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## Theoretical Concepts of Film Studies in *Cinema Art* Journal: 1956–1968

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### Abstract

An analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) in the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal during the Thaw (1956–1968) showed that theoretical works on cinematic subjects during this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on culture (including cinematography), "thaw" trends, but still defending the inviolability of socialist realism, Communist Party in cinematography (A. Anikst, E. Gromov, A. Karaganov, L. Kogan, N. Lebedev, G. Nedoshivin, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, L. Stolovich, V. Tolstykh, E. Weitsman, R. Yurenev, M. Zak, A. Zis and others);
- theoretical articles opposing bourgeois influences, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (N. Abramov, V. Bozhovich, S. Ginzburg, I. Katsev, G. Kunitsyn, A. Mikhalevich, V. Murian, G. Nedoshivin, A. Novogrudski, L. Pogozheva, N. Semenov, L. Stolovich, Y. Sher, V. Shcherbina, I. Weisfeld, E. Weitzman, A. Zis, etc.)
- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: an analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics of Soviet cinema, directing, film dramaturgy, genres, the specifics of television, etc. (S. Asenin, E. Bagirov, J. Bereznitsky, M. Bleiman, S. Freilikh, S. Ginzburg, E. Dobin, I. Dolinsky, L. Kozlov, V. Kolodyazhnaya, A. Macheret, S. Muratov, E. Plazhevsky, M. Romm, A. Svobodin, A. Tarkovsky, A. Vartanov, I. Weisfeld, R. Yurenev, S. Yutkevich, V. Zhdan, etc.);
- theoretical articles balancing ideological and professional approaches to cinema (S. Gerasimov, I. Weisfeld, R. Yurenev, etc.);
- theoretical articles calling on the authorities to ensure an organizational transformation that would encourage the intensive development of film studies as a science, and the sociology of cinema (N. Lebedev, H. Khersonsky, R. Yurenev).

In general, the course toward de-Stalinization taken by Nikita Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party resulted in a noticeable updating of the content of the *Cinema Art* journal: its articles contained fewer dogmatic approaches, it generated lively discussion material, and the former harsh criticisms of the "formalistic" theories of S. Eisenstein, L. Kuleshov, V. Pudovkin and D. Vertov were revised. The journal began to actively support the most artistically brilliant Soviet Thaw films. The rude attacks on certain figures of Soviet cinematography that had been characteristic of the journal in the 1930s and 1940s almost completely disappeared.

At the same time, our content analysis of the *Cinema Art* from 1956 to 1968 showed that after N. Khrushchev was ousted from power, support for the "thaw" tendencies in the journal gradually

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decreased, and a series of articles against the revisionism of socialist ideas and the harmful foreign influence on Soviet filmmakers was published in connection with the Czechoslovak events of 1968.

At the same time, the support of a number of artistically significant Soviet films that did not receive notable approval from the authorities and a rather diverse panorama of cinematic life of foreign countries in the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal eventually led to initiated "from above" strongly critical articles directed against it (in the *Ogonyok* magazine) and eventually to the removal of the editor-in-chief L. Pogozheva.

**Keywords:** film history, cinema art journal, 1956–1968, theoretical concepts, film studies, USSR, movie.

### 1. Introduction

In studies by scholars (Andrew, 1976; 1984; Aristarco, 1951; Aronson, 2003; 2007; Balázs, 1935; Bazin, 1971; Bergan, 2006; Branigan, Buckland, 2015; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Eisenstein, 1939; 1940; 1964; Freilich, 2009; Gibson et al, 2000; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Humm, 1997; Khrenov, 2006; 2011; Kuleshov, 1987; Lebedev, 1974; Lipkov, 1990; Lotman, 1973; 1992; 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982 and others) have discussed film studies concepts many times. However, until now there has been no interdisciplinary comparative analysis of the evolution of theoretical aspects of film studies in the entire time interval of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal (from 1931 to the present) in world science.

It is well known that theoretical concepts in film studies are fluid and often subject to fluctuating courses of political regimes. Hence it is understandable that the Soviet film studies literature (Lebedev, 1974; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982, etc.) tended to exhibit communist-oriented ideological approaches. As for foreign scholars (Kenez, 1992; Lawton, 2004; Shaw, Youngblood, 2010; Shlapentokh, 1993; Strada, Troper, 1997; and others), their works on Soviet and Russian cinema focused primarily on the political and artistic aspects of cinema and rarely touched on theoretical film studies in the USSR and Russia (one of the few exceptions: Hill, 1960).

In our previous articles on theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022), we investigated the period of the 1930s and early 1940s and 1945–1955. In this article we analyze the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal during the "thaw" period – from 1956 to 1968.

### 2. Materials and methods

*The methodology of the research* consists of the key philosophical provisions on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and social in knowledge; scientific, cinematological, sociocultural, cultural, hermeneutic, semiotic approaches, proposed in the works of leading scientists (Aristarco, 1951; Aronson, 2003; 2007; Bakhtin, 1996; Balázs, 1935; Bazin, 1971; Bessonov, 2012; Bibler, 1990; Buldakov, 2014; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Eco, 1975; 1976; Eisenstein, 1939; 1940; 1964; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hess, 1997; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Khrenov, 2006; 2011; Kuleshov, 1987; Lotman, 1973; 1992; 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007 and others).

The project is based on the 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, appeal to the facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc.), on the historical approach – consideration of the specific and historical development of the declared topic of the project.

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

### 3. Discussion and results

In this article we focus on the analysis of theoretical concepts of film studies in *Cinema Art* journal during the "thaw" (1956–1968) of its existence, when the editors in charge were Vitaly Zhdan (1956), V. Grachev (1956), and Lyudmila Pogozheva (1956–1968).

We also indicate in the [Table 1](#) the names of the chief editors of the journal, the length of time they were in charge of the publication, and the number of articles on film theory for each year of the journal's publication.

**Table 1.** Journal *Cinema Art* (1956–1968): statistical data

Year of issue of the journal	The organization whose organ was the journal	Circulation (in thousand copies)	Periodicity of the journal (numbers per year)	Editor-in-chief	Number of articles on film theory
1956	USSR Ministry of Culture, USSR Union of Writers	14,1 – 15,2	12	V. Zhdan (1913–1993) (№№ 1–10) V. Grachev (№ 11) L. Pogozheva (1913 – 1989) (№ 12)	14
1957	USSR Ministry of Culture, USSR Union of Writers (№№ 1–5) USSR Ministry of Culture, Organizing Bureau of the Filmmakers' Union (№№ 6–7). USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers (№№ 8–12).	15,7 – 16,2	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	13
1958	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	19 – 20	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	11
1959	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	19,6 – 21,8	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	12
1960	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	19,4 – 21,3	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	8
1961	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	23	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	17
1962	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	23 – 26	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	32
1963	USSR Ministry of Culture, Union of Cinematographers	29 – 33	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	28

	(№№ 1–5) The State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers (№№ 6–12)				
1964	The State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers	26,3 – 28,2	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	21
1965	The State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers	27,0 – 29,5	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	14
1966	Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	33,4 – 35,4	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	11
1967	Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	30,3 – 35,8	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	19
1968	Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of Ministers, Union of Cinematographers of the USSR	30,4 – 32,3	12	L. Pogozheva (1913–1989)	20

The circulation of the *Cinema Art* (and it was still published monthly) from 1956 to 1968 ranged between 14,1 and 35,8 thousands copies, with a general trend towards a gradual increase. The peak circulation of the journal of the 1930s, 28 thousands copies (1931), was first surpassed in 1963, when the threshold of 29 thousands copies was first crossed.

The frequency of theoretical articles published in the *Cinema Art* during the Thaw period ranged from a dozen to thirty per year. Thus, if during the first decade of the journal's existence (1931–1941) 143 theoretical articles were published, and during the second decade (1945–1955) – 194, then in 1956–1968 – 220.

Since 1957, the *Cinema Art* journal became an organ of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR and the Union of Cinematographers, and from 1963 – the body of the State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers and the Union of Cinematographers. From 1966 and for a long time after that it was an organ of the Committee on Cinematography under the Council of Ministers of the USSR (Goskino) and the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR.

From January 1956 to October 1956, the editor-in-chief of *Art of Cinema* was V. Zhdan (1913–1993). However, because he allowed a politically incorrect positive interpretation of a person

undesirable to the Chinese Communist Party in the publication he was entrusted with, he was dismissed from his position. The November 1956 issue was signed by acting editor-in-chief V. Grachev, and since December 1956 film critic Lyudmila Pogozheva (1913–1989) became the editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art*.

Film critic Yuri Bogomolov wrote about the "thaw" period of the *Cinema Art* as follows: "What was the journal under... editor-in-chief Lyudmila Pogozheva and her deputy Jacov Warszawski? A company of talented editors and authors who paid tribute to official rhetoric (about the Communist image, socialist realism, the problems of cinema, etc.) on the first twenty or thirty pages, and on the remaining one hundred spoke to the reader "for art, for cinema, and for life". Cinema in those years was as much a public tribune as literature and theater... Aesthetic considerations were easily transformed into ethical, civic and humanist. The framework of concrete socialist humanism was quite often pushed apart, and authors invaded the mined territory of abstract humanism. Abstract humanism... is like Bluebeard's locked room. The masters of Soviet culture were given the key to this room, but were not permitted to open it, on pain of death. An exception was made for especially verified masters, i.e. for the accomplices of Bluebeard's crimes. The further from October 1917, the more people risked unlocking it. And then the thaw and its consequences" (Bogomolov, 2001: 6).

Curiously enough, in 1960 the American magazine *Film Quarterly* published an article by the film critic S.P. Hill (1936–2010), in which he tried to analyze the content of the *Cinema Art* journal in 1958–1959. Without going into detail about the articles he reviewed, S.P. Hill noted, of course, that they were politically partisan (particularly the texts by the philosopher V. Razumny), but he praised the journal for its roundtable discussions and its attention to film classics (Hill, 1960).

#### "Thawing" tendencies

The "thaw" period in the history of the *Cinema Art* journal is usually associated with the appointment of Lyudmila Pogozheva (1913–1989) as editor-in-chief. This is true, but let us speculate that had Vitaly Zhdan (1913–1993), who held that post until October 1956, continued in office, a "thaw" would still have taken place in the journal. These trends can be clearly traced by comparing the issues of the *Cinema Art* that came out under V. Zhdan's editorship. These trends can be clearly traced by comparing the issues of the *Cinema Art* in 1951–1953 published under Zhdan's editorship with the issues of the pre-Thaw period and the beginning of the Thaw years (1954–1956). V. Zhdan reacted very quickly to the changes in the political climate in the USSR, and in 1954–1956 the *Cinema Art* journal became slightly less officious and propagandistic with each issue than before.

For example, shortly after the XX Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, where N. Khrushchev (1894–1971) made an anti-Stalinist speech, the *Cinema Art*, still edited by V. Zhdan, published an editorial in which there were very "thawed" lines: "In very recent times we have created a lot of parade, pompous, lacquering movies in which people again and again looked like a static and faceless mass, even though dressed in bright costumes. The cult of personality, deeply alien to Marxism-Leninism, had a particularly pernicious effect on our historical-biographical and military-historical films. In historical-revolutionary films and movies devoted to the Great October Socialist Revolution, the role of the Communist Party and the people's masses was often belittled. Even in such films as *Lenin in 1918* and *Lenin in October*, the outstanding role of the great V.I. Lenin, the founder of the Communist Party and the Soviet state, was not adequately reflected. The feat of the Soviet people during the Great Patriotic War was often portrayed on the screen from a false perspective, turning this or that figure into a miracle-creator hero allegedly capable of solving all military and state problems himself. The role of the people, the real creator of history, was pushed into the background.

In the postwar years, there were many movies of our collective farm village. But most of them depicted collective farm life superficially, in embellished form, as a solid holiday, as life without difficulties and shortcomings. These films abounded with merry feasts, mass festivities and dances. It gave the impression that nothing but minor misunderstandings overshadowed the life of the collective farm village. As you know, these movies were far from the real state of affairs in agriculture. ... More than once, criticism has undeservedly highlighted weak, illustrative works, making an unjustified discount on the relevance and importance of the theme and material itself, viewing complex phenomena of life through the prism of templates and habitual schemes" (Source..., 1956: 3: 5-6).

And in this context they drew the readers' attention to the fact that the “program of great works adopted by the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union set the film-makers a serious task – to increase the production of films, to raise their ideological and artistic level, to ensure the production of at least 120 full-length films a year by the end of the Five-Year Plan” ([Increase..., 1956: 3](#)).

M. Papava (1906–1975) reflected the "thaw" in his article: “Speaking about the struggle against the consequences of the cult of personality, we must remember that the theses, the declarative nature of many scripts and films emasculated the real life content of these works. It was replaced by the life that the authors wanted to see in accordance with a preconceived answer. Cinema became as it were a front porch to our Soviet reality and many real processes of life were out of our attention. It goes without saying that works made according to such recipes did not correspond at all to our idea of the essence of the method of socialist realism. Moreover, they were blatant deviations from this method. It seems to me that a consequence of the cult of personality in art has been a strange, mechanical idea that the formation of the new man of our society does not require the same active and tense struggle as, say, the struggle for the material basis of socialism. And as long as life did not fit into this, I would say, fatalistic notion of the birth of a new man, we "corrected" life in art. It is no coincidence that the *Cavalier of the Gold Star* was at one time the benchmark of the Soviet artist's correct vision of life” ([Papava, 1957: 86](#)).

M. Papava's opinion was largely shared by film scholar M. Zak (1929–2011), who noted that “the cult of personality was hostile to the nature of artistic creation. Since truths were enumerated in advance, judgments about life were dictated and numbered, there was no need for revelations in art. The artist was destined to play the role of popularizer. However, contrary to the cult of personality, the vivifying process of discovery of the world captured in words, sounds, and colors did not cease in Soviet art. Recognizing this, we need not underestimate the damage done. The losses were not only in the past; they are also in the present. How, if not as a consequence of the cult of personality, can one explain the still-existing tyne of the artist who is concerned only with one thing: the supposedly "figurative" representation and transmission of the sum of the known ideas about life to the viewer? This "sum" is not accumulated by him. He is only its hasty dispenser. As a result, the study of reality is replaced by superficial description, and the unique intonation of the discoverer is replaced by the usual shorthand of the know-it-all artist” ([Zak, 1962: 62](#)).

The film scholar N. Lebedev, who was seriously criticized in the 1930s–1940s, also tried to build himself up to the "thaw" trends. In his article with the eloquent title "The Party Leads Us" he reminded us that there are quite a few questions that “to this day have not lost their urgency. These are the question of the struggle for ideological purity and irreconcilability with bourgeois ideology in our art; questions of artistry; questions of the development of such kinds of cinema (documentary, popular-science, educational and school cinema), which still do not receive sufficient attention; questions of research work on cinema art and a number of others. Living experience of history shows – always when the workers of the Soviet cinematography follow the path indicated by the Communist Party, they achieve tremendous creative victories. In the well-known decisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on issues of literature and art adopted in the post-war years, in the decisions of the 20th Communist Party Congress, in the speeches of Comrade Khrushchev, who on behalf of the Central Party Committee set before the Soviet artists the tasks most closely related to the struggle for communism, our filmmakers find ways to a new creative rise of the film art loved by the people” ([Lebedev, 1958: 66](#)).

In this, N. Lebedev's position fully coincided with that of the then USSR Minister of Culture N. Mikhailov (1906–1982), who argued that “the art of cinema has long been recognized by our Communist Party as a powerful ideological weapon. The task consists in ensuring that the entire army of Soviet film workers tirelessly improved this sharp and powerful weapon and served the Party and the people in the struggle for communism with their art, the art of high ideas and high skill” ([Mikhailov, 1958: 1](#)).

Film historian I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) also changed his views considerably. Whereas in the 1930s he sharply criticized S. Eisenstein ([Weisfeld, 1937](#)), in the "thaw" of 1962, on the contrary, he emphasized that as early as 1928 “Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Alexandrov made the famous "Application", in which they charted the way forward in the art of sound film. The theory looked into the future. Is this not an example of active invasion of aesthetic thought in the living, creative process! There are many such examples. These traditions of Soviet film theory... should be supported and developed in every possible way. Theoreticians and critics could analyze specific cinematic works

and at the same time suggest their own working hypotheses, working formulas which would be capable of fascinating the artist, revealing his individuality more vividly, suggesting to him interesting and not fully explored directions in his art. ...the meaning of our common theoretical work lies in a lively, fruitful, creative participation in the life of cinema” (Weisfeld, 1962: 11).

Of particular interest is the ideological transformation of the views of the film director F. Ermler (1898–1967), perhaps the most horrific expression of Stalinist ideology in his struggle against the "enemies of the people": *The Great Citizen* (1937–1939). In his "theoretical" article "The spiritual health of the artist" he first "thawed" asserted that "perhaps no form of art has not suffered from the cult of Stalin as suffered cinematography. One man determined the fate of all works and the fate of their authors. He decreed, allowed, forbade, planned, corrected, completed. It's safe to say that cinema lost a lot of talented young directors, because the right to direct was given to a small group of the "elite". The ridiculous theory of "less is better!" was introduced. "Fewer" went so far as to make nine pictures a year, and these nine, of course, were far from being masterpieces. The artist was afraid of not liking one person. And gradually he was losing faith in his own ability to understand what the people needed. "Just to please him!" It was difficult. But faith in the Communist Party helped us stand, and we stood our ground. Now everything is behind us, and for that our great gratitude goes to the Central Committee of our Communist Party! But words of gratitude are not enough – we artists must repay with deeds. Our duty is to praise in our works the creative power of the people building a communist tomorrow” (Ermler, 1962: 1-2).

However, further on in the same article F. Ermler convincingly proved that in fact he remained largely on his former political platform: “Film as we understand it was and remains a weapon of ideological struggle. And we have someone to fight with. ... when *The Great Citizen* was released and Nevsky Prospect was decorated with flag-banners, I was proud and happy!” (Ermler, 1962: 2, 5).

And here it is impossible not to admit that the screenwriter and film critic M. Bleiman (1904–1973), accused of cosmopolitanism in the late 1940s, was more self-critical, admitting that “the distortion of historical reality was a characteristic feature of a number of films. The author of this article, one of the authors of *The Great Citizen*, is also guilty of this. ... The aesthetics of the modernization of history, its distortion, ignoring real historical circumstances and the psychology of real historical figures was an expression of the cult of personality in our art” (Bleiman, 1963: 25).

