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Western Cinema on the Pages of the Magazine *Soviet Screen*: 1957–1968

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Abstract

The subject of Western cinematography was presented in a rather limited volume on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* magazine in 1957–1960. However, with the appointment of film critic Dmitry Pisarevsky (1912–1990) to the post of editor-in-chief the "thaw" tendencies in the *Soviet screen* led to a gradual increase in the number of materials about foreign cinema on the pages of the magazine (sometimes they took up to a third of the total volume of the issue). Increasingly, photographs of Western movie stars were published (in rare cases, even on color covers), neutrally or positively presented biographies of Hollywood and European actors and directors, articles about Western film weeks and international film festivals, reviews of Western films, etc. Although, no doubt, there were also ideologically biased materials in this magazine.

Based on the content analysis (in the context of the historical, socio-cultural and political situation, etc.) of the texts published during the "thaw" period of the magazine *Soviet Screen* (1957–1968), the authors came to the conclusion that materials on the subject of Western cinema on this stage can be divided into the following genres:

- ideologized articles emphasizing criticism of bourgeois cinema and its harmful influence on the audience;
- articles on the history of Western cinema (as a rule, about the period of the Great Silent, with a minimum degree of ideologization);
- biographies and creative portraits of Western actors and directors (often neutrally or positively evaluating these filmmakers);
- interviews with Western filmmakers (here, as a rule, interlocutors were selected from among "progressive artists");
- reviews of Western films (positive in relation to most of the Soviet film distribution repertoire and often negative in relation to those movies that were considered ideologically harmful);
- articles about international film festivals and weeks of foreign cinema in the USSR (with a clear division into "progressive" and "bourgeois" cinematography);
- reviews of the current repertoire of Western national cinematographies (here, as a rule, criticism of bourgeois cinematography was also combined with a positive assessment of works and trends ideologically acceptable to the USSR);
- short informational materials about events in Western cinema (from neutral reports to caustic feuilletons and "yellow" gossip).

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Keywords: Soviet Screen magazine, Western cinema, film criticism, ideology, politics, reviews, articles, movie.

1. Introduction

The subject of Western cinematography was presented in a rather limited volume on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* magazine in 1957–1960. However, with the appointment of film critic Dmitry Pisarevsky (1912–1990) to the post of editor-in-chief the "thaw" tendencies in the *Soviet screen* led to a gradual increase in the number of materials about foreign cinema on the pages of the magazine (sometimes they took up to a third of the total volume of the issue). Increasingly, photographs of Western movie stars were published (in rare cases, even on color covers), neutrally or positively presented biographies of Hollywood and European actors and directors, articles about Western film weeks and international film festivals, reviews of Western films, etc. Although, no doubt, there were also ideologically biased materials in this magazine.

2. Materials and methods

The research methodology consists of key philosophical provisions on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and the social in cognition; scientific, film studies, sociocultural, culturological, hermeneutical, semiotic approaches proposed in the works of leading scientists (Aronson, 2003; Bakhtin, 1996; Balazs, 1935; Bibler, 1990; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Eco, 1976; Eisenstein, 1964; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hess, 1997; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Khrenov, 2006; 2011; Kuleshov, 1987; Lotman, 1973; 1992; 1994; Mast and Cohen 1985; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007 and others).

The project is based on a research content approach (identifying the content of the process under study, taking into account the totality of its elements, the interaction between them, their nature, turning to facts, analyzing and synthesizing theoretical conclusions, etc.), on a historical approach-consideration of the concrete historical development of the declared theme of the project.

Research methods: complex content analysis, comparative interdisciplinary analysis, methods of theoretical research: classification, comparison, analogy, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, theoretical analysis and synthesis, generalization; methods of empirical research: collection of information related to the subject of the project, comparative-historical and hermeneutic methods.

This article continues our previous series on the analysis of the film press (Fedorov, 2002a, Fedorov, 2002b; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022a, Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022b, Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022c, Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2023).

3. Discussion and results

In this article, we will focus on the analysis of materials about Western cinema published in the *Soviet Screen* magazine from 1957 to 1968, when its editors-in-chief were: Nikolai Kastelin (1904–1968), Elizaveta Smirnova (1908–1999) and Dmitry Pisarevsky (1912–1990).

In Table 1 presents statistical data reflecting the changes (from 1957 to 1968) organizations, the organ of which the journal was, its circulation, periodicity. The names of the editors of the journal and the time intervals of their leading work in the publication are indicated.

Table 1. Magazine *Soviet Screen* (1957–1968): statistical data

Year of issue of the magazine	Organizations whose authority was a magazine	Magazine circulation (in million copies)	Periodicity of the magazine (numbers in year)	Editors of the magazine
1957	Ministry of Culture of the USSR	0.2	24	Nikolai Kastelin
1958	Ministry of Culture of the	0.2	24	Nikolai Kastelin (№№ 1-15) Elizaveta

	USSR			Smirnova (№ 16-24)
1959	Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR *	0.25	24	Elizaveta Smirnova
1960	Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	0.25-0.3	24	Elizaveta Smirnova
1961	Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	0.4	24	Elizaveta Smirnova (№ 1-11) Dmitry Pisarevsky (№ 12-24)
1962	Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	0.4	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1963	Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR (№ 1-10); State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Cinematography, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR (№ 11-24)	0.4-0.5	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1964	State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Cinematography, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	0.5-0.7	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1965	State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Cinematography, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	1.6-1.7	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1966	Cinematography Committee under the Council of Ministers USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	2.6-2.61	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1967	Cinematography Committee under the Council of Ministers USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	2.6-2.9	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky
1968	Cinematography Committee under the Council of Ministers USSR, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	2.0-2.3	24	Dmitry Pisarevsky

* The Union of Cinematographers of the USSR is listed in the imprint of the journal (along with the Ministry of Culture of the USSR) from No. 12 for 1959.

The authors of texts about Western cinema in the *Soviet Screen* in most cases were well-known film critics and film historians, many of whom held leading positions in the editorial offices of magazines and newspapers of that period:

1. M.Z. Dolinsky (born 1930) – journalist, film critic, editor. Member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR. From 1964 to 1969 he was the compiler of the yearbook *Screen* (together with S.M. Chertok). Published in the magazine *Soviet Screen*, in the yearbooks *Screen*. Author of a number of books on the subject of cinematography: *From Idea to Film*. Moscow, 1969; *Connection of Times*. Moscow, 1976; *Music Celebration*. Moscow, 1979.

Table 2. The main authors of the publications of the magazine *Soviet Screen* (1957–1968) on the subject of Western cinema

No.	Surnames of film critics, who most often published articles on Western cinema in the <i>Soviet Screen</i> magazine	The number of articles published by these film experts, film critics in the <i>Soviet Screen</i> magazine on the subject of Western cinema
1-2	Dolinsky M.Z. and Chertok S.M. (1931–2006)	9
3	Bozhovich V.I. (1931–2021)	8
4	Kartseva E.N. (1928–2002)	7
5	Sher Y.L. (1909–?)	7
6	Orlov V.V. (1929–1972)	5
7	Rubanov I.I.	5
8	Khanyutin Y.M. (1929–1978)	5
9	Bachelis T.I. (1918–1999)	4
10	Braginsky A.V. (1920–2016)	4
11	Galanov B.E. (1914–2000)	4
12	Kuznetsov M.M. (1914–1980)	4
13	Lishchinsky, I.	4

2. S.M. Chertok (1931–2006) – journalist, film critic, editor. Graduated from the Moscow State Law Institute (1953). He was a member of the Union of Journalists of the USSR and the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR. From 1962 he was a correspondent, and from 1966 to 1975 – a head of the information department in the *Soviet Screen* magazine; from 1976 to 1978 he was an employee of the Research Institute of Theory and History of Cinema. From 1964 to 1973, he compiled the yearbook *Screen* (from 1964 to 1969, in collaboration with M.Z. Dolinsky). Since 1979 he lived in Israel, where he successfully continued his journalistic activities. Published in newspapers: *Soviet Latvia*, *Soviet Culture*, *Literary Newspaper*, *Evening Moscow*, in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, *Spark*, *Youth*, *October*, *Moscow*, *Questions of Literature*, *Soviet Photo*, *Art*, *Theatrical Life*, *Theatre*, etc. Author of books: *Stars meet in Moscow*. Moscow, 1967; *Foreign screen: interview*. Moscow, 1973; *Start: Cinema of Black Africa*. Moscow, 1973; *Tashkent festival*. Tashkent, 1975; *There-there of the XX century*. Moscow, 1977; *Festival of the Three Continents*. Tashkent, 1978; *About cinema and about myself*. Sofia, 1979; *Freeze frames. Essays on Soviet cinema*. London, 1988 and others.

3. V.I. Bozhovich (1931–2021) – film critic. Graduated from Leningrad State University (1955), Ph.D. (1962). He was a member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. He published his articles in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, etc. Author of books: *Jacques Feyder*. Moscow, 1965; *Contemporary Western Filmmakers*. Moscow, 1972; *Jean Gabin*. Moscow, 1982; *René Clair*. Moscow, 1985; *Jean-Louis Trintignant*. Moscow, 1987; *Kira Muratova*. Moscow, 1988, etc.

4. E.N. Kartseva (1928–2002). Graduated from Moscow State University (1950), Ph.D. (1991). She was a member of the Soviet Communist Party, the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. She worked at the State Film Fund, at the Institute of Philosophy. From 1979 to 2002 she was a researcher and head of Department of the Research Institute of Cinematography. She published her articles in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, etc. Author of books: *Made in Hollywood*. Moscow, 1964; *Bette Davis*. Moscow, 1967; *Spencer Tracy*. Moscow, 1970; *Mass culture in the USA and the problem of personality*. Moscow, 1974; *Ideological and aesthetic foundations of bourgeois "mass culture"*. Moscow, 1976; *Western: the evolution of the genre*. Moscow, 1976; *Kitsch, or the triumph of vulgarity*. Moscow, 1977; *Burt Lancaster*. Moscow, 1983; *Hollywood: contrasts of the 70s*. Moscow, 1987; *Legends and realities. History of the American Crime Film*. Moscow, 2004.

5. Y.L. Sher (1909–?) – journalist, film critic. He published the articles in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, etc.

6. V.V. Orlov (1929–1972) – journalist, film critic, poet. Graduated from Moscow State Institute of International Relations (1950). He published his articles in the newspapers *Izvestia*,

Soviet Culture, in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Crocodile*, etc. Often published under the pseudonym B. Sukharevsky.

7. I.I. Rubanova (born 1933). Graduated from Moscow State University (1956), Ph.D. (1966). Member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. Since 1962, she has been a researcher at the Institute of Art History (now – the State Institute of Art Studies). In 1964–1967 she hosted TV programs about Polish cinematography on Soviet TV. She published her articles in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, *Seance*, *Film Studies Notes*, in the newspapers *Izvestia*, *Kommersant-daily*, etc. Author of books: *Cinematography of the countries of socialism*. Moscow, 1963; *Polish cinema. Films about war and occupation. 1945-1965*. Moscow, 1966; *Conrad Wolf*. Moscow, 1973; *Vladimir Vysotsky*. Moscow, 1983. Laureate of the Russian Guild of Film Critics and Historians.

8. Y.M. Khanyutin (1929–1978) – film critic, screenwriter. Graduated from State Institute of Theater Art (1951), Ph.D. (1965). He was a member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR. Since 1955, he worked in the editorial office of the *Literary Newspaper* (literary collaborator, head of the theater department). He was the head of the cinema sector of the socialist countries at the Research Institute of Theory and History of Cinema. Published in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, etc. Author of books: *Sergey Bondarchuk*. Moscow, 1962; *A warning from the past*. Moscow, 1968; *Sergey Yutkevich* (1968, together with M.I. Turovskaya); *Modern documentary film*. Moscow, 1970; *The reality of a fantasy world*. Moscow, 1977. Author of scripts for documentaries: *Ordinary Fascism* (1965, together with M.I. Romm, M.I. Turovskaya), *About Our Theater* (1975, together with M.I. Turovskaya), *Pyotr Martynovich and the years of great life* (1976, together with M.I. Turovskaya), etc.

9. T.I. Bachelis (1918–1999) – film and theater critic. Graduated from State Institute of Theater Art (1946), Ph.D. (1985). She worked at the Research Institute of Art History. She was a member of the Union of Writers of the USSR, a member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. She published her articles in the newspapers *Izvestia*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, etc., in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, *New World*, etc. Author of books: *Theater abroad*. Moscow, 1961; *Fellini*. Moscow, 1972; *Shakespeare and Craig*. Moscow, 1983; *Hamlet and Harlequin*. Moscow, 2007 and others.

10. A.V. Braginsky (1920–2016) – film critic, translator. Graduated from the Moscow Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages (1941). Was a member of the Soviet Communist Party, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. Laureate of the Prize of the Russian Guild of Film Critics and Historians (for a series of books about French film masters) (1999). Author of many articles and books on French cinema. He published his articles in the magazines *Soviet Screen*, *Cinema Art*, etc. Author of books: *Le Chanois*. Moscow, 1972; *Christian Jacques*. Moscow, 1981; *Jean-Paul Belmondo. In cinema and in life*. Moscow, 1997; *Gerard Depardieu. Stolen letters*. Rostov-on-Don, 1998; *Alain Delon. In love and life*. Rostov-on-Don, 1999; *Catherine Deneuve*. Moscow, 2000 and others.

11. B.E. Galanov (1914–2000) – literary and film critic, writer. Graduated from Institute of Philosophy, Literature and Art (1939). He was a member of the Soviet Communist party, the Union of Writers of the USSR, the Union of Journalists of the USSR, the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and Russia. Member of the Great Patriotic War, he was the war correspondent for the *Pravda* newspaper. He worked as the editor of the prose department of the *Znamya* magazine (1958–1960), deputy editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Screen* magazine (1960–1963), art department editor and member of the editorial board of the *Literary Newspaper* (1963–1991). Published in the newspapers *Evening Moscow*, *Pravda*, *Literary Newspaper* and others. Author of books: *Boris Polevoy*. Moscow, 1953; *S.Y. Marshak: Essay on life and work*. Moscow, 1956; *Ilya Ilf and Evgeny Petrov: Life. Creation*. Moscow, 1961; *Sergei Mikhalkov: essay on creativity*. Moscow, 1966; *Painting with a word: a person, a landscape, a thing*. Moscow, 1972; *Valentin Kataev: essay on creativity*. Moscow, 1982; *Dress for Alice: artist and writer. Dialogues*. Moscow, 1990, etc.

12. M.M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) – literary and film critic. Graduated from Institute of Philosophy, Literature and Art (1939). Member of the Great Patriotic War. He was a member of the Soviet Communist party, the Union of Writers of the USSR and the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR. He published his articles in the magazine *Soviet Screen*, in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and other. Author of books: *Soviet prose of our days*. Moscow, 1961; *Soviet novel*. Moscow, 1963; *Main topic*. Moscow, 1964; *The Hero of our films*. Moscow, 1965; *Contemporary and screen*. Moscow, 1966; *Artistic prose of our days*. Moscow, 1968; *Ways of development of the Soviet novel*. Moscow,

1971; *Novels by Konstantin Fedin*. Moscow, 1973; *Literature and anti-literature*. Moscow, 1977; *Books and films*. Moscow, 1978; *My life, cinema...* Moscow, 1984, etc.

13. I. Lishchinsky (born 1933) – film critic and journalist. Graduated from VGIK. Worked and published in the magazine *Soviet Screen*. In 1973 he emigrated to Israel, where he continued his journalistic activities, but without specializing in cinematography.

However, it was the “thaw” of the materials of the *Soviet Screen* of the 1960s in general and the increase in the volume of articles on Western cinema in particular that caused an extremely negative reaction from the Soviet authorities in 1968.

The catalyst for this was the events in Czechoslovakia and the entry of Soviet troops into this country in August 1968. It became clear to Soviet ideologists that “socialism with a human face,” which already threatened the fortress of the ideological foundations of the USSR with its very proclamation, was largely supported by the Czechoslovak cinema and press.

Hence, it is not surprising that, in the wake of the “Prague Spring”, Prof. Dr. V.A. Razumny (1924–2011), member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and the Soviet Communist Party, known at that time for his strict party views, wrote a kind of policy article “Position, but what?” (Razumny, 1968: 26-27), which already on October 1, 1968 was handed over to the set, and on October 19, 1968 was published in one of the leading mouthpieces of the Soviet Power – the magazine *Ogonyok* (editor-in-chief – playwright A. Safronov (1911–1990), published at that time with a circulation of two million copies.

And although the article by V. Razumny was about the journal *Cinema Art*, it was clear that such lines should be understood in the broader context of the Soviet film press: “The criterion for determining the creative height of new films here is most often not success with the audience, but how on the contrary, it is a “fashion” inspired by Western “models” with their modernist incomprehension, pessimism and despair, with their inability to see in the surrounding life a Man with a capital letter, a hero inextricably linked with his people, a fighter for the happiness and well-being of people. It is precisely such “fashionable” – albeit not accepted by the audience – films that are in the center of attention of the *Cinema Art* magazine. They are considered here as the true spokesmen of modernity, its requirements. Moreover, such a point of view has been literally imposed on the readers of the journal in articles and reviews for many years. ... The editors are very diligently implanting in Soviet cinematography a “fashion” for plotless movies. It imposes in every possible way: either by praising the refusal of the filmmakers from the plot, or by directly declaring the plot, the very adherence to the principle of plotting is a kind of anachronism. ... Isn't it time for the Committee on Cinematography under the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR to pay serious attention to the position of the magazine *Cinema Art*?” (Razumny, 1968: 26-27).

V.A. Razumny also criticized articles by the well-known film critic J.L. Warszawsky (1911–2000), who was deputy editor-in-chief of *Soviet Screen* magazine in 1968.

Further, on November 23, 1968, in the *Ogonyok* magazine, following the article by V.A. Razumny, an open letter by the People's Artist of the USSR Nikolai Kryuchkov (1911–1994) was published, in which he sharply scolded not only the *Cinema Art* journal, but also the *Soviet Screen* for promoting Western cinema and hushing up Soviet cinema: “It is a great pity that V. Razumny's article does not mention another film magazine, the *Soviet Screen*, which comes out in fantastically large print runs – more than four million copies a month! About fifty million copies a year! That's hundreds of tons of precious paper! This is the work of a large army of people! And what? What is the purpose of the *Soviet Screen* magazine? This question can be firmly answered: mainly advertising of foreign films, foreign directors and actors, and sometimes, only sometimes, rather vague notes about Soviet cinematography appear on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* magazine with the definition mainly “like” or “dislike” this or that critic this or that Soviet film. One gets the impression that the *Soviet Screen* magazine writes about Soviet films under compulsion. It is absolutely necessary to strengthen the editorial boards of both magazines... with people who will be able to put these press organs at the service of Soviet cinematography and Soviet audiences” (Kryuchkov 1968: 17).

And it must be said that the attack of the magazine *Ogonyok* on the magazines *Cinema Art* and *Soviet Screen* had significant consequences: in early 1969, film critic Lyudmila Pogozheva (1913–1989) was dismissed from the post of editor-in-chief of the magazine *Cinema Art*. She was replaced in this position for a long time by Evgeny Surkov (1915–1988).

And here is the editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Screen* – Dmitry Pisarevsky – withstood this blow and held out in office until 1975. Was not fired from the magazine and his deputy J. Warszawsky. Apparently, D. Pisarevsky "at the top" turned out to have much more connections than L. Pogozheva, and the Soviet authorities believed in his ability, under the influence of "party criticism", to completely change the content of the *Soviet Screen*. Which, in principle, was done: for this, it is enough to compare the contents of the magazine in 1968 and 1969...

The non-randomness of the appearance of articles by V. Razumny and N. Kryuchkov in *Ogonyok* was soon confirmed: on January 7, 1969, the Resolution of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On increasing the responsibility of the heads of the press, radio, television, cinema, cultural and art institutions for the ideological and political level of published materials and repertoire" (*Postanovlenie...*, 1969) was issued, which did not become property mass audience, but was distributed through "party" channels for responsible persons.

And here it should be noted that Dmitry Pisarevsky, starting from 1969, tried to strictly follow all the directives of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, because of which the information about foreign cinema in the magazine underwent significant ideological changes.

Articles on the history of Western cinema

From the first year of its resumption (1957), the *Soviet Screen* began publishing articles on the history of cinematography, including foreign ones, quite regularly.

At the same time, the initial stage of the development of cinema in the West (1895–1910), as a rule, was covered in an ideologically neutral way. Such were, for example, notes about the brothers Lumiere (*V pervyi...*, 1957: 21) and Georges Méliès (*Dolinsky, Chertok, 1965: 18-19; Sadul, 1961*), about the first acting experiments of M. Linder and Ch. Chaplin (*Film ...*, 1965).

As for the history of cinema art of the 1920s, here the *Soviet Screen* tried to emphasize the positive influence of Soviet cinema on the world process of development of the "tenth muse": The era of differentiation of directions and personalities in cinema, which brought such phenomena as the Swedish school, German expressionism and chamber drama, impressionism and the French avant-garde, and above all the revolutionary realism of the Soviet Union, the work of Chaplin and Stroheim, even before the advent of sound in cinema, created a whole series of masterpieces that remain classic to this day. This great flowering of cinema in the mid-twenties had two immediate causes. Firstly, the artists generally became aware of the expressive means at their disposal, learned how to use them and anticipate the results of their searches. On the other hand, we finally found masters who are not looking for cheap applause from onlookers, but for depth and human truth. The third reason acted indirectly, determining the direction of development, both the form and the content of films. Cinema, which broke with the fair stage of development, however, did not cease to be the art of the masses. Films should have been made for millions, not for millionaires. Only the public spectator could become a patron of the cinematographer, otherwise the production costs would not be reimbursed (*Velikie...*, 1965: 18).

However, the film critic G. Avenarius (1903–1958) wrote about Chaplin's early directorial works in a completely "ideologically consistent" way, insisting that these films "expose assertions about the imaginary perfection of the capitalist world" (*Avenarius, 1958: 11*).

A rather detailed (by the standards of the *Soviet Screen*, of course) and distinctly Marxist biased analysis of Western film classics was given by film critic R. Yurenev (1912–2002) in his article "The Best Films of the World" (*Yurenev, 1959: 12-13*), published in links with a survey of film critics from different countries, conducted by the Belgian Cinematheque.

Here R. Yurenev wrote that *Intolerance* (USA, 1916) by Griffith was rightfully included in the top dozen, but still the main idea of this film is expressed rather vaguely, the composition is immensely complex, many techniques are now hopelessly outdated. On the other hand, in *Greed* (USA, 1924), Erich von Stroheim "passionately exposes... the vice that destroys human destinies – greed, the passion for money, for gain" (*Yurenev, 1959: 12*).

Recalling Carl Dreyer's drama *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (*La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. France, 1928), R. Yurenev first noted that in this film the actress strikes with sincerity, truth and depth, but then exclaimed pathetically: "But isn't this hymn to suffering too gloomy? Isn't the mystical spirit too palpable in him, isn't his pathos reduced to affirming the frailty of everything human?". And then he made a "party" conclusion: "Being a great work of art, the film *The Passion of Joan of Arc* expresses ideas that are alien to very many people of our time" (*Yurenev, 1959: 12*).

Further, R. Yurenev reminded the readers of the magazine that *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (*Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari*. Germany, 1920) by Robert Wiene absorbed the spirit of despair and

confusion, the desire to escape from life into the world morbid fantasy, into a world of bizarre ghosts and has become a source of anti-realistic, reactionary currents in Western cinema (Yurenev, 1959: 12).

Much warmer R. Yurenev appreciated the drama *The Last Man (The Last Laugh/Der Letzte Mann*. Germany, 1924) by Friedrich Murnau, arguing that in it one can hear a protest against the lack of rights of a person in a capitalist society, it has a life truth, deep psychologism, although this film with its bourgeois liberalism, with its cautious criticism and ironic happy ending, forcibly imposed on the director, cannot claim to be the best film of all time (Yurenev, 1959: 12).

