaning and intellectual content. Famous examples include the juxtaposition of Alexander Kerensky to a mechanical peacock or a statue of Napoleon. Unlike either Pudovkin or Dovzhenko, Eisenstein rarely concentrates on an individual protagonist and his or her motivations. Conventional narrative is also less important to him. In *October*, as in *Battleship Potemkin*, meaning is conveyed through formal conflict both between shots and within a single frame. It is a dialectical approach to filmmaking, something Eisenstein describes at length in his essay, “A Dialectic Approach to Film Form” (1929). His theory of montage exploits jarring juxtapositions between flatness/depth, light/dark, static/dynamic, close-up/long shot, slow/fast, and horizontal/vertical/diagonal. In this regard he draws inspiration from painting, sculpture, music, literature, architecture, engineering, and science.

On November 7, 1927, an unfinished cut of the film was to be screened for the first time. On the same day, a directive from Stalin demanded that Trotsky be eliminated from all scenes in the film. Trotsky had been expelled from the Party in 1927 and

would be exiled from the Soviet Union two years later. Trotsky’s absence from the final film changes the historical veracity of events in a significant way, leaving Lenin (and to a lesser degree, Stalin) as the sole architects of the Revolution. *October* was later re-edited and released internationally as *Ten Days That Shook the World*, after the American journalist and social activist John Reed’s book of the same title, published in 1919.

October occupied a strategic position in the on-going debate about formalism in Soviet cinema, extending back to Vertov. Many questions were raised and debated about the form and content of Eisenstein’s achievement. One of the biggest complaints leveled against the film by both Vladimir Mayakovsky and Esfir Shub was Eisenstein’s decision to cast an “actor” (a factory worker) as Lenin. Shub found it to be artificial and contrary to the truth of history. In her article titled “This Work Shouts” (1928), she lists her complaints about *October* in emphatic pronouncements:

Do not dramatize historical fact, because dramatization distorts fact. Do not replace Vladimir Ilyich with an actor whose face appears similar to Vladimir Ilyich’s. Do not allow either the millions of peasants and workers who have not participated in battles, or our next generation...to think that the events of those great days followed the course of Eisenstein and Aleksandrov’s *October*. In such matters we need historical truth, fact, documents, and a great strictness in realization — we need a chronicle.

Unlike Shub’s *Fall of the Romanov Dynasty*, Eisenstein’s radical montage effects and melodramatic fervor were criticized as inappropriate and ineffectual for communicating with a mass audience. Eisenstein, therefore, found himself positioned

at the cutting edge of the growing campaign against formalist and avant-garde film in the Soviet Union.

Fragment of an Empire (1929), the final silent film directed by Fridrikh Ermler (1898–1967), owes a debt to the montage effects of Eisenstein (especially rapid cross-cutting) and the pictorial strength of Dovzhenko. But more than any other film mentioned here, *Fragment of an Empire* represents the transition from formalism to the socialist realism that will come to define later Soviet cinema. Ermler, whose real name was Vladimir Markovich Breslav, was born in Latvia in the same year as Eisenstein. The two men were friends and briefly shared lodgings in Berlin in 1929. Ermler founded the KEM (Experimental Film Workshop), one of many master studios established in Russia during the 1920s and 1930s. Here Ermler advocated revolution through content, not form, a position in direct opposition to Eisenstein's film theory.

Fragment of an Empire starred the great Russian actor Fedor Nikitin (1900–1988), who had trained at both the Moscow Art Theater and the Bolshoi Dramatic Theater in Leningrad. The film tells the story of a shell-shocked, World War I-era Russian soldier, portrayed by Nikitin, who suffers from amnesia. In a montage scene worthy of Eisenstein, he regains his memory ten years later in 1928, only to discover that the Russia he knew before the war has vanished, irretrievably transformed by the Revolution. St. Petersburg is now Leningrad with colossal statues of the revolutionary leader dominating every square. Tall buildings loom above, the energy and chaos of a new industrial modern city frighten, intimidate, and confuse him.

Eventually, through a personal journey that forces him to confront new domestic and political realities in his life, he matures, regains his mental equilibrium, and becomes an example of the new Soviet man. In so doing he realizes that much of

what he has had to overcome are the “pathetic fragments of an empire.” His final words in the film, spoken directly to the camera, are: “There is still much work to be done!”