#### *Politics and ideology in thaw film studies*

Despite the "thawed" tendencies, "ideologically aligned" articles retained a significant place in the pages of the *Cinema Art* in 1956–1968.

The base article of this kind in the second half of the 1950s was, of course, the article of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party N. Khrushchev (1894–1971): "For a close connection of literature and art with the life of people" composed of his speeches delivered at the meeting with writers on May 13, 1957, at the reception of writers, artists, sculptors and composers on May 19, 1957, and with the Communist Party activist in July 1957.

In this article published in the *Cinema Art* it was noted that “in a number of cases under the influence of the general situation during the period of the personality cult in the works of literature and art a biased, one-sided portrayal of Stalin's personality, exaggerated his merits, while the role of the Communist Party, the role of the people did not receive a worthy display” (Khrushchev, 1957: 10).

However, N. Khrushchev went on not only to assert the inviolability of the method of "socialist realism", but also to sharply criticize "alien" and "slandorous" tendencies in Soviet culture: “The Communist Party waged an uncompromising struggle against the penetration into literature and art of alien ideological influences, against hostile attacks on socialist culture. ... We have resolutely and irreconcilably opposed one-sided, unfair and untruthful coverage of our reality in literature and art. We are against those who seek out only negative facts in life, who gloat about them, who try to slander and denigrate our Soviet order. We are also against those who create masculine, sugar-coated pictures which insult the feelings of our people who cannot tolerate any falsity. The Soviet people also reject such essentially slanderous works as Dudintsev's book *Not by Bread Alone*, and such sugary, sugary films as *The Unforgettable Year 1919* or *The Kuban Cossacks* (Khrushchev, 1957: 10, 14).

Khrushchev then moved on to the topic of fighting foreign ideological enemies, emphasizing the "lessons" of the 1956 anti-communist uprising in Hungary: “We would not be Marxist-Leninists if we stood aside, indifferent and passive to attempts to sneak bourgeois views alien to the spirit of the Soviet people into our literature and art. We must take a sober view of things, we must be aware

that the enemies exist and that they are trying to use the ideological front to weaken the forces of socialism. In this situation, our ideological weapons must be in good working order and must work without fail. The lesson of the Hungarian events, when the counter-revolution used some writers for its dirty purposes, is a reminder of what political carelessness, unprincipled and uncharacteristic attitude to the machinations of forces hostile to socialism can lead to. It should be clear to everyone that under present conditions, when there is an acute struggle between the forces of socialism and those of imperialist reaction, one must keep one's powder dry" (Khrushchev, 1957: 16).

Meanwhile, the "thaw" in the Soviet Union continued, as can be seen, for example, in the Resolution of the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party of 28 May 1958 "On the Correction of Errors in the Evaluation of the Opera *Great Friendship, Bogdan Khmel'nitsky and From the Heart*" (Resolution..., 1958).

A direct reaction to this decree was an editorial in the *Cinema Art* journal under the title "The Responsibility of the Artist", which stressed that this revision of the evaluation of musical works does not mean that the other Communist Party Resolutions of the postwar years were also incorrect: "The resolutions of the Communist Party Central Committee regarding literature and art adopted in 1946–1948 were of tremendous importance for the development of Soviet artistic culture. These resolutions, based on Leninist principles of the party and the people's nature of artistic creativity, helped our art to establish itself on the right positions. They were directed against apolitical and ideologically, formalist tendencies, the separation of artistic creativity from life, guided Soviet writers and artists to the creation of samples of truly popular, realistic art" (Responsibility..., 1958: 11).

And then it was stressed once again that "the powerful force of the art of socialist realism is in its inseparable connection with life. Life in its revolutionary development moves this art, is to it the source of themes, subjects, and images. Socialist art, in turn, has an active influence on life, giving its full power to the cause of building the new world. In the age when socialism has become a world system, this new art has become an important and effective factor in the spiritual life of peoples. It is a sharp weapon in the ideological battle between two systems—the world of socialism, which belongs to the future, and the world of decrepit capitalism, which is clinging in futile rage to its place on the historical stage" (Responsibility..., 1958: 11).

One of the leading theorists of the *Cinema Art* journal in the 1950s and early 1960s was the philosopher and film scholar V. Razumny (1924–2011).

Ardently defending the basic principles of the "Marxist-Leninist doctrine" (often supported by quotations from N. Khrushchev's speeches) and socialist realism, V. Razumny was a prime example of a supporter of the "Communist party vector" of the "thaw".

On the one hand V. Razumny could allow himself to assert that "artistic truth is fundamentally different from the figurative illustration of general ideas. It is the result of a generalization of vital phenomena specific to art, which is commonly referred to as typification. The misunderstanding of typification by some of our artists is one of the main reasons why illustrativeness is so widespread in art. ... Having failed to study life deeply and thoroughly, having failed to accumulate sufficient observations of life, an artist creates a purely speculative sociological scheme (say, "innovator of production", "bearer of residual capitalism", "subversive", etc.) of the future image. From this scheme, he then proceeds to enliven the image, more or less skilfully, with details, details, and character traits. "Individualized" in this way the image is presented to the viewer. Once on this path, the artist gradually acquires a whole set of common clichés and limits his "creative" task to their virtuosic disguise. It is as if they stand between the artist and life, shutting out its real meaning, its real processes. ... Thus, the illustrative art creates images and schemes which function in standard situations and which are brought to life in a purely external way. Genuine art creates typical characters in typical circumstances, and its works are artistic discoveries and explanations of the world" (Razumny, 1956: 4-5, 10).

On the other hand, V. Razumny was convinced that "for the artist of socialist realism the ethical ideal is a man-fighter, a revolutionary, daring to transform the world, a hero in the full and highest meaning of the word. Critics, of course, are right to speak out against abstract idealization, against image schemes which concentrate all the virtues (or vices) in themselves. But criticism of idealization should not lead to the oblivion of the demand for the scale of the hero, of his feelings and deeds, the scale that distinguishes the majestic spiritual character of the builders of communism. ... The artist of socialist realism is above all a politician, able to approach political generalizations through ethical collision" (Razumny, 1959: 126, 133).

B. Razumny never tired of reminding us that “the partisanship of the artist of Soviet cinema is expressed in the worldview charge with which he saturates his film, giving it an explosive, revolutionary force. Such is the artist of socialist realism – he is a fighter always and everywhere! ... Socialist Realism knows no thematic limitations. Any theme can become such an object of imaginative comprehension that allows us to put the fundamental problems of our life and struggle” (Razumny, 1961: 12).

At the same time, “a talented artist in his own way sees and reproduces reality, in his own way guesses, recognizes in it the features of the ideal – the features of the future. The dialectical interpenetration of the real and the ideal is the condition for realistic artistic creativity. There should be no hesitation in the artist – what to draw: authentic, though not ideal, reality or, for example, the sublime, perfect, but immaterial “ideality”. To see in real life a movement toward an ideal, to recognize in our communist ideal the features that have become reality today, is the point” (Razumny, 1962: 10).

In full accordance with the political line of the Soviet Communist Party and the slogans of N. Khrushchev, V. Razumny fought against “harmful bourgeois influences” and “formalism” in his articles: “Borrowing external forms, structural features of art that exist today in capitalist countries, artists involuntarily come to shift the ideological emphasis in reflecting our reality in these forms. An instructive lesson in this is the unfortunate attempt to apply the imagery of neo-realism, born out of a critical rejection of the bourgeois world, to films about the Soviet man. ... The great and socially significant content, the raising of civic issues, the truthful reflection of life are what make a work of art interesting and contemporary, exciting and passionate in the first place. Formal extravagance, even if it aggravates the viewer's interest, is fruitless, for in the final analysis it is an ersatz art” (Razumny, 1961: 133-134).

At the same time, as V. Razumny stressed, “the wretched troubadours of bourgeois propaganda, stunned by the success of Soviet cinema with the audiences of capitalist countries, are trying in every way to denigrate it, to slander it, to reduce the public resonance of our films. They tediously repeat the same thing: figures of the Soviet cinema are slaves of politics, deprived of creative freedom. They are echoed by the revisionists, who seek to confuse the minds of artists, to cut them off from the current political, moral, and social problems of the day” (Razumny, 1961: 11). That is why, V. Razumny believed, “we should not forget about the struggle against the corrupting influence of modern bourgeois decadence in all its forms and forms. We need to go boldly against all the winds of modernism, not to sidestep the sharp angles and contentious issues on which the decadents are attempting to give battle to realism, but to accept their challenge and denounce them, showing the creative futility of formalism of all stripes, its objective social meaning and anti-aesthetic essence. The figure of reticence does not suit us!” (Razumny, 1961: 64).

A. Karaganov (1915–2007), a film critic who was also one of the most notable theorists in the *Cinema Art* journal during the Thaw period, was on a similarly clear ideological position.

Following the Soviet Communist Party, Karaganov tirelessly defended the principles of socialist realism: “Recently there have been many statements abroad denying the very existence of socialist realism. In doing so, their authors commit direct violence both to logic and to history. ... They do not recognize the right of the epoch of socialism to its own creative method in art, to its own artistic direction. Needless to say, both this “forgetfulness” and this “inconsistency” are connected with polemical passions, with a hatred of socialist realism, before which logic falls silent... Among the opponents of Socialist Realism there are those who do not deny its existence, but declare it a dogmatic code of art regulating creativity. ... Socialist realism is a living creative method, not a set of fixed rules, as dogmatists have tried to make it, as some revisionist critics are trying to present it” (Karaganov, 1957: 85, 89).

“The principles of socialist realism, freed from the dogmatic layers of past years”, A. Karaganov wrote, “are directed both against uncertainty, half-heartedness, vagueness of views on life, and against subjectivism, which claims to command life without regard to its real regularities, to arbitrarily decree ways and forms of its development, to consider true in art only what the bearers of voluntarist views like – without regard to what actually happens in real life. What is incompatible with such an understanding of socialist realism is the vanity of the conjuncture, the irresponsible fecklessness, the laziness of thought – the unwillingness to think independently and the associated readiness to hastily adapt art and the facts of life itself to any ‘reorganization’, to any transient slogan – without a thorough check and analysis of its causes and possible consequences” (Karaganov, 1966: 17).

At the same time, A. Karaganov, in full agreement with the line of struggle against the "cult of personality" initiated by Khrushchev, reminded that "for no one was easy transition from adoration of Stalin to criticism of Stalin. This transition was helped by the Leninist straightforwardness of the Communist Party in talking about the personality cult and its consequences. This transition was aided by communist ideology. And only people for whom the bureaucratic maintenance of the cult of personality has become second nature and weakened their inner, psychic ties with the people, only they resist the fight against the consequences of the cult of personality – if they do talk about it, then with a thousand reservations, reluctantly, obeying the general tone and rhythm of life, as if they were following a directive, without a counter movement of the mind and heart. It is no longer a problem for a Soviet artist to say once again with all the necessary determination about the mistakes and crimes of Stalin. The problem, and a very difficult one, is to convincingly, truthfully show and explain the people who preserved their revolutionary worldview in the very years when these crimes and mistakes were committed. To show how the people involved in the spread of the cult of personality became its resolute critics, practical fighters against its consequences. To show the historically developing, complex and nevertheless revolutionary integral psychology of today's builders of communism" (Karaganov, 1963: 12).

At the same time, A. Karaganov emphasized that "it is not about weakening criticism of the cult of personality. Our artists will often return to the themes and problems that are the subject of *Beyond the Far Away, Clear Sky, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, the poets' anti-cult poems... It's about analysis. About a truly dialectical understanding of one of the most complex eras in our history, about a truthful portrayal of the people who formed in that era and continue to work now, about the connection, the "revolutionary baton" of different generations of Soviet society. ... The Communist Party criticism of the cult of personality, by analyzing comprehensively the development of Soviet society, opens up new possibilities for an in-depth depiction of life; it helps one understand how and why Soviet people carried the ideological conviction of builders of the new world through the most difficult years" (Karaganov, 1963: 12).

However, soon after N. Khrushchev's resignation the tone of A. Karaganov's theoretical articles changed significantly. A. Karaganov was well aware that the topic of the "cult of personality" had already been pushed into the deep shadows, and wrote that it was necessary "to assess the accumulated experience calmly and objectively, abandoning the former zigzags of opportunistic thought and the fiery one-sidedness of transient polemics. This was all the more important because many works of film studies of past years were written in a polemical state of mind that hindered analysis. In saying this, I want to be understood correctly: it is not a question of transforming the critic or film scholar into a chronicler who reviews the historical paths of cinema, paying indifferent attention to good and evil, forgetting about the dramas and prototypes on these paths. With an objective approach to what has been passed, polemics cannot be avoided. But it is important that polemics should not hinder, but help the analysis" (Karaganov, 1966: 14).

On the other hand, it was A. Karaganov who, in fact, called (with, of course, appropriate support for "partisanship", "revolutionariness" and "innovation") for the rehabilitation of the classics of Soviet cinema, cruelly and mercilessly accused of formalism in the 1930s and 1940s: "In the polemical heat of the recent past we often robbed ourselves of ourselves, we impoverished Soviet cinema – its history was presented as an alternation of errors and mistakes. The struggle against negative phenomena (for example, against formalism) often turned into a campaign which spread out in "divergent circles," lashing out critical blows not only against the negative phenomena themselves, but also against such works of Soviet cinema as were part of its traditions, its truly great history. At one time, influenced by this kind of campaign, our historians dissociated Eisenstein's early films from revolutionary art, regarding them as dangerous attempts to "correct" or "improve" realism, likening realist aesthetics to the Gospel or the Koran – its immovability was guarded not only by casuistic dogmatic formulas, but also by very transparent ideological threats. The polemics against some of Eisenstein's statements on the montage method and intellectual cinema led to the fact that the main thing in his work remained truly unappreciated. Something similar happened when discussing the early films of Vsevolod Pudovkin, Alexander Dovzhenko, and Dziga Vertov. But now the old debates are over. And it became clear to every thoughtful historian that it was thanks to the boldness and unusualness of the directorial quests of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, Vertov, that the realistic tradition received in the 1920's a development worthy of the historical changes which occurred in the country. The revolution came to the screen, causing a revolution in the art of the screen itself" (Karaganov, 1966: 14).

Rehabilitating the leading Soviet film directors of the 1920s, A. Karaganov immediately came out in defense of the "socialist realist" films of the 1930s: "In some of the art criticism works written after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party, the restoration of an objective attitude toward early revolutionary art coexisted with a very angry evaluation of the art of the 1930s: the critique of negative phenomena associated with the cult of personality often so fascinated and captivated those writing about film that a certain emotional barrier was placed in the way of objective reflection" (Karaganov, 1966: 15).

One of the brightest signs of the Thaw was the expansion of international contacts, including those in the cultural sphere. In this regard, in July 1967 the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR held an international symposium of film critics, at which a theoretical discussion unfolded.

Speaking at this symposium, A. Karaganov – in full accordance with the party policies of those years – emphasized, with all the encouragement of innovative approaches, "we must not talk about turning the whole Soviet film industry in purely experimental – only for "experts", but the activation of creative search in different areas of film-making, the increase and clarification of aesthetic criteria, the more rigorous and thoughtful separation of the talented from the untalented, the active support of films that solve their ideological problems at the level of high art, and more demanding criticism. Freedom of creativity in socialist society presupposes free – by conviction, by the call of the heart – service to the people, a high sense of the artist's responsibility to society, the mutual interest of film-makers in each other's success" (Karaganov, 1967: 37).

Film critic R. Yurenev (1912–2002) structured his theoretical articles in a similar way.

On the one hand, he reasonably complained that attempts to "create a theory" of conflict-free works damaged Soviet cinema greatly by producing grey, dull or sugary works devoid of any real truth in their subject matter (Yurenev, 1957: 29).

On the other hand, from article to article he repeated (not forgetting to quote Khrushchev's speeches) the stereotypical "Communist party attitudes" about formalism, idealism, socialist realism and "bourgeois influences": "The new tasks that confronted the victorious people after the war were reduced to the restoration and development of the national economy, to the further movement along the socialist path. Not all cinematographers immediately understood these tasks correctly. Soviet films appeared characterized by cheap entertainment, a superficial attitude to reality, and a lack of ideology. The Central Committee of the Communist Party subjected works of literature, theater, music, and cinema that expressed bourgeois influences to harsh criticism in a series of resolutions. The Central Committee's resolutions on ideological issues helped Soviet cinema to overcome many significant shortcomings. ... No, our victories were not easy to obtain, not smooth, not easy was our forty-year road passed with honor. Bourgeois ideology had a corrosive influence on the masters of Soviet cinema. The method of socialist realism was forged in the struggle against formalism and naturalism. Various delusions and vestiges left their traces in many films" (Yurenev, 1957: 27, 32).

And, of course, he did not forget to remind the journal's readers that "the Communist Party consistently and irrefutably smashed all idealistic notions about the independence of art from life, about the supposed freedom of artists from politics, from social struggle, ruthlessly debunked those artists who imagined themselves 'superhumans' hovering over social processes, beyond the class struggle" (Yurenev, 1967: 1).

The theme of socialist realism was most fully represented in a theoretical article by the literary scholar A. Anikst (1910–1988). It stressed that "the struggle for socialist realism is for us the continuation of that constant struggle on the ideological front which we wage against the culture of decaying imperialism, against everything that is alien and hostile to us in the art of a dying bourgeois society. We are contrasting the decadent, misanthropic art of the imperialist bourgeoisie with a life-affirming art which truthfully reflects reality and consciously serves the interests of the masses in their struggle for socialism. ... Lately it has become clear to all of us that the cult of personality has indeed had very grave consequences for our art. It has led in artistic practice to deviations from the very essence of socialist realism, and the theory of socialist realism has at times been misunderstood and interpreted" (Anikst, 1957: 38-39).

A. Anikst argued that the following points of view on the concept of socialist realism have emerged: 1. Socialist realism is a worldview. 2. Socialist realism is a principle of artistic creation. 3. Socialist realism is a style. 4. Socialist realism is the method of our art. ... of the four current definitions of socialist realism, the one according to which socialist realism is a method is the most correct. ... Method in art is not the sum of obligatory methods and norms, but the means to the

achievement of creative ends, the way determining the essence of an artistic movement. ... method is the relationship of the artist to the creative tasks that confront him. The artistic method is the artist's approach to life and the way of processing the phenomena of reality in the process of creating a work of art. ... In socialist realism, the ideology of the revolutionary socialist proletariat constitutes the very essence, the very core of this new art. It did not grow up as the result of the discovery of some new technique in the field of the visual arts; it emerged as one of the results of a progressive social movement expressing the most advanced social consciousness of the age. It is on this basis that I think that, when speaking of the method of our art, we correctly call it the method of socialist realism. The method of our art is, of course, connected with socialist reality with all its essence, with the desire to comprehend its development and to contribute to the building of communism (Anikst, 1957: 40-41, 46).