R. Yurenev also approached Orson Welles's drama *Citizen Kane* (USA, 1941) rather sternly, as the directorial techniques in it are varied, but somewhat mannered, deliberate, pretentious. *Citizen Kane* is a good, strong film, but undoubtedly not the best (Yurenev, 1959: 13).

R. Yurenev's favorites turned out to be three masterpieces of Western film classics: *Gold Rush* (USA, 1925) by Ch. Chaplin, *The Grand Illusion (La Grande illusion*. France, 1937) by Jean Renoir and *Bicycle Thieves (Ladri di biciclette*. Italy, 1948) Vittorio De Sica.

According to R. Yurenev, in the *Gold Rush*, Chaplin ridicules the pursuit of profit, and the romance of gold digging, and the notorious American enterprise, and presumptuous egoism. In a magnificent film, comedy is intertwined with melodrama, the struggle of a small tramp, strong only in his humanity, is crowned with victory; movie is both sensitive and infinitely funny, has cheerfulness, and anger, and subtle lyricism, and reckless eccentricia (Yurenev, 1959: 12).

The Great Illusion "conquers with its humanism, bold anti-war orientation, richness and diversity of its cinematic language" (Yurenev, 1959: 13), and *Bicycle Thieves* is the most striking work of the so-called "Italian neo-realism", a movement of progressive artists that arose after the liberation of the country from fascism (Yurenev, 1959: 13).

Here it should be noted that, as in the 1920s, the *Soviet Screen* still treated Ch. Chaplin's films with maximum reverence.

Thus, in her retrospective article, film critic V. Kolodyazhnaya (1911–2003) called Ch. Chaplin a great comedian who, in *A Woman of Paris* (USA, 1923), with the extraordinary flair of a great realist artist, a subtle and intelligent innovator, creates in this film he is a new psychological drama for his time, reflecting in clear and convincing images all the injustice of bourgeois society, hostile to the human person (Kolodyazhnaya, 1959: 13).

From other materials of the *Soviet Screen* of the "thaw" period on the topic of the history of cinema, one can note rather benevolent, but with "politically correct" accents, articles about G. Garbo (1905–1990), D. Durbin (1921–2013), D. Coogan (1914–1984), M. Pickford (1892–1979).

In particular, it was noted that in relation to D. Durbin in Hollywood, "predatory exploitation of a successfully found and already successful image" was used, and G. Garbo was forced to play insidious seductresses in vulgar Hollywood melodramas. Only after breaking out of the framework of the bondage contract, Garbo managed to play really interesting dramatic roles (Kartseva, 1962).

Biographies and creative portraits of Western actors and directors *Creative portraits of American and British filmmakers*

An indisputable favorite of the genre of creative portraits of Western actors and directors in the Thaw period of the *Soviet Screen* was Chaplin (1889–1977): the magazine published four articles of this kind (Alexandrov, 1964: 8; Bleiman 1966: 17-18; Ershtrem, 1957: 12-13; Kukarkin, 1959: 12-13).

In particular, A. Ershtem wrote that Ch. Chaplin's film *A King in New York* (UK, 1957) turned into a great event not only in the cultural but also in the political life of Western Europe. ... this is an interesting result of the long and fruitful work of the "king of laughter", who, at sixty-seven, is full of strength, energy, bold creative searches... Chaplin spent more than thirty years in the USA, he has the right to talk about those who corrupt for the sake of the dollar ordinary Americans who want to win world domination. *A King in New York* is a burning satire on the reaction prevailing in the USA, on the violation of the freedom of the individual (Ershtrem, 1957: 12-13).

Film critic and culturologist A. Kukarkin (1916–1996) was more strict with Ch. Chaplin, because, in his opinion, he did not always succeed ... with equal success to realize his plans, in some cases the well-known limitations of his ideological positions made themselves felt". However, further A. Kukarkin emphasized that, despite this, in the *New Times* sprouts of social protest break through and the formation of its class consciousness takes place. *The Great Dictator*... is already an

angry political pamphlet directed against fascism. Chaplin's latest films represent one of the greatest achievements of critical realism in the post-war cinema of the West (Kukarkin, 1959: 13).

And the finale of A. Kukarkin's article did resemble a celebratory toast: "Looking back at the creative path that Charlie Chaplin traveled, when his 70th birthday is solemnly celebrated, you clearly imagine the origins of the great love that he won from ordinary people all over the world, as well as and the origins of the hatred that his wonderful works aroused in reactionary circles of various stripes and shades. The most talented cinema artist of our time, the singer of Man, the fighter for peace, the angry denunciator of capitalism, Charles Spencer Chaplin is bound by inseparable ties with all progressive mankind" (Kukarkin, 1959: 12-13).

Film critic M. Bleiman (1904–1973) was, in fact, in solidarity with the opinion of A. Kukarkin: "Chaplin's political statements are sometimes naive", however, "the constant theme of Chaplin's films, the theme of human grief and loneliness, loss and humiliation in the city of "yellow devil"... is based on the biography of the artist, on his sharpest, most powerful impressions" (Bleiman, 1966: 17-18).

But a connoisseur of the work of actress Vivien Leigh (1913–1967), film critic V. Utilov (1937–2011), rejecting any ideological passages, wrote that she is an actress of an exceptionally wide range, equally bright and interesting in comedic, dramatic and tragic roles, Vivien Leigh has created many remarkable, dissimilar images in the cinema (Utilov, 1960: 16).

In a purely positive way, but with "Marxist accents", film critic E. Kartseva (1928–2002) talked about the work of an outstanding actor Spencer Tracy (1900–1967): He participated in more than 60 films, starting in the thirtieth year, and throughout his artistic life he never betrayed his principles, never took part in films that degrade human dignity, trample justice or built on lies masquerading as truth. ... Soviet viewers saw Spencer Tracy in films of different periods ... They could be convinced of the versatility of his talent and his loyalty to a certain, very accurately defined type of American – a restrained, incorruptibly honest and independently thinking person with an organic sense of humor and a heightened sense of justice, or, in other words, the best representative of his nation (Kartseva, 1966: 18-19).

In approximately the same spirit, E. Kartseva wrote about another famous American actor, Henry Fonda (1905–1982). Here she praised Henry Fonda's "extremely realistic" performance in *Twelve Angry Men* (USA, 1957) and noted as great success the roles he played in the *Young Mr. Lincoln* (USA, 1939), *The Grapes of Wrath* (USA, 1940) (Kartseva, 1961: 16-17).

Theater and film critic V. Shitova (1927–2002) highly appreciated the work of Anthony Quinn (1915–2001): "He has a strangely rough, powerful face, excised with large, scar-like folds ... The face of a man, not that gloomy, but like something very different from the rest, was on the screen the face of a pirate, a savage, a gangster, an immigrant. But most often it was the face of a stranger, a person who is somehow torn out of his own environment ... Gradually, the constant theme of Quinn crystallized out – the very motive of the strength and loneliness of his heroes, which is so clearly felt in many films" (Shitova, 1962: 14).

And, of course, the *Soviet Screen* could not ignore the work of one of the few Hollywood black actors at that time – S. Poitier (1927–2022): No matter what features Poitier endows his characters, no matter what contradictions or complex spiritual world no matter how their images were filled, each hero is based on a truly national character. Behind the imaginary, purely external constraint, the versatility of the character is visible, in which such storms and passions lurk that the viewer intuitively expects their explosion. And when the temperament breaks out, it conquers so much that those around it completely obey its power. Sidney Poitier has become prominent in American theater and cinema. He belongs to those truly talented artists who find inspiration only in new socially significant themes (Krylova, 1960: 19).

In 1962, in connection with the triumphant release of the western *The Magnificent Seven* (USA, 1960) on the Soviet screens, a biographical note about the actor Yule Brynner (1920–1985) was published in the *Soviet Screen*. In general, it was also positive, although with an indication of the "star disease" of the actor (Pravda ..., 1962).

Unbelievable, but true: the magazine *Soviet Screen* did not always scold *Psycho* by A. Hitchcock. So in an article about the work of an actor Anthony Perkins (1932–1992), film critic E. Kartseva informed readers that almost simultaneously with the film *On the Beach* (USA, 1959) Perkins starred in Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho* (USA, 1960), and completely new sides of his talent were opened here. Using the traditional theme of Perkins, Hitchcock showed what a tragic aspect a strong human feeling can take (this time – love for a mother). The charm of the actor,

his still charming smile and carefree gait hid an ominous pathology. A handsome young man turned out to be a mentally ill killer. *Psycho* brought Perkins worldwide fame (although the great humanistic theme that he developed in all his previous work turned out to be turned inside out) (Kartseva, 1966: 19).

But the outstanding British actor Sean Connery (1930–2020) in the "thaw" *Soviet Screen* was not lucky. A very critical article was published about his work under the eloquent title "Prisoner of James Bond" (Shirokov, 1965). Here, the actor was blamed for his participation in Bond: "We are talking about cleverly crafted film detectives, in which a certain James Bond occupies a central place – a cynical and cruel, unscrupulous, but outwardly charming "secret agent of the intelligence service of Her Majesty the Queen of England". It should also be said that over the past two or three years this movie character has taken an important place in the system of militaristic bourgeois propaganda. Its creators have worked hard to ensure that this "hero" in spite of his inhumane nature becomes popular among a not too picky public" (Shirokov, 1965).

Creative portraits of French and Italian filmmakers

For obvious reasons, the magazine *Soviet Screen* willingly published materials about Western "progressive filmmakers" who had already passed away, who could no longer be involved in anything hostile to the USSR.

So the work of Gerard Philip (1922–1959) was devoted to two very positive articles (Gulyanitskaya, 1961; Obratsova, 1960: 17-18). Assessing the work of this outstanding actor from a Marxist-Leninist position, the theater critic A. Obratsova (1922–2003) wrote as follows: The work of Gerard Philippe is dear to us, this wonderful artist is close to us. ... The smile of Fanfan la Tulipe lit up with its light, the joy of the hearts of viewers in many countries ... His work took a special place in the post-war artistic life of France, because it actively resisted the pessimism that emerged in a number of works, and empty entertainment and, vulgarity, bad taste, flourishing in commercial film production. The light, transparent, graceful art of Gerard Philip claimed life, struggle, freedom, courage. It proceeded from the folk foundations of French culture and was progressive, international in ideological aspirations (Obratsova, 1960: 17-18).

As for other French and Italian stars of the middle and older generation, the *Soviet Screen* wrote very positively about J. Gabin (Bozhovich, 1966: 18-19), A. Magnani (Rubanova, 1965: 23), Bourvil (Dolinsky, Chertok, 1967), Fernandel (Chernenko, 1965: 18-19), M. Morgan (Lishchinsky, 1968: 18-19), L. Ventura (Markov, 1968), Y. Montand (Semenov, 1967), M. Mastroianni (Bachelis, 1964: 16-17) and others.

So film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2001) rightly noted that Jean Gabin (1904–1976) is characterized by an almost hypnotic ability to influence the audience, which the French call "the power of presence", is characteristic, of course, not only of Gabin. But experience shows that actors who have nothing but "presence" quickly lose their power. And if for decades Gabin remained the hero of the public consciousness, then the psychological reasons that were at work here cannot be separated from the historical reasons. This is what happens when an actor, by the very structure of his feelings, temperament, mentality and character, manages to respond to the deep and essential needs of the time. ... Gabin brought to the screen the spirit of true democracy, merged with a strong-willed, effective principle and deep respect for the human person. ... The bad complexity of the world around Gabin opposed his need for clarity, a high desire for simplicity. It is as if he forges his images with a heavy hammer among fiery splashes and flashes of flame. He does not have that ease of sliding transitions, that emotional mobility and nervous responsiveness to the slightest irritation – all that so often bribes us in the actors of the modern French school. But from him comes a feeling of great inner strength: we have a nature that does not want to be exchanged for trifles. Gabin is a strong-willed and passionate actor. He does not kindle, but restrains his passion. That is why his emotional explosion is so devastating: the actor does not flare up, he is heated from the inside. The growing pressure of passion is interspersed with moments of pre-storm calm. And finally, a long-contained outburst of rage (Bozhovich, 1966: 18-19).

The magazine also noted the importance of the work of another charismatic actor of the European screen – L. Ventura (1919–1987): With a strong-willed face, a cold look, quick, decisive actions, dismissive of conventions. Lino Ventura created his own type of heroes. His gangsters, as a rule, are courageous people, who do not lose their calmness or camaraderie, no matter how difficult it is for them. The acting style of the actor is restrained, he carefully selects expressive means, knows how to convey calmness, inner strength, confidence of his characters (Markov, 1968).

Film critic I. Rubanova wrote about the work of Anna Magnani (1908–1973) just as reasonably and stylistically vividly: “Even long before the world recognized the actress from *Rome – the Open City*, the audience of the Italian capital fell in love with her in everyday comedies, where she played next to the favorite of the Romans, the comedian Toto. Anna Magnani was also known from cabarets, in which she sang mocking songs ... And she herself, with a tousled mop of hair, with quick and dexterous hands, was not an actress, it seems, but simply one of those who sit in the hall. Roman, in a word. This absolute involvement with the audience played a decisive role for Italian cinema in its time. ... Magnani not only worked well with the directors of the new Italian cinema, but together with them, in essence, can be called its creator. She gave the screen its democracy, its temperament, not only ardent, but also multifaceted; your optimism, which instilled hope in the hearts of the audience even in those cases when sad things happened on the screen. She gave the screen her heart. And she became a symbol of truth in art, became his bellissima – the most beautiful. Because it was a generous gift” (Rubanova, 1965: 23).

Film critics M. Dolinsky and S. Chertok (1931–2006) spoke similarly about Anna Magnani, using the epithets "great", "actress of tragic power" (Dolinsky, Chertok, 1966: 9-10).

Film critic I. Lishchinsky praised the work of Michelle Morgan (1920–2016) on the pages of the *Soviet Screen*: “The heroine of Michelle Morgan, as a rule, is a thin and vulnerable person. Her strength is pride and dignity. This is Michelle Morgan's desire to conquer fate, to prove stronger than circumstances, to prove, at least by her own example, that this world is reasonable, logical, clear. But in fact, the world around is not like that. Circumstances will assert their strength, destroying her happiness, and the characters of the actress will not give up. ... Michelle Morgan is not only a professional actress, but also trained in French. In her interpretation, the lessons of both cinema and theater are felt. It moves easily, freely, and this freedom is restrainedly noble. There is a certain roundness in her gesture. ... Morgan's acting colors are muted: her smile is a half-smile, her joy is a little sad from the start” (Lishchinsky, 1968: 18-19).

Film critic T. Bachelis (1918–1999) wrote about the work of M. Mastroianni (1924–1996), a favorite of the Soviet public of the 1960s, with traditionally placed “necessary” ideological accents for those times: Some spiritual uncertainty and softness of character, instability of desires and moods are hidden behind the charming appearance and plasticity of Mastroianni's hero, as he appeared in *The Sweet Life (La Dolce vita/La Douceur de vivre*. Italy-France, 1960). There is no pride or ambition in him. This is by no means an "intellectual hero" and not a man of will; what attracts in him is not purposefulness, but impressionability, emotional susceptibility (both to beauty and to any vulgarity and falsehood). The contemplative Marcello glances around, his thoughtfulness and absent-mindedness are colored with slight irony; therefore, his smile is a smile as if to himself, not specially addressed to anyone, not addressed. Unlike, say, Giulietta Masina's smile, which was entirely turned to other people, addressed to the world around. In the very deep bitterness that *The Sweet Life* is saturated with, both the passionate power of exposing bourgeois society and the position of protecting a person from the dirt and foam of this society that overwhelmed the screen were expressed, from his satiated and false "love", from his spiritual flabbiness and impotent, confused intellectualism. The film speaks bluntly: society is to blame for the fact that the individual is leveled. ... Naturalness, behind which one can guess the possibility of improvisation, plasticity that can give grace to any characterization – in a farce, in an epic, in a lyrical monodrama. Smoothness, lightness, ease, some kind of free manner to live on the screen in the circumstances of any plot – this is Mastroianni's style – the style of the person he portrays, and of himself as an artist. And finally, the last one: looking at the game of this master, you feel that he trusts the viewer, knowing that he will perfectly understand the joke, the humor, and any conventions of the plot. Marcello Mastroianni's performance is similar to his smile: shy and frank, modest and slightly ironic, this is a smile of confidence (Bachelis, 1964: 16-17).

Starting from 1968 and for many years (up to the “perestroika” times), the Soviet press tried not to mention the famous chansonnier and actor Yves Montand (1921–1991), who was “fined” in connection with his speeches in defense of the “Prague Spring”. However, in 1967, it was not only possible, but also necessary, to write positively about a singer and actor popular at that time in the USSR: “Yves Montand entered the age of maturity. He is full of energy – manages to play theatre, acting in cinema, singing from the stage. ... And most recently, Montand starred in the film by Alain Resnais *The War is Over (La Guerre est finie*. France-Sweden, 1966). The hero of Montand is a Spanish revolutionary underground, a man who sees the meaning of life in the struggle. ... We see

on the screen a very smart, courageous, let's say more, talented person, played by Montand with restraint and simplicity" (Semenov, 1967).

Who knows, perhaps, if it were not for the events of 1968, then the "progressive" film *The War is Over* would have hit the Soviet box office. But in the end, he remained out of sight of the mass audience in the USSR...

Of course, in the late 1950s and 1960s, the *Soviet Screen* also wrote about young Western actors and actresses at that time. In particular, the work of S. Lauren (Goncharova, 1968: 15), S. Sandrelli (Ivanova, 1967: 14), C. Deneuve (Gosti..., 1966. 11: 13), A. Karina (Chernenko, 1966: 24), A. Delon (Lishchinsky, 1967: 7).

In fairness, it was emphasized that Anna Karina (1940-2019) finally found her type of modern woman, rushing about in search of the authentic, natural, real, and every time she loses in a world where a person becomes a toy of circumstances. It is no coincidence that the fate of almost all of her heroines is tragic: their purity, on which the dirt of life leaves no trace, is doomed to death. ... She found her character and played her "from all sides." Perhaps, in the future, a different fate awaits her heroine, and she will finally understand that death is not the only way out that one can win in life (Chernenko, 1966: 24).

Yes and A. Delon "is not one of those who pursue easy success. Knowing full well that he does not have a real acting school, he seeks to improve his skills" (Poznakomtes..., 1962). And although "Alain Delon seems to have been created for the covers of newsreels – young, slender, frankly handsome", he is "a professional, a hard worker, for whom his acting business has both meaning and purpose in life. Such devotion to art, of course, impresses, but also a little bit alarming. Especially when it comes to an artist, who studies a person in all the complexity of his nature, a thinking and acting person. In art, a whole picture of the world is recreated, and it is especially dangerous for an artist to become isolated in his craft ... Alain Delon can act in a variety of roles. And even more: the multiplicity, the multi-character of one and the same person is the most important leitmotif of his work" (Lishchinsky, 1967: 7).

But the most popular Western young actress at the *Soviet Screen* (Sher, 1962: 18-19; Valentinova, 1959; Znakomtes..., 1966: 18-19) after the impressive success in the Soviet film distribution *The Blonde Witch* (*La Sorcière/Häxan*. France-Sweden, 1955) was, of course, Marina Vlady. This happened partly because of her Russian origin, but most importantly because of her openly expressed leftist views and sympathies for the USSR. Plus, in 1968, the shooting of the Soviet-French film *The Plot for a Short Story* with her participation began.

In particular, readers of the magazine were reminded that Soviet viewers first met M. Vlady when the film *The Blonde Witch* was released, where Marina Vlady – Inga turned out to be the soul whole, trustingly sincere, pure and selfless – truly Kuprin. She is ours! That's what immediately made the audience fall in love with a completely unfamiliar performer. The simplicity and spontaneity of the game, plasticity and grace, the inner purity of most of the heroines did not allow this love to fade away (Znakomtes..., 1966: 18-19). A few years later, the film critic Y. Sher wrote that M. Vlady over the years comes acting experience and creative maturity (Sher, 1962: 19).

In 1966, in the article "Meet the Polyakov Sisters" (Znakomtes..., 1966: 18-19) *Soviet Screen* briefly and very kindly told readers about the life and film / theater career of four sisters, French actresses of Russian origin – Marina Vlady, Odile Versois (1930–1980), Helene Vallier (1932–1988) and Olga Varen (1928–2009).

Among the French and Italian directors, *Soviet Screen* tried to single out, of course, "progressive artists" who were in no way noticed in public speeches against the USSR.

Film critic A. Braginsky (1920–1916), who specialized in French cinematography, was sure that the directorial style of René Clair (1898–1981) is one in its essence and at the same time inexhaustibly inventive in form ... Dynamic editing, clear development of characters, an abundance of tricks that always carry great semantic load, genuine musicality and – most importantly – excellent taste distinguish his films. ... Rene Clair is one of those French artists who managed to reveal the soul of the people of their country (Braginsky, 1962: 17).

Assessing the work of Jean-Paul Le Chanois (1909–1985), film critic I. Lishchinsky wrote that his films "are different in topics, but in all the same call sounds, which he repeats with the passion of a preacher: "People, understand each other!". These are works about solidarity and mutual assistance, about not skimping on good feelings "And two comedies – *Papa, Mama, the Maid and I* (*Papa, maman, la bonne et moi...* France, 1954) and *Papa, Mama, My Wife and Me* (*Papa, maman, ma femme et moi...* France, 1955) is a brilliant, laid-back story, repackaged with

jokes, comic tricks. ... Such is the work of Le Chanois. This is a very French artist: smart and light, cheerful and humane. He loves his simple characters, and his sincere feeling awakens the same feelings in the audience. And that is why we love Le Chanois" ([Lishchinsky, 1960: 14-15](#)).

Creativity of another very popular among Soviet viewers of the era of the "thaw" director-Christiane-Jacques (1904–1994) – *Soviet Screen* also presented on its pages in general positively. For example, film critic I. Rubanova praised the adventure comedy *Fanfan la Tulipe* (France-Italy, 1951) and, insisting that the best of what Christian-Jacques created, he did in the spring of liberation, when hope was seething and the future smiled with the promise of democratic reforms, she regretted that in recent years, Christian-Jacques has become involved in the production of standard commercial products ([Rubanova, 1965](#)).

Referring to the multifaceted work of the outstanding director and actor Vittorio De Sica (1901–1974), film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2001) also did not avoid critical notes: While Rossellini, Fellini, Visconti paved new paths for Italian cinema, the thankless task fell to Zavattini and De Sica to exhaust all the possibilities of the method to the end and draw a line under the post-war development of neorealism. Such a work, "closing" a certain period, was the film *The Roof* (*Il Tetto/Le Toit*. Italy-France, 1956). It turned out to be a collection of commonplaces of neorealist cinema, worldly authentic, but devoid of the former artistic power and persuasiveness. It was impossible to go further along the same path. The creators of the film themselves felt this too ... In De Sica's latest films, *Marriage Italian Style* (*Matrimonio all'italiana/Mariage à l'italienne*. Italy-France, 1964), *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (*Ieri, oggi, domani/Hier, aujourd'hui et demain*. Italy-France, 1963) in addition to being made by the hand of a master, there are many moments that attract attention. ... Of course, the main goal ... is to entertain the viewer. But what is also important is where the author is looking for the possibility of entertainment, where he sees the fullness and boiling of life. ... Let's hope that Vittorio De Sica, this greatest master of neorealism, will make another new contribution to the development of Italian cinema ([Bozhovich, 1967](#)).

Theater expert and film critic V. Shitova (1927–2002), analyzing the work of the director Luchino Visconti (1906–1976), staged his drama *Rocco and His Brothers* (*Rocco ei suoi fratelli/Rocco et ses frères*. Italy-France, 1960) in parallel with Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, noting that the great and strict artist "peers with pain at the cruel patterns of human dehumanization. Even such a beautiful, mentally perfect being as Rocco cannot resist this process. ... The scale of the shown moral tragedy is so significant that the ending, in which there is only a faint ray of hope and the promise of renewal, cannot be its true resolution" ([Shitova, 1962](#)).