By the 1930s the Stalinist regime had turned against the experimental innovations of Vertov, Eisenstein, and their peers. Such abstractions were now considered “bourgeois” art, incapable of communicating Soviet political and social realities. Many films were banned (fortunately few were destroyed). Filmmakers adapted to these new circumstances, choosing more acceptable subjects compatible with socialist realism. Films dealing with revolutionary history, the coming Soviet utopia, resistance to foreign aggressors, and the cult of political, military, and revolutionary heroes became prevalent. Notable in this regard are: *Chapaev* (1934) by the Vasilyev brothers; *The Youth of Maxim* (1935) by Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg; *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) by Eisenstein; *Shchors* by Dovzhenko (1939, commissioned by Stalin); and *Minin and Pozharsky* (1939) by Pudovkin and Mikhail Doller. Avant-garde painting and sculpture suffered similar fates, with the once celebrated movements of cubism, futurism, suprematism, and constructivism now labeled “decadent.” Artists were dismissed from their teaching positions, their works confiscated, and bans issued against both the exhibition and creation of art.

In April 1932 Stalin dissolved all existing literature and arts organizations to form a single union to control all creative output, including education. On August 2, 1932, the Leningrad Union of Soviet Artists was born, ushering in the era of Soviet realism. In 1934 the Russian congress established specific guidelines for soviet realism in art, defining its four major characteristics as:

Proletarian: art relevant to the workers and understandable to them

Typical: scenes of everyday life of the people

Realistic: in the representational sense

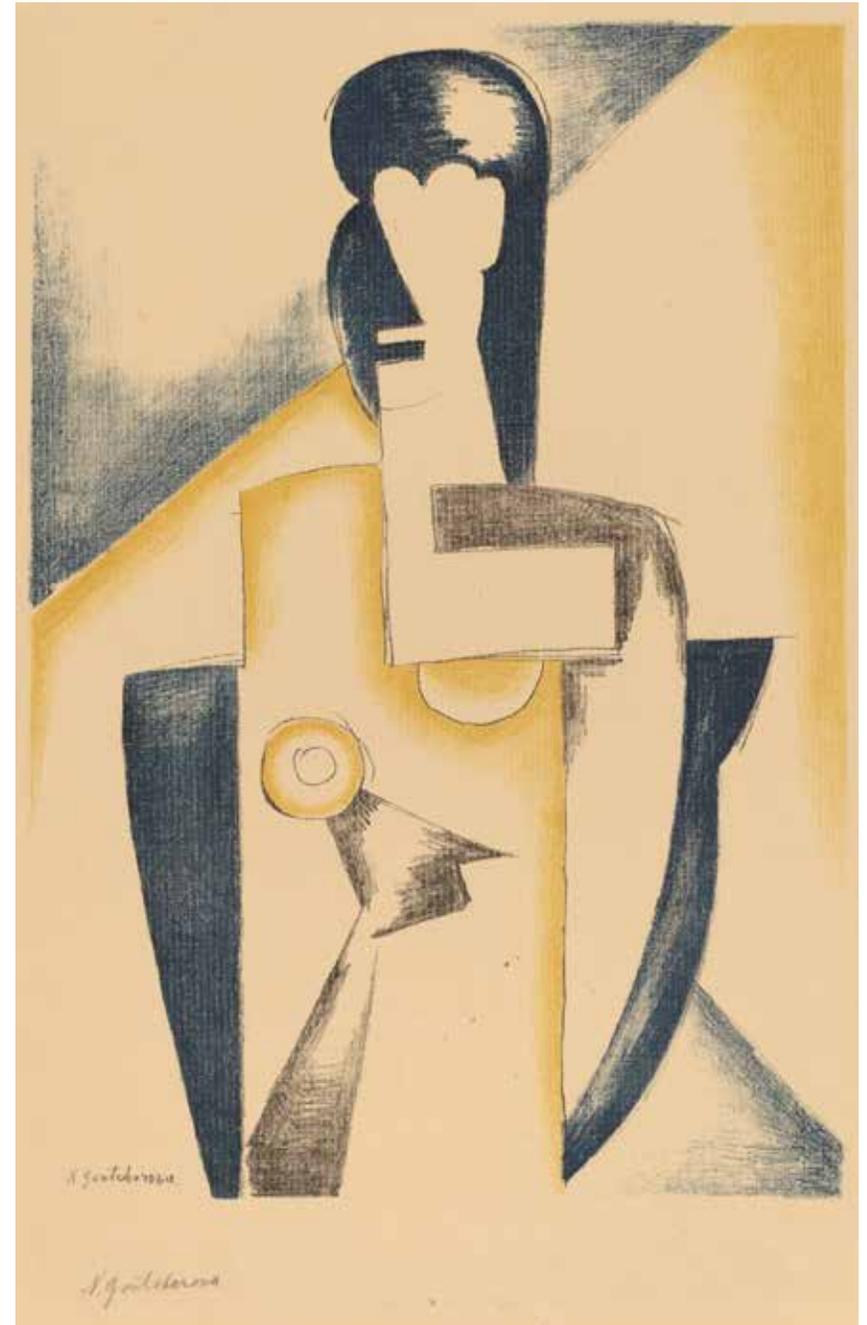
Partisan: supportive of the aims of the State and the Party