Film critic J. Warszawski (1911–2000) was of a similar opinion, writing that “Socialist realism is the flowering of many artistic schools. We are now clearly convinced of this. We, too, as viewers, must be widely receptive to the infinite diversity of the language of cinema” (Warszawski, 1962: 116).

The philosopher V. Tolstykh (1929–2019) wrote in his article about the inviolability of the principles of socialist realism in his interspersed with quotations from Party resolutions and speeches of the then Secretary of the Central Committee of Soviet communist Party L. Ilyichev (1906–1990): “The highest truth of socialist realism is expressed not in the truth of details and atmosphere (although it presupposes it), but in the truth of the representation of the main conflicts and contradictions of the era, the clash of classes. Here, too, socialist realism always wins, for it was always possible for it to reveal the connection between the individual and society. For it is always a 'fighting' realism” (Tolstykh, 1963: 28).

Art historian G. Nedoshivin (1910–1983) fully agreed with this approach, and assured his readers that “we may polemize with Socialist Realism, we may not accept it for the time being, but we cannot discount its authority which it won throughout the world, its decisive influence on art, and on the masses in particular. No deformities of formalist decay, no excesses of subjectivism and aestheticism can obscure the triumphant rise of socialist art” (Nedoshivin, 1964: 18).

In this context, film critic E. Gromov (1931–2005) reminded us that “revisionists and dogmatists came into contact with one another because they parted a deep chasm between the artist's worldview and his work, thus metaphysically separating the artistic and imaginative structure of thought from the logical. As a result, they got a distorted picture of the creative process: ostensibly, the worldview was theory and normative thinking, while figurative thinking was concrete and sensual and emotional; it was the sphere of exclusive expression of a creative individuality. Disputes broke out, even arguments of little comprehension, for example, debated the question: from what the artist goes, from image to thought or from thought to image, as if artistic creativity does not include with absolute necessity both theoretical and concrete-image thinking, if only because the selection of vital material is impossible without analysis and synthesis” (Gromov, 1963: 28).

The philosopher A. Zis (1910–1997) defended socialist realism against revisionism in his voluminous article (quoting Lenin and Khrushchev), referring to Hungarian and other "revisionists: “The struggle against dogmatism and nachatism is inseparable from the struggle against revisionism. We have no right to forget that under the guise of criticizing dogmatism, renegades of Marxism – revisionists – often act in an attempt to denigrate the creative method of our art and, at the same time, the basic principles of Soviet ideology. ... These revisionist views are essentially a capitulation to bourgeois ideology. The mean and insidious role which the revisionist and essentially inflammatory speeches of the members of the Hungarian circle played in the ideological preparation of the counter-revolutionary revolt in Hungary in autumn 1956 has now been completely exposed. And here we are talking about the very discussions in the Petéfi circle about which Lukács said that they had a "positive significance" in the struggle against dogmatism. ... In the vicious attacks on the method of socialist realism, the political and aesthetic meaning of revisionist concepts in art is particularly fully revealed. The revisionists in aesthetics have widely picked up the word 'Stalinism' used by all the enemies of socialism to fight against the art of socialist realism” (Zis, 1958: 140, 136).

At the same time, A. Zis emphasized, the conscious mastery of the method of socialist realism presupposes that the artist has a Marxist worldview – the scientific basis of our entire socialist ideology. The facts convincingly prove that the indifference and indifference of the artist in matters

of worldview, the vagueness of ideological positions damage creativity, lead to the distortion of the truth of life, and destroy artistic talent (Zis, 1958: 140).

The philosopher E. Weizman (1918–1977) also fought against harmful bourgeois influences in the pages of the *Cinema Art*. This case concerned the Freudian concept of personality, which “has penetrated widely into literature, painting, theater and cinema, and claims to penetrate the soul of modern man. ... The danger of Freudian concepts lies in the fact that they find expression not only in absurd, surrealist compositions. They also penetrate into the art that seeks to reflect life in the forms of life itself, which bears in itself, as has been said, progressive, denunciatory tendencies” (Weizman, 1962: 130, 132). Thus, according to Weizman, “the critique of Freudian concepts in ethics, psychology and art is a struggle against pessimistic ideas of man's powerlessness before the dark world of the 'unconscious' in defense of a philosophy of life, triumphant humanism and faith in the inexhaustible possibilities of the human mind. It is a struggle for a new man, a man of communism” (Weizman, 1962: 138).

E. Weizman wrote, that in film studies one is confronted with a one-sided tendency to consider the new phenomena of Western cinema mainly from the point of view of their stylistics, means of expression, techniques, in short, what is often called the 'language' of cinema, understanding by that only the external form. Unfortunately, analysis of cinema works does not always go as far as to reveal their ideological essence, to clarify what essentially a conception of life, a conception of man is contained in them. Meanwhile, only in deep connection with the analysis of the ideological content takes the proper place and consideration of graphic means and style. This, as everyone knows, is an elementary requirement of Marxist analysis. Maybe our cinematography should approach the evaluation of currents, trends, and tendencies of foreign cinema art with greater scientific rigor, specifying their objective foundations, and, most importantly, their connections with the general ideological situation in the spiritual life of the West. ... This is all the more necessary because some Soviet artists, without defining precisely enough their attitude to the phenomena of bourgeois cinema, get carried away by the new and sharp means of expression found there, by the sharpening of certain directorial techniques, without noticing that this sometimes carries into our cinema a world view alien to us in terms of philosophy (Weizman, 1963: 37-38).

In the second half of the 1950s, the stylistics of some Soviet films (*Strangers' Children* and others) were affected by the influence of Italian neorealism with great delay. In this regard, the *Cinema Art* published a theoretical article by the philosopher L. Kogan (1923–1997), in which he wrote that “the topic of the people in neo-realism organically grows into a theme of human solidarity, the unity of ordinary people. Many things in it bear the bright imprint of the main idea of our century – the idea of socialism; the spontaneous attraction to socialism is one of the main features of its works. That is why the critique of the bourgeois order is stronger in neorealism than in bourgeois critical realism of the past and the present. That is why, in very, very many ways, the makers of these films are our like-minded friends. That is why millions of Soviet people received the films of Italian neo-realism with sincere excitement and great warmth” (Kogan, 1958: 145).

However, friendship is friendship, but, as L. Kogan immediately emphasized, “we cannot fail to see the essential differences between the creative method of neorealism and socialist realism” (Kogan, 1958: 145), since one of the essential watersheds between neorealism and socialist realism is the presence in the latter of a militant revolutionary romance which is an organic part of socialist realism. It is this revolutionary romance, the romance of heroism and struggle that Italian neo-realism lacks. Its films are very human, but they do not glorify Man with a capital letter. ... Therefore, the mechanical transfer of the artistic techniques of neo-realism to the art of socialist realism is in principle impossible (Kogan, 1958: 146-147).

Another one philosopher, V. Murian (1926–2004), concurred with L. Kogan in pointing out that: “However sharp a critique of the bourgeois world view and bourgeois way of life may be from within, it will not reach its goal if the artist abstracts from the living conditions of reality, from its social and class sense, if he views man and society in general. ... The main trouble here is that the abstract-humanistic view of the world disarms man in the sharpest sociopolitical struggles of modernity” (Murian, 1965: 10).

The philosopher L. Stolovich (1929–2013), with references to N. Khrushchev's speeches and an emphasis on "socialist humanism" in the merciless terror-filled film *Lenin in 1918*, wrote in his theoretical article, traditionally warning filmmakers against "the harm of formalism," that “modernity ... is the most important condition for the art content itself. But not only the content. In a truly artistic work must be modern form. Of course, innovation cannot avoid relying on artistic

tradition, but it must continue it in order to express its time. This is the main thing, since the concern for the novelty of form, being an end in itself, cannot lead to anything but pseudo-innovatorial, formalistic experimentation” (Stolovitch, 1960: 76).

Partially agreeing with L. Stolovich, film critic G. Kremlev (1905–1975) took a more "thawed" attitude to the subject of formalism: “Our cinema art endured a long and persistent struggle against ideologylessness and formalism, against the separation of content from form, against its fetishization. However, in defending the right positions, some participants in these discussions turned the form into a bugbear, instilled a kind of distrust and disdain for it, and artists who cared about improving their professional skills were often unjustly accused of the grave sins of formalism” (Kremlev, 1961: 117).

Ideological approaches also dominated many of the "thaw" articles of the *Cinema Art* journal devoted to film criticism.

Thus director S. Gerasimov (1906–1985) insistently persuaded readers that during the Thaw “criticism has an especially important role to play now. But it is precisely here, it seems to me, that there is still the greatest discord, randomness and superficiality of judgment, and at times even outright irresponsibility. The outward "courage"... of other speeches, in the end, have no goal other than the rejection of the "traditional" positions in evaluating works of literature and art. Comparison of one's own critical position with social criterion, with social experience in such cases is consigned to oblivion and replaced by the pathos of subjectivist evaluations... The negation and exclusion of the rational element in artistic creativity and opposition to it by spontaneous intuitionism have been the basis of all anti-realism for centuries. Any proponent of subjective idealism would undoubtedly subscribe to the thesis from image to thought” (Gerasimov, 1963: 8-9).

With the appointment of film critic L. Pogozeva (1913–1989) as editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art*, the journal's format changed in many ways: readers' letters began to be published, topics of film education of schoolchildren and film amateurism were discussed, the number of film reviews increased and reports on "round tables" held by the editors appeared.

One of these round tables, held in 1957, was devoted to film criticism. The political direction the participants adhered to at the time was clearly marked.

Film director I. Kopalín (1900–1976) lamented that the *Cinema Art* has not yet “published significant articles, which would have promoted the decisions of the XX Congress of the Soviet Communist Party on issues of ideology. It is necessary to take a new look at the path our cinematography has taken, to develop its best, revolutionary, fighting traditions and to cast aside everything that restrained the creative forces of the Soviet artist in the years of the spread of the cult of personality. One cannot approach new pictures with outdated critical standards, nor must one put up with the slightest sign of lacquering, of simplifying life” (For..., 1957: 1-2).

Film scholar N. Lebedev (1897–1978) set several tasks for the journal: “A daily, implacable, unrelenting struggle against the still very tenacious psychology and "creative method" that became widespread among filmmakers during the years of Stalin's personality cult – against unscrupulousness in life and art, detachment from the people and withdrawal from the truth, obsequiousness and fear of criticism. The tireless, persistent, qualified explanation of the Leninist, truly Bolshevik tendencies in the field of art, their daily – through concrete examples – implementation in the practice of Soviet cinema. A return to these guidelines is a guarantee of a new, powerful rise of artistic creativity” (For..., 1957: 6).

Film scholar D. Pisarevsky (1912–1990) believed that “the most difficult problem of merging and interacting in the single fabric of an artistic work of different arts, of their complex impact on the emotional perception of the viewer, has fallen out of sight of researchers. ... Our film studies up to now have lacked a taste for exploring the history of the birth of major works, for digging deep into the material, for comparing variants, for that which constitutes the most interesting side of many of the best works in literary studies, which helps to reveal creativity "from within", precisely as a process” (Pisarevsky, 1961: 94).

One of the former editors of the *Cinema Art*, N. Semionov (1902–1982) (in 1957 he was Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federative Socialist Republic), insisted that “it is necessary to engage in polemics with our foreign critics as well. We know that our films are criticized in other countries sometimes from friendly and sometimes from hostile positions. The struggle against enemy ideology in the field of art is one of the most important tasks of the journal” (For..., 1957: 4).

During the All-Union Conference of Soviet Cinematographers (February 28 – March 4, 1958) another round table of film scholars and critics took place at which L. Pogozheva reminded that “the modern period's characteristic activation of what might be called positive and progressive forces is simultaneously accompanied by a more reactionary and hostile to us forces. These forces continue to attack the foundations of our art – the method of socialist realism. Quite apart from the various guises with which this attack is disguised, its essence consists in attempts to revise the provisions of Marxism in art, in the propaganda of idealism in philosophy and aesthetics, and of individualism in morality. We cannot ignore these peculiarities of contemporary life without being concerned about them, and we cannot remain passive and indifferent, sometimes engaging in criticism with narrow and particular problems, with a limited "review" of certain phenomena in art and literature. Criticism is strong when it is connected with the people, when it defends in a Bolshevik-like rigorous, principled, exacting way those cultural values which today the people and the Party are armed with” (Toward..., 1958: 3).

Similar opinions of film scholars and film critics were expressed at the discussion "The Party's Art and the Artist's Individuality" held in 1962.

Of course, as before, the *Cinema Art* paid enough attention to the ideological struggle against Western film concepts.

Thus, the film historian and screenwriter N. Abramov (1908–1977) spoke out against the distortion by foreign film critics of the history of Soviet cinema, drawing the attention of the journal readers to the fact that “not too numerous, but still an influential group of reactionary bourgeois film critics are hostile to Soviet cinema and openly seek to denigrate its historical role and significance. ... When bourgeois film historians turn to Soviet cinema in the 1930s, they turn as much against the method of socialist realism as against the principle of partisanship in art, and against the manifestations of the personality cult of Stalin. It was precisely under the conditions of the personality cult that the method of socialist realism was often dogmatically interpreted and distorted. It sometimes leads to a peculiar paradox: a foreign critic who sincerely admires the best works of Soviet cinema but at the same time vehemently disputes the method by which they were created. Why? Only because the method was formulated by some art critics in a narrowly dogmatic way and as such became famous abroad” (Abramov, 1963: 10, 14).

In the same vein an article with the militant title "You Lie, Mr. Berest!" was written in which the monograph by B. Berest on the history of Ukrainian cinema, published in the USA (Berest, 1962) was severely criticized.

Film historians N. Kapelgorodskaya (1932–2005) and N. Tritinichenko believed that, “standing on the reactionary positions of bourgeois nationalism, Berest furiously denies the commonality in the material and spiritual development of the Russian and Ukrainian people, trying to prove the closeness of Ukrainian culture to the 'Western', that is bourgeois, at all costs. He repeats on every page that Ukrainian cinema art chose a particular path, rather than developing as part of the entire Soviet cinematography... But these attempts by Berest are in vain. Even foreign critics do not share this view of the development of the Ukrainian Soviet cinema; they feel the same displeasure from Berest. ... Berest's book is one of the samples of talentless falsification of Ukrainian cinema's history, intended for those who hate Ukrainian people and do not want to notice their victorious movement towards communism” (Kapelhorodskaya, Tritinichenko, 1963: 97, 100).

On July 19, 1962 another Resolution of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee called "On measures to improve the management of the development of artistic cinematography" was adopted, which noted that “there were major shortcomings in the development of cinematography. Soviet cinematography does not yet fully fulfill its role in the communist upbringing of the people. The film-makers do not always take into account the ideological and artistic power of the influence of cinema, the most popular of the arts, on the shaping of the views and convictions, the aesthetic tastes and behavior of millions of people, especially the young. The number of films screened in the country is severely limited by ideological and artistic content, and the audience is rightly condemned. ... The Soviet cinema is called upon to exercise its ideological and artistic influence to educate the working people in the spirit of the principles of the moral code of the builders of communism, to wage an implacable and merciless struggle against bourgeois ideology, against parasitism, an unscrupulous attitude to work, violations of the rules and regulations of socialist society, all forms of mismanagement, red tape – everything which prejudices the interests of the Soviet state and our socialist society” (Resolution..., 1962).

A kind of positive reaction to this decree can be seen in the theoretical articles of the film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003), who noted that “naturalism, superficial fixation on fleeting impressions, and the loss of a progressive philosophical stance are the dangers of the artist” (Weisfeld, 1963: 108), while “individualism and subjectivism manifest themselves in aesthetic snobbery, a lack of interest in reality, in such self-centeredness and self-destruction that the artist is consumed. (In socialist countries there have been and are artists who have been influenced to one degree or another by this bourgeois decadent 'tradition')” (Weisfeld, 1966: 8).

The degree of politicization in the theoretical articles published in the *Cinema Art* was particularly high in the last “thaw” year, 1968, marked by the May “student revolution” (partly Maoist and Trotskyist) in France and the temporary victory of “socialism with a human face” in Czechoslovakia, which was crushed by the invasion of Soviet troops.

In connection with these events, the *Cinema Art* published a number of theoretical articles whose essence could be summed up in a single slogan: “Revisionism will not pass!”

Thus, the philosopher G. Kunitsyn (1922–1996), who worked in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union until 1966, based on quotations from speeches of the then Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Leonid Brezhnev (1906–1982), wrote that “under the pretext of 'alphabetical', 'outdated' or 'not applicable' political criteria in evaluating works of art, some simpletons are willing to abandon the party and class criteria in creativity or to downplay their significance. In literary criticism, notions that are sometimes hijacked by the bourgeoisie “without adjectives” – “simply” citizenship, “simply” realism and humanism, etc.” (Kunitsyn, 1968: 1), the problem of exploring the links between politics and art became more complicated “because, along with openly bourgeois ideologues and revisionists, Chinese dogmatists and sectarians opposed Leninist teachings on artistic creativity. They vulgarize in an unprecedented way the connection between art and politics, ascribing to artists, each and every one of them without exception, a conscious desire to represent life only in an aspect that is purely politically advantageous to this or that class. It would seem that here the polar opposites are strikingly similar. After all, it is precisely the bourgeoisie that has sought and is seeking to impose a similar one-sidedness, a political lie on artists” (Kunitsyn, 1968: 4).

This position of G. Kunitsyn was shared in 1968 by director S. Gerasimov (1906–1985). In his article “The Offensive Power of Our Art”, interspersed with the words “Soviet Communist Party, Communist ideals, plenum, enemies, ideological diversions, events in Czechoslovakia,” etc., he argued that “the concept of an angry, or rather, irritated view of the world has long been the only criterion of artistry in contemporary bourgeois aesthetics and criticism. ... [Foreign] critics, in their subversive pathos aimed at destroying socialist realism ... call us wretched applied artists, servants of the state, contrasting our purposive art with 'free' art, which reflects the chaos and cruelty of existing human relations in the world around them” (Gerasimov, 1968: 9, 20).