Film critic I. Rubanova was in full solidarity with her, writing that the works of L. Visconti "they do not often appear on the screen, but each of them is a premonition of new themes, new concerns of Italian cinema, the discovery of its new expressive possibilities. ... Visconti worked all his life in such a way that each of his films is a stage in the development of national cinematography and, to some extent, world cinematography" ([Rubanova, 1966: 19](#)).

Of course, the magazine could not ignore the analysis of the work of one of the most prominent Italian directors of the "left flank", a member of the Italian Communist Party Giuseppe De Santis (1917–1997), emphasizing that he needed to have great courage to "in the most difficult years reaction, "gagged" to stand firmly on the extreme left flank of Italian cinema, preaching with his work the art of great social and artistic generalizations. ... De Santis did not compromise his convictions one iota" ([Lunyakova, 1966: 16](#)).

But the work of the famous Italian director Michelangelo Antonioni (1912–2007) in the *Soviet Screen* of the first half of the 1960s received a very negative assessment. Film critic and screenwriter of the "old Soviet school" N. Kovarsky (1904–1974) considered that Antonioni, moving away from the principles of neorealism, changed both the characters and the social environment in which they live, and the themes, and the range of problems. Neorealism was revolutionary ... Antonioni replaced the rebellious pathos of neorealism with a bad predilection for dubious mental difficulties for characters extremely reminiscent of the heroes of decadent literature. ... In essence, both his characters and his films – one of the characteristic phenomena of conformism, which has no signs of ideological and artistic revolutionary and is marked by all the signs of bourgeois stagnation. For all his talent and fashionable "leftism", his films are sometimes reminiscent of the salon melodramas that were so characteristic of pre-First World War Italian cinema. Art is bread. It is our daily bread. And the art of Antonioni, an artist who is undoubtedly

talented, whose characters and whose films are meaningless and empty, is not bread and not even ersatz. It is a stone instead of bread (Kovarsky, 1962).

Interviews with Western filmmakers

It is clear that the *Soviet Screen* tried to publish interviews only with those Western filmmakers who fit into the ideological framework of "progressive artists" set by the authorities.

Thus, interviews with Ch. Chaplin often appeared on the pages of the magazine (Alexandrov, 1962; 1964; Belova et al., 1961).

A special role here was assigned to the director G. Alexandrov (1903–1983), who met Chaplin personally more than once. At the same time, G. Alexandrov did not tire of emphasizing that Chaplin indignantly condemns the preparations for a nuclear war, calls on artists to fight against nuclear weapons with all their creativity, to do everything possible to strengthen peace (Alexandrov, 1962), and "each new meeting with Chaplin – this is a meeting with youth, enthusiasm, humor and creative inspiration ... We didn't touch on any topics in our long conversations with Chaplin! They talked about the Stanislavsky method (Chaplin is his ardent supporter), and about Freud's psychoanalysis ("They replaced all creative methods in the USA," my interlocutor said), and about the problem of standardizing actors in Hollywood ("Most of them play the same, only in different costumes"), and about the production of *War and Peace* in the USSR ("Finally, you Russians will film your brilliant novel yourself"),

Interviews were also published with such famous directors as Joris Ivens (1898–1989) (Mastera..., 1957: 16-17), Federico Fellini (1920–1993) (Mikhan, 1967: 14-15), Yves Ciampi (1921–1982) (Senin, 1966: 18-19), Giuseppe De Santis (1917–1997) (Dolinsky, Chertok, 1965: 14-15); Nanni Loy (1925-1995) (Bogemsky, 1966: 18), Luigi Comencini (1916–2007) (Tokarevich, 1966: 20), etc.

Let us cite a fragment of an interview with L. Comencini, which is typical in this sense, where he emphasized that "a film, like every work of art, should raise issues that are important for a given country, should have its own national features and characteristics. Otherwise, it will lose the only form that is the only one capable of embodying the content that is urgently needed by the people of the country where the film was created. I do not always agree with our esthetic critics who call on filmmakers to create films that the audience does not accept. The position of such critics is understandable to me; often they are even right, especially when they are fighting against the vulgarization of art. Yet no one makes films for himself or for critics. Therefore, I firmly know that I must make films that are accessible to the audience and will be successful with them" (Quoted in: Tokarevich, 1966: 20).

As for Western actors and actresses, their interviews were in most cases less socially oriented. This applies, for example, to texts of interviews with Sophia Loren (Soviet Screen, 1965: 17-18), Claudia Cardinale (Soviet Screen, 1967) and others.

Perhaps only an interview with Marlene Dietrich (1901–1992) turned out to be openly biased by M. Dolinsky and S. Chertok, and as a result, the authors made the following conclusion: "We knew a lot about Marlene Dietrich the actress, but we did not fully imagine Dietrich the person. Now the acquaintance has taken place. It brought admiration for her young talent, respect for her position as a citizen and artist, for whom art is a weapon" (Dolinsky, Chertok, 1964: 19).

Evaluation of Western films that hit the USSR film distribution

Opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about American, British and Canadian films shown in the Soviet box office

In the era of the "thaw", the magazine first of all tried to review Western films that got into Soviet distribution. So in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a number of British dramas were generally highly appreciated in the materials of the *Soviet Screen*: as a rule, these were adaptations of classic literary works: *The Million Pound Note* (UK, 1953), *Great Expectations* (UK, 1946), *Oliver Twist* (UK, 1948), *Richard III* (UK, 1955) (Nedelija..., 1959; Vilesov, 1960: 7-8; Utilov, 1961: 14-15).

In particular, film critic V. Utilov (1937–2011) wrote that *Great Expectations* (UK, 1946) managed to create (especially at the beginning of the film) a truly Dickensian atmosphere of action", and in *Oliver Twist* (UK, 1948) David Lean's in much greater depth than in his previous film, shows the social environment that breeds poverty and crime. Confident acting, precise directing, a perfectly conveyed atmosphere of horror and impotence before the authorities ..., an original cameraman's decision ... all this gave Lean the opportunity to make a film that deservedly won fame as the best adaptation of Dickens' novel (Utilov, 1961: 15).

True, in the film *The Million Pound Note* (UK, 1953), despite the fact that the scriptwriter of the film approached the film adaptation of Twain's work with great tact, retaining all the main plot points of the story," and "the film retained the satirical nature of the story, aimed at condemning the power of money in a capitalist society (Vilesov, 1960: 7), an overly sentimental interpretation of the plot was noticed.

Of course, the magazine could not but respond to such large-scale hits of the Soviet film distribution as *War and Peace* (*Guerra e pace*. USA-Italy, 1956) by King Vidor and *Spartacus* (USA, 1960) by Stanley Kubrick.

With regard to the film adaptation of *War and Peace*, it was rightly noted that in this picture one can feel a relatively careful attitude to the text of L.N. Tolstoy, especially in family scenes. A number of episodes relating to the life of Natasha Rostova are distinguished by lyricism and psychological truthfulness. ... However, in comparison with the grandiose epic canvas of Tolstoy, the film loses significantly (Voyna ..., 1959).

A deep analysis of the historical drama *Spartacus* (USA, 1960) was given on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* by film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978). He wrote that in *Spartacus* "directing, albeit without special insights, but confident and strong, the work is professional and clean. ... a brilliant cast quartet of Kirk Douglas, Laurence Olivier, Charles Lawton and Peter Ustinov. Yes, all this is a magnificent and exciting spectacle! But it's not just a spectacle. ... From the very concept of "gladiator" poetic veils are removed, and the authors show the school of gladiators as a prototype of modern slavery. The director and screenwriter discover the mechanism of violence, methods that turn a person into a slave, methods that have survived without much change from ancient times to the present day. ... Crassus, played by Laurence Olivier, is the most interesting figure in the film. There is clarity of purpose, inflexibility and intelligence in this man with thin lips and a heavy gaze. In him – the individuality is so large that even Spartacus loses next to him – Kirk Douglas, but not to mention Gracchus. ... But Spartacus is not inferior to Crassus. This is the only person for whom Crasse feels keen curiosity, fear and even envy. Fear, for he is a god as long as he is worshiped. Envy, because he, Crassus, can force you to obey, but he cannot command you to love yourself. ... The pathos of the film is in a clear sense of the connection of times. He not only restores history, but also learns from it. Therefore, the picture has become something more than just a picturesque spectacle from Roman life with indispensable and inevitable Hollywood clichés" (Khanyutin, 1967: 16-17).

Ideologically very important for the Soviet film distribution was the film by S. Kramer *Judgment at Nuremberg* (USA, 1961). And film critic T. Bachelis (1918–1999) rightly wrote that in this movie shot without any directorial or camera effects, with calm, sober and tough realism ... veracity is elevated to the law and brought to the magic of documentary." ... It is known that fascism relies on the philistine environment, using for its demagoguery the everyday needs and interests of the masses. The novelty of the film *Judgment at Nuremberg* – in the study of the nature of fascism, its psychology, in the assertion that fascism exploited not only base and dirty, but sometimes high motives of people, relied not only on philistine instincts, but also speculated on such concepts as patriotic duty and law. He, this "ordinary fascism", hides in every atom of injustice; it nests wherever people deceive themselves into thinking that the political end justifies the means. Such a reminder is more than timely, and it somehow resonates with excitement, the exciting interest with which we watch the film *Judgment at Nuremberg* (Bachelis, 1966: 16-17).

The unconditional support of the *Soviet Screen* was also received by Arthur Penn's socio-critical drama *The Chase* (USA, 1966): "Where is America going? Who will be next? Where are the origins of the cruelty and violence that has been cultivated for so long in the United States of America and for which now one has to pay so tragically? These questions are now being asked by more and more people in the United States, and more and more often American cinematography is trying to find answers to them" (Fedorova, 1968: 15).

Positively viewed on the pages of the magazine and the anti-racist theme in the drama *One Potato, Two Potato* (UK-USA, 1964) (Karaganov, 1964: 18-19; Lishchinsky, 1965).

And in relation to the film *The Road Without End* (*The Shiralee*. Great Britain, 1957), it was noted with satisfaction that the authors conceived the film as a psychological drama, the action and meaning of which are closed in a narrow circle of experiences of several people. But their desire to realistically show the fate of an ordinary person led to the fact that the film outgrew the idea, turning into a story about ... an unemployed tramp. Social motives burst into the chamber plot (Skalova, 1959: 13).

The realism of the social theme was noted in the *Soviet Screen* and reviewers of dramas *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (USA-Canada, 1964) (Karinskaya, 1966: 19), *Left, right and center* (UK, 1959) (Demin, 1965: 19-20), *This Sporting Life* (UK, 1963) (Galanov, 1963: 16-17).

The film *Hell Drivers* (Great Britain, 1957), popular with Soviet viewers, received an assessment in the magazine with a pronounced Marxist approach: "The film looks tense. In front of the camera lens, there was material that was fertile for an action movie: roaring trucks, various fights, distorted faces of villains ... All this was edited with great cinematic skill. ... But it is sincerely a pity that the rich arsenal of cinematic means was put into action without deep thought, without a serious analysis of life phenomena, and therefore without any benefit. ... the authors of the film came close to serious accusations. Revealing the methods of brutal exploitation and outright fraud, they could and should have taken the last step – to call it the essence of the capitalist system. And then the meaning of their work would become honest and revealing. But the machination ... turned out to be only an outline of an adventure plot that drowned out the social sharpness" (Loktev, 1960).

About entertaining American and British films, *Soviet Screen* wrote much less often. But to pass by the comedies *Roman Holiday* (USA, 1953) and *Only girls in jazz (Some Like It Hot)* (USA, 1958) magazine, of course, could not.

Curiously, about *Roman Holiday* (USA, 1953) in the *Soviet Screen* a kind of discussion arose.

On the eve of the release of *Roman Holiday* in the Soviet film distribution, a warm review was published in the magazine, which stated that in this comedy lyricism and subtle humor are intertwined ... with the motives of social satire. Realistic, lively scenes from the everyday life of the Romans, deeply humane images of ordinary people are opposed by the world of an arrogant and spiritually empty aristocracy, served in the techniques of the grotesque, caricature. ... *Roman Holiday* once again confirmed the great skill and talent of William Wyler (Dobrokhотов, 1958).

But already after the release of *Roman Holiday* (USA, 1953) in the all-Union distribution, screenwriter and film critic M. Bleiman (1904–1973) caustically (but, based on the genre of this now classic film – completely unfounded) emphasized that in this movie has one thing that makes it not only ridiculously old-fashioned, but falsely propagandistic. Wyler not only defends the right to love for his heroine, He also pities the poor representative of the royal family (Bleiman, 1960: 14-15).

Five years later, film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) spoke rather sourly about the famous musical *My Fair Lady* (USA, 1964): recognizing that the film has staged scope, brilliant colors, stereo sound", he lamented that "Shaw's irony, Lowe's poetic music dissolved in the ponderous monumentality of the production (Khanyutin, 1965: 14-15).

But play/screenwriter Victor Slavkin (1935-2014) took the comedy *Some Like It Hot* (USA, 1958) much more favorably, noting that the film was based "as old as the genre of comedy itself, the trick of dressing a man as a woman has been laid down. ... The film would have been sugary in American style if the authors hadn't added a rather strong dose of parody to it. They not only tell us a banal story, but also have a great laugh at it. That's what makes the movie really interesting. So, the plot itself is banal. But the way it is told makes us smile, giggle, laugh and cry with laughter for an hour and a half. With each frame, the stamped frame is overgrown with a tie of funny clutches and unexpected twists. ... By the way, about ... ambiguity. The filmmakers are constantly walking along the wire, risking every second to fall into the abyss, where bad taste and vulgarity await them. But the skillful, ironic acting of Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon, Joe Brown, the charm of Marilyn Monroe, the clarity of directing (Billy Wilder) and the wit of the script help to balance on a thin wire" (Slavkin, 1966: 19).

In connection with the re-release of the musical melodrama *The Great Waltz* (USA, 1938) in the Soviet film distribution, the reviewer of the *Soviet Screen* noted that in this picture talented cinematographers, artists splendidly recreated the spirit of the composer's work, revealed the world of his images (Skazki..., 1960). But melodramatic *Rhapsody* (USA, 1954) reproached that film's creators sometimes begin to savor Louise's secular manners, her outfits, the life of a wealthy family... Here vulgarity comes into the picture (Skazki..., 1960).

And the American film adaptation of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (USA, 1960) received a completely negative assessment in the *Soviet Screen*, since the reduction of the most important and key Twain scenes (for example, ridiculing the American aristocracy, scourging shameful relic of "blood feud") and the exorbitant expansion of others ... was by no means accidental. Everything revealing, which is the main value of the novel, is removed; everything purely entertaining, devoid of any social significance, is expanding (Nikolaeva, 1962: 19).

On June 18, 1962, the Western of John Sturges *The Magnificent Seven* (USA, 1960), which was destined to become the highest grossing Western film on Soviet screens: 67.0 million viewers in the first year of film distribution alone. This movie eventually managed to get ahead of all other American and European hits, including *Spartacus* (63 million viewers), *Mackenna's Gold* (63 million viewers), and others. Only Mexican *Yesenia* managed to achieve the best attendance figures among foreign films in the USSR.

Soviet Screen responded to the rental triumph *The Magnificent Seven* (USA, 1960) article by film critic E. Kartseva (1928–2002), in which this movie received a mixed assessment.

On the one hand, E. Kartseva noted that the film ... is distinguished by good directing, talented acting, excellent filming. The wide screen, color and huge depth of the frame recreate with our own eyes the pictures familiar to us from childhood from books. ... *The Magnificent Seven* differs in many ways from most empty and meaningless Westerns, where a brave, white-toothed cowboy will certainly emerge victorious from the most difficult and risky situations, receiving the title of an "honest" person and his beloved girl as a reward. The film almost does not feel that touch of well-being and optimism, which has always been characteristic not only for "westerns", but also for the entire bulk of Hollywood production. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the film lacks a traditional happy ending. ... The main conflict lies here not in the familiar primitive scheme of opposing "good" and "bad" bandits, but in the moral duel of the peasants with the "knights of fortune". And the fact that the peasants are the winners is very significant. Perhaps none of the "Westerns" known to us has risen to such a critical look at its bandit heroes (Kartseva, 1962).

But on the other hand, E. Kartseva "party" reminded the readers of the magazine that elements of the standard for "Western ideology are absolutely unacceptable for us. ... Works that voluntarily or unwittingly promote cruelty and murder are spiritual food alien to us. N.S. Khrushchev rightly said this in his conversation with American journalists. If we talk about the educational role of this film, then it can do more harm than good to young people (Kartseva, 1962).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about French and Italian films shown in the Soviet box office

The *Soviet Screen's* approach to French and Italian films that got into Soviet distribution was standard for those years: articles and reviews praised films for "criticism of bourgeois society", for "humanism and faith in humanity", for "a call to fight for workers' rights" and anti-war pathos (Bozhovich, 1960: 12-13; 1967: 14-15; Esli..., 1957: 7; Ilinskaya, 1959; Khanyutin, 1961; 1956; Kozintsev, 1959: 4-5; Kuznetsov, 1965: 2-3; Loktev, 1965; Lvov, 1960: 16; Novogrudsky, 1958: 4; Orlov, 1959; Roof, 1958: 5; Sher, 1960: 17; Tokarevich, 1960: 14-15; 1961, etc.) and scolded for "thoughtless entertainment", "bad taste", "propaganda of the bourgeois way of life" and so on (Orlov, 1966: 14-15; Vladimirov, 1960, etc.).

One of the first weeks of foreign cinema (in this case, French) was held in Moscow in 1959. Almost all the films presented on it were later released to Soviet distribution: *Marie-Octobre* (France, 1958), *The Lovers of Montparnasse* (*Montparnasse 19/Les Amants de Montparnasse*. France -Italy, 1957), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (*Notre-Dame de Paris*. France-Italy, 1956).

In this regard, the film critic S. Komarov (1905–2002) published a review article in the *Soviet Screen*, where he spoke very positively about all these films (Komarov, 1959: 12-13).

This high appraisal of French films of the 1950s was also supported in further "thaw" publications of the *Soviet Screen*.

Thus, it was emphasized that in *Les Misérables* (*Die Elenden*. France-Italy-GDR, 1958), the authors carefully, with great love transferred the novel to the screen. They managed, without overloading the action with an abundance of details, to select all the most interesting and necessary to characterize the era, the main and secondary characters. The image of Jean Valjean was recreated with remarkable skill by one of the greatest French actors, Jean Gabin (*Les Misérables*, 1960: 15).

And *Marie-Octobre* (France, 1958) by J. Duvivier is only at first glance, a filmed performance, but in fact, the dialogue is extremely cinematic, the word is inseparable from plasticity. The action would be incomprehensible without close-ups, without details, without a duel of eyes, without that complex mini-film dramaturgy that is peculiar only to cinema. ... An interesting film created by talented masters of French cinema (Manevich, 1960).

Soviet Screen reacted with great enthusiasm to the film *If All the Guys in the World...* (*Si tous les gars du monde*. France, 1956), which became a major event in world progressive cinema. ... Immediately after the screenings, viewers of six cities exchanged impressions of the film with each

other over the radio. Muscovites who were sitting in the “Udarnik” cinema expressed their opinion and heard a voice from [Paris, New York and Oslo]. All the movie was highly rated...The director of the film, Christian-Jacques, also spoke on the radio call. ... The idea of international solidarity of the “steam room of the whole world”, people of good will, who joined their efforts in the name of saving human lives, found an exceptionally vivid artistic embodiment in the film, convincing with its artless simplicity and truthfulness of life (Eslin..., 1957: 7).

The magazine emphasized with satisfaction that in *Rue des Prairies* (France-Italy, 1959), director Denis de la Patelière managed to visually show those forces, those methods that the modern capitalist world uses to conquer and subjugate the morally unstable part of the working youth. ... Patelière has a fixed, observant look. He seeks and always finds the smallest and smallest touches that make his heroes alive, close and understandable people (Lvov, 1960: 16).

Evaluating the film *Sky above* (*Le ciel sur la tete*. France-Italy, 1964) film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) wrote that he is about the responsibility of people who have received the most terrible weapon of destruction in their hands. The hero of *Sky Above* is an aircraft carrier – a perfect work of technical thought – stuffed with electronics, automation and... nuclear bombs. ... Technology is smarter than man. It is possible that among a number of correct and indisputable thoughts of Ciampi about the responsibility of people for the fate of the world, about the dangers of suspicion, there was also a bitter thought about the discrepancy between the pace of technical progress and the pace of spiritual aesthetic development (Khanyutin, 1965: 14-15).

In the film *Tamango* (*La rivolta dell'esperanza*. France-Italy, 1958), the reviewer of the *Soviet Screen* emphasized the anti-colonial theme: The work was made by the hands of a master who has a clear worldview, who sees in film art a powerful means of fighting for a better future for peoples. *Tamango* will not leave our audience indifferent. This film makes more real, more tangible and understandable those events in the life of the African continent, which each of us learns from the telegrams of TASS correspondents and newspapers (Sher, 1960: 17).

But film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2021), even in the psychologically subtle autobiographical drama by François Truffaut *The 400 Blows* (*Les Quatre cents coups*. France, 1959) emphasized the “anti-bourgeois orientation”: the linking of facts and events does not play a significant role in this film. The main thing is the subtle psychological elaboration of images, the accuracy of details, the richness of life observations and the agitation of the authors, which gives the work some special tender and painful penetration. Gradually, without intrusive frontal techniques, the authors of the film – director Francois Truffaut and screenwriter Marcel Moussy – reveal to the viewer a picture of a bourgeois society in which lies, hypocrisy and indifference have become the norm of human behavior. They reflect, but do not reason, ask, but do not teach. And they offer the viewer to take part in solving the question: Who is to blame? Who is to blame for the fact that, in general, a good boy, striving for people, for love, for human warmth, is torn out of society, turned into a criminal, doomed to loneliness? The film does not answer this. ... But first of all, I would like to talk about the most important thing. And the main thing in this film is the idea, humanity, concern for the fate of people and society (Bozhovich, 1960: 12-13).

Turning to the analysis of the works of Italian cinematography, the reviewers of the *Soviet Screen* during the “thaw period” supported neorealist films with great enthusiasm (Krysha, 1958: 5; Novogrudsky, 1958: 4; Orlov, 1959; Solovyova, 1960: 18; Tokarevich, 1961; Trombadori, 1960: 10-11 and others).

In particular, the films *Umberto D* (Italy, 1952) and *The Roof* (*Il Tetto*, Italy-France, 1956) by Vittorio De Sica (Asarkan, 1965: 16; Krysha, 1958: 5), *The Year Long Road* (*La Strada lunga un anno*. Italy-Yugoslavia, 1957) by Giuseppe De Santis (Orlov, 1959), *Generale Della Rovere* (*Il Generale della Rovere*. Italy, France, 1959) Roberto Rossellini (Tokarevich, 1961), *The Machinist* (*Il Ferroviere*. Italy, 1955) Pietro Germi (Novogrudsky, 1958: 4), *The Job* (*Il Posto*, Italy, 1961) Ermanno Olmi (Rassadin, 1963), *Piece of the Sky* (*Un Ettaro di cielo/Un morceau de ciel*. Italy-France, 1958) (Zorky, 1962: 20), *Rome at 11 o'clock* (*Roma ore 11*. Italy-France, 1952) (Loktev, 1965), etc.

In particular, film critic and poet V. Orlov (1929–1972) argued that *The Year Long Road* leads to the emergence of a new, powerful image – image of the people, the builder of the road ... [this] is a great, deep, true work” (Orlov, 1959). And the journalist A. Asarkan (1930–2004), reviewing *Umberto D*, wrote that “great art always brings joy, even when it comes to sad things”, and this “film is truthful, hard, distinct (Asarkan, 1965: 16).

The film critic A. Novogrudsky (1911–1996) noted that at the same time, neorealist cinema is characterized by a certain limitation of ideological horizons: fixing individual pictures of life, noting certain facts of social injustice, the films of Italian directors usually do not indicate a way out of that kingdom of evil, which they so temperamentally and passionately condemn (Novogrudsky, 1958: 4).