Finally in 1935 the Communist Party issued a decree placing all publishing houses under the supervision of the *Komsomol* (All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, founded in 1918) that established a system of strict censorship and initiated an intense state crackdown on avant-garde experimentation. One of the most exciting and seminal periods of innovation and achievement in western art and film history was at an end.

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Natalia Sergeevna Goncharova, *A Woman*, 1921, Gift of Jacob Kainen



Wassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation 31 (Sea Battle)*, 1913, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

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Selected Russian Filmography 1920s
(in chronological order)

The Murder of General Gryaznov, 1921,
dir. Ivane Perestiani

Polikushka, 1922, dir. Aleksandr Sanin

Kino-Pravda, 1922–1925, dir. Dziga
Vertov

Little Red Devils, 1923, dir. Ivane
Perestiani

Aelita, 1924, dir. Yakov Protazanov

*The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr.
West in the Land of the Bolsheviks*,
1924, dir. Lev Kuleshov

The Adventures of Oktyabrina, 1924,
dirs. Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid
Trauberg

Soviet Toys, 1924, dir. Dziga Vertov

Father Frost, 1924, dir. Yuri Zhelyabu-
zhsky

Strike, 1925, dir. Sergei Eisenstein

Chess Fever, 1925, dirs. Vsevolod
Pudovkin and Nikolai Shpikovsky

Battleship Potemkin, 1925, dir. Sergei
Eisenstein

In the Name of God, 1925, dir. Abbas
Mirza Sharifzada

Jewish Luck, 1925, dir. Alexis
Granowsky

The Tailor from Torzhok, 1925, dir.
Yakov Protazanov

Mother, 1926, dir. Vsevolod Pudovkin

The Devil's Wheel, 1926, dir. Grigori
Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg

The Overcoat, 1926, dirs. Grigori
Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg

By the Law, 1926, dir. Lev Kuleshov

The End of St. Petersburg, 1927, dirs.
Vsevolod Pudovkin and Mikhail Doller

Fall of the Romanov Dynasty, 1927, dir.
Esfir Shub

The Great Road, 1927, dir. Esfir Shub

Moscow in October, 1927, dir. Boris
Barnet

The Girl with the Hat Box, 1927, dir.
Boris Barnet

The Poet and the Czar, 1927, dirs.
Yevgeni Chervyakov and Vladimir
Gardin

Zvenigora, 1928, dir. Aleksandr
Dovzhenko

*Leo Tolstoy and the Russia of Nicholas
II*, 1928, dir. Esfir Shub

*October (Ten Days that Shook the
World)*, 1928, dirs. Sergei Eisenstein
and Grigori Aleksandrov

The House on Trubnaya, 1928, dir. Boris
Barnet

Storm over Asia, 1928, dir. Vsevolod
Pudovkin

The Eleventh Year, 1928, dir. Dziga
Vertov

Man with a Movie Camera, 1929, dir.
Dziga Vertov

New Babylon, 1929, dirs. Grigori
Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg

Fragment of an Empire, 1929, dir.
Fridrikh Ermler

The Living Corpse, 1929, dir. Fyodor
Otsep

Turksib, 1929, dir. Victor Turin

The General Line, 1929, dirs. Sergei
Eisenstein and Grigori Aleksandrov

Arsenal, 1929, dir. Aleksandr
Dovzhenko

Earth, 1930, dir. Aleksandr Dovzhenko

Latif, 1930, dir. Mikayil Mikayilov

Alone, 1930, dirs. Grigori Kozintsev
and Leonid Trauberg

Salt for Svanetia, 1930, dir. Mikhail
Kalatozov