C. Gerasimov was echoed by critic A. Mikhalevich (1907–1973). Referring to the decisions of the April 1968 Plenum of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, he once again reminded us of the exacerbation of the ideological struggle with the West and the dangers that might lie in wait for Soviet “epigones” of foreign cinematic trends: “Isn't it offensive to 'catch up' with bourgeois provincialism, forgetting or in no hurry to develop the golden vein of what is fundamentally new that asserts itself in socialist reality and the new man? Isn't it a shame to waste oneself on dubious pursuits! “Alienation?” – And us! “Uncommunicativeness?” – And us! “Deheroization?” – And us! “Sexual revolution?” – And us! That's not hard science, is it? Of course, one cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that there are processes, problems, and concerns shared to some extent, but only to some extent. All of these must be dealt with soberly, intelligently, consistently” (Mikhalevich, 1968: 7).

#### *Theory and history of cinematography*

At the same time, much less politicized theoretical articles were also published in the *Cinema Art* journal of the “Thaw” era. In particular, articles (Bleiman, 1961: 66–78; Freilich, 1968: 69–87, etc.) that largely rehabilitated the theoretical concepts of S. Eisenstein, L. Kuleshov, and V. Pudovkin were criticized in the 1930s and 1940s.

For example, an article by the film scholar S. Ginzburg (1907–1974) was devoted to an analysis of the theoretical legacy of S. Eisenstein and V. Pudovkin, in which he asserted that “our film studies and criticism owe a debt of gratitude to S.M. Eisenstein and V.I. Pudovkin. The creative and theoretical pursuits of these remarkable artists, cinematographers who laid the foundations of revolutionary cinema, for a number of years either perverted or hushed up.

For years, our critics have written almost nothing about the search and achievements of the cinematographic innovators. If it did mention these masters, it was most often to condemn the mistakes made by them. There were even specialists in "working through" the artists whose work constituted the national pride of Soviet cinematography. ... Now, together with all Soviet art criticism, our cinematographic theory is being liberated from the dogmatic strata that prevented not only a proper comprehension of the path traversed, but also a proper resolution of new, contemporary tasks of Soviet cinematography. Now film historians and critics are obliged to reconsider the experience of the Soviet cinematography of the 20s from a genuinely Marxist standpoint, without any group bias, relying on a broad and objective study of the facts of artistic life in their concrete historical meaning" (Ginzburg, 1956: 82-83).

In the "thaw" conditions S. Ginzburg apparently decided that Eisenstein's theoretical concepts should be rehabilitated under the banner of socialist realism and nationality understood by his superiors: "Party affiliation, communist ideology is a specific feature of the art of socialist realism. It is these qualities which distinguish Eisenstein's creative and theoretical search and determine the importance of his best films as milestone works of Soviet cinema on the way to mastering of the new, revolutionary artistic method. ... Eisenstein's work on the embodiment in cinematography of the image of revolutionary people, Eisenstein's work on the theory of montage as a means of realistic representation of reality by means of cinema, his research on the establishment of connections between the montage principles of cinema art and the artistic means of realistic prose and poetry – all this played an enormous role in the struggle for the approval of the socialist realism method in the art of cinematography" (Ginzburg, 1956: 85-86).

At the same time, S. Ginzburg by no means meant a complete rehabilitation of the theoretical views of the classics of Soviet cinema: "We know about the mistakes of the theory of editing attractions, and about the mistakes of the theory of intellectual cinema, and about the mistakes of the layout theory outlined in the article Behind the Scenes, and many-many other mistakes of Eisenstein. In his articles, Pudovkin did not succeed in fully overcoming his overestimation of montage. He saw montage not as a means of directorial creativity in cinematography, but as an artistic method. This error is equally reflected in the articles of different years. ... Equally mistaken was the experience of using the "magnifying glass of time" proclaimed by Pudovkin in the article "Time in close-up" (Ginzburg, 1956: 86, 88-89).

Film historian I. Dolinsky (1900–1983) also tried to defense of the theoretical views of S. Eisenstein (although with reservations): "Take, for example, the presentation of Eisenstein's theory in studies on the history of cinema ('montage of attractions', 'emotional screenplay', 'intellectual cinema'). This is a ridiculous paradox, which even the youngest students of the All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography can see with a smile. Eisenstein is vaunted as the founder of Soviet cinema, as the head of an innovative movement, but his theories and the films produced according to these theories turn out to be almost entirely formalistic" (Dolinsky, 1960: 102).

Film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005) was even more positive about Eisenstein's theoretical legacy, emphasizing that "Eisenstein's works are strikingly relevant. He was prescient, his arguments about art will retain not only historical interest – they will long remain advisers in addressing issues of living cinematic practice" (Freilich, 1964: 35).

Film historian L. Kozlov (1933–2006) argued that "Eisenstein's supreme virtue as an artist-ideologue, artist-theorist is revealed precisely in the consistency with which he put ideas in order in his artistic world. The firmness and confidence with which he each time recreated and resolved the contradiction between the idea and the object, the ideal and reality. In the consistency with which he sought to bring his idea – the idea of unity – to its true content and meaning" (Kozlov, 1968: 76).

Several theoretical articles in the Thaw period journal were devoted to the topic of the nature and specificity of cinematography.

Film historian A. Vartanov (1931–2019) wrote that "foreshortening, editing and planning make no sense in and of themselves, much less are specific to cinema. All of these are means of realizing an image, a cinematic form. The notion of a cinematic image is inseparable from formal resources which include not only those that differ from those in other art forms, but also those that are common to them, yet appear in a new quality. The use of verbal forms or forms of spatial-compositional solution is fundamentally different in cinema art than in literature or painting, even though the material from which these forms emerge is the same. The specificity of an art form (e.g. cinema) is in the existence of the image in the work of art (film). Therefore, the specificity of art is the content in close unity with the form – the unity of content and form. The specificity of the

content (it is the dialectics of art!) consists in the fact that it is expressed in the work with no other means than the material specific to the given kind of art and is cast into a specific form corresponding to the given content (and, at the same time, in a specific form). Thus, the specificity of cinematography manifests itself in the being of a film image” (Vartanov, 1956: 83).

The Hungarian film scholar K. Nemes entered into a polemic with A. Vartanov's views: “So Vartanov's thought process is as follows: the specificity of an art form is the sensual and cognitive limits of approaching the content of the objective world; the content, that is the artistic image, expresses this specificity most fully; therefore the conclusion – the specificity of cinema is manifested in the being of the image. Is this definition really a specificity of the art form? It seems that it does not. The point is that the discovery of interconnections is only a moment on the road to cognition of the essence. It is still necessary to grasp the cause, which in the final analysis is the determining one. Vartanov put the specificity of the content, i.e. the artistic image, in dependence on the sensual and cognitive limits of the given type. However, firstly, this is only a quantitative definition which cannot explain the specificity of the content without elucidating the qualitative transition; secondly, it is not clear what these sensory-cognitive boundaries are determined by. ... The artistic image is not at all equal to the content, as it appears to Vartanov, but is already a completed artistic reflection of reality. That is why it is possible to clarify the specificity of artistic cognition (art) only through it” (Nemes, 1956: 83-84).

Continuing the discussion, the critic K. Piotrowski wrote that in general the articles of A. Vartanov and K. Nemes “make it possible to consider henceforth finally broken the point of view of those who deduce the specificity of cinema from its formal means, who do not wish to see the specificity of the very content of cinema art, who, finally, do not understand that the problem of the specificity of the subject matter of cinema not only has the right to exist, but is determinative in developing a film theory if it really wants to pursue a materialistic aesthetic” (Piotrowski, 1956: 74).

As part of this discussion, film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) attempted to support his point of view with "Marxist-Leninist doctrine" by identifying “three varieties of the vulgar sociological approach to script and film: denial of the individual life phenomenon as an art object, 'straightening' of character, and mechanical copying of literature. The peculiarity of vulgar sociology in cinema today is that it has taken on new, not always easily identifiable forms, and filmmakers succumb to its influence most often unconsciously, because remnants of harmful aesthetic attitudes remain outside criticism. The time-honored Marxist-Leninist criteria for evaluating artistic phenomena, which had given Soviet cinema unprecedented victories and placed it at the forefront of world artistic cinematography, must be restored completely in order to clear the way for the new” (Weisfeld, 1956: 16).

Film scholar L. Kozlov (1933–2006) reminds us that “the task of developing a theory of cinema art and studying its aesthetic specificities necessitates an appeal to a theory of the arts that feed cinema; more broadly, to the general aesthetic heritage. The second source is the testimony of contemporary cinema practitioners. They have accumulated a wealth of observations. These observations retain the living breath of art, but have significance far beyond the empirical” (Kozlov, 1956: 90).

Film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005) generally agreed with these theoretical approaches: “Cinema is a synthetic art. It is similar to painting and sculpture by the direct effect of the visual image, to music by the feeling of harmony and rhythm through the world of sounds, to literature by the ability to depict the world in all its connections and mediations, to theater by the art of the actor. At the same time, to each of these arts cinema leaves its material and its expressiveness. And cinema knows the art of the performer, but there cannot be in it the direct performance of the actor; and cinema is the art of painting, but there is not in it the unique, really tangible brushstroke of the artist. None of them can not replace the cinema, because it combines only their opposite qualities. It is a synthesis, not a mixture. In its various qualities cinema is close to theater, painting and literature, but it is neither the one nor the other nor the third: cinema embraces all of these arts and at the same time expresses all their differences. Otherwise cinema would not be able to solve the problem of depicting reality on its own” (Freilich, 1961: 110).

A number of other theoretical articles published in the *Cinema Art* in the second half of the 1950s and 1960s (Altshuler, 1957: 119-124; Bleiman, 1961: 117-120; Dzigan, 1958: 123-131; Kandelaki, 1956: 90-93; Klado, 1962: 90-102; Kozlov, 1961: 115-117, Vartanov, 1967: 60-65; Weisfeld, 1967: 19-29; Zhdan, 1964: 48-59, etc.).

Against this academic background stood out an article written by director A. Tarkovsky (1932–1986) in lively, vivid language, in which he boldly asserted that “cinema is first and foremost a depiction of time”: “But in what form is time depicted by cinema? – I would define this form as factual. An event, a human movement, or any real object can be a fact, and that object can be presented in stillness and immutability (since this immutability exists in a really current time). This, I think, is the root of the specificity of cinema. ... Time captured in its actual forms and manifestations is, for me, the main idea of cinema and cinema art. This idea allows me to think of the richness of cinema's untapped possibilities, of its enormous future. ... Why do people go to the cinema? Because cinema, more than any other art, expands, enriches and concentrates man's actual experience, but it not only enriches it, it makes it longer, significantly longer, so to speak. That is the real power of cinema-not in 'stars,' not in formulaic plots, not in entertainment” (Tarkovsky, 1967).

A theoretical article by M. Markov was devoted to the laws of perception of art, in which he argued that “the final result of perception of art is action, a change in consciousness, and hence in the behavior of the perceiver. This is precisely the special quality of art with regard to the ideas it carries within it. Another conversation is that these ideas can be wrong, disorienting. In such a case, a talented or at least simply “cleverly” created work of art can do great harm to society. It must be said, however, that the interest shown in certain ideas, the considerable public need for them can in some way and by itself greatly enhance the perceptibility of works of art that contain these ideas, if such works create at least minimal conditions for transfer” (Markov, 1957: 98).

L. Gurevich (1932–2001), a scriptwriter and film director, also discussed special perceptions of cinema among mass audiences. He wrote that “in their dispute with proponents of emotional, poetic cinema, adherents of reticence and fluency argue about an elevated level of spectators who do not need prompting, who are 'able to understand everything' themselves. We are talking about counting on the imaginative thinking of the viewer, about the active co-authorship of millions. ... Although, frankly speaking, box office statistics do not yet give us reason to rejoice at the increased demands or the increased taste of the mass audience. ... Moreover, more than once or twice the primitive and mediocre cinema is covered by the flag “the viewer likes it”. ... Therefore, we can only hope for the imaginative thinking of the viewer by awakening this thinking. S.M. Eisenstein's expression is not at all outdated nowadays: “The viewer creates an image from the fabric of his associations according to images precisely guided by the author. Such mobilization of the viewer's activity, his involvement in co-creation are possible if the artist relies on associative thinking, which is characteristic of man of our days, whose circle of interests and connections is diverse, and whose ability to compare is infinite” (Gurevich, 1961: 37).

Film scholar E. Dobin (1901–1977) tried to understand the differences between poetic and prose filmmaking: “The prose (or more accurately, the narrative) beginning is driven by a desire for versatility. ... The poetic or, in other words, 'metaphorical' beginning does not have this impetus. We observe here an orientation toward brevity, condensation. The multiplicity of phenomena is reduced to a single focus. Distant phenomena and things are brought together in a blink of an eye. The whole and the complex is expressed in a single “snatched” detail. The narrative is “extensive”. It speaks about many things: the external environment and circumstances, events and relationships, the inner life of man and the patterns of social life. The “metaphorical” beginning, on the contrary, is intense. Certain sides, features, facets are condensed, pedaled. On them the figurative vision is concentrated. In the metaphorical beginning the generalization is brought to the forefront. But this generalization is significantly different from the narrative. In his famous article “Montage 1938” Eisenstein contrasts two artistic principles – montage and representation. Eisenstein is a supporter of the former and an opponent of the latter. The “montage” way is “genuinely figurative.” The “pictorial” way is “flat,” “protocol,” “informational.” This division generally corresponds to the dividing line between the “poetic” and the “prose”” (Dobin, 1960: 94).

However, E. Dobin believed (and in our opinion, rightly so) that “carried away with their grandiose discoveries, Eisenstein, Pudovkin and others overestimated the possibilities of “poetic” language. They fell prey to the illusion that it was possible to create a coherent film work where the artistic core would be metaphor and the narration would be a supplement to metaphor” (Dobin, 1960: 97). Indeed, it is hard to disagree that “poetry” in cinema does not exist without “prose”. The metaphorical beginning is not sovereign, not all-encompassing. With all its power, expressiveness and beauty on its own, without reliance on narration, it is unable to create a coherent human image, a multifaceted reflection of reality” (Dobin, 1960: 100).

Moreover, E. Dobin subtly notes that in Soviet cinematography in the 1920s “the power of metaphor was derived from its revolutionary pathos. When the illusion arose that the power lay in the reception itself, metaphor began to slip into allegorism, far-fetched and cold” (Dobin 1960: 102).

As in previous decades, the *Cinema Art* in 1956–1968 published quite a few articles on the subject of film dramaturgy.

Film scholar A. Vartanov (1931–2006) defended his point of view on the screenplay as a work of cinema art rather than literature, emphasizing that “the main danger is not the increased size of the screenplay, not the tendency of some screenwriters to make their work easy to read, but the predominance of literary thinking over cinematic thinking” (Vartanov, 1959: 50).

Film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005) argued with him: “The cross-cutting idea, the pathos of A. Vartanov's article. Vartanov is that he contrasts literary and cinematic expressiveness. He sees them as antagonistic. The author gives many examples of bad literary expressiveness from modern script practice and subjects them to a harsh and, let us note, fair criticism. Indeed, the script is entirely composed of literary beauty, reminiscences, causes much trouble for the film factory: the literary husk flies away, and there is very little left for the production. But we do not share Vartanov's generalizations and conclusions. The screenplay, the author concludes, cannot belong to the kind of fiction, to the creation, whose weapon is the word – the cinematographic expressiveness is in another. Aren't these conclusions hasty? ... The word is not opposed to cinematographic expressiveness. It is the means to achieve it, it is the screenwriter's weapon. To neutralize it means to disarm the screenwriter, not only as a writer but also as a cinematographer. The screenplay is equally a cinematic and literary work” (Freilich, 1959: 71, 74).

The screenwriter L. Zhegelenko (1903–1970) held a similar point of view: “Understanding, however, what cruel verdict he passes on screenwriters, expelling their work from the confines of literature, A. Vartanov hastens to console them by declaring the screenplay “a complete work, but not of fiction, but of cinematic art”. ... But for Vartanov the literariness of the script and the bad “literariness” are synonyms. And instead of a just war against literary figures unable to produce a plastic image on the screen (this is, indeed, a common flaw in our scripts), he attacks any literary imagery, whatever possibilities of plastic realization it may have” (Zhegelenko, 1959: 60, 64).

Screenwriter and film scholar M. Bleiman (1904–1973) was less categorical, believing that “in vain some of Vartanov's opponents, defending his 'corporate honor', reproach him for operating with examples from undeniably bad scripts. On the contrary, Vartanov should be reproached for excessive piety for our screenwriting. Even in the scripts of our best masters one can find cinematically inexpressive episodes, which, by the way, are inexpressive from the literary point of view. There is nothing to argue about. We need to learn to write better” (Bleiman, 1959: 67).

But then M. Bleiman reproached A. Vartanov for not distinguishing between the experience of silent and sound cinema in his article and “says nothing about the nature of the cinematic plot, about the principles of cinematic characterization, about the components of the image, without which the art of cinematography cannot be imagined. ... Hence the polemical inflections and mistakes of the theorist” (Bleiman, 1959: 75).

M. Bleiman believed that “the literary quality of a script is in some cases not a sign of its high cinematographic quality, while in others these concepts are equally important. ... It must be said that because of the dogmatic and normative approach to questions of screenplay form, we sometimes refuse to produce interesting works on the grounds that they are supposedly insufficiently developed” (Bleiman, 1960: 93–94).

Film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) spoke quite sharply against both the downplaying of the role of the screenplay and against “weakened film dramaturgy”: “The theoretical justification for mediocrity in cinema these days is the thesis that the screenplay is neither literary, nor completed, nor any work at all. This thesis justifies the undemanding work of talented writers in cinema, opens the floodgates to potboilers, weakens the responsibility of directing, and introduces an atmosphere of complacency into our environment. ... The slogan of the leading role of film dramaturgy in film-making, the union of literature and film, friendship with writers, high exactingness toward the work of the screenwriter must be opposed to the dilatory “theories” that deny the artistry of the literary script” (Weisfeld, 1960: 88, 93). “It is now considered good form to ‘cancel’ the plot, the dramatic construction in world cinema...”, I. Weisfeld continued his discussion of film dramaturgy in his next article. – Well, advanced, courageous filmmaking will somehow survive this as well... But can we be content with that? How will cinema win if theory and criticism help us to creatively grasp the meaning of the “destruction” of dramaturgy and the meaning of its

creation, which is taking place right in front of our eyes! Awareness to help improve cinema” (Weisfeld, 1962: 88).