And the theater and film critic I. Solovieva emphasized that the film by Luigi Zampa *The Judge (The All of Us Are Guilty/Magistrate)*. Italy-Spain, 1959) is already academic neorealism. It seems as if the search and the crisis have passed by this calm and conscientious director. There is no piercing feeling of the truth being discovered for the first time, there is no passionate excitement of the artist who turned to this truth. Behind the characters and events of the film, it seems, is not so much life as the film school and its requirements. And truthfulness also exists here as a requirement of the school. ... The story, banal and tragic, is told in Zampa's film with enough freshness of observations, told with talent. ... This is a picture conscientiously made in the best traditions. Having said this, you will quite accurately determine its shortcomings and its advantages (Solovieva, 1960: 18).

The film *The Man in Short Pants (L'Amore più bello/L'uomo dai calzoni corti/Tal vez mañana)*. Italy-Spain, 1958) also received an ambiguous assessment in the magazine. Noting that this picture was shot at the level of the best works of Italian cinema, the reviewer wrote, for all that, the desire of the audience to find out whether Salvatore's mother is worthy of love is natural. However, the authors evade the ethical assessment of her crime against morality and do nothing to ensure that the spectator himself makes the verdict. And the belated repentance of the mother, and the sudden determination, and the break with her husband, and the lightning-fast reconciliation, all this is "compassionate", sugary, sentimental and in many ways spoils the overall good impression of the picture (Dmitriev, 1960: 15).

Analyzing the films *Marriage Italian Style (Matrimonio all'italiana/Mariage à l'italienne)*. Italy-France, 1964), *Boom (Il Boom)*. Italy, 1963) and *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Ieri, oggi, domani/Hier, aujourd'hui et demain)*. Italy-France, 1963), film critic T. Bachelis (1918–1999) noted that you can no longer call them neorealistic – they resemble rather a brisk sale of neo-realist jewels at not too high prices. Nevertheless, the first love of Italian cinematographers gave their art the strongest, tangible impetus for development to this day. Even today, Italian cinema enters into a sharp, internally dramatic relationship with reality, with the life of today's Italy. True, he no longer peers as intently as before into this life, into its details, into everyday life, in a fluid and changeable everyday life. On the other hand, he claims – sometimes quite justifiably, relying on a great experience of knowledge and on the energy of a generalizing thought – to comprehend the very meaning of modernity, to express in the most acute and distinct form that feeling of a painful crisis that permeates artists and which they would like to overcome (Bachelis, 1966: 16-17).

But *Seduced and Abandoned (A Matter of Honor/Sedotta e abbandonata/Séduite et abandonnée)*. Italy-France, 1964) by Pietro Germi, according to T. Bachelis, was the closest thing to neo-realism, to its ideas and forms ... Comedy, witty and funny, a little bitter. The taste of bitterness, and also, perhaps, the place of action – Sicily, beloved and glorified by neorealists, the poorest and wildest land of Italy – makes one recall the former, now perceived as classic films by Germi ... But still, in the end, there remains a feeling of some kind of annoyance. Germi makes us laugh at the misfortune. He does it gracefully and deftly. But Stefania Sandrelli, who plays Agnese with a boisterous temperament and genuine pain, nowhere laughing at her character, seems to object to the director and reminds him of the times when neither grief nor the shame of Sicily were laughed at, when the tragedy of a wounded love did not become an occasion for funny comedy, even if made with skill and talent (Bachelis, 1966: 16-17).

True, the literary critic and film critic M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) *Boom* (Italy, 1963) received a much more positive assessment on the pages of the *Soviet Screen*: In terms of its visual means, the film *Boom* is emphatically modest. And what the deepest tragedy of the individual in the modern Western world is revealed here, how brazenly, but at the same time, decently unrespectable inhumanity marches in the picture! Here is an example of how everyday squabbles are raised to tragic heights by the forces of real art, an example of how cinema can look deeply into the life of society (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17).

The same M. Kuznetsov spoke highly of the drama *The Women at War Camp Followers (Le Soldatesse/Des filles pour l'armée)*. Italy-France-Yugoslavia, 1965) by Valerio Zurlini, who received the Golden Prize of the Moscow International film festival: This is a strong, direct, cruelly

truthful picture, the fire of true art burns in it. Started almost in a frivolous spirit, a story about a "transport of love" moving in the days of the war with live goods for soldiers' brothels, this film story soon grows into a harsh story about trampled and monstrously perverted human relationships, about grossly mutilated destinies. ... That is why this film, full of deep truth, merciless denunciation, excellent direction and acting skills, was so warmly received at the festival (Kuznetsov, 1965: 3).

Quite often, the "thaw" *Soviet Screen* wrote about French and Italian melodramas that do not pretend to the philosophical depth of film images: *The Blonde Witch (La Sorcière, La Häxan*, France-Sweden, 1955) (Warszawsky, 1959), *The Naked Maja (La Maja desnuda*, Italy-France-USA, 1958) (Kartseva, 1968: 16-17), *Anatomy of a Marriage (La Vie conjugale/La vita coniugale*, France-Italy, Germany, 1963) (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17), etc.

For example, film critic J. Warszawsky (1911-2000) spoke rather reservedly about the favorite of Soviet viewers of the late 1950s – *The Blonde Witch (La Sorcière, La Häxan*, France-Sweden, 1955), reproaching her for being too free interpretation of the prose of the classic of Russian literature: "The plot of the film is built in a lively, exciting way. ... The film was made skillfully and conscientiously. But what was it made for? ... How much richer in thoughts and feelings is Kuprin's story! ... The content of the film is only superficially similar to Kuprin's story – cordial, warm, touching readers "for the living" ... Marina Vlady draws the image of her heroine with spectacular, but cold colors. She is beautiful, capricious, but where is the power of love in her, which raises the well-known Kuprin Olesya to such a proud height! This is what we will not find in the film ... Kuprin was carried away by the poetry of love, the authors of the film – the unusual amusing position in which the hero found himself. Here is the boundary between Kuprin's idea and the imagination of the filmmakers. That is why we can accept André Michel's film only as a curious experience of film adaptation "on the theme of Kuprin" – an experience far from the poetic work of a great Russian writer" (Warszawsky, 1959).

But film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) treated the adventure melodrama *Angelica, Marquise of Angels (Angélique, marquise des anges*, France-Italy-Germany, 1964) with depressing seriousness: "The creators of *Angelica, Marquise of Angels*, having made an excursion into distant French history? Brave cavaliers, splendidly wielding swords, fatal passions, secret passages of the Louvre, gloomy intrigues of the court, and with all this – the demonic, seductive in his ugliness Count – Hossein and dazzling in her luxurious robes, and especially without them, young Angelique – Mercier. But ... nevertheless, this is a document of time, if not the past, then the present. ... that the desire to distract the viewer coincides at some point with his need to be entertained, is this not an important and disturbing message from the ship of modernity?" (Khanyutin, 1965: 14).

To the melodrama *Anatomy of a Marriage (La Vie conjugale/La vita coniugale*, France-Italy-Germany, 1963), the literary critic and film critic M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) reacted warmer, but with obvious sadness of nostalgia: It attracts the artistic technique itself: first, the whole story appears as a story of a husband, and then all the same events are drawn through the eyes of a wife. From this it was possible to make a funny farce, an elegant comedy, but director André Cayatte created a psychological drama not without merit. There is humanity, warmth in the picture, there is a captivating authenticity of acting – Jacques Charrier and Marie- José Nat, there are many subtle and accurate observations. ... All this is true. But again, a feeling of slight disappointment does not leave you: the whole drama of married life revolves somewhere "around" deep life problems ... Yes, nice, yes, "talented in places", however – shake – does not shake. ... In it, in this film, there was a strangely predominant note of some kind of lethargy, timidity – in the approach to life, in artistic decisions, in daring, finally ... As if we were facing the art that we knew, the same a glorious tradition, a manner... And at the same time – something like a lower class, weaker, somehow faded (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17).

But about the melodramatic musical *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, France-Germany, 1964), crowned with the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

First, one of the leading ideologists of the then Soviet film criticism, A. Karaganov (1915–2007), having visited the Cannes Film Festival, lamented that the jury had awarded the main prize to *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, but this film, alas, is very far from the problems that are now worrying the people viewer (Karaganov, 1964: 18-19).

M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) approached this masterpiece of Jacques Demy, although warmer, but sour, emphasizing that *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* is a modern opera, more of a film opera,

the characters are from today's life, the usual everyday conversation is set to music, the plot is a modest everyday drama... Really, it's curious! And something happened. There is a kind of grace in the film, an atmosphere of quiet sadness. What else? They say that there is also a thought: they say, although the heroes achieve the bourgeois ideal – wealth, but there is no happiness, love is also needed. It is possible that this thought will be able to be subtracted, excuse me – "to look out" in this sweet, but, alas, extremely shallow film. After all, despite the deliberately bright colors, he is all kind of internally faded, the stamp of artistic anemicity, thinness lies both in directing and in acting ... And not at all because the authors prefer halftones, want to speak softly, take mediocre characters (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17).

And only film critics M. Dolinsky and S. Chertok, in our opinion, adequately assessed this film, based not on stereotypical ideological approaches, but on the features and logic chosen by the authors of the genre and style: There is such a kind of literature – a poem in prose. Jacques Demy filmed *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* as a poem in music and color. The coloristic solution of this picture with bold, bright spots of carmine, crimson, ocher on a lilac-black background, a picture where the air itself seems to change shades every minute, resembles, although it does not repeat, does not imitate, the canvases of the Impressionists. ... The poet always sees the world in his own way, for him the word "sadness" is not only herself, but all the infinite richness of human feelings is in it. This film is full of sadness. And, without being imbued with it, without trusting the poetry contained in each frame, one can, as if hearing everything, hear nothing. And then a cold analysis will come into play, easily revealing in the plot both unoriginality, and sentimentality, and a certain isolation. And then algebra will kill harmony, destroy the fragile world of poetry, dissipate the charm.

The Soviet press has already written about the film *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*. This picture was reproached for its intimacy, reproaches, to be honest, strange, because, going this way, one can also complain about Pushkin, who wrote "I remember a wonderful moment ..." too intimately, only about love. It was even said that Demy's film is asocial, that the hero who goes to the Algerian war could just as well go on a trading business: after all, this war is only named, but there is no wide public background in the picture.

It really does not exist, because the task was completely different. And does anyone have the right to demand from the delicate canvases of Renoir the battle scale of Delacroix's canvases, from the lyrics – the properties of the epic? ...

The film simply would not exist if it did not combine text with music. He is the first step into an unexplored area. Demy brilliantly proved in practice the possibility and legitimacy of the existence on the screen of such a conditional genre as a film opera, destroying the speculative theoretical constructions of his opponents. ... *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* is a film opera in its purest form, where both the laws of the screen and the laws of music are observed and correlated with the same tact. No, the rigid standards of rationalism do not apply to poetry and music. This movie should be watched with an open mind. He must be trusted (Dolinsky, Chertok, 1966: 12-13).

But the next musical by Jacques Demy – *The Young Girls of Rochefort* (*Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. France, 1966) – was, in our opinion, quite reasonably perceived by T. Bachelis (1918–1999) without enthusiasm: Accepted to think that pure entertainment is bad in principle. Jacques Demy and composer Michel Legrand, the authors of the charming, elegant film *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, apparently undertook to refute this current opinion when they created *The Young Girls of Rochefort* – a three-hour mass gala performance with dances and songs in delicate pink, yellow, bluish tones. ... All this would be nice if it were not so treacherously long and – again. Demy decided to develop the wonderful findings of the *Umbrellas* on a large scale, and from this alone everything changed. Naivete, repeated twice, runs the risk of seeming stupid. What was so charming and original in *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* – their ingenuous lyrics, recitatives, bold colors of painted nature and, finally, captivating melodies that led the dramaturgy of the film, musical and color in nature, all disappeared. The cute, provincial town of Cherbourg has turned into some kind of huge stadium, which is provisionally named the city of Rochefort. It seems to me that there has been an attempt to Americanize the genre, to compete with *West Side Story*, to make it a French, provincial version. Unfortunately, the variant turned out to be really provincial (Bachelis, 1967).

But, undoubtedly, the main Western melodrama in the Soviet film distribution of the 1960s was the film by Claude Lelouch *A Man and a Woman* (*Un homme et une femme*. France, 1966), as well as *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, which received the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

And here the theater and film critic T. Bachelis (1918–1999), in our opinion, very accurately and stylistically exquisitely wrote on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* that the film *A Man and a Woman* is filled with love for life, for beauty, sometimes unfinished, into poetry, sometimes sad. ... Lelouch experiences and causes aesthetic pleasure. An operator himself, Lelouch combines the color of the world and its colorlessness, grayish mists in special rhythms, like a painter. This is how Vigo once worked at the dawn of French cinema. ... And the rain is constantly lashing against the glass, and two faces are always nearby, and the memories of both are rushing before us. The sun bursts into a fireball, everything is flooded with orange light. Love, hugs, closed eyes of a woman, the back of a man's head – the fire color of these frames of love and intimacy conquers everything in advance: the color of Anna's memories, and the fog of the night road, and the burning of the station, the distance of the sea, the scope of the sunset, the cold beach, the risk of auto racing ... Happiness must necessarily defeat the past that has risen between two people. The love elegy of Lelouch's film is subtle, just as the relationship between two people is subtle and important. But still, the main thing in the film is painting, perfectly coordinated with that fragile force of gravity, which is the most unique thing in meeting and love. ... Lelouch paints with light. He has transparency and fog, softness and undisguised tenderness of the artist, innocently, trustingly and selflessly in love with what he sees. And he sees the beauty of the air, the transparency of the light, the embrace of the arms, the fate of crossing (Bachelis, 1967).

And although the film critic I. Rubanova was stricter about this film, she also noted the merits of this poetic melodrama: “Neither the life material that formed the basis of the picture, nor its interpretation is new and does not bring discovery. Perhaps they even have a taste of literature: such lyrical stories with a happy ending often come across in popular fiction. Everything was decided by execution. The way the film is made and the way it is played. Go and see for yourself that Anouk Aimée’s work here is the most complex score of feelings prompted by experience, skill and bright inspiration. Enchanting modesty, forbidden yearning for happiness, timid hope and melancholy disbelief – this is Anna Gauthier, as the actress composed and played her. Her role is a melody sung in a clear and true voice. In this melody is the birth of a feeling, unabashed, relentless, tender, a little bitter, genuine, hot, a feeling that ordinary people cannot experience and ordinary actors cannot express” (Rubanova, 1968).

The main role in the next film by Claude Lelouch – the melodrama *Live for Life* (*Vivre pour vivre/Vivere per vivere*. France-Italy, 1967) was played by Yves Montand (1921–1991), and in 1968, just before the Soviet troops entered Czechoslovakia, Soviet Screen managed to publish a review of the film: “And again about love. Claude Lelouch's film *A Man and a Woman*, striking in its chastity and beauty, did not have time to enter our rental, and the director had already finished work on the original continuation of this story of feeling – the film *Live for Life*. ... Again love, only not the beginning of it, but the end, excruciating agony, slow and agonizing. Indifference, tiny intrigues on the side. Finally, a new love – for a young American, again deceptions, a break, a return to the bosom of the family. Pastel colors again, virtuoso camera, elegant editing. Again the brilliant actors Yves Montand and Annie Girardot” (Zhit..., 1968: 18).

True, the anonymous author of the review further drew the attention of the magazine's readers to the shortcomings of this picture, since “inconsistency also leads to stylistic inconsistency: chamber lyrical scenes in the familiar Lelouch’s manner peacefully coexist with purely spectacular episodes ... And in the final analysis, the title of the picture turns out to be evidence conformism. And the weaknesses of a person who cannot cope with the chaos within himself, and not just in the world around him. Evidence that revealing the psychology of modern man by means of art is too difficult a task, even for such a talented artist as Claude Lelouch, if he is not able to formulate his clear and defining social position in our changing world” (Zhit..., 1968: 18).

In the same 1968 film *Live for Life* was bought for distribution in the USSR, but due to Yves Montand’s support for the “Prague Spring” it was put “on the shelf” and was released on Soviet screens only a few years later...

But to French and Italian comedies and other entertainment films that reached the Soviet film distribution, the reviewers of the *Soviet Screen* often approached with the utmost severity, carefully warning readers that most of these films are not among the best works of cinema art ... There is a the tendency to turn the film into an entertaining spectacle, pleasing to the eye and easy on the mind (Bozhovich, 1962: 18-20).

While tens of millions of Soviet viewers laughed at the screenings of Christian-Jacques' comedy *Babette Goes to War* (*Babette s'en va-t-en guerre*. France, 1959), in the *Soviet Screen*

magazine a review was published stating that in the film, Babette is an empty place. ... Having lost the folk basis of the central image, Christian-Jacques seems to have lost the best features of his comedic gift. His lightness begins to border on lightness, ease with carelessness, wit with frivolity, fun with vulgarity. All this is jarring, starting from the very first shots depicting the “glorious flight” from France of the inhabitants of a brothel who did not want to become free prey for the enemy (Vladimirov, 1960).

Got it from the *Soviet Screen* and a parody adventure comedy about Fantômas.

M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980), on the one hand, correctly noted that “the authors laugh at horror films, at all sorts of supermen and other rubbish. There are scenes that are really funny and entertaining. A smile saves the authors more than once...”, but, on the other hand, the critic was convinced that “more than once or twice a smile turns out to be a kind of “pass” into the primitive world of an ordinary detective story, where the creators of the picture plunge so “with their heads” that they no longer Do you know what is serious here – a parody or Fantômas himself? The genre of parody requires a full measure of intelligence, grace, wit, and finally, the purpose for which a parody is created ... Okay, let's agree that *Fantômas* is a parody. But, alas, not the first (perhaps not even the second) grade” (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17).

In a similar vein T. Bachelis (1918-1999) wrote about the second series of this trilogy – the parody comedy *Fantomas raged* (*Fantômas se déchaîne/Fantomas minaccia il mondo*. France-Italy, 1965): without some playful irony; it is she who helps the most highbrow spectator to see through to the end all the absurd situations of this, let's face it, though the most base, but completely harmless genre of “mass culture”. ... Hunebelle's film does not hide its commercial nature and is not satisfied with significant lengths. That doesn't mean it's good, of course. The mixture of guignol and farce is strained. And neither the magnificent “hypnotic” plasticity of Jean Marais, nor the magnificent facial expressions of Louis de Funès saves from the strain (Bachelis, 1967).

However, some French and Italian comedies, due to their “public significance” and “satire in relation to the bourgeois system”, received much higher marks from the reviewers of the *Soviet screen*.

For example, film critic V. Kolodyazhnaya (1911–2003) wrote very positively about such comedies as *The Scandal in Clochemerle* (*Clochemerle*. France, 1947), *Mr. Taxi* (*Monsieur Taxi*. France, 1952), *Fanfan la Tulipe* (France-Italy, 1951) and *Policemen and thieves* (*Guardie e ladri*. Italy, 1951) (Kolodyazhnaya, 1958: 13).

For example, she noted that one of the best Italian neo-realistic film comedies, the *Policemen and Thieves*, directed by Steno and Monicelli, wittily exposes the ugliness of capitalist society (Kolodyazhnaya, 1958: 13), and in the comedy *The Scandal in Clochemerle* the provincial town due to the construction of a public restroom, reveals the true essence of rich and “respectable” people – military merchants, officials. Debauchery, stupidity, lies, hypocrisy and demagoguery of the characters are well displayed in the satirical mirror of the comedy. Not without reason, before the film was released, it was shown to the highest authorities of France, and they discussed the issue of the “dangerous” moments of the film, beginning with the too long stay of the Minister of Agriculture in the public toilet (Kolodyazhnaya, 1958: 13).

And the general conclusion of V. Kolodyazhnaya was clearly ideologically sustained: Foreign comedies appearing on our screens are extremely diverse in their types, themes and the creative manner of the authors. In them you can find the image of the most diverse phenomena of life. With different strengths and depths and in different forms, they criticize the negative phenomena of reality and serve to affirm the best in a person (Kolodyazhnaya, 1958: 13).

A similar approach in evaluating the comedy *The Law is the Law* (*La Loi c'est la loi/La Legge è legge*. France-Italy, 1958) was used by the film critic Y. Sher: The meeting with the work of Christian-Jacques in the film *The Law is the Law* is nice meeting. A smile appears on the lips of the viewer literally from the first frame, and behind the smile a feeling of deep sympathy for the heroes of the film is born – small, ordinary people, victims of ridiculous, formally applied laws. Laws are ridiculed evilly, in detail, witty. In every plot twist, in every misadventure... the authors of the film expose more and more inert aspects of bureaucratic legislation (Sher, 1960: 15).

The *Soviet Screen* also rated the comedies of Jacques Tati very positively: Funny makes you think. Funny sometimes makes you hate. But for all that – and this is the main thing – the funny here makes me laugh. And very much (Solovieva, 1962).

About adventure films shot in France and Italy, *Soviet Screen* wrote less often.

So M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) reacted rather favorably to *The Three Musketeers* (*Les Trois mousquetaires*. France-Italy, 1961) by Bernard Borderie: "To say something new in another adaptation of Dumas' novel is a task of great difficulty... The director is not too deferential to the novel, he allows himself a bit of mischief. For the artistic aim of the picture is to create a funny play-presentation. And the novel is only a pretext for that. The irony, the banter, the mockery is the secret of the film's charm. ...In *The Three Musketeers*, the dynamics of the action are spectacular. The viewer is not given a single minute to be bored, or even just to stare around. ... But let's be deceived – the film is not the pinnacle of art at all. There are no outstanding artistic discoveries in it, although there are some small achievements that we tried to tell you about. But, rightly, without claiming to be much, it succeeds in one task: to give fun" (Kuznetsov, 1962).

Spaghetti western *The Golden Bullet* (*El Quien sabe?* Italy, 1966) by Damiano Damiani received an even more positive assessment in the *Soviet Screen*, this time with an emphasis on the political significance of the movie: "Here is another film based on the Mexican revolution – *The Golden Bullet* – was released on the screens. This time from Italy. More shots and jumps. Again imitation and direct quotes from the textbook *Viva Villa!*. Again, the desire to amaze us with the mystery of the plot. And, despite the professional direction and strong actors, this film would be a typical standard western, if not for one circumstance. ... A living assassin who felt attached to a friend in adventures, who understands the "laws of honor" in his own way (even if these are the laws of sharing!), disinterestedly punctual, respecting this disinterestedness in himself above all – that's who the film shows us goodbye. Look, murderers probably have friends too! That's what's really creepy ... So a western enters a completely uncharacteristic topic. This is how tragedy begins. So a film about shots and jumps becomes a study and a story about the most vile phenomenon on earth – about a hired killer. ... Yes, the guy is real. And his real, and not cinematic, descendants fled from the railway embankment in Dallas, aimed optical sights at the balcony where Martin Luther King stood for the last time, presented a toy pistol to the killer Sirhan Sirhan ... I don't know if the directors of the Italian western were planning on Mexican themes tell us something about the American way of life. But they told enough" (Orlov, 1968: 17).

But the peplum *Labors of Hercules* (*Le Fatiche di Ercole*. Italy-Spain, 1958) was sarcastically, but with a clear overkill of demanding seriousness, crushed in the *Soviet Screen*: "There are adventures. There is tempo and rhythm. There are some good outdoor shots. There are even natural ruins, and mountains, and the sea. ... And then we gradually realize that there are no Greeks in front of us, that the authors of the film trimmed the ancient characters to the current standards, or rather, the schemes. Superman hero without fear and reproach. A pretty, loyal and defenseless heroine. The hero's friends are a dashing company of fellows who – dress them accordingly – will still fight, stab and cut in any era ... And then we find the answer to the question: why was this done? ... with one thought: how to adjust both the ancient legend and the era, and its characters under the primitive concepts of the bourgeois film market. How would it be smarter to let them into the meat grinder, called the entertainment machine. ... But has art ever been valued, measured by the amount of money and colorful rags for the production of those released, and the brilliance of names, and the level of purely handicraft professionalism of its creators? The measure of art is thought. And what is the idea in the same action films with the same adventures, the same love, the same ends, even the same slanting snub-nosed faces of the heroines" (Orlov, 1966: 14-15).

The works of the so-called "author's cinema" were rarely seen in Soviet cinema theaters during the "thaw", but they were presented by the names of the first row: F. Fellini, M. Antonioni...

The films of Federico Fellini, made by him in the 1950s, in most cases were highly appreciated in the Soviet Screen.

So film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2021) wrote that F. Fellini's film *The Road* (*La Strada*. Italy, 1954) marked a turning point in the development of post-war Italian cinema. Then he triumphantly passed through the screens of the world. ... Many contemporary artists prove to us, like two times two – four, that the world is absurd, life is meaningless, and the fate of man is loneliness. Now it is in the works of this direction that they often see the highest expression of artistic maturity and insight, and Fellini is reproached for naivety, sentimentality and melodrama. In fact, disagreements concerning style and artistic taste turn out to be in this case an expression of a dispute about a person, about his spiritual resources, about his ability to withstand the deadly breath of cruel time. No matter how bitter Fellini's film, it does not exude hopelessness. For the artist believes in man, in his moral principle, which is stronger than the cruelty and cynicism of an unjustly arranged world (Bozhovich, 1967: 14-15).

Director G. Kozintsev (1905–1973) wrote about *Nights of Cabiria* (*Le Notti di Cabiria*. Italy-France, 1957) something like an ode in prose: “A reminder of reality, of the dirty streets of the Roman outskirts, where vice, where the horror of social inequality turns people into semi-animals. Giulietta Masina makes us believe that these warped creatures in other social conditions would be people in the beautiful sense of the word. The actress is characterized by the courage of the tricks of the game. She is not afraid of exaggerations, a sharp clash of contrasts. And at the same time, her Cabiria is sincere, direct, touching” (Kozintsev, 1959: 4).

But the article of film critic S. Tokarevich coincided with the opinion of G. Kozintsev only at first: It is difficult to imagine a person whom the film *Nights of Cabiria* would leave indifferent. The audience leaves the hall shocked by the terrible life of little Cabiria, about which the director Federico Fellini tells with such captivating talent. And all without exception find themselves in the grip of a peculiar and completely irresistible charm of the performer of the role of Cabiria – the actress Giulietta Masina (Tokarevich, 1960: 14).

But further, S. Tokarevich, in fact, launched an ideological attack on the outstanding Italian director, informing the readers of the *Soviet Screen* that Fellini's religious worldview ... was combined with outright decadence. Fellini the artist saturates his works with a vision of the reality surrounding him, sharpened to the point of cruelty. Fellini the decadent selects from this reality all the sickest, the ugliest. Pathology in his works often replaces psychology, and violence – love. Especially characteristic is his specifically decadent mania for constant confession, his desire to show the very unattractive insides of his heroes, internally identifying himself with them...

Fellini the Catholic, having painted a tragic picture of modernity, finds a way out only in a religious miracle. With his films, he is trying to say: "Look to God – and you will see a miracle and find redemption" ... But after all, it has long been known that only those who do not believe in a person, in his healthy beginning, in his spiritual strength, are looking for a way out in a miracle. Is this unbelief connected with Christian love for one's neighbor, with faith in him as in the likeness of God? ... And although Fellini believed that with Cabiria's smile “not only the finale was born, an idea was born that inspired the entire film,” this idea of his came into such conflict with the entire content of the film that the finale could not be perceived otherwise than as an artificially glued ending. What he saw in life, truthfully and talentedly depicted on the screen, killed the far-fetched idea (Tokarevich, 1960: 14-15).

Paradoxically, the same film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2021), who highly appreciated the work of F. Fellini, approached the interpretation of the film of another outstanding Italian director, M. Antonioni, rather dogmatically.

Here is what V. Bozhovich wrote about M. Antonioni's masterpiece *The Eclipse* (*L'Elisse/L'Éclipse*. Italy-France, 1961): *The Eclipse* is often seen as the completion of the trilogy created by Italian director Antonioni in the late '50s years. The first two parts are *Adventure* and *Night*. The cross-cutting theme of all these works – loneliness, the disunity of people, the fading of feelings – received in *The Eclipse* the most distinct, visual, almost illustrative expression. ... Antonioni is attracted by moments of emptiness that can only be described negatively, moments when there is no love, no anger, no hope, no despair, only sluggish and hopeless longing. It can be said about his heroes that despair and pain would be a boon for them. But their souls are demagnetized, their feelings have atrophied, their will has died. The director is far from to see in the state of mind of their heroes a simple psychological incident or the result of the moral degeneration of a narrow social group. No, for him it is a sign of the times, symptoms of a general spiritual crisis in society. Antonioni is the author of one theme, and he is convinced that this theme is of universal importance. That is why he does not get tired of varying it from film to film.

What is the reason for the crisis? Antonioni develops a “vein” that is too old, too traditional for modern art, to linger on this for a long time ... In all Antonioni's mature films, the same thing is repeated: the event is not allowed to take shape; barely outlined, it disintegrates, dissolves, goes into the sand. Antonioni's themes and motifs, his worldview are consistent with the style of his films, their polished and cold performance. ... To a world in which human feelings have faded and all moral values have depreciated, he can oppose only his professional conscientiousness, his impeccable skill.

It is often said that Antonioni's art is tragic. It's hard for me to agree with this. After all, a true tragedy presupposes a high intensity of feelings, a formidable, sometimes catastrophic clash of mighty forces, tension, struggle. Only art can be tragic, reflecting the world in motion, in the

struggle of contradictions, and only it can help to rise above the oppressive monotony of everyday life, or, as Gleb Uspensky said, "straighten" a person (Bozhovich, 1966: 17-18).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about the West German and Austrian films shown in the Soviet box office

The first West German films that appeared in the Soviet film distribution – *Rats (Die Ratten. Germany, 1955)* and *Before Sundown (Vor Sonnenuntergang. Germany, 1956)* and others were met in the *Soviet Screen* quite positively. An anonymous reviewer of the magazine noted, for example, that in *Rats* the viewer excitedly follows the development of events, the interesting fates of the characters. The leading role is played by one of the best modern German film actresses – the charming and talented Maria Schell. The images she created on the screen captivate with lyricism, deep drama, combined with tenderness and utmost truthfulness (Rats, 1957: 5).

Film critic M. Turovskaya (1924–2019) emphasized the importance of anti-war and anti-Nazi themes in the drama *The Bridge (Die Brücke. West Berlin, 1959)*.

The magazine approved of the criticism of capitalist society in the film *The Girl Rosemarie (Das Mädchen Rosmarie. Germany, 1958)*: Although the film feels the presence of standard techniques, excessive curiosity for intimate details, and everything that characterizes the style of bourgeois cinema, *The Girl Rosemarie* did her job: she exposed the halo of morality of the country's masters (Samoilov, 1959; Chudo..., 1966).

Approximately in the same vein, the film *We are geeks (Wir Wunderkinder. Germany, 1958)* was evaluated (Orlov, 1960: 15).

But the picture *The Power of the Uniform (The Captain from Köpenick/Der Hauptmann von Köpenick. Germany, 1956)* in the *Soviet Screen* clearly did not do well. Film critic A. Zorky (1935–2006) approached him based on the canonical Marxist-Leninist class positions: It seems that the authors of the film *The Power of the Uniform* are ultra-brave people. Through the mouth of Willy Voigt they say: "I have no homeland", and in the line above: "I am ready to die for it." In desperation, the hero of the film steals only his passport from the police. Obviously, this decency should shock us? But are we, living in a country whose people have taken away their power and wealth from the landowners and manufacturers, to be touched by the feat of good will of Willy Voigt? (Zorky, 1960).

The *Soviet Screen* also treated frankly entertaining German and Austrian films very seriously and ideologically strictly.

For example, about movie *12 Girls and One Man (Zwölf Mädchen und ein Mann. Austria, 1959)* in the log it was written as follows: We will not claim that the film will seem boring to you. No, you smile more than once. You will enjoy the beautifully staged "ski" numbers, and the perky musical rhythms, and the brilliant sportsmanship of the leading actor. But is it enough for a work of art? ... in this case, and this does not save the situation. The acting skills of the performers are also not encouraging. ... Purely entertaining films that become an advertisement for a beautiful, easy, carefree life are an integral part of the ideological propaganda of the bourgeois world. ... Perhaps this picture will bring income to rental organizations, but who will calculate the moral and aesthetic losses? (Vladimirovsky, 1960: 15).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about the Scandinavian films shown in the Soviet box office

The leading Soviet specialist in Scandinavian (especially Swedish) cinema in the 1960s was V. Matusevich (1937–2009), who, by the way, emigrated to the West in 1969 and then worked for *Radio Liberty* for many years.

But until 1969, the publications of V. Matusevich on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* did not contain even a hint of the future "dissidence".

So he wrote about the film *Legend of the Fugitive (Qivitoq. Denmark, 1956)*, which Here, the Greenlandic exoticism is not an end in itself, but an organic and necessary background against which complex and very topical ideological and ethical problems are resolved. ... The filmmakers are on the side of those who choose difficult but honest paths in life, full of creative work. The indigenous inhabitants of the island, the Eskimos, are depicted with sympathy and respect; excellent knowledge of the material is felt in showing their way of life. ... And although *The Legend of the Fugitive* is not a masterpiece from a purely cinematic point of view, this film is a bright line of that page in the history of Danish cinema that is being written today. ... Danish cinematography has not been flourishing in recent years. But this film showed her a growing creative force capable

of creating something more than the vulgar comedies that make up the vast majority of Danish film production (Matusevich, 1960: 14).

And about the drama *Elvira Madigan* (Sweden, 1967) V. Matusevich, in general, sang a kind of film-critical anthem It was joyful to see the victory of healthy, simple and vital art, like black bread, a work of deep tragedy, but at the same time courageous and purifying beauty. It was a joy to know that just such a film has become one of the most outstanding phenomena of Swedish cinema in recent times. Based on the textbook story of love and death of an aristocrat and a circus dancer, the talented Swedish director Bo Wiederberg creates a pastoral pierced by the soft rays of the northern sun. Here everything is in harmony, everything breathes with young, healthy, chaste happiness, the beauty of natural being that is understandable and accessible to everyone. And at the same time, the motif inherent in Swedish cinema for a long time, obviously doomed summer idyll is given in *Elvira Madigan* with chilling sobriety. ... With the utmost laconism and inexorability, with a genuine maturity of social thinking, Wiederberg traces the movement of moral conflict, the tragic climax of which occurs when the heroes silently, deeply realize three simple truths: love is unthinkable outside of society; such love is unthinkable in such a society: without such love and in such a society they will no longer live. ... For Wiederberg, lyricism is inseparable from a rational analysis of the social nature of things; that is why the logic of artistic self-development has now led the director to work on a film about a labor strike (Matusevich, 1968).

Quite positively, the "thaw" *Soviet Screen* also responded to other Scandinavian films that got into the Soviet film distribution: *Princess* (*Prinsessan*. Sweden, 1966) (Karinskaya, 1967: 13), *Ditte is a human child* (*Ditte menneskebarn*. Denmark, 1946) (Ditte ..., 1957: 6), *A Sailor Goes Ashore* (*A sailor has never been in this skin/Das haut einen seemann doch nicht um*. Denmark-West Germany, 1958), *The Red Mantle* (*Hagbard and Signe Røde kappe/Den röda kappan*. Denmark-Iceland-Sweden, 1967) (Pisarevsky, 1967).

In particular, it was noted that the film *A Sailor Goes Ashore* not everything ... the Soviet viewer perceives with the same satisfaction. Of course, something will seem unusual to him, alien, sometimes naive. But the film also has undeniable merits. Willingly or unwillingly, the authors of the film reveal the disgusting ulcers of the capitalist world. And in little Denmark, people live in slums. And here there is poverty, unemployment, And prostitution, smuggling, secret drug trade flourish here. And here you have to pay dearly for everything ... Another advantage of the film is that it is mostly ordinary people who act in it – sailors, stokers, cafe waiters, hotel employees ... Elements of melodrama and sentimentality do not harm the film with such a healthy beginning. They are quite appropriate and organic, in the plot, associated with the child. Moreover, these features largely determine the course of development of the thought of the work and the images of its characters. They do not become tiresome, because the whole film is lit up with cheerful, bright humor (Shabanov, 1960: 15).

But, of course, the greatest interest among the Scandinavian films shown in the Soviet film distribution of the 1960s was the philosophical parable of the outstanding Swedish director I. Bergman *Wild Strawberries* (*Smultronstället*. Sweden, 1957).

Literary and film critic L. Anninsky (1934–2019) wrote that *Wild Strawberries* is Bergman's best film... crystal clearness, analytic form in Bergman's films only paradoxically set off the painful hopelessness of his thoughts. ... What does it mean to live? ... Dr. Borg is endowed with a brilliant ability to rise above time: a clock with broken hands is a nightmare that haunts him. He could not bear people, their disgustingness, their bestiality. He did not want to judge or punish them. On the contrary, he even treated them for diseases. But he just didn't want to live like them. And what? Ingmar Bergman is called a religious artist. This is hardly fair. In any case, he has nothing to fill the religious abyss... What a horror that there is no God, and we are alone! This mood of modern Western atheists is completely mastered by Bergman. No god means a spiritual absolute is inconceivable in this stupid, swine, base world. ... In the world surrounding Ingmar Bergman, there is no clue, no meaning and measure, no shrine. Bergman knows no way out of this spiritual impasse; his latest films, very contradictory, testify even more clearly to the impotence to protect and justify a person. And even in *Wild Strawberries* (and this is Bergman's best film) there is, in fact, no answer (Anninsky, 1965: 16-17).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about the films of other Western countries shown in the Soviet box office

Of course, films from France and Italy, which were traditionally considered more democratic than the rest, were the basis of the Western repertoire of the USSR film distribution during the

thaw period, especially in the light of their influential communist parties at that time (about two million members of the Communist Party in Italy and more than half a million in France). Carefully selected American, British, West German and Scandinavian films also fell into Soviet distribution. Films from other countries were guests of the Soviet screens much less frequently.

As a rule, Spanish, Greek, Finnish films received a rather warm welcome from the *Soviet Screen*. So about the Finnish drama *Women of Niskavuori* (*Niskavuoren naiset*. Finland, 1958) it was written that it contributes to improving mutual understanding and strengthening friendship between the Soviet and Finnish peoples (Krymova, 1959: 12). And although the film *Three Mirrors* (*Tres Espelhos*. Portugal-Spain, 1947) is a typical detective story, the plot of which is built on the Hollywood model, it attracts not with a plot, but with good acting (Tri..., 1958: 4). And let in *Electre* (*Ilektra*, Greece, 1962) in expressive, unusual angles, in excessively close admiration of details, there is a well-known aestheticization of suffering, poverty. But this is still not the main thing in the film... Behind the ancient tragedy of *Electre*, today's Greece appeared on the screen – beautiful and sad (Galanov, 1964: 17).

Of the Spanish films that got into the Soviet film distribution, the magazine received the greatest support for the dramatic *The Executioner* (*El Verdugo/La Ballata del boia*. Spain-Italy, 1963) by Luis Berlanga: His hero José Luis is a cheerful, sociable guy, what is called a nice guy. Only the trouble is, he married the daughter of an old executioner and must inherit his position, otherwise the family will not receive a government apartment. José Luis doesn't want to be an executioner. But the apartment! Calmly, cheerfully and evilly, Berlanga explores the psychology of the tradesman, consumed by temptations and tormented by conscience. Yes, this good-natured guy allows himself to be persuaded, signs an obligation. ... The director does not forget about the circumstances, but he does not justify, does not pity the person who succumbed to them. He is well aware that in human history there have been far fewer enthusiastic killers than those who "simply served" (Khanyutin, 1965: 14-15).

It is interesting to note that sometimes the articles of film scholars and film critics published in the *Soviet Screen* of the 1960s went beyond reviewing individual Western films or festival reviews.

For example, these could be reflections (in our opinion, not at all outdated even today) about the detective genre in cinema: A detective, revolving for decades in the circle of the most traditional plot schemes and provisions, most often evokes an ironic attitude towards himself. He is regularly blamed for superficiality, aimless sophistication of riddles, inability to comprehend the complexity of human psychology. But sometimes they do not notice that creative search breaks into this genre, as if stagnant in clichés and platitudes.

Of course, ... sometimes artists in the West seek to destroy the traditional plot of a detective investigation, when a detective (Sherlock Holmes, for example) created for himself a logically accurate picture of a crime. But they see a departure from the stereotype in the complication of the plot, in juggling with unthinkable and extremely unrealistic circumstances. Having confused the situation, the authors resolve it either with the help of an absurd, artificial plot twist, or pull out into the light of day the "dark recesses of the human soul", which are no longer amenable to logical decipherment. But from such works is also excluded what was the true humanistic value of the classic detective story: the assertion of the omnipotence of a thinking person. It seems that the days of Sherlock Holmes are long gone, and even the commissar Maigret in the modern novels of Georges Simenon looks like a good-natured elderly gentleman of the era of the latest gas lamps and the first automobiles. They were replaced by a sporty-looking young man with a square jaw, resolving any difficult situation with the help of fists and a revolver.

Other artists working in this genre follow a different path: they try to qualitatively change the conflict itself, on the basis of which the detective story is built. At the forefront is no longer a detective mystery, but the important questions of human existence that can be resolved with its help.

The hero of the work is not necessarily one of the parties to the simplest conflict between the criminal and the investigator, but the entire sum of detective circumstances serves as an indicator, a litmus test that reveals the true essence of the hero. Not only events draw a person into their course and lead to changes in his destiny, but also a person actively influences their development. This complex interrelation causes a step forward both from the usual level of a traditional detective story and from those works where adventures serve only as a background for solving an artificially introduced problem (Dmitriev, Mikhalkovich, 1964: 18-19).

And sometimes the magazine also published articles, the main message of which was a dialogue with readers, a hope (maybe in many ways – naive) for the development of their artistic taste.

So the poet and film critic V. Orlov (1929–1972) wrote about a typical situation in audience disputes when hot people ... seriously rush at each other, and for the hundredth time one hears: “You are all philistines if you don’t understand *Marriage Italian Style!* (Orlov, 1966: 19).

And here V. Orlov reminded the readers of the magazine that the film perception and further conclusions of the audience depend on what a person today expects from a picture. And he, by the way, has the right to wait for what he wants. We must not forget the simple truth: he is a consumer. Yes, yes, the consumer, or, if you like, the buyer - and there is nothing shameful or offensive in this for respected cinematic masters. The viewer goes to the cinema, pays for the cinema, and millions of cinematic incomes are made up of his countless fifty dollars. And the buyer has the right to demand.

“What do you expect from art?” we, the critics, ask the question, and then we rush to answer it ourselves. And our opinion is known. We are professionals and – let the viewer not be offended – we know more and understand more, because this is our specialty. This is forgotten by people who write in the editorial office, “correcting” critics, often with abuse, with insults, but they themselves would hardly allow criticism to teach them how to pour steel or prescribe potions. We, professionals, are in principle for the art of thought. Our opinion has been put forth, frankly speaking, gained through suffering as a result of long and hard work, viewing, studying life, books, documents, and audience reviews, the most detailed acquaintance with the live work of the studios, and most importantly, as a result of the difficult education of one’s own critical level.

But when we begin to unrestrainedly attribute our own – albeit qualified – views to the entire audience, this is both premature and incorrect. We answer the question “what do you expect from art” in our own words, and a huge number of dissidents remains to be declared aesthetically backward people.

And dissenters, of course, are offended. Dissenters are rising up against us, the critics, and our supporters, the spectators. ...

And the viewer expects different things from art. ... You can search in the art of thoughts. Possibly entertainment. And you can demand: let it be funny to me – that’s what I wish today. It happens. There is a time for everything (Orlov, 1966: 19).

But then V. Orlov moved on to the “educational part” of his article (adding a fair amount of ideologization here), where, in fact, he largely refuted his own thesis about the acceptability of a variety of audience tastes:

But therein lies our account with today’s entertainment consumers. Or rather, our first concern. Isn’t entertainment self sufficient for you? Always fun – and only fun? ... That’s when it’s bad. Think about it. You are robbing yourself. You do not want to pay attention to excessively mentoring articles and reader letters, you yourself are the masters of your free time ... but still, for your own good – think about it ...

For works of “fake” are not so harmless as they seem at first glance. They instill in people their own, distorted view of life, of human relations, their bad taste. And from the views close to the actions. Brought up on superficial, sentimental-slobbering explanations of the heroes of other cinematic melodramas, how will you treat people yourself? How to love? Brought up on “power” methods of conflict resolution, will you lose a precious gift – humanity?

Art acts in different ways – both directly and indirectly. But it works – gradually instills thoughts, shades in behavior and, most importantly, a worldview. And the worldview in other petty-bourgeois militants, which also appear on our screens, is often very doubtful. Not only not Soviet, but also not human in the sense in which we are accustomed to understanding it. This worldview rests on two “pillars”: the alleged commonality of all people (there are no classes, there are no capitalists or workers) and the alleged separation of each person from his neighbor ... To live in such a wolf world with blue trim – no, you’ll excuse me! ...

These are our worries – and, you see, the worries are justified. And the conclusion from all the same will be unexpected: art needs different things. Miscellaneous, but necessarily bearing noble thoughts. Not bringing up superficiality, indifference, vulgarity in behavior and relations between people. Does not distort the picture of life. ... Art needs different things. When we truly understand this, then discussions like the ones I mentioned at the beginning will disappear. People will begin to respect the tastes of others. And perhaps an admirer of Wajda or Kramer will make peace with an admirer of trick comedy on one condition: both of them must be thinking people.

Mutual understanding does not mean universal tolerance. ... And now, when we learn mutual respect, we will present our bill both to our cinema and to our rental (Orlov, 1966: 19).

Evaluation of Western films that, for one reason or another, were not shown in the Soviet film distribution

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about American and British films that were not shown in the Soviet box office

The approach of the editors of the *Soviet Screen* during the "thaw" to Western films that, for one reason or another, did not fall into the mass Soviet film distribution, was similar to the assessments of the rental repertoire: they praised films for their social orientation and criticism of the bourgeois system, anti-war themes, scolded for "unrestrained" entertainment and ideological hostility.

So in the article *Soviet Screen* it was noted that in the film *Bonnie and Clyde* (USA, 1967) director Arthur Penn managed not only to brilliantly recreate the atmosphere of the thirties – the atmosphere of depression and the general crisis of ideals, but also to show how in this situation two young people, without strong moral fundamentals, not finding an application for their strength, the desire for romance and adventure, they turn to crime as the only outlet for their passions. ... The killers are not pathological degenerates, but ordinary people, similar to many spectators looking at them. People who grew up in a certain country – in the United States of America, morally crippled by its system. ... Many events ... – and the barbaric bombing in Vietnam, and the vile assassination of Martin Luther King, which stirred up all of America, and much more – confirm this (Vozublennyye..., 1968).

It was also noted that in *Planet of the Apes* (USA, 1968) by Franklin Sheffner argues with the American society will go further and further along the path of dehumanization of man! ... Sheffner's film, one of many warning films made in recent years in the West. And let neither Godard in *Alphaville* (France-Italy, 1965) nor Truffaut in *Fahrenheit 451* (UK-France, 1966) nor Scheffner on *Planet of the Apes* see or do not want to see ways out – their anxiety, their preoccupation, their bitterness and satirical intensity make these fantastic films about the future a serious phenomenon of art (Filev, 1968).