I. Weisfeld would return again and again to this protest against "dedramatization": "Cinematography does not need standardized works or "anti-romances," but novels with their endless variety of characters, types, relationships, not "dedramatization," but a dramatization which opens up new worlds, complex historical events, the formation of characters, the movement of thought before the viewer” (Weisfeld, 1964: 38). “Modern film masters and theorists now often say something like this: for art to be authentic, remove all obstacles, including the plot, remove what you see, show on the screen an unprejudiced, unorganized, unconnected course of events, facts or a jumble of instinctive urges without any selection, without any influence of the author's logical position, without any intrusion of social motives in characterizing the psychological state of the character, etc., etc. We can respond to this, relying on the historical experience of realist literature and cinema, that such "approximation" means in reality a removal from the individual, from his real struggle” (Weisfeld, 1965: 118).

Contrary to I. Weisfeld's opinion, film scholar E. Dobin believed that "dedramatization" was not without some positive aspect. It is a protest against banal dramaturgy, clichéd plot devices, and Hollywood standardization. We must also constantly fight against hackneyed schemes, flat, tired illustrative plots (Dobin, 1964: 74)

In the theoretical section of the *Cinema Art* in 1967 there was an amazing event, we think, unparalleled either before or after. The debut book by the then young film critic V. Demin, “Film without Intrigue” (Demin, 1966), became the basis for two solid theoretical articles reflecting on the peculiarities of the structure of film plots.

The first lines of an article by the venerable film scholar I. Weisfeld were as follows: “Let's start with literary stylistics. How often do we read theoretical books written with fervor, colored by the charm of youth, immediacy? Recently I read such a book – it is "Film without Intrigue" by Victor Demin, a graduate of Institute of Cinematography. Its stylistic feature – the freedom of narration, ease of "montage" transitions, sometimes quite unexpected. Reading the book, you gradually get used to them. You are no longer surprised, that after a paragraph of artistic perception is the story of how the first year old son watched TV author, and what thoughts it has prompted a young father and an equally young writer. Nor will you be surprised by the "juxtaposition" of, say, a parodic description of a chess sketch, the definition of the plot and the evaluation of Fellini's interview. This stylistics is not from the imitation of the now fashionable critical manner of Anninsky or Turbin, but from the author's own temperament. He writes as he thinks. The literary style coincides with the mood of the book. Victor Demin is simultaneously captivated by his idea and as if surprised by his own findings, wants to captivate the reader with his enthusiasm and is a little ironic about himself. ... "Film without Intrigue" explores the ways of modern drama, freed from the rigid iron structure of events, from the standards of the playful details, from the refrains. The author is fascinated by the novelty of the dramaturgical construction of such different scenarios as *Nine Days of One Year*, *Courage for Every Day*, or *Hiroshima*, *My Love* – they do not fit into the framework of the cinematic representations of earlier days” (Weisfeld, 1967: 30).

And then in this lengthy article there was a detailed argument about dramaturgical and directorial searches and the breakdown of aesthetic canons in cinema: “Read the pages devoted to overtones of dramaturgy. Drawing on the concept put forward by Eisenstein – "overtone editing" – Demin parses and compares works of prose, drama, and film dramaturgy. Overtones are the author's native element. He is at home here. ... shows the significance of human characteristics, colors, details that lie beyond the event structure. ... One can dispute Demin's division of dramaturgy into "tonal" (Vishnevsky, Bill-Belotserkovsky) and "overtone" (Bulgakov, Babel), each of which has its own strong points. But the very course of the analysis of overtones is undeniable” (Weisfeld, 1967: 31-32).

However, I. Weisfeld believed that “the correct observation (the craving for the reliability of the image) is transformed by the critic into an all-encompassing truth, and this is already a delusion. A delusion all the more dangerous because a superficial mind can (and does!) draw from it: a strange conclusion, one that 'cancels' dramaturgy as an anachronism” (Weisfeld 1967: 31). In addition, according to I. Weisfeld's thought, V. Demin's authorial style sometimes became “sprawling, losing both his sense of proportion and tact. Demin's argument with the proponents of the screenplay adaptation of the silent film *Mother* is conducted in the swashbuckling spirit of the

Saturday feuilleton (Demin, 1966: 27). This is not a manner of polemic that disposes of itself" (Weisfeld 1967: 32).

Weisfeld's conclusion, however, was major and insightful: "An interesting and largely controversial book, "Film Without Intrigue", announced to us the appearance of yet another temperamental, promising researcher" (Weisfeld, 1967: 33).

Film scholar E. Levin (1935–1991) practically echoed I. Weisfeld in his theoretical article, arguing that "the theory of the film plot today is perhaps the most dramatic area of film studies. It is shaken by passions. Axioms firmly established yesterday are being disproved today in order to reassert their former greatness tomorrow. Many things here are defined before they are established, and change without being defined" (Levin, 1967: 33).

He then moved on to an analysis of V. Demin's article "The Rebellion of Details" (Demin, 1965), which, in fact, was later included in the book "Film Without Intrigue".

Here, too, V. Levin entered into a sharper argument with V. Demin than I. Weisfeld did: "V. Demin is wrong in thinking that exposé. Demin is wrong in his opinion that the exposition of a drama is a static, inactive, eventless element, an evil which the "plot of the story" has to put up with. The exposition is also an event of a kind, with its own composition, its own plot, and its own plot. It is not at all inactive, it is not only informative. ... Exposition, like every other component of composition, is multivalent, multifunctional. ... V. Demin understands the efficacy of the event too poorly and narrowly, and interprets the event in a one-sided manner. ... And it is not by chance that where Demin forgets about his schematics, he gives examples of magnificent, profound analysis – what a joy to read pages devoted to the consideration of the concept of "norm" and the analysis of supposedly fabulist films of Fellini from the perspective of this concept – from a very important, fruitful perspective! Demin is animated with the best of motives, but when he fights against facial schematism, against standard, crippling facial templates, he spills the baby out with water: his concept of "fabulist dramaturgy" is only the reverse side of facial dogmatism" (Levin, 1967: 38, 40).

Honestly, even today, half a century later, the argument of these film scholars is fascinating for its unconventionalism, argumentation, combined with a benevolent attitude toward a colleague.

In theoretical articles devoted to cinematic editing, as in previous years, the tone was set by directors. M. Romm (1901–1971) wrote that "the montage method of shooting inevitably leads to a number of purely cinematic conventions. Any editing interruption destroys the continuity of actually current time; time is inevitably condensed or stretched out. It is the same with space. The sense of direct observation disappears. The perception of the spectacle changes dramatically. Montage scene requires the viewer to work vigorously to connect and make sense of the frames, that is the work of 'extra imagination'. Montage method of shooting compels the viewer to construct in his mind a general outline of the event, which he judges the individual colliding details, parts, angles it. Thus, the perception of the montage is more complex, more creative, active and constructive. ... Montage is not only the ability to cleanly, accurately and delicately glue shots together, montage is the artist's thought, his idea, his vision of the world, expressed in the selection and juxtaposition of pieces of cinematic action in the most expressive and most meaningful way" (Romm, 1959: 123, 137).

Hinting at the title of one of Eisenstein's most famous theoretical articles, director S. Yutkevich (1904–1985) titled his article "Montage 1960". In it S. Yutkevich wrote that Eisenstein "established new laws of sound cinema arising from the counterpoint combination of image and sound. It seems to me that now comes the era of what I conventionally define as horizontal editing, because for the first time the possibility of simultaneous, i.e. simultaneous, projection of three different images on the screen has arisen before cinema, and we can mount pieces of film not only in their "vertical" sequence, but also by their "horizontal" juxtaposition. ... the possibilities contained in multiscreen editing open up new, broad horizons in the field of film editing dramaturgy, and the qualitative leap that filmmakers will have to make will obviously be similar to what happened in the history of world cinema with the discovery of the close-up. ... And then the art of film editing will open up unprecedented horizons, which previously could arise only in the most daring dreams of the cinematographer" (Yutkevich, 1960: 122-123).

As the cinematic practice of the following decades showed, the multiscreen cinema remained at the level of experiment and attraction, and S. Yutkevich's assumptions were not justified.

Meanwhile, at the turn of the 1960s S. Yutkevich was not alone in his predictions. For example, the film scholar D. Pisarevsky (1912–1990) wrote that "the technique makes it possible to narrow or expand the image, and all of this raises the question of the "mobility" of the

screen and the possibility of diversifying the spatial resolution of individual scenes and shots within one film, then narrowing the screen horizontally or vertically to the size necessary to show an expressive close-up or detail, then expanding to the limits of the all-round view of the surrounding environment. This kind of "spatial montage" – let's call it conventionally – will become a new means of artistic representation of the infinitely diverse picture of the world around us, a new means of emotional impact on the viewer. And this expressive means, we think, lies on the main paths of development of the realistic creativity, corresponds to the nature of the artistic knowledge of reality, the ability of human perception and thinking to focus attention on details and specifics, or to go through a wide coverage and generalization" (Pisarevsky, 1959: 17).

During the Thaw, the *Cinema Art* paid quite a lot of attention to the discussion of cinematic style.

For example, the director and film scholar A. Macheret (1896–1979) wrote that "the struggle against attempts to ascribe to style a fundamental significance for the history of art entailed a wary attitude toward the problem of style itself. The place cleared by advanced thought from formalist debris is still only waiting to be filled by Marxist theory" (Macheret, 1956: 6), so it is necessary "to consider style, first, as typical properties of art belonging to a certain historical interval of time; second, as an artistic current and, third, as the ideological and artistic features individually inherent in the artist" (Macheret, 1956: 25).

In addition, A. Macheret categorically spoke out against the utterance of a voice-over text in feature films: "I will list again the arguments on which I base the artistic "illegality" of the reception of thoughts sounding from closed mouths. First, it simplifies and vulgarizes the depiction of a complex mental process. Second, he artificially circumvents the organic difficulties of finding truly artistic solutions, replacing living diversity with a dead standard. Third, not only does he ignore the difference between oral, communicative and inner speech, but he does so in an open and primitive way, without even trying to find the necessary artistic justification. Fourth, he interrupts the portrayal of objective reality with information stylized as a character's reflections in a number of cases. Fifth, he impoverishes the pictorial side of the film. Sixth, it is physiologically unnatural and associated with ventriloquism" (Macheret, 1965: 62).

Macheret summarized his theoretical views in his monograph "Artistic Trends in Soviet Cinema" (Macheret, 1963). This book raised many objections from film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005): "A. Macheret defines socialist realism not as a method but as a direction. This, of course, is incorrect, and the author pays the price for his methodological error more than once. ... Because there is no sense of Socialist Realism as a method unifying styles, as a fundamentally new stage in the philosophy of art, the basic, general line of development of Soviet cinematography is not drawn" (Freilich, 1964: 89).

This context also includes a theoretical article by the film critic J. Bereznitsky (1922–2005), who writes that "the authors of numerous articles and notes on the so-called 'contemporary style' in art have appeared in recent months. Although they often take mutually exclusive positions, they use much the same concepts: brevity, expression, psychologicalism, and so on. The vulnerability of this approach lies not only in the fact that it sometimes overlooks the genre diversity of this or that kind of art, but also in the fact that each of these notions is often taken in polemical passion as something absolute. The way in which the inner meaning of a theoretical concept changes, sometimes literally over the course of a few years, with reference to concrete artistic practice is demonstrated by the ongoing process of the "disintegration" of subjectivity in the habitual sense of the term" (Bereznitsky, 1961: 52-53).

However, the most interesting and weighty regarding the analysis and systematization of film language and cinema of the turn of the 1960s on the pages of the journal *Cinema Art* was an article by the Polish film scholar and film critic J. Płazewski (1924–2015).

By means of analysis J. Płazewski came to the conclusion that the cinema of the late 1950s and early 1960s were characterized by the following changes in the sphere of film language:

- lengthening of the montage frame;
- the twilight of montage (the less film glues, the less importance montage plays in it...; the associative, semantic montage (Eisenstein called it intellectual) decreased sharply;
- active use of actor's movement in the frame and movement of the camera itself; various camera movements fulfill many functions which previously belonged to editing;

- The decline of the close-up... [because] the close-up (André Bazin was the first to emphasize this), as a means of coercion, deprives the viewer of freedom of choice. Throwing everything that seems superfluous beyond the screen, the director commands, "Look here!"

- the rejection of objective narration... While total subjectivization (combining the camera lens and the hero's eyes) proved inconvenient and essentially aimless, subjectivization through the commentary of the author or hero, unrelated to the time of the events depicted, made a staggering career in the postwar years;

- the advent of the open plot, devoid of the conventions of theatrical drama (Płażewski, 1962: 160-161).

In these trends J. Płażewski saw the following positive possibilities: for reality, the hero, and the audience:

"There is no doubt that since the emergence of neorealism, the innovators of cinema have sought to return reality to its multiple meanings. We never know all the causes and all the consequences of even the simplest events, we never know what's going to happen in a minute. So the authors refuse to orchestrate cinematic reality too explicitly. ...

There is, however, also a reverse tendency to "subjectivize" cinema. Isn't Resnais' *Hiroshima, My Love* a constant transformation of the past into the present, the creation of a subjective cinematic space in which Nevers and Hiroshima are united into a unique whole, depending on the heroine's thought processes? ...

Do these "objectivizing" and "subjectivizing" tendencies cancel each other out, and do they prove that the new poetics, having taken a step forward, immediately takes a step backward as well? Not really. Both tendencies move cinema away from the third position, that of the self-satisfied but undetectable author who abuses his position as the cinematic Creator. ...

Here cinematography has hit a major barrier. Until now nothing has appeared on the screen that would be a genuine penetration into the human psyche, that would free it from its obligation to show the human being only through a gesture, a word, a deed. What would be a drama of thought. This is probably why cinematography, to a much greater extent than literature, feeds on "types", "characters"...

New trends can finally benefit the viewer, of course, the viewer experienced, aware of the stylistics of today's cinema and dissatisfied with it. "Objectivizing" tendencies contribute to transforming the viewer from a creature passively subject to the hypnosis of an invisible author who "knows better" into one who not only watches, but actively participates... "Subjectivizing" tendencies also demand a great deal from the viewer. Introspection into the field of someone else's psyche requires a new armament – the ability to read the complex movements of a person's inner life on the screen" (Płażewski, 1962: 162).

At the same time, J. Płażewski noted, "the rejection of montage jumps, close-ups of the human face and other forms of cinematic expression can produce monotony, a sudden return to theatrical aesthetics. ... 'Subjectivization' can become an escape into the psyche of the third person, 'objectivization' can become an escape into impassioned narrative. Here and there lies the danger of the loss of social tendentiousness, of the conscious concealment of the author's face. ... "Objectivization" can lead to the spectator believing the author, but ceasing to experience him. "Subjectivization" can lead to the viewer becoming excited but ceasing to understand. The viewer, who has lost contact with the author, will cease to understand what is happening on the screen and will become bored. Many films made by members of the new trends are considered "boring" – a formidable signal that is carelessly ignored. ... Perhaps cinematography should develop its own artistic capacities and in the future move away from literature, not closer to it, but on the contrary" (Płażewski, 1962: 162-163).

#### *Theory of film genres*

Part of the theoretical articles of the "thaw" period of the journal *Art of Cinema* was devoted to film genres.

Film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005) was convinced that "genre is always a phenomenon of style. Without an analysis of style it is impossible to transcend the empirical study of individual genres and their history in order to approach the development of a theory of genre. But if this is the case, another problem arises in the way of research. Since the modern screen has mastered the possibility of the direct embodiment of the author's subjective beginning, which has become a feature of the modern film style, it is naturally very important to understand what this authorial attitude toward the world consists in and what the world itself is that the artist portrays.

Contemporary cinema, even in its stylistic unity, reveals a difference in method. In other words, the problem of genre is insoluble without clarifying its relationship to the problem of style and method” (Freilich, 1966: 70).

As part of his research into specific film genres, the scriptwriter Y. Shevkunenko (1919–1963) wrote that in adventure films “the regularity of events is expressed chiefly in the structure, solidity and logic of the plot, the basic spring which organizes all the events taking place, all the actions and deeds of the characters, and the tension of which must rise upward. ... [which] is routinely ignored. Deviating from the logic of the plot, the authors immediately turn to side paths, begin to deal with secondary circumstances, introduce unnecessary characters, and if they sometimes achieve some success in this “second” plan, they unwittingly distract from the main direction, loosen and crush the main action, weakening the power of its perception. Whatever complicated problems and tasks the authors of the adventure film solve, whatever cunning and original tricks they use to achieve their goals, no matter how logically solid and grounded the plot is, a successful “shot” will not happen if the image of man is forgotten. ... We are for the equality of genres in the face of criticism. Taking into account genre peculiarities of adventure film we wanted it to have the same high demands to artistic perfection as works created in other genre varieties, be it novel or tragedy. Discounts and indulgences for specificity could never become a stimulus for the further development of our cinema” (Shevkunenko, 1956: 27, 40).

Analyzing Soviet adventure films of the 1950s, film scholar V. Kolodyazhnaya (1911–2003) regretted that such films as *Ghosts Leave the Peaks*, *Traces in the Snow*, *The Case of Sergeant Kochetkov*, *In Square 45* and others “appeared as a reaction to the previous undervaluation and denial of the adventure genre, but proved to be primitive and low-key. They portrayed Soviet people superficially. These are light, “entertaining” films; their educational value is not great, in fact they discredit the genre. ... The defect of these films is largely due to the fact that not only the laws of the adventure genre have been violated in their scripts, but even the generally binding rules of dramatic construction. ... Why are there so few good films? Often the reason lies in the neglect of screenwriting techniques. The weakness of most films is due to their faulty dramaturgical construction too cursory, superficial descriptions of events, undeveloped action, lack of interesting roles for the actors, etc.” (Kolodyazhnaya, 1956: 34-35).

Further, in our opinion, V. Kolodyazhnaya rightly complained that many authors of Soviet adventure films of the 1950s believed that “as the complex plot prevents from giving a detailed psychological analysis of the characters' behavior, it should be simply ignored, but then the basis on which characters are created in adventure films is lost. In most recent adventure films the characters are schematic and colorless. And the problem is not that they don't show complex character development, but that the characters have no characters at all. The concentration of the action, its rapid development, intriguing changes of positions, most unexpected turns of action, braking, inversion, mysteries—all these features of the construction of the adventure plot not only do not harm, but, on the contrary, help create informative and entertaining films with strong, interesting characters” (Kolodyazhnaya, 1956: 37-38, 43).