But the film *In the Heat of the Night* (USA, 1967) by Norman Jewison was already unconditionally praised in the *Soviet Screen* for telling how racism is deeply rooted in the USA, how strong are the ideas brought up by generations about the superiority of some people over others only on the basis of skin color. The more contrasting is the position of the authors of the film, the position that more and more Americans are now taking. In fact, for the first time in US cinema, it is shown that a smart and capable Negro is better than stupid whites. This recognition is a noticeable phenomenon not only in the art of the country, where the racial problem is so tragically expressed, but also in its social life. ... So gradually, slowly, overcoming many and many obstacles, progressive-minded American filmmakers raise their voice of protest against the "stuffy night" of racism,

Another American film on the topic of racism, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (USA, 1967) by S. Kramer, was also highly praised in the magazine, which was called "a vivid satire on American mores", where "dramatic collisions, like in a mirror, reflect the social gulf between the white and black populations of America (Goncharova, 1968).

Moreover, the famous Soviet actor V. Sanaev (1912–1996) shared with the readers of the *Soviet Screen* his positive impressions of the sensational film *The Wild Angels* (USA, 1966) by Roger Corman: "He talks about the "innocent", at first glance, entertainment of young Americans, ending in orgies, murders and the appearance of a swastika on flags. The young actor Peter Fonda, the son of one of the most talented actors in America, Henry Fonda, plays the main role with great skill. The rest of the skillfully selected actors play freely and sincerely. The film warns of the dangers of a slippery slope that could lead American youth to fascism, and I was surprised and saddened by the cold reception that was given to this socially significant and necessary work, while the American film *Chappaqua* ..., which tells about life drug addict, was awarded a special jury prize for musical accompaniment and interesting camera work" (Sanaev, 1966: 17).

By the way, *The Wild Angels* was even purchased for Soviet distribution, but then the censors still didn't let it through, apparently, frightened by the "propaganda of violence" and the possible negative impact of the movie on "unstable" youth.

Positive ratings were awarded in the *Soviet Screen* to such significant works as *Paths of Glory* (USA, 1957) (Cher, 1958), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (UK-USA, 1967) and *The Charge of the*

Light Brigade (UK, 1968) (Hibbin, 1968: 13), *The Hill* (UK, 1965), *It Happened Here* (UK, 1965) (Pisarevsky, 1965) and *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (UK-USA, 1957) (Kuznetsov, 1965).

But one of the largest military dramas – *The Longest Day* (*Le Jour le plus long*. USA-France, 1961) – was accused in the *Soviet Screen* of misinterpreting the events of the Second World War: *The Longest Day*, is undoubtedly interesting as an attempt to resurrect the historic day of June 6, 1944, when the Allies landed in Normandy, on a grand scale with the help of feature films. Episodes of dropping paratroopers, a battle on the coast are really impressive, but ... Attempts to convey the inner world of soldiers and officers are insanely weak, and, most importantly, the war itself is portrayed as a kind of large-scale football match between two rivals – allies and Nazis. What about the aims of the war? Was it the salvation of mankind from the fascist gas chamber or just a jousting tournament? The authors of *The Longest Day* were on the side of outspoken politicians, but true art cannot live in the stale atmosphere of "politicking" (Kuznetsov 1965: 2-3).

Similarly, other American and British films on the theme of the Second World War were evaluated in the *Soviet Screen*: *The Desert Fox: The Story of Rommel* (USA, 1951), *Battle of Britain* (UK, 1969), *Battle of the Bulge* (USA, 1965) and others: Our press has repeatedly reported a whole series of falsified "military" films of Anglo-American production, seeking to whitewash and rehabilitate the "exploits" of the Nazi warriors during the days of the last war. It began ... with the American painting *The Desert Fox: The Story of Rommel*, this continues today, which is exemplified by such a grandiose and false falsification of history as the movie *The Longest Day* – about the landing of Anglo-American troops in Normandy. Now the infamous producer of the James Bond spy series, Harry Saltzman, is directing the filming of the rabidly faked film *Battle of Britain*. ... The press of Germany enthusiastically writes about this picture, emphasizing its role in the rehabilitation of Hitler's Luftwaffe. And this is understandable: the military of the fascist Reich has long peacefully coexisted in NATO with representatives of British aviation. ... Thus, the *Battle of Britain* will be for the Nazi aces evidence of their chivalry and nobility. ... The *Battle of Britain* broke the record of lies and slander against the heroes of the past war, the record of indignation and protests of the progressive press of Great Britain and the West Germany (Lesovoy, 1968: 12).

It should be noted that in the "thaw" era, sometimes even Western cinematic experiments that did not carry any ideological danger were met extremely negatively in the *Soviet Screen*.

So about the experimental Hollywood film *Scent of Mystery* (USA, 1960) a feuilleton was published in the magazine called "Movies with Smell": It seems that only recently a *New York Times* film critic wrote ironically about the experiences of several film entrepreneurs who, no matter what it took to achieve an impact on the viewer, they arranged the chairs in the hall so that they either oscillated or began to sway during the session (thus, regardless of the quality of the picture, the viewer literally bounced on the spot). And now these tricks seem to have already passed the stage. American producer Michael Todd Jr. made a film called *Scent of Mystery* in which the title is at least half true. Half in the sense that, although there is no particular secret, the smell is always present in the hall. The "Smellvision" system (smelling image) is a device with the help of which various smells are supplied to the hall during the session through pipes, corresponding to what is happening on the screen. In *Scent of Mystery*, viewers pay three and a half dollars for a ticket and can inhale the smell of apples, wine, tobacco, shoe polish, garlic and roses, not to mention the more common scents. ... According to the American magazine *Time* (and in this case we are inclined to believe it), the majority of visitors, having left the cinema, will unanimously decide that the best smell in the world is the smell of fresh air. ... It remains to be added that the Smellvision system opens up the broadest prospects for American cinema. Imagine how easy it will be to make melodramas now. Let some tear gas through the system – and the sobs of the audience are guaranteed.

An article by the then head of Mosfilm V. Surin (1906–1994) gives a complete picture of how it was customary to cover the repertoire of Western film festivals during the thaw: The festival screen collided two types of works: those that glorify a person and his strength, are imbued with attention to his position in the world and the subtlest movements of his soul, are devoted to acute social topics, raise important social problems, and those whose leitmotif is pessimism and hopelessness in which the absence of big themes and bold ideas is replaced by exoticism, savoring human vices. It would seem that horrors, abominations, base passions, which form the basis of hundreds of Western films, should have remained outside the festival screen, where all the best and loftiest are invited. Unfortunately, it is not. The ancient Greek god of love Eros himself would blush

with shame for this unbridled pornography that reigned in world cinema and managed to penetrate Cannes (Surin, 1967: 15).

B. Galanov (1914–2000) also wrote about the Cannes Film Festival in a similar spirit: “How many hopelessly pessimistic films there were at Cannes, imbued with disbelief in man, in his strength and capabilities” (Galanov, 1963: 16). The anonymous “editorial article” was approximately the same: there were quite a few frankly reactionary paintings, alien to the truth of life and humanism, imbued with hopelessness and darkness, paintings whose content was reduced to depicting bloody dramas and bed stories (Cannes..., 1963).

Here is what, for example, the then editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Screen* D. Pisarevsky wrote about the film *The Collector* (USA-UK, 1964) by William Wyler: A story about a mentally ill young man, a maniac who lures young girls into the basement of his there, in confinement, striving to achieve their love, smacks of frank guignol. And what's the point that the film is professionally and deftly staged, that good actors are involved in it: the art here is given to the needs of the most undemanding tastes, for the sake of commercial purposes (Pisarevsky, 1965: 16-19).

Even about M. Antonioni's masterpiece *Blowup* (UK-Italy, 1967), won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, the *Soviet Screen* wrote with a big fly in the ointment: If you want to live peacefully in this society, as Antonioni says, be indifferent, skim the surface of events, do not try to penetrate their essence. The problematics of this movie, its dramatic structure, pictorial side are of considerable interest. But I want to say about what upset me in this film. Antonioni paid tribute to fashion – savoring sex scenes. Western critics called *Blowup* the best work of Antonioni. I do not agree with this (Surin, 1967: 14).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about French and Italian films that were not shown in the Soviet cinemas

At the initial stage of its "relaunch" in the second half of the 1950s, *Soviet Screen* often resorted to the services of Western film critics of a socialist or communist orientation. In this sense, the French film critic, member of the Communist Party, Georges Sadoul (1904–1967) was an almost perfect figure.

So, for example, in an article by G. Sadoul about French cinema, published on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* in 1959, the films *The Cheaters* (*Youthful Sinners/Les Tricheurs/Peccatori in blue jeans*. France-Italy, 1958) and *One Life* (*Une vie*. France-Italy, 1958) were positively evaluated (Sadoul, 1958).

And in his kind of programmatic article entitled “Realism and world cinematography”, Georges Sadoul wrote that there is cinematography that shows life, social reality. And there is also the cinema of “white phones”. ... “White phones” are almost never seen in everyday life, but they were, and still are, an obligatory prop of bad films, in which gentlemen in tailcoats and ladies in evening dresses in luxurious salons, surrounded by a crowd of maids and lackeys, discuss heart problems. ... Sometimes it looks comical, sometimes dramatic, but in general it remains a false, fictional world that has nothing to do with reality. In France, and in other Western countries as well, cinema for millions of people, which really reflects the hopes and aspirations of the masses, is in constant struggle with the cinema of “white phones”, that is, with films that financed by millionaires who seek to use the screen as a means of profit, a means of harmful propaganda, intoxicating the people. In this struggle, the best filmmakers, although not always, win victories (Sadoul, 1959: 12).

And then G. Sadoul praised such artistically significant films as *Hiroshima, My Love* (*Hiroshima mon amour*. France-Japan, 1958), *The Lovers* (*Les Amants*. France, 1958), *Handsome Serge* (*Le Beau Serge*. France, 1958) and *Cousins* (*Les Cousins*. France, 1959).

It was noted that in the drama *Hiroshima, My Love* by Alain Resnais with hatred opposes war, against massacres with the help of an atomic bomb, against racism that has taken such deep roots” ... In *The Lovers* by Louis Malle, “some scenes are shocking, but should admit that in other episodes the director satirically depicted the mores of the big bourgeoisie. And although Claude Chabrol's *Cousins* is not without “shortcomings, it is a completely realistic work with undeniable merits, like the first film of this director, *Handsome Serge* (Sadoul, 1959: 13).

Approximately the same confidence in the era of the “thaw” was evoked by the editors of the *Soviet Screen* by another well-known French film critic, a member of the French Communist Party, Marcel Martin, who told the readers of the magazine about the French “new wave” (Marten, 1961).

The Soviet film critic and translator A. Braginsky (1920–2016) fully agreed with the opinion of G. Sadoul about the film *The Cheaters* (*Youthful Sinners/Les Tricheurs/Peccatori in blue jeans*.

France-Italy, 1958). He believed that by showing the drama of modern youth, focusing on it as a national disaster, Marcel Carnet, obviously, from the point of view of some zealous defenders of the bourgeois system, insulted the patriotism of the French. ... Marcel Carnet is not only a prosecutor in *The Deceivers*. He made his film with great heartache for the fate of the younger generation (Braginsky, 1959).

A little later, the same A. Braginsky (after all, it was only after the "Paris May" that Jean-Luc Godard began to be considered one of the enemies of the USSR) praised the drama *The Little Soldier* (*Le Petit soldat*. France, 1960): This is the story of a deserter of the French army, operating in Algeria. The hero of the film is trying to personally decide for himself the question of who is right and who is to blame in this cruel war. Godard is far from taking the side of the Algerian patriots to the end. But he opposes the war, denouncing the cruelty of the colonialists. By thirteen votes to six, the censorship commission demanded ... a ban on the film *The Little Soldier*. The Minister, who has the right to uphold or revoke the decisions of the censorship, agreed with the opinion of the commission. For what reasons? Yes, because scenes of torture are shown on the screen. Because the hero of the picture was a deserter looking for the truth. "At that moment, when all French youth, says the communiqué of the Ministry of Information, are called up for military service in Algeria, an attempt to oppose this cannot be supported. Various public and professional organizations protested against the ban on *The Little Soldier*. The struggle against the arbitrariness of censorship in France merges today with the movement of broad public circles against the continuation of the war in Algeria (Braginsky, 1960: 17).

Another film by Godard, *Alphaville* (France-Italy, 1965), presented at the Moscow Film Festival, but not purchased for Soviet film distribution, was also rated very positively in the *Soviet Screen*.

Film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) wrote that the threat of neo-fascism is embodied by the French director Jean-Luc Godard in the gloomy images of the totalitarian state of Alphaville. Alphaville is a city where science is put at the service of destruction, where the conquest of foreign countries is the main task, and the reprisal against dissidents is an iron rule. In this world of concrete walls, endless corridors and empty-eyed people, the word "love" has been replaced by the word "voluptuousness", and the concept of "conscience" does not exist at all (Khanyutin, 1965: 14-15).

The anti-totalitarian significance of the film was also emphasized by film critic E. Kartseva (1928–2002), emphasizing that, although *Alfaville* is made in the tradition of social science fiction, this, however, in no way meant a departure from the problems of our time. On the contrary, the originality of the form made it possible to look at these problems more broadly and put them more sharply. Worried about the activation of fascism, the tendencies of social development leading to dictatorship, the French director, warning, although not always consistently and clearly in position, created on the screen a prototype of an authoritarian state, from the life of which normal human relations were etched out (Kartseva, 1966: 19).

The importance of anti-war themes in the film *317th Platoon* (*La 317e section*. France-Spain-Cambodia, 1965) was emphasized in an article by D. Pisarevsky (1912–1990): The painful path of a French platoon retreating through the jungle, the death of its people, the cruel drama of the soldiers involved in an adventure alien to them – all this grows in the film into incriminating evidence against a dirty war. Although the author is not bold enough and consistent in all his conclusions, the material of his film, the whole structure of his images suggest to the audience the thought: it is impossible to defeat the people fighting for freedom. And this page of recent history acquired a topical sound, highlighting the events that are still taking place in the same places today (Pisarevsky, 1965).

Of course, the *Soviet Screen* was very sympathetic to those Western films where the positive characters were revolutionaries of "democratic views". So Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) enthusiastically wrote about the political drama *The War is Over* (*La Guerre est finie*. France-Sweden, 1966) as follows: Therefore, its spiritual wholeness is clearly visible. He does not yet know how he will fight, but he will fight. The Spanish war is over, a new generation has come, conditions have changed, but the struggle continues. ... The main role in the film is played by Yves Montand. He has grown old, the charm of the darling of the public has gone, bitterness and fatigue have appeared in his eyes. Now Montand has somehow subtly become similar to Gabin of his mature years. The same stinginess of acting means, unexpected change of rhythms, charm of masculinity. And next to Montand is Ingrid Thulin. The well-known actress from Bergman's films found some kind of inner harmony in this picture. Her acting duets with Montand are perhaps the best of the

film. Perhaps, love has not yet been shown as in this film. So candid and so chaste. So sensual and so sublime. In general, it is difficult to determine the style of Resnais in this film. Maybe it can be called poetic, enlightened realism. His thought retained complexity, volume, and the language became simpler, more expressive. This picture requires intellectual effort, and it captures with its emotional power. This is where the synthesis that modern cinema is looking for is born, the synthesis of thought and feeling that captivates the viewer and raises him to the heights of great art (Khanyutin, 1966: 15).

It can be assumed that *The War is Over* could well have appeared in the Soviet film distribution, but in 1968 the "black list" of Western cultural figures in the USSR included both the scriptwriter of the film Jorge Semprún and the actor Yves Montan...

It is clear that Mario Monicelli's drama *The Organizer (Les Compagni/I Camarades*. Italy-France-Yugoslavia, 1963) was also highly rated by the magazine, since the film deeply and truthfully shows the origin and development of revolutionary consciousness among Italian workers (Matveev, 1964: 18).

At the same time, the chamber psychological drama *Mouchette* (France, 1967): Robert Bresson. His view of the world is rigidly predetermined and firm, his film *Mouchette* based on the novel by Bernanos is a terrible, depressingly hopeless film, full of despair and a special, purely Bressonian silence. A work of high veracity, *Mouchette*, perhaps, does not rise in its strength and depth of silence to Bresson's famous masterpiece *The Condemned to Death Fled*, but it is no less amazing. Here, in *Mouchette*, silence reigns, for the whole world is a prison. The loneliness of man is absolute, life is monstrous, cruel, the author's pessimism is boundless. You can not share this pessimism. You can not love Bresson, but his goal – to show the defenselessness of man in the conditions of animal existence – is a necessary goal. In the Bressonian picture of the world, there is no god, no devil, no "special" villains, and the human being is nevertheless hunted. ... A terrible, inexorable picture. There don't seem to be any criminals. At the same time, Bresson sees them, and we see them. This is indifference. Indifference to someone else's poverty and misfortune, to the torment of an almost feral soul. Their indifference is the main source of Bresson's bitter pessimism (Bachelis, 1967).

At the turn of the 1960s, Antonello Trombadori (1917–1993), then member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, editor-in-chief of the magazine *Contemporaneo*, was entrusted to tell the readers of the *Soviet Screen* about modern cinema in Italy.

In his article, A. Trombadori argued that in 1959, a new upsurge of Italian cinematography began. It is an upswing, not a resurrection. Despite the fierce attacks of censorship, Italian cinematography has created a number of films of a certain artistic and public interest. But it cannot yet be said that the working conditions of directors and their ideological views meet the requirements that can guarantee the creative flourishing of Italian cinema. Censorship continues to stifle any attempt by Italian cinema to comprehend social processes. The political views of many of the most prominent directors and screenwriters are still very vague. They oscillate between subjectivism, bordering on mysticism, and the illusory hope that all the plagues inherent in modern bourgeois society, can be eliminated by social democratic reforms. It is interesting to note, however, the fact that censorship shows hostility even towards a very moderate ideological orientation (Trombadori, 1960: 10).

However, continued A. Trombadori, it should not, of course, be approached with a doctrinaire yardstick to assess the worldview of the most prominent representatives of Italian cinema. Some of them, as you know, occupy advanced, socialist positions. However, others, those who are obviously far from the Marxist worldview, are by no means singers of longing and loneliness, they do not act as preachers of the ideas of neo-capitalism. They are characterized by a sincere desire for something new, a passionate spirit of creative search. At the heart of their work lies the problem of the relationship between the people and art, between personal experiences and the structure of society. Thus, it is by no means accidental that the films that will now serve as the basis for talking about the new rise of Italian cinema attract attention, above all, for their subject matter (Trombadori, 1960: 10).

And further in the article, an analysis was given to such significant films as *The Great War (La Grande Guerra*. Italy-France, 1959), *The Cruel Summer (Estate violenta*. Italy-France, 1959) and *The Sweet Life (La Dolce vita*. Italy-France, 1960).

A. Trombadori noted that in Mario Monicelli's movie *The Great War* is the story of two soldiers who do not want to fight and think only about how to return home alive is told. The director endowed

these characters with a comedy-grotesque character, thanks to which their low-heroic behavior does not become repulsive. ... Elements of the comic, grotesque, pathos are closely intertwined with each other, organically penetrating into the overall fabric of the narrative. And yet, at the end of the viewing, you involuntarily think about how much this film would have won if the historical and social essence of the events had been clearly revealed in it (Trombadori, 1960: 11).

Valerio Zurlini's drama *The Cruel Summer* also received an ambiguous assessment from the critic: This movie shows the moral decay of a wretched provincial bourgeois society during the years of fascism. ... The love that arose between the thirty-year-old widow of a naval officer who died heroically in the war, and the young man – the son of a Nazi leader – is doomed to a tragic outcome by the inhumanity of the fascist regime. ... The film has many shortcomings, although the main scenes are distinguished by their brightness and great expressive power (Trombadori, 1960: 11).

The now classic *The Sweet Life (La Dolce vita)*. Italy-France, 1960) deserved a very positive assessment from A. Trombadori: The viewer sees the rampant wealth that destroys all moral foundations, sees spiritual squalor, stupidity, and boundless boredom representatives of the upper bourgeoisie and the aristocracy. ... From the point of view of directing and acting skills, this film ... is a significant step forward for the director on the way to eliminating elements of spiritualism and metaphysics in his work. The negative aspects of the life of modern Italy are revealed with merciless realism. And only at the end of the film, the clear, clear eyes of a young girl, as it were, tell the viewer that there is a saving outcome, there is another path that you can follow. It is to be expected that Fellini would come to this conclusion. However, Italian cinematography cannot limit itself to showing only the negative aspects of contemporary society, and this is not the key to its further flourishing (Trombadori 1960: 10-11).

Approximately in the same ideologically verified vein, the article of another Italian journalist and communist Paolo Alatri (1918-1995) was sustained, who, in a review of Italian films, although in general, praised the films *We Still Kill the Old Way (A ciascuno il suo)*. Italy, 1967) by Elio Petri, *The Climax (L'Immorale/Beaucoup trop pour un seul homme)*. Italy-France, 1967) by Pietro Germi and *Excuse me, are you for or against? (Scusi, lei è favorevole o contrario?)* Italy, 1966) Alberto Sordi, but then emphasized that the desire of Sordi and Germi to solve the issues in a sugary tone, avoiding really dramatic moments, severely limits the value, meaning and effect of the works (Alatri, 1967), and the overall picture of Italian cinema very depressing. Particularly distressing is the gradual surrender of even the best film directors of commercial cinema. To create a "difficult" and that is why it could turn out to be a significant film, Italian masters lack not so much artistic strength as moral (Alatri, 1967).

Curiously, highly rated *The Sweet Life (La Dolce vita)*. Italy-France, 1960) Federico Fellini gave S. Bondarchuk (1920–1994), as this film, "exposing the vices and ulcers of various strata of modern Italian society, made an impression exploding bomb" (Bondarchuk, 1960).

And the director of Mosfilm, V. Surin (1906–1994), practically agreed with the assessment Paolo Alatri film Pietro Germi *The Climax (L'Immorale)*. Italy-France, 1967): The hero of his movie ... is a decent man and a good family man. But his character is such that he has already acquired a third family. He loves all his wives and children equally, but, rushing between three homes, he dies of a broken heart. Had this story fallen into the hands of another director, it would have turned out to be a vulgar, banal picture. It is saved by her talent, an unusually kind attitude toward man, Germi's ingenuity, a cascade of unexpected and funny situations. Saves it and a great actor Ugo Tognazzi, who knows how even in the funniest moments to maintain an unflappable seriousness, makes not only laugh, but also to think about life. His acting contributed greatly to the fact that the curious story became a sharp, accurate and funny satire of the mores of modern society (Surin, 1967: 14).

Michelangelo Antonioni's existential drama *The Red Desert (Il Deserto rosso/Le Désert rouge)*. Italy-France, 1964) was also quite positively assessed in *Soviet Screen*: One of the most poignant and socially significant pictures ... was *The Red Desert*. ... Sometimes questions arise: is Antonioni not speaking out against progress and technology in this film, is he not a kind of preacher of neo-Russianism, calling mankind back to the primordial nature? It is hardly right to imagine Antonioni as being so naive. He shows the other side of the economic miracle in Western countries, he speaks of the terrible price of spiritual devastation with which bourgeois prosperity is bought (Karaganov 1964: 18-19). Nevertheless, this film only became available to a mass audience in the USSR during the years of Perestroika...

Positive reviews were published in the *Soviet Screen* about *The Leopard* (*Il Gattopardo/Le Guépard*. Italy-France, 1963) by Luchino Visconti (Galanov, 1963: 16), *The Moment of Truth* (*Il Momento della verità*. Italy-Spain, 1965) by Francesco Rosi (Pisarevsky, 1965), *The Battle for Algeria* (*La Battaglia di Algeri*. Italy-Algeria, 1965) by Gillo Pontecorvo (Sanaev, 1966: 18), *Seated at His Right* (*Seduto alla sua destra*. Italy, 1968) (Solovieva, Shitova, 1968: 14).

But although the festival audience “followed with great excitement ... the almost documentary footage of the heroic struggle of the Algerian people for freedom” (Sanaev, 1966: 18) in the *The Battle for Algeria*, although it was purchased for Soviet distribution, but on the screens of cinemas in The USSR never came out, because it showed too naturalistically and quite objectively not only the cruelty of the French army, but of the Algerian rebels...