Analyzing the peculiarities of the comic genre, film critic R. Yurenev (1912–2002) reminded readers that “the theory of comic incongruities is not a comprehensive, exhaustive one. A subtle play of wit and a state of joyful merriment based on a feeling of freedom, harmony, and righteousness can also provoke laughter. But still, in order to realize and explain the occurrence of laughter, it is best to look for inconsistencies. Inconsistencies of form and content, of feeling and its manifestation, of intention and the results achieved. Mismatches between the goal and the way it is achieved, between the action and the circumstances in which it is performed, between the inner state and the outer appearance. Inconsistencies that reveal the contradictions between the new and the old, the good and the evil, the clever and the stupid, the useful and the harmful, the beautiful and the ugly, the sublime and the low. Inconsistencies that reveal deviations from norms: people too big and too small, too fat and too skinny, people scattered, awkward, half-dressed, slovenly, soiled” (Yurenev, 1961: 126).

At the same time, R. Yurenev argued that “the funny and the comic are not the same. The distinction between them is subtle, not always perceptible, but nevertheless essential, especially for art. Laughter can be provoked not only by comic incongruities, but also in other ways, from joy (for example, when meeting friends) to tickling. Laughter can be induced by wine, by drugs, by laughing gas, finally simply by feelings of physical pleasure, satiety, warmth, health. This makes it possible to view laughter as a physiological state. ... The concept of the funny is

broader than the comic. But the comic is higher than the funny. The comic evokes laughter through thought and emotion. ... The funny is a psychological category, the comic is an aesthetic category, along with the tragic, the beautiful, the sublime. The ridiculous may not have any educational functions, the comic has them. The comic may or may not have a social coloring. The comic is always social" (Yurenev, 1961: 126).

Further, R. Yurenev insisted that comedy "long ago ceased to be a single genre, having divided, multiplied into a significant number of genres. It is more correct now to call comedy not a genre, but a genre or a field of art" (Yurenev, 1961: 132). R. Yurenev also reminded that "the terms 'satire' and 'humor' have different contents. ... Satire prompts us to laugh at a comic character, evokes a sense of superiority over him. Humor prompts us to laugh along with the comic character, sometimes causing a desire even to imitate him" (Yurenev, 1961: 128).

Further, in a quite "thawed" spirit, R. Yurenev drew readers' attention to the fact that "the opponents of satire reason roughly as follows: the sharp, satirical contradictions of society are of a class nature and die out with the victory of socialism. Hence, satire also dies out, giving way to joyful, affirming comedies – extravaganza, vaudeville, carnival – that are more in accord with the happy moods and harmonious outlook of the people of socialist and communist society. But reasoning in this way, one can come to a conclusion about the stoppage of movement, about the cessation of human society's development... Can one imagine a stopped society, devoid of struggle, devoid of conflicts? What a terrible, dead picture! What an object for satirical creativity!" (Yurenev, 1961: 131).

Referring again to the genre of comedy in one of his following theoretical articles, R. Yurenev noted that "justly advocating the ideological content of our film comedy, many critics come down on lyrical, humorous works, considering them thoughtless, decorating, varnishing, denying them educational and cognitive value. Wrong is this. Conflictlessness, cheerfulness, lacquering are indeed inherent in some of our lyrical comedies, but this is their illness but not their essence. The essence of light, lyrical comedy is the joy of life, the affirmation and singing of that new, good, happy thing that life generates, that every day becomes more and more" (Yurenev, 1964: 93). And then he returned to his reflections on satirical comedy: "But even more wrong are those critics who think that with the development of socialist society satire will die out, that with the elimination of classes, exploitation, wars the need for sharp, scathing, evil satire, for exposing, for destroying evil by artistic means will also disappear. It's not right. A misunderstanding of the laws of the development of life" (Yurenev, 1964: 93).

Film scholar and culture expert A. Kukarkin also reflected on the nature of the comic, stressing that "the fact of the revival of the comic in our days deserves attention and comprehension. Means and receptions of the comic, akin to the folk art of the skomoroshy banagan and circus, applied on a new aesthetic basis, proved capable of satisfying certain needs of modernity" (Kukarkin, 1967: 106).

The writer G. Gurevich (1917–1998) devoted two of his theoretical articles to film sci-fiction (Gurevich, 1964; 1966). He was convinced that the successful development of the sci-fiction genre in Soviet cinematography was hindered by three prejudices: 1) there are genres honorable, serious, deserving praise and awards and there are second-rate, unserious, unworthy of a respectable director, and science fiction among them; 2) the pride of the cinematographer not wanting to screen popular fantasy novels in the hope of creating his original film work, dramatically different from literature; the desire to find one single, supersimilar, universal script, solving all kinds of problems at the highest level: cognitive, educational, political, psychological, etc." (Gurevich, 1964: 68).

In this regard, G. Gurevich rightly remarked that "the film practice of the times of the cult of personality will remind us of what happens when one looks for comprehensive masterpieces. Six films a year comes out – and not a masterpiece and not all-encompassing. So it is with science fiction. Neither are there comprehensive masterpieces" (Gurevich, 1964: 68).

#### *Theory of Popular science and documentary film*

In the "thawed" times, the *Cinema Art* paid a lot of attention to the theory of popular science and documentary cinema.

A. Zguridi (1904–1998) and B. Altshuler (1904–1994) believed that scientific cinematography includes three main types of films: a) scientific research films, b) educational films, and c) popular science films; the division of scientific films is based on their objectives. The basis for the division is the purpose of scientific films, the purpose of their application. "Thus, there are various popular science films – essays, posters, magazines, lectures, novels. Among

educational films there are films for universities, for technical colleges, for schools, for workers' circles, for professional development courses. There are also sequence films, film-series, etc. Finally, both are divided by fields of study. There are films on biology, geography, astronomy, physics, chemistry, and other sciences" (Zguridi, Altshuler, 1958: 141).

Director and screenwriter E. Yakushkin (1901–1961) was convinced that "a popular science film fulfills its tasks when the basis of the film production and the source of the viewer's interest in it is directly the scientific idea itself. Everything else depends on the creative solution. The brighter and more original it is, the better the film serves the cause of propaganda of advanced science and technology, development of a materialistic worldview, the stronger its educational role" (Yakushkin, 1956: 31).

Film scholar V. Zhdan (1913–1993) noted that "the popularization of knowledge by means of the art of cinema requires the use of all its broadest expressive possibilities, for what already exists in our life, when communism has become the living, creative work of millions, in the age of atomic energy and space speeds, strikes the imagination requires for its expression a form no less vivid and exciting. Otherwise there is no reason to impoverish what in life is so beautiful and fascinating!" (Zhdan, 1961: 51).

Film directors G. Nifontov (1922–1991) and G. Fradkin reasonably emphasized that "the high quality of popular science films has long been hindered by one old and dangerous disease – the illustrative thinking of screenwriters and directors. Watch any of our bad films, and you will see that the trouble is usually always the same. The visuals, illustration after illustration, are lined up with the narration" (Nifontov, Fradkin, 1963: 90).

The screenwriter and film critic M. Arlazorov (1920–1980) was quite emotional in his defense of the status of art for popular-scientific cinema: "Workers in the popular-scientific film industry may remember the bitter dispute that took place several years ago. Its essence can be formulated very briefly – is the popular science film art or not art? Those who tried to deprive this huge field of cinema of the right to be called art were defeated" (Arlazorov, 1962: 246).

In this context, screenwriter and film scholar I. Vasilkov (1910–2003) wrote that "films that popularize the spider by didactic and artistic-shaped means (way) are similar and different at the same time in many ways. They share the same subject matter (science) and function (popularization of scientific knowledge), they use the same pictorial techniques of cinematography, and their language has the same requirements – it must be light, elegant, and figurative. At the same time, films of the first type differ fundamentally from films of the second type. First of all, this difference lies in the attitude of the author and the director toward the object of popularization. Perceiving the phenomena of real life, the processes taking place in the world around us, one can tell about them either through logical concepts or through their artistic and figurative comprehension, ideological and aesthetic evaluation. In this case, stressing the fundamental differences between the two types of works, it was not meant to oppose logic to poetry and vice versa. There is beauty and poetry in the consistency of logical thought itself. But only the artist who figuratively comprehends reality can feel and convey this poetry" (Vasilkov, 1962: 89).

V. Arkhangelsky (1932–1983) was "convinced that the history of the scientific film as a work of art is just beginning. The way of knowledge of reality by a film drama or a film comedy is one. The way cinematography cognizes reality through direct observation is different. The scientific cinema is a truly synthetic cinema, combining in itself the first two ways and also having its own specifics: the diverse and constant mediation of reality by the materialistic scientific worldview. ... This species has varieties: educational, scientific and artistic, and special research. Each develops according to its own laws – some according to the laws of art, others according to the laws of didactics. So – scientific instead of popular science" (Arkhangelsky, 1966: 75, 77).

Screenwriter and director L. Gurevich (1932–2001) intervened in the debate with Arkhangelsky's article: "Arkhangelsky suggests replacing the notion of popular-scientific cinema with a broader notion of scholarly cinema. He believes that, unlike fiction and documentary films, science films have their own specifics: "a diverse and constant mediation of reality and a materialistic scientific worldview" (!). Here we have to stop, because the words are loud, but not very intelligible. What is this special mediation? ... [Arkhangelsky] insists on imagery! And he insists correctly. Here we can only support him. Only this does not require inventing a specificity which is little understood, thus throwing other genres into the swamp of anti-science, or, worse still, into the swamp of immateriality – non-materialism" (Gurevich, 1967: 78-79).

Reflecting on the problems of documentary filmmaking, director V. Osminin (1941–2013) lamented that “the script problem still largely hinders the development of our documentary cinema. Some writers come away with the conviction that writing a script for a documentary is not difficult, if only there were an interesting subject. The fetishization of the fact itself leads to a description or, more often, to a simple list of phenomena and events that should be shown, exactly shown, in the picture. And much less often do authors think about the artistic methods by which a particular episode should be resolved. Moreover, authors often have no sense of the genre of the thing, nor of its rhythm, and hence of the volume of the film. How I would like to see scripts where the sound score of the film is thought out, moreover, where the authors think about the strength of the emotional impact of a sudden pause in the text or in the music, which sometimes completely deafens the audience” (Osminin, 1963: 95).

And film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) emphasized the ideological aspects of documentary cinema: “Anyone who has read Dziga Vertov's book “Articles, Diaries, Conspiracies” can be convinced that ... Vertov wanted to promote and express ideas of the communist present and future in that personal intonation, with the passion and conviction that was inherent in him. ... [to have] the rights to the emotional multicolor and philosophical richness of communist film publicity” (Weisfeld, 1968: 62).

#### *The Theory of cartoon cinematography*

Appealing to the theory of animated film, film scholar S. Asenin was quite positive in his opinion, emphasizing that “animation is now posing more and more daring tasks. It was possible to use it to speak about such acute problems of the time as the struggle for peace, to deeply and caustically expose the social and artistic failure of abstractionism, to ridicule lazybones, slackers and bureaucrats and to assert new principles of morality and human relations” (Asenin, 1964: 63).

On the other hand, animation director D. Babichenko was much more critical, lamenting that “with all the external variety of genres in our [cartoon] films the range of themes is still limited, which is reduced mainly to the struggle of good and evil in different variations that differ little from one another. Moralizing films with standard endings have no effect on anyone and do not educate anyone because of their excessive, “frontal” edification. It has become increasingly rare in recent years to see significant films that would define new milestones in the development of the art of animation. Films of recent years in the majority repeat the discoveries made once. A number of our films still suffer from a tendency to imitate nature. ... Our long-standing love affair with Walt Disney has done us a disservice. Even now both the manner and methods of animating characters are captive to Disney standards” (Babichenko, 1961: 33-34).

#### *Cinema and the spectator*

A small part of the theoretical articles of the “thaw” period of the *Cinema Art* was devoted to the relationship of cinema and the audience.

Screenwriter and film critic H. Hersonsky (1897–1968) rightly believed that “the Union of Film Workers, without delaying, need to make efforts to create a center for the study of the viewer. It doesn't matter what it will be called at first: a “section” of the Union, or a “study” at the Union, or a “sector” of a future film research institute (this institute has to be created by all means). It's important to start!” (Khersonsky, 1962: 15).

Film historian N. Lebedev (1897–1978) fully agreed with him: “Where are the sociological studies, monographs, dissertations illuminating and generalizing the practice of distributing films by type of film, by group of films, by individual films? Where are the scientific works on the specifics of the activity and the role of different types of cinema enterprises – city commercial cinema theaters, specialized cinemas, trade union clubs, rural installations, etc. – in the aesthetic education of the audience? Where are the studies on such a general problem of the near future of our cinematography as “Cinema and School”? – about the place and role of cinematography in the education and upbringing of students at different levels of secondary school, vocational schools, universities, and extramural studies? And who can answer these questions: what part of the population of the USSR attends cinemas, and what part does not go to them? What can and should be done to expand the contingent of movie-goers?” (Lebedev, 1964: 49).

“And here – as N. Lebedev believed – it is necessary to emphasize with all his might that these are not narrowly economic, “distribution” issues, as it seems to some film scholars, hovering in the empire of pure art history, but are acutely political, sociological and aesthetic problems that should be addressed from a broad film studies point of view. ... It is high time, long ago, that we set out to create a great science of cinema, to found a special research institute and, later, an Academy

of Film Studies. If properly organized, they can be of immense help both to the management of cinematography and to all the creative and practical workers in our most complex field of culture and art” (Lebedev, 1964: 49).

#### *Television theory*

If for the *Cinema Art* in the 1930s was very relevant theoretical discussion about the then new sound cinematography, but for the "thaw" period of this journal the relevant material for discussion was television.

It all began with an essay by M. Romm (1901–1971) entitled "Let's Look at the Road" (Romm, 1959), in which he touched on the specifics of television.

A little later, screenwriter and television journalist A. Yurovsky (1921–2003) joined this theme, believing that “television and cinematography have a common language, and it will always be common in its basis. After all, the wide format, stereophonic, stereoscopic nature of the future cinema does not change the basics of its language, does it? And whatever technical improvements may be made to television in the future (equal to the named improvements of cinematography), the basis of its language will remain the same as it is today” (Yurovsky, 1960: 126).

Screenwriter A. Wolfson (1914–2000) also believed that “by the nature of its expressiveness, by its figurative language, by the means of creative organization of material, television is identical to cinema. ... It ... demands a quieter montage (not emotionally calm, just the duration of each plan should be longer than in cinema), prefers large and medium shots, and does not tolerate general long shots with complex compositions. ... These are, in fact, the main peculiarities of television, its most essential peculiarities. But there are some peculiarities of color cinema and widescreen cinema as well, they are taken into account when creating movies, but they do not constitute a special artistic language. They are merely, I would say, different dialects, dialects of one common film language. In its aesthetic basis, television is cinema. It's very important to understand this. Those who believe that they flatter television by titling it as a new, special, "independent" art only confuse it. By shutting it off from cinema, they lead it astray from its only right path, dooming it to roadlessness” (Wolfson, 1961: 89-90).

The film director O. Remez (1925–1989), referring to the fact that television plays in the USSR in the early 1960s were not yet videotaped, but were broadcast "live", wrote that “editing as the final stage which synthesizes the performance of actors, creating a whole – an image – from the disparate actions of the performer, occurs in films after the filming is completed. In television, editing takes place simultaneously with the very process of the actor's creativity. This obliges the actor to have a special "sense of editing", just as in theater the actor has a sense of *mise-en-scène*. Developing this kind of control over oneself in the process of acting is necessary for the television actor” (Remez, 1961: 120).

In this connection L. Muratov wrote that “if in a film set an actor behaves all the time as if the spectator does not exist, in a television studio he addresses the spectator. He comes into constant contact with them. This feature of television does not seem too significant at first. What a big deal, making contact. A small thing, not worthy of attention. But this trifle blows up the fourth wall” (Muratov, 1964: 49).

I. and M. Andronnikov's article also laid emphasis on "live" television: “There is always one essential difference in the approach to material broadcast on television "from life" and recorded on film. It is conditioned by time: always real on television, in live broadcasting, and, as a rule, conventional – in cinema” (Andronnikov, Andronnikova, 1963: 100).

"Live broadcasting" and the role of the word in it were seen as the basis of the specificity of television and L. Tarasov: “The practice of 'live' television programs daily asserts the special importance of the word on the blue screen. The internal tendencies in the development of television, which is essentially documentary art, lead to the fact that the word more and more powerfully makes its way to the viewer. Not only that, it subordinates the image, becomes the leading component” (Tarasov, 1966: 73).

TV experts E. Bagirov (1928–1984) and I. Katsev (1922–?) agreed with this: “We see the preservation of television spectacle not in the external "non-selectivity" of the audience (which in film does not exclude, but rather suggests the strictest selection), but above all in the consideration of perception conditions to create a more direct contact between author and viewer. ... The presence of commentators in the frame, the appeal directly to the viewer create the necessary element of trust, which determines a high degree of credibility of the spectacle, allows cinematic freedom to operate with time and space” (Bagirov, Katsev, 1966: 115).

In the early 1960s, the first book in the USSR devoted entirely to television was published. It was a work by the journalist and critic V. Sappak (1921–1961), who passed away early, entitled "Television and We" (Sappak, 1963).

The film critic A. Svobodin (1922–1999) wrote in this regard on the pages of the *Cinema Art* that "Vladimir Sappak noticed many phenomena, principles and laws in television. He dwelled on some of them in detail, passed over others in passing. You can disagree with him, but you cannot do without his book in television criticism from now on. ... soon there will be new books, dozens of books. But the first book will still be "Television and We", and it will always be useful (I am sure that TV critics will develop even such a habit) to look "into Sappak" – hasn't he already written about it, hasn't he noticed it in passing, hasn't he thought about it? And for years to come, we will note with amazement: yes, he wrote, noticed, thought... He had understood the authenticity of television. Sappak saw a new quality of television authenticity in something else – in the possibility of observing the movement of life at the moment this movement takes place, synchronously. ... the effect of presence" (Svobodin, 1963: 129).

A. Svobodin reminded us that "the television screen has discovered a terrific sensitivity to all kinds of falsehood: from the falsehood of behavior arising from inexperience, "stiffness" or imaginary improvisation, to the falsehood nesting in the very character of the writer, artist, artist. Sappak profoundly and psychologically subtly explores this feature of the television screen. And he comes to the conclusion that in the final analysis "telegenicism" is not the quality of the speaker's appearance, not the quality of his behavior in front of the camera, but the quality of his human personality. Here aesthetics merges with ethics" (Svobodin, 1963: 131).

Film scholar and screenwriter S. Muratov (1931–2015) believed that "television is just embarking on the path of the great mastery of life. But it is looking for the road by groping. Instead of comprehending new methods, of anticipating unexplored possibilities, instead of being ahead of the curve, its critics remain for the most part in a state of extreme torpor. Even as they insist on live television and call for it to invade the depths of our vivid, multifaceted reality, they often accompany their appeals with so many caveats that they discourage rather than encourage the search" (Muratov, 1966: 119).

#### *Theoretical articles on foreign cinema*

For all its "thawing tendencies", the *Cinema Art* actively struggled against the harmful influences of Western cinema between 1956 and 1968 (Abramov, 1965: 86-89; Buryak, 1964: 26-36; Furtichev, 1968: 80-89; Weisfeld, 1963: 77-80; Yutkevich, 1964: 68-80, etc.).

Thus, in 1957, L. Pogozheva (1913–1989), editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art*, reminded us "of the intensification of reactionary bourgeois propaganda and the worsening of struggles on the ideological front; of the errors and mistakes of certain Polish art critics who made groundless attacks on socialist realism; of the political carelessness and unscrupulousness of certain Hungarian writers whom the counter-revolution used for its dirty ends" (Pogozheva, 1957: 2).

Literary scholar V. Scherbina (1908–1989), who attacked "cosmopolitans" in 1949, referring to Khrushchev's speeches, warned readers that "the dehumanization of art, the distortion of the human image, comes in many forms and is caused by many reasons. But no matter how fanciful these forms and no matter how complex these causes may be, one must not lose sight of the basic goals pursued by the ideologues of reaction in dehumanizing and distorting the image of man. The modernism of our day encompasses seemingly completely opposite phenomena. Abstraction, which reaches the point of absolute "geometricism," here exists alongside both an emphatically anti-aesthetic naturalism and mystified psychologism, which absolutizes the chaos of man's private inner states, with the "flow of the subconscious. ... The demonstrative denial of all ideals and the inability to put them forward is a universal feature of modernist movements" (Shcherbina, 1963: 1).

The philosopher G. Kunitsyn (1922–1996), who worked from 1961 to 1966 in the apparatus of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, wrote that "here and there bourgeois 'theories of de-dramatization, of the notorious flow of life' went into action, which were a by-product of Freudism with its morbid interest in the 'subconscious' and pathology of morally broken people. And some homegrown gore-innovators even began to experiment in the field of abstractionism and formalism, mimicking the creators of the true culture of socialism. It did not immediately become clear that this most heinous trend of bourgeois decadence is also a kind of denigration and ideological desertion in our conditions. ... We should also realize that it is unwise, even as imitators, for these lovers of death-dramatization to take their cue from West European bourgeois art. After all, its best examples, too, which are free of overtly reactionary ideas, do not save

anything. In the life of bourgeois countries which have hopelessly lost their former political and economic power, pessimism and despair inevitably reign. Those who do not connect their hopes with the struggle of the proletariat and its party are inevitably locked in a circle of unsolvable problems. That is why these countries' screens are almost exclusively filled with images of life's hopeless dead ends" (Kunitsyn, 1963: 14, 22).

Turning to the analysis of Western entertainment film N. Vasilyeva argued that "the harm and evil of commercial bourgeois cinema is not only that it floods the screen vulgarity and handicraft, not giving way to talent and truth in art and instills millions of viewers bad, vulgar taste. No, the true aim of bourgeois cinema is a certain ideological education of the masses. Through a variety of means the spectator is indoctrinated into thinking that the bourgeois order is unshakeable and perfect. Using all means, commercial cinema teaches man to be patient, to see in the fundamental shortcomings of the social system only the sad circumstances of this or that human destiny and to wait for his happy fortune. It is the idea that everyone can win his happiness if he does not grumble that is preached by hundreds of films – melodramas with heartwarming romances of millionaires and girls from the "lower classes," comedies where characters become rich and happy thanks to a lottery ticket, etc. The gigantic "dream factory" distracts people from real life with its plagues and troubles, stultifies and dumbens them down" (Vasilyeva, 1962: 106).

Film critic S. Ginzburg (1907–1974) wrote roughly the same thing: "Escapist films are films which take the viewer away from the modern problems that worry him into a world of pure fiction. The erotic and criminal themes of bourgeois cinema are essentially of the same order. The sharper the contradictions tearing apart bourgeois reality, the more frequently the reactionary circles in power in capitalist countries make use of every opportunity, along with direct propaganda of reactionary ideas and slander of democracy, to distract the masses from the pressing problems of reality. ... But the desire to distract viewers from actual social problems only partially explains the propaganda role of films on criminal, erotic and psychopathic themes. The fact is that by depicting pathological experiences, by explaining all human behavior through physiological motives, reactionary art seeks to prove that human behavior depends exclusively on the mental properties inherent in each individual, and not at all on social conditions. Thus, capitalism tries to absolve itself of responsibility for all the troubles it has brought to humanity" (Ginzburg, 1959: 114).

Film critic Y. Sher frightened journal readers that Hollywood's film noir were a conscious corruption of the viewer's psyche because in them "the murderer became attractive. Even with a magnifying glass you cannot tell good from evil. The criminals are transformed into the most ordinary people who, in between the crimes they commit, appear as good fathers of families, gentle lovers, sentimental admirers, recalling their childhood in the lap of nature. The victim of the crime has become no less suspicious than the perpetrator, to whom all sympathy is directed by the authors. The heroine is flawed, she is capable of murder, she is necessarily a drug addict or an alcoholic. ... The neuropath and the mentally ill become desirable actors. The film turns into a bad dream, and the worse the dream, the more sympathetic it is to those who in Hollywood give work to directors. Everything is put in the service of creating a sense of mental malaise and sickness in the viewer" (Sher, 1957: 141).

The screenwriter and film critic A. Novogrudsky (1911–1996) drew colleagues' attention to the fact that "a huge flow of works of modern bourgeois cinema, designed for hundreds of millions of viewers, is designed in a spirit of mimicry of realism, in a spirit of imitation of artistic truth, sometimes crude, sometimes quite skillful. Daily and hourly, these pseudo-realist films of various genres influence the mass spectator, educating him in the spirit of bourgeois, bourgeois moral precepts; they seek to denigrate the socialist world, thereby maintaining a "cold war" climate; they promote the bourgeois way of life by all means, propagating militarism and racism. They glorify their hero, the knight of free enterprise who, elbowing everyone and everything, at times stepping over corpses, achieves personal prosperity in life or accomplishes incredible feats in the struggle for the interests of the bourgeois state. There are innumerable such pseudo-realist pictures, and among them are quite a few made with high professional skill. And we should, of course, fight against this kind of pseudo-realism with the full force of our theoretical thought" (Novogrudsky, 1963: 120).

Further, A. Novogrudski reminded the audience that "bourgeois film aesthetics willingly supports and adopts some so-called 'innovations' in cinema art: from extreme subjectivism, where the figurative picture of the world on the screen is replaced by cloudy and incoherent visions extracted from the depths of the artist's subconscious, to equally extreme objectivism, extreme

naturalism, where the artist's thought and position with respect to reality completely disappears, and the film-maker is assigned the role of a kind of mechanical robot, passively capturing on film random, incoherent fragments of "life caught unawares." The deeply reactionary philosophy of these works is camouflaged as something "new", "progressive," and the anti-realist artistic method by which they are created is presented as a "pioneering search" for artistic truth. Bourgeois film aesthetics seeks to declare such works as the main, leading phenomena of contemporary cinema art" (Novogrudsky, 1963: 121).

And here A. Novogrudski goes to the most important thing, to the fact that "part of Western democratic film criticism – and some of our comrades, for crying out loud! – have been confused by this question and have also begun to admire various 'latest screams' of bourgeois cinematic fashion, mistaking them for a new stage in the development of world art. All of this taken together disorients some really talented filmmakers and leads their work into modernist dead ends. These fashionable pseudo-innovative currents, presented as something progressive and archaic, have a certain influence on the cinema of socialist countries. Moreover, their echoes permeate our Soviet cinema, they sometimes make themselves felt in the work of young filmmakers who, as they say, hear a bell, but do not know where it rings" (Novogrudsky, 1963: 121).

A. Novogrudski paid considerable attention to the Western attempts to lead cinema "away from big social themes, from showing social contradictions under the pretext of 'going inside the human personality', to 'theoretically prove' the futility of the search for artistic truth in art and justify the decay of artistic form, corresponding to the decay of thought; to substantiate that philosophy of skepticism, despair, doom, disbelief in man that pervades the most fashionable Western film movements of recent times. This muddy philosophy, declaring the powerlessness of man in the modern world, gave rise to the concept that is commonly called the "deheroization" of art and which, to a certain extent, is reflected even in the creative practice of some of our film artists" (Novogrudski, 1963: 121).

This position of A. Novogrudsky was supported by film historian V. Bozhovich (1932–2021): "The theories of 'spontaneous', 'direct' or 'direct' cinema are an expression, an aesthetic statement of the scarcity of ideas to which modern bourgeois consciousness has come. Never has the bourgeoisie been as hostile to art as it is today. Contemporary bourgeois consciousness has no positive ideas, no positive conception of the world, and this absence of positive ideas is what its ideologists are trying to establish as the aesthetic norm. This is the source of all these theories of the "direct" and "immediate" cinema and theories of the artist's self-abandonment and artistic neutrality (which actually conceal a certain position in the ongoing class struggle). ... Modern bourgeois consciousness tries to affirm its confusion, its fear of life, its sense of the disintegrating bonds of life as the norm of human existence, to affirm these qualities under the sign of eternity. ... One example of this art is the film *The Source* by Swedish director Ingmar Bergman. The film is full of horror, violence, murder in the most brutal, disgusting forms. ... It is not by chance that Bergman is the embodiment of aesthetic ideals of reactionary film critics. He is now somewhat overshadowed by Antonioni, whose theme of the collapse of the bourgeois individual, its spiritual depletion and emotional lethargy is also seen as a universal phenomenon from which no exit can be seen. ... The pseudoscientific terms "magic realism," "phenomenological realism", "authorial self-effacement" – these are the words with which reactionary ideology mesmerizes artists, convinces them that they have not and never will have the opportunity to penetrate the depths of life. ... They are hypnotized by disbelief in man, disbelief in his powers and the possibilities of art" (Bozhovich, 1963: 122-125).

Film critic J. Warszawski (1911–2000) reminded us that "in Poland a film called *Eroica* was staged to show that heroism is a fiction, a fiction, a legend, a burden on the conscience of the common man. Artists in many countries argued that there are no heroes, and presented "hero-less" plays, films, and novels, sullenly proving that the most natural human condition is indifference to everything in the world, except one's loneliness, longing, and elementary physiological sensations" (Warszawski, 158: 28).

Film scholar S. Ginzburg (1907–1974) wrote with sadness that "influences of alien ideas, alien morals, and especially often alien tastes for one reason or another penetrate the works of Soviet film artists as well. It is perfectly natural that these influences are bound to be reflected in those, even progressive, works of bourgeois cinema, which we have no reason to refuse to show on our screen" (Ginzburg, 1959: 111).

And film critic I. Katsev concentrated on the harm of bourgeois film studies, arguing that “in the West such a multitude of theories concerning film aesthetics was presented that it might seem as if bourgeois art criticism and criticism were trying to put this matter on an assembly line. Countless systems of proof were used for the sole purpose of making people believe that only those works which ignored reality and its laws of evolution could be classified as true art. The fierce attacks to which many foreign bourgeois publications on cinema subject the most advanced artistic method of our time – the method of Socialist Realism – serve the same purpose” (Katsev, 1963: 120).

Literary scholar N. Anosova (1918–2005), analyzing the theoretical concepts of film scholars published in the French magazine *Cinema*, wrote that in it “there are still theory and criticism clinging to the illusion of objectivity and imaginary freedom of judgment, sincerely striving to 'become above' the modern ideological struggle. ... Cinematography admits to its pages a criticism that attempts to evaluate artistic processes from the point of view of their social content. But the general tendency of the magazine (and this tendency exists despite its declarations of rejection of all tendentiousness) is manifested in a constant striving, sometimes more directly, sometimes more veiledly, to subordinate the meaning of content to the meaning of form” (Anosova, 1961: 116, 119).

In the year of the most active struggle of the USSR against the “Czechoslovak revisionists”, the *Cinema Art* published an editorial under the deceptively positive title “In the interests of friendship” (In..., 1968: 1-3), which drew readers' attention to the fact that “one cannot remain silent about the emergence in Czechoslovakia of erroneous ideological positions among some figures in film and literature that lead directly to a total rejection of the principles of socialist art. This began quietly, not immediately. Since the end of the 1950s, there was already a tendency in art and literature toward deheroization, toward a one-sidedly critical portrayal of life, to show man standing as if on the sidelines of the main path of life... Then came the more distinct idea of a reassessment of values. This also touched on contemporary themes and the depiction of war. Remember the film *Carriage to Vienna...*, which appeared a few years ago. In that film, the authors told the story of the last days of the war with the sole purpose of condemning all war, including the past one, as the senseless violence of man against man. “War is only a motor of death”, Jan Procházka stated in his explanation of the film. In the film, the heroes of the resistance, the partisans, are even more brutal murderers, rapists than the Nazis. ... *Carriage to Vienna* insulted the feelings of those who had fought in Czechoslovakia for the victory over fascism, for the sake of happiness and peace in the world” (In..., 1968: 2).

#### *On the problems of film criticism and film studies*

As in previous decades, the *Cinema Art* repeatedly addressed the problems of film criticism and film studies in its pages. Approaches here were quite diverse.

For example, the film critic R. Yurenev (1912–2002) ‘naively’ believed that “the study of N. Khrushchev's speech will teach us – critics and art and literature theorists – a great deal. An unshakable and passionate conviction in the fruitfulness of the principles of socialist realism, the ability to articulate accurately and fully the tasks of art in connection with the tasks of communist construction, with the aspirations and ambitions of the Soviet people, with the policy of the Communist Party, open and unequivocal condemnation of any and all deviations from the principles of ideology, nationality and realism and at the same time infinite goodwill, concern for the father, a desire to help, correct, encourage – all these instructive features of the speech of N. Khrushchev. Khrushchev's speech should be firmly rooted in Soviet criticism. ... Criticizing the materials of the film *Zastava Ilyicha* Khrushchev, without any impersonations demanded from the film ideological clarity and faithfulness to the truth of life. He helped the authors to think more deeply about the future of the film. This is the kind of directness, certainty, and exactitude we need to learn” (Yurenev, 1963: 10-11).

“I have been working in film criticism for a very long time, – R. Yurenev wrote “thawed”, – and have experienced all the difficulties and mistakes in the development of this important, necessary work. For years, film executives said and wrote only that there is no film criticism. At the same time, they were inclined to blame the “absent” critics and theorists for all the problems and shortcomings in film production. They were not allowed to listen to critics; they were denied the right to have their own opinion and were obliged only to explain and popularize the opinions they had heard from on high. This situation, and especially in the situation of “little-karting”, when ten or fifteen films a year were quite similar to each other, made the work of film critics almost impossible. After the XXth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the situation changed drastically. The explosive development of the film industry, the appearance of many new young and

talented artists, the growth of the international prestige and influence of the Soviet cinema – all this provided film critics with the widest possible field of activity, made our work respected and necessary and reminded of our special responsibility to the people. And it must be said that not all of us and not always remember this responsibility” (Yurenev, 1963: 10-11).

The philosopher V. Tolstykh (1929–2019) lamented that “too often in practice, criticism, especially in newspapers, turns into a handout of marks according to a five-point system, into a well-meaning commentator of plot, images, stylistics, etc. And it rarely, if ever, becomes a public rostrum from which, through the prism of art, the pressing problems of modernity and communist construction are discussed. Criticism often lacks civic pathos and the ability to spot and reveal the laws of life itself and how they are portrayed in cinema. Too much of our criticism is still engaged in stating well-known truths that do not go beyond the infantile formula what is good and what is bad” (Tolstykh, 1963: 64).

Meanwhile, V. Tolstykh continued, “the role of criticism in the development of the artistic culture of communism, in the ideological and aesthetic education and upbringing of both masters of cinema and spectators is great. And it will fulfill this task if it goes beyond the narrow aesthetic shop to the broad road of life” (Tolstykh, 1963: 65).

Then, interspersing his article with quotations from Khrushchev's speeches, V. Tolstykh predictably reduced his demands to film criticism to “Communist party feeling”, “socialist realism”, “aestheticism” and “formalism”: “Principledness and goodwill toward a talented artist are the main qualities which define the face of true Communist Party criticism. This principled approach consists in defense of the methodological foundations of Soviet art, of the method of socialist realism, of the principles of Communist Party and peoplehood, in irreconcilability with any kind of deviation from the ideological and aesthetic foundations of our society, in strictness and exactitude in artistic evaluations. Today it is clear that our criticism and aesthetics have not given timely and resolute resistance to such “discoveries” of bourgeois art and art criticism as theories of “one style,” “dematrization,” “flow of life,” and the tend toward deheroization of cinema. ... Discourse about art outside of a profound social and class analysis of modernity inevitably leads to aestheticism, to a formalistic interpretation of its nature. The rejection of sociology has even become a sign of good taste. At the same time, the bias towards aesthetics took place under the sign of the struggle against vulgar sociology, which was indeed widespread in the recent past” (Tolstykh, 1963: 66).

On the other hand, V. Tolstykh was right when he wrote that the Soviet film critics and critics of the 1960s were largely focused on “works of art, even the most talented, but those least used as ideological weapons by those in power. ... those known to cinematographers and critics and those completely unfamiliar to millions of viewers” (Tolstykh, 1963: 66), while popular Western entertainment films were often not analyzed in the Soviet press.

V. Tolstykh was indignant about this state of affairs: “By shying away from a serious critical review of such films, we seem to be guided by the simplest syllogism: if it is mediocre, if it is fake art, then it is also safe. But in reality this kind of production does its job, infecting a solid part of the audience with an ideology and morality that is foreign to us. Yes, it is certainly less interesting to analyze *The Unknown Woman* than, say, to analyze the aesthetics of Godard or Fellini. Nevertheless, in choosing an object to apply its forces to, criticism should proceed from what is of real importance in the ideological struggle against bourgeois ideology. To help millions of people develop a clear appreciation of and immunity to false art is not this an interesting and fascinating task for the critic?” (Tolstykh, 1963: 66-67).

The article by the philosopher E. Weizman (1918–1977), who argued that in Soviet film criticism in the 1960s there were few “articles about film that would become events, that would be talked about, argued about, and that would be most likely to be read” (Weizman, 1967: 55).