By the way, a similar case (purchase and subsequent absence from the Soviet film distribution) happened with Valerio Zurlini's drama *Seated at His Right*, which also received a very positive assessment in the *Soviet Screen*: Behind her hero, who here bears the name of Maurice Lalubi and who is killed after torture by mercenaries of a foreign legion in an unnamed African country, behind this hero is, perhaps, not only Patrice Lumumba, but also Martin Luther King, but also Mahatma Gandhi, but also other moral leaders of the peoples, heralds of freedom and goodness who were shot or torn to pieces. From this film, the viewer can run away, because it is terrible to see torture. But you can't run away from the fact that in life now, this very minute someone is being tortured ... Zurlini's tragedy is both revealed and balanced by the harsh classicism of construction; the hero's death journey on the cross is at the same time traditional for Italian art and preserves the bleeding authenticity of the fate of this particular man and his two random cellmates, who will be killed along with him. ... Here is the height of the conscience of the artist, for whom the world is full of problems, social battles, violence and courage. This is ... one of the best films of today's Italian cinema (Solovieva, Shitova, 1968: 14).

As for the *The Moment of Truth*, he received support from the magazine and personally from its editor-in-chief for the fact that "ruthlessly exposed" "the social ulcers of Spain", and at the same time this picture, which strikes with the virtuosity of filming bullfights, the sincere play of non-professional performers, continues the traditions of Italian neorealism (Pisarevsky, 1965).

And here is the *Sandra of a Thousand Delights* (*Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa...* Italy, 1965) by Luchino Visconti, *Accattone* (*The Scrounger*. Italy, 1961) by Pier Paolo Pasolini and *Last Year in Marienbad* (*L'Année dernière à Marienbad/L'Anno scorso a Marienbad*. France-Italy, 1961) provoked serious reproaches from the *Soviet Screen*, since in the *Sandra of a Thousand Delights* “everything in the film is unsteady, unclear, human relations are confusing, unnatural” (Skobtseva, 1965: 17), gloominess and pessimism prevail in *Accattone* (Kremlev, 1962), and the parable *Last Year in Marienbad* is clearly over-praised by Western journalists (Kremlev, 1962).

In contrast to *The 400 Blows* (*Les Quatre cents coups/Les 400 coups*. France, 1959), another work by Francois Truffaut is the subtle psychological drama *Silken Skin* (*The Soft Skin/La Peau douce*. France, 1964) did not find understanding from the reviewer of the *Soviet Screen*: Love is a great and eternal theme of art. But one does not have to be an art critic to catch one pattern in the artistic development of this topic: an elementary depiction of a love affair with an importunately diligent depiction of bed details cannot become, never became a fact of great art. With such an image of love, the work dedicated to it will say little about time and people. Yes, and love itself, turned off by the artist from the stream of multi-layered life, will inevitably lose its real strength and beauty. In order to truly understand and experience the love of on-screen characters, the viewer must recognize them, be spiritually interested in their fate. The creator of *Silken Skin* is surprisingly superficial in the depiction of characters. All his outstanding skill is aimed at showing the dating scenes more accurately and more expressively. Without delving into the characters of the characters, he cut off the possibility of a deep depiction of their drama. Heroes have become elementary performers of plot functions, nothing more. *Silken Skin* leaves such a feeling: the director took on an extremely dramatic film, not wanting and not trying to illuminate the life and characters of the film's characters with observations and thoughts that go beyond the banal love story. He clearly cheated on himself, going backwards from films like *The 400 Blows*. And this is a very revealing case, all the more revealing because we are talking about a major artist, not a craftsman (Karaganov, 1964: 18-19).

An extraordinary review of the most significant Italian films of the mid-1960s was made on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* magazine by film critic Tatiana Bachelis (1918–1999).

So she wrote about *Sandra of a Thousand Delights* (*Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa...* Italy, 1965), that ultimately this film is a kind of escape from reality into a gloomy, closed sphere of dark and extravagant passions” (Bachelis, 1966). And *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (*Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*. Italy-France, 1964) by Pier Paolo Pasolini, “on the contrary, is monumental in style and design ... directly introduces cinematography into ideological spheres. Before us, no doubt, is something innovative in many respects. New and bold is the very idea of making the gospel epic accessible to the wide screen, of making a picture according to the "scenario" of the Holy Scripture. The interpretation of the image of Christ is also interesting. He is Pasolini – as once in the books of Barbusse about Jesus – a real person (a person, not a deity), fanatical and militant. His angry, fiery, and sometimes downright vicious sermons delivered over the shoulder to invisible followers and adversaries (which is done cinematically well) all too often evoke the slogan of an end that justifies any means. ...

It is said that Pasolini seeks to bless historical materialism with the name of Christ and, by showing Christ at the moment of the destruction of the temple, to unite his teaching with Marxism. But the Pasolinian Christ, an ascetic and propagandist, preaches the sword and wrath, not peace and goodness, he is the first dogmatist who fights both against the Pharisees and against his own apostles, disciples, who therefore look in the film as very stupid representatives of a stupid people, because they don't given neither to understand nor to act; for here a man "appeared" – a leader who knows the ultimate truth, who wants to take full responsibility for the fate of the world on himself alone.

Pasolini's Christ acts in exactly the same way as Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, basing his feat "on miracle, mystery and authority." And he obviously cannot, and does not want to change life for the better. He promises salvation and joy only in the afterlife... No, we are not going to conduct anti-religious propaganda among Pasolini. But to preach in our day the religion of one person, the religion of the sword and authority, now that the consciousness of the individual has awakened? I don't know who can be happy with such a thought today. Perhaps the director was "confused" by the contradictions of the gospel text itself? But it is no coincidence that of the four canonical gospels he chose the most dry and militant, the most unkind? Even the Sermon on the Mount, which is cinematically excellent, even it is suppressed by the idea of Golgotha, the idea of suffering,

Referring to the film *Juliet of the Spirits* (*Giulietta degli spiriti/Juliette des esprits/Julia und die Geister*. Italy-France-Germany, 1964), T. Bachelis wrote that this "comparatively modest theme, chamber Fellini's film ... is perceived as a work of intensely emotional. Of course, this film is weaker than *8 1/2*, awarded the highest prize of the Moscow Film Festival, weaker than *The Sweet Life* – there is no doubt about it. But how much stronger, brighter, and simply more lively than the last movies of Antonioni, Visconti, Pasolini! Fellini does not go into the sphere of exceptional passions, is not interested in madmen, laughs at the prophets. In general, he laughs at a lot of things in the life of contemporary Italy ... And at the same time he does not fall into a state of panic, despair, he does not scare us with future ruins ... And the heroine of her last film teaches only one thing: do not lose your presence of mind, do not complain. This time, the director's imagination is riveted to the drama of a woman who is abandoned by her husband. It is only about women's - about human – dignity. ... Compared to Fellini's previous films, what's new here is color, anger and improvisation. The color of the booth is bright, theatrical, hyperbolic. Anger is barely contained. The experience of free directorial improvisation on the screen - in the spirit of commedia dell'arte, surprise, "tricks", "lazzi" in every frame, as once in every scene of the Italian comedy of masks. At the same time, the whole lyrical theme of the film is convincing, fresh and saturated with spiritual health – the theme of the simple joys of life, the natural beauty of being, in which the heroine gradually finds a foothold and finds salvation (Bachelis, 1966).

At the same time, T. Bachelis reacted very negatively to the film of another famous director of the 1960s – *Second Breath* (*Le Deuxième souffle*. France, 1966) by Jean-Pierre Melville, reproaching him for romanizing a lone gangster and his “code of honor”. ... If the authors of *Second Breath* imagine that they are giving an example of a “strong personality”, then they are mistaken. ... And as a result, the old respected genre ... is violated, the intrigue is inhibited, the plot is stretched, the heads of the audience are confused, high-class camera, acting, and directing skills serve goals that go beyond art (Bachelis, 1967).

French and Italian cinema of a frankly commercial nature has traditionally evoked either angry or caustically ironic assessments from the reviewers of the *Soviet Screen*.

So about *Contempt (Le Mépris)*. France-Italy, 1963) by Jean-Luc Godard was published almost as a feuilleton on the pages of the magazine: While Godard was filming this picture, producer Carlo Ponti sold it to the Americans, apparently promising that they would see B. Bardot in all her glory, as naked as possible. ... The Americans and the producer insisted that Godard make the film "commercial". ... Godard gave in to the demands of American distributors and agreed to add new footage of Bardot in the nude. ... Failure to choose an actress, a misreading of the book, pressure from Hollywood businessmen – all this led to the fact that the atmosphere of Moravia's novel was lost in the commercial picture. The story that happened with the film *Contempt* can serve as a clear illustration of the issue of "creative freedom" in French cinema. At the first collision with reality burst, like soap bubbles, the new wave's broadcast claims that they are against commercial art. It took only a little pressure of moneybags for Godard to agree to make what was demanded of him from a deep and intelligent novel (A gde..., 1964).

And the critic M. Kuznetsov (1914–1980) wrote about *Famous Love Affairs (Les Amours célèbres)*. France-Italy, 1961), that the dominance of the bourgeoisie is, first of all, the domination of the bourgeois, seized power. ... In bourgeois cinema, the bourgeois dictates his miserable tastes, and directors, actors, screenwriters, cameramen, all creative workers are forced to please him. ... their idea is reconciliation with vulgar reality, spiritual and moral promiscuity (Kuznetsov, 1963).

M. Kuznetsov did not like the dashing adventure film *That Man From Rio (L'Homme de Rio/L'uomo di Rio)*. France-Italy, 1963): This movie is clumsy, tasteless, frank, without shame and artistic conscience, an imitation of Hollywood Tarzan. From a heap of monotonous fights and chases, you remember only one thing – the amazing buildings of the new capital of Brazil – the city of Brasilia. But this has only a distant relation to the *That Man From Rio*. ... Belmondo is a talented actor, but his talent is not able to overcome the mediocrity of the script and the routine techniques of directing (Kuznetsov, 1965: 16-17). (P.S. As a result, only in the liberal years of "perestroika" did this movie still get into the Soviet film distribution).

The venerable film critic G. Kapralov (1921–2010), although he admitted that *Monkey in Winter (Un singe en hiver)*. France, 1962) is not without some merits, which is primarily due to the participation of such famous artists as the venerable Jean Gabin and young Jean-Paul Belmondo. But the talents of these actors, their charm are prudently exploited in the film by director Henri Verneuil to win cheap success. In the plot of this movie, one can catch the poetic thought of a beautiful dream that lives in the heart of a person. But Verneuil missed her, or rather, literally drowned in a sea of wine, in unrestrained drunkenness and drunken bravado of his heroes. Wine trading companies could give a special prize to this film for inventive promotion of their products (Kapralov, 1962).

In a similar vein, *Soviet Screen* wrote about *A Ravishing idiot (Une ravissante idiote)*. France-Italy, 1964), "a cinematic trifle", "on which one could not stop, if not for one circumstance. This picture is a parody of films about "Russian spies", which until recently were made seriously, but now have become the subject of ridicule" (Matveev, 1964: 19).

It should be noted here that the *Soviet Screen* reviewers were especially disappointed when Western directors turned to entertainment genres, who had previously earned a reputation in the USSR as "progressive figures in cinema art".

So the film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978) wrote about the film by Carlo Lizzani *Wake up and kill! (Svegliati e uccidi)*. Italy-France. 1966) like this: Do you want to experience a moment of horror? Come see our movie! And it is always very sad when an artist depicts something ugly, cruel only in order to tickle the nerves of the viewer. Perhaps the greatest disappointment in this sense was caused by the Italian painting *Wake up and kill!* Telling the story of the famous Milanese gangster Luthring, the authors, they said, wanted to show how society itself, newspapers, and television created an advertising hype around a simple Italian guy and pushed him to new crimes. But the social theme of the film was dissolved in the spectacular adventures of Luthring. The wide screen, the color, the shot of machine guns, the chic windows of the jewelry stores that Luthring robs, and luxury hotels, where he rests before new exploits together with his charming lover (She is played by Lisa Gastoni – an actress of beautiful appearance, explosive temperament) ... looking at Luthring's face, you only think: will he run away or not? ... The saddest thing is that this film was directed by Carlo Lizzani according to the script by Ugo Pirro – two great masters who left their mark on the glorious history of Italian neorealism. A shameful compromise! (Khanyutin, 1966: 15).

A similar disappointment was caused by the melodrama *Misunderstood (Incompreso)*. Italy-France, 1966), because this film is sweetly bourgeois, museum-bourgeois, unbearably old-

fashioned bourgeois ... It is surprisingly staged by the respected director Luigi Comencini... Sentimentality does not go out of fashion, like sables and rolls-royces. Those who like to cry in the cinema on the movie *Misunderstood* have every opportunity to drown in sweet tears until the orphan Andrea, misunderstood by his diplomat dad, leaves this world for which he, a quiet angel in shorts, was too good. The film is uncompromising in its own way; no concession to good taste; not a single note of truth that would instantly ruin the idyll in a luxurious villa, among roses, vases and silent servants. His techniques knock out a tear unmistakably – like a blow with the edge of the palm on the tip of the nose (Solovieva, Shitova, 1968: 14).

Regret was also caused by another commercial work of talented filmmakers – *Ghosts – Italian Style (Questi fantasmi/Fantômes à l'italienne*. Italy-France, 1967): Based on the comedy of Eduardo De Filippo" – puts in the credits director Renato Castellani. Eduardo De Filippo never dreamed of that dashing completeness, that comedic springiness... Fountains of ingenuity beat noisily and effectively, but the sound of De Filippo's comedy was completely different – a quiet, questioning, cracked, weak sound of a falling uncertain drop. ... Castellani did not leave anything from anxiety and aching fluctuation. Least of all should one oppose the playwright, artist and citizen, to the commercial director. The fact of the matter is that Renato Castellani... is a name no less worthy than the name of De Filippo. And Sophia Loren and Vittorio Gassman, too, are not working artisans because of money alone, especially since they work perfectly in the film within the limits of the task assigned to them. Apparently, the whole point is precisely within the task. The film *Ghosts – Italian Style* is an energetic parade-alley of comedy situations. The director took the original anecdote from the play... And rolled this anecdote into a full-length and color film. Such is the descent to what is called a commercial film, to the entertainment industry (Solovieva, Shitova, 1968: 14).

Against this background, I. Solovieva and V. Shitova (1927–2002) noted that Giuliano Montaldo made his film *Grand Slam (Ad ogni costo/Diamantes a gogó*. Italy-Germany-Spain, 1967) more honest, so like this film without cheating. He doesn't pretend to be anything. It is entirely within the limits of its task – an energetically entertaining, adventurous and, in the final analysis, still openly bourgeois movie (Solovieva, Shitova, 1968: 14).

The opinions of the "Soviet Screen" reviewers about West German and Austrian films that were not shown in the Soviet box office

In the era of the "thaw" *Soviet Screen*, as a rule, wrote about West German and Austrian films that were not shown in the Soviet box office in a negative way, emphasizing their commercial and propaganda nature.

So film critic G. Kapralov (1921–2010) condemned the thriller *Game of killers (Mörderspiel*. Germany-France, 1961) for being "inspired" by "dark animal instincts" and for the fact that "the cold sadism of a maniac criminal is depicted dryly, methodically, as if it were a training manual for professional killers" (Kapralov, 1962).

An extremely negative reaction from G. Kapralov was also caused by the scandalous *Lulu* (Austria, 1962), since "Rolf Thiele turned to the old plot not to criticize the capitalist world, not because he planned to show the same dirt on the new one, but say stage. He was attracted only by a spicy plot, and the new film appeared as another film speculation on obscene and semi-pornography" (Kapralov, 1962).

And, of course, the film *Escape from Train No. 234 (Durchbruch Lok 234*. West Germany, 1963) caused complete indignation on the *Soviet Screen*, because "the authors wanted to prove that life is better in the West Germany than in the German Democratic Republic, and the Ost Germans dream of moving to the West" (Matveev, 1964: 18).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about the Scandinavian films that were not shown in the Soviet box office

The main Soviet specialist in Scandinavian films, film critic V. Matusевич (1937–2009), published a long article in the mid-1960s entitled "The Swedish cinema boom" (Matusевич, 1966: 14-15), where he argued that "a complex, curious process is taking place in Swedish cinema, and acquaintance with it is of interest to our film lovers. ... In three years, twenty-four new directors came to Swedish cinema, one can say that he became the most "youthful" in the world" (Matusевич, 1966: 14).

And then the most significant, in the opinion of critics, Swedish films of the "new wave" were selected for analysis.

Here, V. Matusevich drew the attention of the magazine's readers to the fact that *The Crow's Quarter* (*Kvarteret Korpen*. Sweden, 1963) by Bu Wiederberg is the first Swedish film in many years dedicated to the working environment. Depicting the beggarly slums of the thirties and remaining at first glance within the "family" plot, Wiederberg directly and closely approaches the understanding of the social situation in Sweden today. The film is filled with simple and pure tenderness, the artist's reckless love for life and people, which is why his ruthlessly sharp conclusions about the social and moral origins of petty-bourgeois complacency acquire special weight (Matusevich, 1966: 14).

Further, V. Matusevich wrote that Vilgot Sjöman "caused a noisy scandalous controversy" with his outrageous film *491* (Sweden, 1964) about juvenile delinquency, exposing the sanctimonious-philanthropic in form and essentially inactive position of the ruling circles in the "youth" issue. This film, in a certain sense, summed up the theme of extreme rejection, worthlessness, ugliness of the existence of the younger generation, which sounded in recent years in many works of Swedish art, and rightfully saw the root cause in the general atmosphere of lack of ideas, hopelessness, in the collapse of petty-bourgeois moral criteria and ideals (Matusevich, 1966 : 14).

Further, V. Matusevich expressed regret that even in many serious, significant" Swedish films "there are such horse doses of erotic revelations that the essence of their ideological content, willy-nilly, fades into the background. Go and figure out why the fuss broke out around Sjöman's movie *491*: either in connection with the sharpness of social denunciations, or about the completely indecent display of all kinds of sexual perversions. And now the "rebel" Sjöman is filming an opus, the content of which, if not exhausted, then meaningfully explained by the title: *Bed of a brother and sister* (*Syskonbädd 1782*. Sweden, 1965). ... And the competition is expanding, and the censorship bastions are being stormed, and the atmosphere of scandalous sensationalism is being pumped up, and now Mai Zetterling paints the connection between a woman and a dog, and Erling sets a new record, showing a man on the screen, naked down to the causal place... And God knows what other "r-revolutionary innovations" are coming!" (Matusevich, 1966: 14).

As a result of his article, the future employee of *Radio Liberty*, V. Matusevich, made an absolutely "party" conclusion, worthy of publication not only in the *Soviet Screen*, but also in the editorial of the *Pravda* newspaper: "No subsidies, no reforms will create prosperity on their own Swedish film art, if its leaders continue, in the words of one critic, to be concerned only with what people do at night, and not with what people live from day to day, if the consciousness of filmmakers is not filled with genuine citizenship, an imperious need to comprehend a wide range of the most acute problems of reality" (Matusevich, 1966: 15).

D. Pisarevsky (1912–1990), the editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Screen*, also complained about the Swedish movies alien to Soviet viewers, noting that the film *Couples in Love* (*Älskande par*. Sweden, 1964) relied on striking frankness showing erotic scenes and sexual perversions. On the path of such "problematics" the great masters were also defeated (Pisarevsky, 1965).

In a negative way, he wrote about the drama *The Adventure Begins Here* (*Här börjar äventyret*. Sweden, 1965) film critic Y. Khanyutin (1929–1978), noting that it was filmed with significant pauses, omissions, deliberate obscurity and unbearable boredom in the auditorium. ... the disease of modern cinema is pictures that seem to defiantly ignore the viewer, the normal psychology of perception (Khanyutin, 1966: 14).

On the other hand, the anti-Nazi documentary *Mein Kampf* (Sweden, 1960) received full and well-founded support from the *Soviet Screen*: The film is ruthless, as ruthless is the truth itself. ... The film shows that even after Hitler came to power, the communists continued to fight. The film boldly reminds that the fascist Franco enslaved the heroic Spanish people only thanks to the help of Hitler and Mussolini. The film boldly emphasizes the role of "Western democracies" in the occupation of the Rhineland, in the war in Spain and in the Munich Pact. How many nice services the governments of France and England rendered to Hitler before he swept them out of his way. How many assurances of his friendship did Hitler give in order to trample everything later. How many contracts he turned into scraps of paper (Versmer, 1961).

The opinions of the reviewers of the "Soviet Screen" about the films of other countries, which also did not go to the Soviet box office

Among the films of other countries that did not get into the Soviet film distribution, the *Soviet Screen* rightly singled out the masterpiece of Luis Bunuel *Viridiana* (Spain-Mexico, 1961): The story of a young girl about to devote herself to God, and experiencing the collapse of her

faith, seems far removed from politics. Let us remember, however, that in a country of fascist dictatorship, art is forced to speak in Aesopian language, and it is a film about human dignity and the thirst for love, a protest against the dogmas of the church, which seek to squeeze man into the rigid rules and prohibitions, [it is] a humanistic call for respect for the human person, a rejection of the dogmatic regulation of his spiritual and moral life, very typical of progressive cinema today (Khanyutin, 1961).

Short informational materials about events in Western cinema

During the era of the "thaw", the *Soviet Screen* under the headings "Chronicle of foreign cinema", "Mosaic", "Guests of our screens" regularly published short information reports about the shooting and premieres of Western films, about foreign actors, often without any ideological assessment.

But often does not mean always. So in the "Chronicle ... the attention of readers was drawn that "in 400 foreign and domestic films shown in Germany, recently, it is shown: 34 arson, 54 cases of blackmail, 104 robberies, 310 murders, 405 adultery and 624 scams of various types. A total of 1,531 film crimes (Hronika..., 1960: 20), and over the past year, in four hundred films shown on West German screens, the audience saw 1,394 crimes of various types. ... It is no wonder that these visual aids of murder, violence and debauchery contributed to an unprecedented increase in crime in West Germany (Revanchism..., 1965).

The "chroniclers" from the *Soviet Screen* were also worried about the escalation of sexual themes on Western screens: Recently, films have often been released in France that rely on erotica, on playing out very frivolous situations. The deplorable impact of such films on the morale of young people is undeniable. But the campaign against these films, which included various leagues, associations, the Catholic Church... often does not pursue the defense of morality. Almost always, the censorship commission prohibits not so much really pornographic pictures as those that contain criticism of the moral state of society, its collapse and decline in morals (Hronika..., 1960: 20).

In addition, according to the *Soviet Screen*, it was this terrible reality that gave birth to a new profession of chasing scandalous "sensations", an "industry" that grew on peeping through keyholes, on shaking dirty linen. ... These are the facts. They not only expose the "moral foundations" of Hollywood, but also vividly illustrate the mores of bourgeois journalism. The reader, who sincerely loves cinema, this should be deeply disgusted (Goncharova, 1962).

With a heavy dose of irony, *Soviet Screen* wrote about the attempts of Western filmmakers to make entertaining films on the Russian topic. In particular, the competitive struggle between the American and Italian film crews was described quite caustically, almost at the same time filming the novel by Nikolai Gogol *Taras Bulba: Taras Bulba* (USA-Yugoslavia, 1962) and *Cossack Taras Bulba (Plains of Battle/Taras Bulba, il cosacco*. Italy, 1963) (Bulba..., 1962: 18).

The *Soviet Screen* also reacted very negatively to the support of the famous American actor John Wayne (1907–1979) for American aggression in Vietnam: John Wayne is a famous film actor who has been working in American cinema for more than a quarter of a century. In numerous westerns, he created the image of a determined and fearless cowboy, achieving everything in the world with a colt and a fist. But few people know what Wayne is like in life. At one time he was one of the most ardent supporters of McCarthyism in Hollywood, and did not shy away from denunciations. John Wayne is currently in South Vietnam. He is directing a documentary commissioned by McNamara; the film should explain to the Americans what exactly they are looking for in this part of Asia (Na..., 1966: 19).

And film critic Y. Sher reminded readers of the magazine that in the late 1940s, Senator McCarthy and his henchmen undertook a campaign in Hollywood to persecute the Reds: the so-called "witch hunt". Ten creative figures of American cinema were sent to jail. The rest, on whom the eyes of the possessed senator fell, were blacklisted. For many years, they lost not only their creative work, but in general any opportunity to earn their living... Hence the scandal with the Oscars for screenwriters from McCarthy's list (they were under pseudonyms). And a no less scandalous story related to how the reactionaries did not allow F. Sinatra to produce a film written by a screenwriter from the "list" (Sher, 1960: 18).

Of course, the important and ideologically necessary "progressive-democratic" events in the West received a very positive interpretation in the news section of the *Soviet Screen*.

For example, the magazine fully supported the information that increasingly wider circles of French film workers are expressing indignation at the ongoing bloodshed in Algeria. Many outstanding figures of French cinema signed petitions demanding an end to this criminal colonial

war, including actors Simone Signoret, Daniel Delorme, Roger Pitot, Laurent Terziev, screenwriters Jules Ferry and Marguerite Duras, directors Alain Resnais, Pierre Kast, Francois Truffaut (Bozhovich, 1960: 17).

Further, film critic V. Bozhovich (1932–2021) informed readers that frightened by the growing protest campaign, the French authorities are preparing to subject the “recalcitrant” to repression. According to a bill prepared by the Ministry of Culture, all actors who called for “disobedience to the authorities” will be banned from performing in state theaters, radio and television. All films in which the persons guilty of “calling for disobedience” take part will be deprived of the right to use the “Aid Fund”. ... If the proposed bill is approved, a “witch hunt” could begin in French cinema, similar to the one that raged in Hollywood during the “McCarthy” period. And this will lead to disastrous consequences (Bozhovich, 1960: 17).

It is interesting to note that the *Soviet Screen* more than once or twice sharply spoke on its pages not only against the “negative influence of bourgeois cinema”, but also against the “yellow bourgeois press”, sometimes (apparently in order to increase circulation due to “undemanding” part of the audience) resorted to the methods of the latter on his pages.

So in the material about the grandiose peplum *Cleopatra* (USA-UK, 1963), gossip was retold about his filming and that E. Taylor should be filmed naked (Cleopatra ..., 1962: 21).

And the film critic F. Andreev (1933–1998) (by the way, he emigrated to the USA in the early 1990s) vividly described how the shooting of the film with the participation of Catherine Spaak (1945–2022) goes on: She was showered with money. She bathes in them. Not figuratively, but in the most direct sense. It's good that the bills are large. Otherwise, Catherine Spaak, an eighteen-year-old movie star, would have had a hard time ... The director of the film ... carefully thought out this scene. After all, Catherine is removed in it completely naked. Her only clothes are banknotes worth 50,000 lire each. At the very least, but ... a million will come running. ... “The spicy pose of a representative of the class” powerful of this world. And money... Lots of money. Perhaps, if someone sets out to embody the petty-bourgeois tastes of the micro-bourgeois, his base interests symbolically, in some allegorical form, you can't imagine a better episode (Andreev, 1964: 17).

In a similar “yellow” vein, the note “Microphone... in bed” was sustained: French movie star Brigitte Bardot unexpectedly left the resort of St. Tropez on the Cote d'Azur, causing great surprise. It is known that the actress was one of the first inhabitants of the town, had a villa here and served as the main bait for holidaymakers. After her departure, St. Tropez began to wither ... Why did Brigitte leave the town? It was only recently that the reasons for her flight became known: it turned out that under the bed of the “star” in villa there was a microphone, secretly installed by order of the New York magazine *Confidential!* Every sound in her bedroom was recorded on movie. Trying to hide from annoying newspaper reporters, the actress surrounded the villa with a tall fence, but it never occurred to her that the highest form of impudence was possible – a microphone in bed (Microfon ..., 1965: 18).

The genre of “foreign travel notes” was also quite curious in the *Soviet Screen*, where the readers of the magazine, as a rule, who had never been to the West, had to trust the impressions of “ideologically verified” visitors.

So the screenwriter, but most importantly an Soviet official cinema boss Igor Chekin (1908–1970) wrote about his business trip to France as follows: “We are in autumn Paris. The stands of countless cinemas, as if competing with each other, scream furiously about action movies, comics and erotic paintings. *Ecstasy, Torments of Love, The Last Bacchanalia of Rome*: these names are full of advertising at the hours when Paris lights up its evening lights. We sincerely dreamed of seeing another advertisement – about films in which the voice of the great art of cinema would sound. French cinema knows how to excite and shock the hearts with the tragic power of Simone Signoret and Jean Gabin, ... Fernandel's inexhaustible supply of fun and humor. Alas, Paris did not please us with anything this time. As soon as the evening lights of the French capital are lit, a frenzied pandemonium of advertisements begins. Place Pigalle is coming – with its decorated bad taste, wild music and yard-high photographs of “stars” performing in programs of “slow stripping” ... People of young, middle and even older age appear on the streets – men and women from dark Paris – characters who have descended from the pages tabloid magazines and newspapers. On the corners of the dark quarters there are suspicious persons trading in human goods... These are the black shadows of Paris... Fog blocking the light. Mud... Night Place Pigalle. Decorated with all the colors of the rainbow and at the same time deathly pale in the neon rays of the face ... The street of “human misfortune and dishonor”, as one of the journalists aptly described this area of Paris. Here

they live in the hope of deceiving or luring a foreigner who has fallen into this cycle for the first time, selling a fake stone or selling themselves. Everything is bought, everything is sold. But here comes the day. Place Pigalle is empty. Beautiful morning in Paris. Under the rays of the sun, the unique features of the city come to life, all the most valuable and dear wakes up. Bright, laboring Paris is waking up” (Chekin, 1961: 16-17).

4. Conclusion

The subject of Western cinematography was presented in a rather limited volume on the pages of the *Soviet Screen* magazine in 1957–1960. However, with the appointment of film critic Dmitry Pisarevsky (1912–1990) to the post of editor-in-chief the "thaw" tendencies in the *Soviet screen* led to a gradual increase in the number of materials about foreign cinema on the pages of the magazine (sometimes they took up to a third of the total volume of the issue). Increasingly, photographs of Western movie stars were published (in rare cases, even on color covers), neutrally or positively presented biographies of Hollywood and European actors and directors, articles about Western film weeks and international film festivals, reviews of Western films, etc. At the same time, of course, there were also ideologically biased materials in the magazine.

Thus, the *Soviet Screen* kept a balance between the communist ideology (articles and notes about important events and Soviet films from this point of view) and attracting the widest audience, which was interested in a wide panorama of cinema, including foreign.

Based on the content analysis (in the context of the historical, socio-cultural and political situation, etc.) of the texts published during the "thaw" period of the *Soviet Screen* magazine (1957–1968), we came to the conclusion that materials on the subject of Western cinema on this stage can be divided into the following genres:

- ideologized articles emphasizing criticism of bourgeois cinema and its harmful influence on the audience;
- articles on the history of Western cinema (as a rule, about the period of the Great Silent, with a minimum degree of ideologization);
- biographies and creative portraits of Western actors and directors (often neutrally or positively evaluating these filmmakers);
- interviews with Western filmmakers (here, as a rule, interlocutors were selected from among "progressive artists");
- reviews of Western films (positive in relation to most of the Soviet film distribution repertoire and often negative in relation to those movies that were considered ideologically harmful);
- articles about international film festivals and weeks of foreign cinema in the USSR (with a clear division into "progressive" and "bourgeois" cinematography);
- reviews of the current repertoire of Western national cinematographies (here, as a rule, criticism of bourgeois cinematography was also combined with a positive assessment of works and trends ideologically acceptable to the USSR);
- short informational materials about events in Western cinema (from neutral reports to caustic feuilletons and "yellow" gossip).

It is this kind of "thaw" tendencies in the *Soviet screen* of the 1960s in general and the increase in the volume of articles on Western cinema in particular caused an extremely negative reaction from the authorities in 1968. The catalyst for this was the events in Czechoslovakia and the entry of Soviet troops into this country in August 1968. It became clear to Soviet ideologists that “socialism with a human face,” which already threatened the fortress of the ideological foundations of the USSR with its very proclamation, was largely supported by the Czechoslovak cinema and press.

In the fall of 1968, the magazine *Ogonyok*, which at that time had a circulation of two million copies, published two articles (most likely initiated by the relevant structures in the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party): from Prof. Dr., member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and the Soviet communist Party V.A. Razumny (1924–2011) (Razumny, 1968: 26-27) and People's Artist of the USSR, member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and also Soviet Communist Party N.A. Kryuchkov (1911–1994) (Kryuchkov, 1968: 17), where they sharply criticized the magazines *Cinema Art* and *Soviet Screen* for promoting Western cinema and hushing up Soviet cinema, urging the authorities to urgently restore order in the leadership and editorial line of these publications, to "put these printed organs at the service of Soviet cinematography and Soviet audiences" (Kryuchkov, 1968: 17).

The initiation of the publication of articles by V. Razumny and N. Kryuchkov in *Ogonyok* "from above" was soon confirmed by the publication January 7, 1969 of the Resolution of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On increasing the responsibility of the heads of the press, radio, television, cinema, cultural and art institutions for the ideological and political level of published materials and repertoire" (*Postanovlenie...*, 1969).

This decree obliged the USSR Ministry of Culture, the USSR Council of Ministers Committee on the Press, the USSR Council of Ministers Committee on Radio Broadcasting and Television, and their local agencies, the creative unions "to take concrete measures to improve the management of the printed press and publishing houses", to raise the ideological and political and professional level of their activities "in a spirit of party affiliation, principled action, high responsibility to the party and the people", "take measures to strengthen the editorial teams of magazines, especially literary and artistic magazines, newspapers, radio and television, editorial and artistic councils of publishing houses" (*Postanovlenie...*, 1969).

And here it should be noted that Dmitry Pisarevsky, who managed to retain the position of editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Screen*, began to strictly follow all the directives of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, which is why the information about foreign cinema in the magazine underwent a significant ideological transformation.

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Appendix

The main dates and events related to the historical, political, economic, ideological, sociocultural and cinematic context in which the publication of the *Soviet Screen* magazine was carried out in 1957–1968.

1956

February 14-25: XX Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. Speech by N.S. Khrushchev, exposing the "cult of personality" of I.V. Stalin.

April 17: Dissolution of Komiinform.

June 30: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On overcoming the cult of personality and its consequences".

October 23 – November 9: anti-communist uprising in Hungary and its suppression by Soviet troops.

October 30 – December 22: Suez Crisis in Egypt.

1957

January 12: The first issue of the renewed *Soviet Screen* magazine is signed for publication. Nikolai Kastelin (1904–1968) became the editor of the magazine, who remained in this post until July 1958.

February 27: All-Union Conference of Soviet Cinematographers, Moscow.

May 13: N. Khrushchev's speech at a meeting of writers in the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

May 19: N. Khrushchev's speech at the reception of writers, artists, sculptors and composers.

June 3: at the suggestion of director I.A. Pyryev (1901-1968), the secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party approved the creation of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR.

June 18-21: meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, at which V. Molotov and G. Malenkov, dissatisfied with the course towards de-Stalinization, made an unsuccessful attempt to deprive N. Khrushchev of power.

June 28-29: First Plenum of the Organizing Bureau of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR, Moscow (Chairman was I. Pyryev, Deputy Chairman: A. Zguridi, Chairmen of sections and commissions are elected: M. Romm, I. Kopalın, E. Gabrilovich, I. Ivanov-Vano, R. Yurenev, B. Konoplev, G. Roshal, S. Yutkevich).

July 28 – August 11: World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow.

August 21: test of the first Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States.

October 4: The USSR launched the world's first artificial Earth satellite into orbit.

December 12-18: First conference of cinematographers of the socialist countries (Prague).

1958

28th of February-March 4: Conference of workers of Soviet cinematography.

May 18: awarding the film *The Cranes Are Flying* by M. Kalatozov (1903–1973) and S. Urusevsky (1908-1974) with the main prize of the Cannes Film Festival: "Palme d'Or".

May 28: Decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On the correction of errors in the evaluation of the operas *Great Friendship*, *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky* and *From the bottom of my hear*".

June 16-4th of July: All-Union Film Festival, Moscow.

August: Elizaveta Smirnova (1908–1999) succeeded Nikolai Kastelin (1904–1968) as editor of *Soviet Screen*. She held this post until June 1961.

October 4: Decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On the note of the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party for the Union Republics". On the shortcomings of scientific-atheistic propaganda obliging party, Komsomol and public organizations to launch an attack on "religious survivals" in the USSR.

October 23: Award of the Nobel Prize in Literature to Boris Pasternak: for significant achievements in modern lyric poetry, as well as for continuing the traditions of the great Russian epic novel (*Doctor Zhivago*).

October 23: Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On B. Pasternak's slanderous novel".

October 25: meeting of the party group of the Board of the Writers' Union: N. Gribachev (1910–1992), S. Gerasimov (1906–1984), V. Inber (1890–1972), L. Oshanin (1912–1996), S. Mikhalkov (1913–2009), S. Sartakov (1908–2005), M. Shaginyan (1888–1982), A. Yashin (1913–1968) and others demanded to expel B. Pasternak (1890–1960) after a "nationwide discussion in the press" from the Union of Writers of the USSR, to deprive him of his citizenship and expel him from the USSR.

October 27: decision joint meeting of the Presidium of the Board of the Union of Writers of the USSR, the Bureau of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Writers of the RSFSR and the Presidium of the Board of the Moscow Branch of the Union of Writers of the RSFSR exclusion of B. Pasternak from the Writers' Union of the USSR (this decision was supported by V. Azhaev (1915–1968), S. Antonov (1915–1995), G. Markov (1911–1991), S. Mikhalkov (1913–2009), G. Nikolaeva (1911–1963), V. Panova (1905–1973), N. Tikhonov (1896–1979), Y. Smolich (1900–1976), L. Sobolev (1898–1971), N. Chukovsky (1904–1965) and other writers).

October 28: Note from the Department of Culture of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on the results of the discussion at the meetings of writers of the issue "On the actions of a member of the Union of Writers of the USSR B.L. Pasternak, incompatible with the title of a Soviet writer", according to which V. Ermilov (1904–1965), V. Kozhevnikov (1909–1984), V. Kochetov (1912–1973) and others joined the recommendations of the party group of writers.

October 31st: All-Moscow meeting of writers chaired by S. Smirnov, at which B. Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* and the Nobel Prize were opposed by: S. Smirnov (1915–1976), S. Antonov (1915–1995), S. Baruzdin (1926–1991), A. Bezymensky (1898–1973), L. Martynov (1905–1980), L. Oshanin (1912–1996), B. Polevoy (1908–1981), B. Slutsky (1919–1986), V. Soloukhin (1924–1997), A. Sofronov (1911–1990) and others.

December 12: Second Conference of Cinematographers of the Socialist Countries (Sinai, Romania).

1959

January 1: Pro-communist revolutionaries rise to power in Cuba.

January 27 – February 5, 1959: XXI Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

April 11 – 26: All-Union Film Festival, Kyiv.

July 24-September 4, 1959: holding a American exhibition in Moscow.

August 3-17: Moscow International Film Festival. Main prize: *The Fate of a Man* (USSR, directed by Sergei Bondarchuk).

September 15-27: negotiations between N. Khrushchev and D. Eisenhower in the USA.

1960

February 16-19: Plenum of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Workers of Soviet Cinematography.

May 1: An American spy plane is shot down in the skies of the USSR.

May 4: N. Mikhailov (1906–1982) dismissed from the post of Minister of Culture of the USSR. Appointment as Minister of Culture of the USSR E. Furtseva (1910–1974).

May 14-25: All-Union Film Festival, Minsk.

May 18-23: Third Congress of Soviet Writers.

May 30: death of the writer B. Pasternak (1890–1960).

July: recall of Soviet specialists who worked in the China under the program of international cooperation in connection with the deterioration of relations between the USSR and the Communist China.

August 17: Plenum of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Workers of Soviet Cinematography, at which I. Pyryev (1901–1968) was deprived of the status of chairman of the organizing committee. He was replaced by director L. Kulidzhanov (1924–2002).

November 15-20: Third International Conference of Cinematographers of the Socialist Countries, Sofia (Bulgaria).

1961

February 24: Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On measures to increase the material interest of film workers and film studios in creating films of a high ideological and artistic level".

April 8: N. Khrushchev sent a note of protest to US President John F. Kennedy against the anti-Castro landing in Cuba.

April 12: The USSR launched the world's first spacecraft with a man on board (cosmonaut Yury Gagarin) into low Earth orbit.

June: Dmitry Pisarevsky (1912-1990) succeeded Elizaveta Smirnova (1908–1999) as editor of the *Soviet Screen* magazine. D. Pisarevsky held this post more than all the other editors of the *Soviet Screen*: from 1961 to 1975.

July 9-23: Moscow International Film Festival. Main prizes: *Naked Island* (Japan, directed by Kaneto Shindo) and *Clear Sky* (USSR, directed by Grigory Chukhrai).

August 13: Construction of the Berlin Wall begins.

October 17-31: XXII Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which approved the slogan that a base of communism would be built in the USSR by 1980, and actually announced the second wave of de-Stalinization (in particular, the body of I. Stalin was removed from the Mausoleum on October 31).

1962

February 6-9: Plenum of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Workers of Soviet Cinematography.

June 1-3: armed suppression of protests in Novocherkassk caused by rising food prices.

July 19: Decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On measures to improve the management of the development of artistic cinematography".

September 8: Golden Lion of St. Mark" at the XXIII International Film Festival in Venice was awarded to the film *Ivan's Childhood* (directed by A. Tarkovsky).

October 14 – November 20: After the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the United States declares a naval blockade of the island. A politically tense Caribbean crisis begins, which forces the USSR to remove missiles from Cuba in exchange for a US promise to abandon the occupation of the "Island of Freedom".

November: publication (approved by N. Khrushchev) in the journal *New World* (No. 11, 1962) of A. Solzhenitsyn's (1918–2008) story *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, which directly reflected the theme of Stalin's camps.

December 1: N. Khrushchev's visit to the exhibition of avant-garde artists of the New Reality studio in the Manege (Moscow), which served as the beginning of the party-state campaign against formalism and abstractionism.

December 17: N. Khrushchev's meeting with the creative intelligentsia in the Reception House of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party (Moscow), at which he again spoke out against abstractionism and other "bourgeois influences".

1963

January 5: The first issue of the weekly journal *Soviet Cinema* was published (supplement to the newspaper *Soviet Culture*).

March 7-8: meeting of N. Khrushchev, members of the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party and the government of the USSR with the creative intelligentsia.

March 23: Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the formation of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for cinematography." A. Romanov (1908–1998) was appointed chairman of the Goskino.

June 19: The USSR temporarily canceled the jamming of *Voice of America*, *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* broadcasts in Russian in the USSR.

June 18-21: Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, which criticized the film *Zastava Ilyicha (I'm 20 years old)* by M. Khutsiev.

June 20: conclusion of an agreement between the USSR and the USA on the establishment of a "hot" telephone line between Moscow and Washington.

June 21: Resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On the Immediate Tasks of the Party's Ideological Work".

June 25: F. Yermash (1923–2002) approved head the cinema sector of the ideological department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

July 7-21: Moscow International Film Festival. The main prize is 8 ½ (Italy-France, director Federico Fellini).

November 24: Assassination of US President John F. Kennedy in Dallas.

1964

May 14: Decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On the work of the Mosfilm film studio" was published.

August 2: The USA starts the Vietnam War.

July 31 – August 8: All-Union Film Festival, Leningrad.

October 14: The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party dismissed N. Khrushchev (1894–1971) from the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and removed him from the Presidium of the Central Committee. L. Brezhnev (1906–1982) was elected the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on the same day.

October 15: Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Khrushchev on the release of N. Khrushchev from the post of head of the government of the USSR.

1965

January: The first issue of the illustrated advertising monthly *Moviegoer's Companion* was published, with a circulation of 50,000 at first.

April 5: The USSR supplied North Vietnam with missiles.

July 5-20: Moscow International Film Festival. The main prize is *War and Peace* (USSR, directed by Sergei Bondarchuk) and *Twenty Hours* (Hungary, directed by Zoltan Fabri).

October 9: State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Cinematography renamed the Cinematography Committee under the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

November 23-26: The First Congress of Cinematographers of the USSR. Director L. Kulidzhanov (1924–2002) became the head of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR, and G. Maryamov became the organizing secretary. S. Gerasimov, R. Karmen, A. Kapler, A. Zguridi, G. Chukhrai, A. Karaganov and M. Kalatozov were appointed heads of creative commissions under the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR.

December 10: presentation of the Nobel Prize in Literature to M. Sholokhov (1905–1984) for the novel *Quiet Flows the Don*.

1966

March 29 – April 8, 1966: XXIII Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. Renaming the post of 1st Secretary of the Central Committee to General Secretary of the Central Committee, restoration of the Politburo of the Central Committee instead of the Presidium of the Central Committee.

May 21-31: All-Union Film Festival, Kiev.

June 20 – July 1: visit of French President General de Gaulle to Moscow.

October 6: France withdraws from the NATO military organization.

The film distribution ban was imposed on the films *Andrei Rublev* (directed by Andrei Tarkovsky) and *A Bad Joke* (directed by Alexander Alov and Vladimir Naumov).

1967

April 21: Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On the economic results of the work of enterprises and organizations of the Committee on Cinematography for 1963–1966".

May 16: A. Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) circulated his open letter scheduled for the end of May IV Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers, in which he spoke out against censorship and the confiscation of his archive.

May 22-27: IV Congress of Writers of the USSR, Moscow.

July 5-10: Six-day war in the Middle East, break in diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR.

August 14: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On measures for the further development of the social sciences and increasing their role in communist construction."

July 5-20: Moscow International Film Festival. The main prizes are *Journalist* (USSR, directed by Sergei Gerasimov) and *Father* (Hungary, directed by István Szabó).

1968

January 4: A. Dubček (1921–1992) became the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, who initiated reforms aimed at liberalizing and democratizing the country.

April: The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia launched a reform program that included a policy of "ideological pluralism" and "socialism with a human face."

April 9-10: Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Report of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party L. Brezhnev. Decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On Topical Problems of the International Situation and on the Struggle of the Soviet Communist Party for the Cohesion of the World Communist Movement".

May: mass unrest in France, the reason for which was the dismissal of the director of the Paris cinemathèque. The unrest, in particular, involved the youth of anarchist, Trotskyist, Maoist and other leftist political orientations.

May - September: publication in the West of A. Solzhenitsyn's novels *In the First Circle* and *Cancer Ward*.

May 18-27: All-Union Film Festival, Leningrad.

August 20: The USSR resumed jamming of *Voice of America* and other Western radio stations in Russian in the USSR.

August 21: Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

October-November: Soviet magazine *Ogonyok* published articles by Prof. Dr., member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and the Soviet Communist Party V.A. Razumny (1924–2011) and People's Artist of the USSR, member of the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR and the Soviet Communist Party N.A. Kryuchkov (1911–1994), in which they sharply criticized the magazines *Cinema Art* and *Soviet Screen* for promoting Western cinema and hushing up Soviet cinema, urging the authorities to urgently restore order in the leadership and editorial line of these publications in order to "put these printed organs at the service of Soviet cinematography and Soviet audiences" (Kryuchkov, 1968: 17).

December: preparation Decree of the secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On increasing the responsibility of the leaders of the press, radio, television, cinema, cultural and art institutions for the ideological and political level of published materials and repertoire", which, soon (January 7, 1969) was approved as a guide to action to strengthen the ideological control and censorship, including in the field of cinema and the press.

The film distribution ban was imposed on the films *Commissar* (directed by Alexander Askoldov), *Intervention* (directed by Gennady Poloka) and the film almanac *The Beginning of an Unknown Age*.