However, when E. Weizman further insisted that “a sociological approach must form the core of Marxist criticism, with all its varied genres and a keen ability to uncover all sides and qualities of a work of art, that is, the establishment of causal links between artistic discovery and life, a rational grasp of the dialectics of human and social development through artistic production” (Weizman, 1967: 56), it probably became clear to many Soviet film critics that the ideological templates he offered would be virtually impossible to produce event-oriented articles.

Against the background of such instruction by E. Weizman, even the reasoning of one of the main ideologues of Soviet film criticism, V. Baskakov (1921–1999), one of the chief ideologues of Soviet film criticism, seems quite reasonable: “Fortunately, this approach to film criticism is fading away, seeing it as designed to ‘serve’ the film-makers. To serve and at the same time to ask:

"Doesn't it bother the client? If it does, then the client will be dissatisfied and say, Bad article, wrong, this guy who wrote it didn't understand me, didn't appreciate it properly. Less frequently from the rostrum of cinematic meetings one hears cries: Who dares to criticize me? Who but the artist himself can evaluate an art phenomenon? Does this critic know how to make movies like I do?" Yes, such cries, which we often heard in the past, are now less common" (Baskakov 1967: 30).

Relevant, isn't it? True, with a correction: today it is not the directors and scriptwriters, but the producers who compel (using, of course, not ideological but financial arguments/subsidies) other Russian film critics to "serve" their interests. But the same phrases are still heard from the stands (including on the Internet)...

The philosopher B. Meilach (1909–1987) in his article called for a comprehensive study of cinema because "an approach to the study of film as a dynamic process involving all the links – from conception to perception – would lead to interesting and useful results in the field of creative theory and practice" (Meilach, 1968: 79).

In October 1968, rich in "revisionist" events, the last "thaw" year, philosopher and film critic V. Razumny (1924–2011) published an article in *Ogonyok* magazine (published in two million copies at the time!), which smashed film criticism and film studies approaches to the *Cinema Art* journal (Razumny, 1968: 26-27).

As we remember, in the 1950s and early 1960s V. Razumny was one of the most active theorists published in the *Cinema Art*, but in the second half of the 1960s his articles virtually disappeared from the pages of this publication. Now we can only guess what happened. Perhaps V. Razumny had a falling-out for some reason with L. Pogozheva (1913–1989), the chief editor of *Cinema Art*. Perhaps V. Razumny had been urged to write a sharply critical article "from above"...

But the fact remains that V. Razumny accused the *Cinema Art* that "the criterion for determining the creative height of new films here is most often not their success with spectators, but just the opposite – 'fashion' inspired by Western 'models' with their modernist indistinctness, pessimism and despair, with their inability to see in life around them a man with a capital letter, a hero, inseparable from his people, a fighter for the happiness and well-being of people. It is precisely such "fashionable" films that are in the spotlight of *Cinema Art* journal, even if they have not been accepted by the audience. They are considered here as the true spokespeople of modernity and its demands. And this point of view has been literally imposed on the journal's readers in articles and reviews for many years now" (Razumny, 1968: 26).

"It is impossible not to pay attention, – V. Razumny further wrote, – that this mixing is a noticeable tendency of the *Cinema Art*. The editors are very diligent in forcing a 'fashion' for storyless documentaries on Soviet cinematography. It imposes it in every way possible: either by praising the filmmakers' rejection of plot, or by outright declaring plot, the very adherence to the principle of plot to be an anachronism" (Razumny, 1968: 27).

V. Razumny criticized an article by G. Kunitsyn (1922–1996), who had recently been fired from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and who was known for his commitment to "thawed" sentiments. Having chosen for himself an "easy target," V. Razumny wrote that Kunitsyn's "theorizing" allowed the journal to become even more entrenched in his favorite position of a hostile and critical attitude toward our reality. The praise of all films that paint Soviet life and the Soviet people in a black light receives, albeit very confusingly, some 'justification' nonetheless!" (Razumny, 1968: 26).

The finale of Razumny's article brought to mind the times of the Communist Party's struggle against "cosmopolitanism": "Isn't it time for the Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of Ministers and the Union of Cinematographers of the USSR to pay serious attention to the position of the *Cinema Art* journal?" (Razumny, 1968: 26).

The *Ogonyok* magazine, whose editor-in-chief at the time was the playwright A. Safronov (1911–1990), published an open letter from the People's Artist of the USSR N. Kryuchkov (1911–1994) in which he emotionally supported V. Razumny's article: "If you collect all the articles in recent years about Fellini, Antonioni, De Sica, Bergman (no doubt talented masters) and some other directors and actors of the bourgeois West, printed in the *Cinema Art* journal, you could compile several volumes of monographs of praise and delight about each of them. But, unfortunately, the Soviet cinema professionals – directors, actors, cameramen, screenwriters – who created the world's most revolutionary cinema art, are rarely mentioned in this journal. ... Often the pages of the journal glorify films with bourgeois grumbling, pessimistic overtones, and a strange erotic licentiousness. All this is presented as "artistic courage" and "innovation". ... In many

articles you find statements to the effect that a film's talent is not determined by the number of spectators, as if films are made not for a mass audience, but for a handful of snobs from the House of Cinema" (Kryuchkov, 1968: 17).

In response to this attack, *Cinema Art* journal, in its January 1969 issue, tried to justify itself in an editorial which noted that V. Razumny's accusations concerning the journal's praise of "all films which paint Soviet life and Soviet people in a black light" were insulting "not only to the editorial board, but also to the entire creative collective of Soviet filmmakers", as was "an equally ridiculous and unfounded accusation of 'aversion to Soviet reality. ... Such 'polemical methods' cannot be tolerated in the Soviet press. They do not do honor to their authors and are of no use to the cause" (Criticism..., 1969: 10).

But it was already too late ... The problem of the "too thawed" *Cinema Art* journal was apparently already solved "upstairs" by that time: in the spring of 1969 Ludmila Pogozeva was fired from her post as editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art*...

## 5. Conclusion

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the existence of the of *Cinema Art* journal during the Thaw (1956–1968) showed that theoretical works on cinematic subjects during this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the Soviet communist Party Central Committee on culture (including – cinematography), "thaw" trends, but still defending the inviolability of socialist realism and Communist Party in cinematography (A. Anikst, E. Gromov, A. Karaganov, L. Kogan, N. Lebedev, G. Nedoshivin, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, L. Stolovich, V. Tolstykh, E. Weitzman, R. Yurenev, M. Zak, A. Zis, and others);

- theoretical articles opposing bourgeois influences, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (N. Abramov, V. Bozhovich, S. Ginzburg, I. Katsev, G. Kunitsyn, A. Mikhalevich, V. Murian, G. Nedoshivin, A. Novogrudsky, L. Pogozeva, L. Stolovich, Y. Sher, V. Shcherbina, I. Weisfeld, E. Weitzman, A. Zis, etc.)

- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: an analysis of the theoretical heritage of the classics of Soviet cinema, directing, film dramaturgy, genres, the specifics of television, etc. (S. Asenin, E. Bagirov, J. Bereznitsky, M. Bleiman, S. Freilikh, S. Ginzburg, E. Dobin, I. Dolinsky, L. Kozlov, V. Kolodyazhnaya, A. Macheret, S. Muratov, M. Romm, A. Svobodin, A. Tarkovsky, A. Vartanov, I. Weisfeld, R. Yurenev, S. Yutkevich, V. Zhdan, etc.);

- theoretical articles balancing ideological and professional approaches to cinema (S. Gerasimov, I. Weisfeld, R. Yurenev, etc.);

- theoretical articles calling on the authorities to ensure an organizational transformation that would encourage the intensive development of film studies as a science and the sociology of cinema (N. Lebedev, H. Khersonsky, R. Yurenev).

In general, the course toward de-Stalinization taken by Nikita Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party resulted in a noticeable updating of the content of the journal *Cinema Art* journal: its articles contained fewer dogmatic approaches, it generated lively discussion material, and the former harsh criticisms of the "formalistic" theories of S. Eisenstein, L. Kuleshov, V. Pudovkin, and D. Vertov were revised. The journal began to actively support the most artistically brilliant Soviet Thaw films. The rude attacks on certain figures of Soviet cinematography that had been characteristic of this journal in the 1930s and 1940s almost completely disappeared.

At the same time, our content analysis of *Cinema Art* from 1956 to 1968 showed that after N. Khrushchev was ousted from power, support for the "thaw" tendencies in the journal gradually decreased, and in connection with the Czechoslovak events of 1968 a series of articles were published which were directed against the revisionism of socialist ideas and the harmful foreign influence on Soviet filmmakers.

At the same time, the support of a number of artistically significant Soviet films that did not receive notable approval from the authorities and a rather diverse panorama of cinematic life of foreign countries in the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal eventually led to initiated "from above" strongly critical articles directed against it (in the *Ogonyok* magazine) and eventually to the removal of the editor-in-chief L. Pogozeva.

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## Appendix

Key dates and events relevant to the historical, political, economic, ideological, sociocultural, and cinematographic context in which the *Cinema Art* journal was published in 1956–1968

### 1956

February, 14–25: 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. N. Khrushchev's speech denouncing Stalin's cult of personality.

April 17: dissolution of the Kominform.

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

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

October 30 – December 22: The Suez Crisis in Egypt.

### 1957

January 12: the first issue of the renewed *Soviet Screen* magazine was signed for publication; the circulation of this fortnight was then 200 thousands copies.

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

May 13: N. Khrushchev's speech at a meeting with Soviet writers.

May 19: speech by N. Khrushchev at a reception of Soviet writers, painters, sculptors and composers.

18–21 June: a meeting of the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, where V. Molotov and G. Malenkov, dissatisfied with the policy of de-Stalinization, made a failed attempt to deprive N. Khrushchev.

June 28–29: the first plenum of the Organizing Bureau of the USSR Union of Cinematographers (chairman – I. Pyrev), Moscow.

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

August 21: Test of the first Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching U.S. territory.

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

December 12–18: the first conference of filmmakers of socialist countries (Prague).

### 1958

February 28 – March 4: conference of workers of the Soviet cinematography.

May 18: the film of M. Kalatozov (1903–1973) and S. Urusevsky (1908–1974) *Cranes are Flying* awarded the main prize of the Cannes Film Festival, the Palme d'Or.

May 28: Resolution of the CPSU Central Committee "On correcting errors in the assessment of the operas" Great Friendship ", " Bogdan Khmel'nitsky "and" From the Heart ".

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

October 4: Resolution of the Soviet Communist Party "On the note of the Propaganda Department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee in the Union republics On the shortcomings of scientific and atheistic propaganda" of October 4, 1958, which obliged Communist party, Komsomol and public organizations to launch an attack on "religious vestiges" in the USSR.

October 23: Awarding the Nobel Prize in Literature to Boris Pasternak: "For significant achievements in contemporary lyrical poetry and for the continuation of the traditions of the great Russian epic novel" (*Doctor Zhivago*).

October 23: Resolution of the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee "On the defamatory novel by B. Pasternak".

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 after "nationwide discussion in the press" to exclude B. Pasternak (1890–1960) from the Union of Soviet Writers, deprive him of his citizenship and deport him from the USSR.

October 27: a joint meeting of the Presidium of the Union of Soviet Writers, the Bureau of the organizing committee of the Russian Socialistic Federative Republic Union of Writers and the Presidium of the Moscow branch of the Russian Socialistic Federative Republic Union of Writers decides to expel B. Pasternak from the Union of Writers of the USSR (this decision was supported by V. Ajaev (1915–1968), S. Antonov (1915–1995), N. Chukovsky (1904–1965), 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), and other writers).

28 October: Note of the Department of Culture of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee on the results of the discussion at meetings of writers on the question "On the actions of a member of the Union of Soviet Writers, Boris Pasternak, incompatible with the title of a Soviet

writer," according to which the recommendations of the party group of writers was joined by V. Yermilov (1904–1965), V. Kozhevnikov (1909–1984), V. Kochetov (1912–1973) and others.

October 31: All-Moscow meeting of writers, chaired by S. Smirnov, at which against the novel by B. Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* and the awarding of the Nobel Prize to him were made by: 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), S. Smirnov (1915–1976), V. Soloukhin (1924–1997), A. Sofronov (1911–1990), etc.

December 2-12: second conference of filmmakers of socialist countries (Romania).

### 1959

January 1: pro-Communist revolutionaries come to power in Cuba.

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

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

July 24 – September 4, 1959: holding an American exhibition in Moscow.

August 3–17: Moscow International Film Festival. Main Prize: *The Fate of Man* (USSR, directed by S. Bondarchuk).

September 15–27: talks between N. Khrushchev and D. Eisenhower in the United States.

### 1960

February 16–19: The Plenum of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Soviet Cinematographers.

May 1: In the skies of the USSR shot down an American spy plane.

May 4: N. Mikhailov (1906–1982) was released from the post of Minister of Culture of the USSR. E. Furtseva (1910–1974) was appointed Minister of Culture of the USSR.

May 14–25: All-Union film festival, Minsk.

May 18–23: The Third Congress of Soviet Writers.

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

July: withdrawal of Soviet specialists, working in China on a program of international cooperation in connection with the deterioration of relations between the USSR and the China.

August 17: the plenum of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Soviet Cinematography Workers, at which I. Pyrev (1901–1968) was deprived of his status as chairman of the Organizing Committee. He was succeeded by the director L. Kulidzhanov (1924–2002).

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

### 1961

February 24: "Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on measures to increase the material interest of film professionals and studios in the production of films of a high ideological and artistic level".

April 8: N. Khrushchev sent a note of protest to U.S. President J. Kennedy against the landing of the anti-Castro landing in Cuba.

April 12: The USSR launched the world's first human spacecraft into Earth orbit (cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin).

July 9–23: Moscow International Film Festival. Top prizes: *Naked Island* (Japan, directed by K. Shindo) and *Clear Sky* (USSR, directed by G. Chukhrai).

August 13: Beginning of construction of the Berlin Wall.

October 17–31: the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which approved the slogan that by 1980 the USSR would have a base of Communism and approved the second wave of de-Stalinization (in particular, the removal of Stalin's body from the Mausoleum followed – October 31).

### 1962

February 6–9: Plenum of the organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Cinematography Workers.

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

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

October 14 – November 20: The United States announces a naval blockade of Cuba after Soviet missiles are installed. The politically tense Caribbean crisis begins, forcing the USSR to remove missiles from Cuba in exchange for a U.S. promise to give up its occupation of Liberty Island.

November: The publication (approved by N. Khrushchev) of A. Solzhenitsyn's (1918–2008) novel "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" in the magazine *Novy Mir/New World* (№11, 1962), the first direct reflection of the Stalinist camps.

December 1: N. Khrushchev's visit to an exhibition of avant-garde artists of the "New Reality" studio in Moscow, which served as the beginning of the Soviet Communist party and government campaign against formalism and abstractionism.

December 17: N. Khrushchev meets with the creative intelligentsia at the Communist Party Central Committee Reception House (Moscow), where he again speaks out against abstractionism and other "bourgeois influences".

### 1963

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

March 7–8: Meeting of N. Khrushchev with the Soviet creative intelligentsia.

March 23: Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On establishment of the State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers". A. Romanov (1908–1998) is appointed the chairman of this Committee.

June 19: The USSR temporarily suspended the jamming of *Voice of America*, *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* programs in Russian on USSR territory.

June 18–21: The Plenum of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, which criticized N. Khutsiev's film *Zastava Ilyicha (I am 20 years old)*.

June 20: The conclusion of the treaty between the USSR and the United States on the establishment of a "hot" telephone line between Moscow and Washington.

June 21: Resolution of the Plenum of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee "On the next tasks of the ideological work of the Party".

June 25: F. Ermash (1923–2002) approved the head of the film section of the ideological department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee.

July 7–21: The Moscow International Film Festival. Grand prize: "8½" (Italy-France, directed by F. Fellini).

November 24: The assassination of U.S. President J. Kennedy (1917–1963) in Dallas.

### 1964

May 14: The Resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "On the work of the *Mosfilm* studio" is published.

August 2: The USA starts the war in Vietnam.

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

October 14: The Plenum of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee relieved N. Khrushchev (1894–1971) of his position as First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and removed him from the Presidium of the Central Committee. Leonid Brezhnev (1906–1982) was elected First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee on the same day.

October 15: Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: N. Khrushchev relieving of his position as head of the USSR government.

### 1965

January: The first issue of the illustrated advertising monthly *Cinema Viewer's Companion* was published, its circulation initially was 50 thousands copies.

April 5: The USSR supplied North Vietnam with missiles.

July 5–20: The Moscow International Film Festival. Main prizes: *War and Peace* (USSR, directed by S. Bondarchuk) and *Twenty Hours* (Hungary, directed by Z. Fábri).

October 9: The State Committee on Cinematography of the USSR Council of Ministers was renamed the Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of Ministers.

November 23–26: The 1st Congress of Cinematographers of the USSR. Film director L. Kulidzhanov (1924–2002) becomes the head of the USSR Union of Cinematographers.

December 10: Awarding of the Nobel Prize for Literature to M. Sholokhov (1905–1984) for his novel *The Quiet Don*.

### 1966

March 29 – April 8, 1966: XXIII Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

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

June 20–July 1: French President De Gaulle's visit to Moscow.

October 6: France withdrew from the military organization of NATO.

The films *Andrei Rublev* (directed by A. Tarkovsky) and *A Bad Anecdote* (directed by A. Alov and V. Naumov) are banned from distribution.

### 1967

April 21: Resolution 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) distributes his open letter to the IV Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers, scheduled for the end of May, in which he opposes censorship and confiscation of his archive.

May 22–27: IV Congress of Soviet Writers, Moscow.

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

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

July 5–20: The Moscow International Film Festival. Grand prizes: *The Journalist* (USSR, directed by S. Gerasimov) and *Father* (Hungary, directed by I. Szabó).

### 1968

January 4: A. Dubček (1921–1992) becomes the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, initiating reforms aimed at liberalization and democratization of the country.

April: The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia begins a program of reforms, including "ideological pluralism" and "socialism with a human face".

April 9–10: Plenum of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee. Report of L. Brezhnev. The Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Resolution "On current problems of the international situation and the struggle of the Soviet Communist Party for the unity of the world communist movement".

May: the mass unrest in France, the reason for which was the dismissal of the director of Paris Cinémathèque. The unrest involved, in particular, young people of anarchist, Trotskyist, Maoist and other left-wing political orientations.

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

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

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

August 21: Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The films *Commissar* (directed by A. Askoldov), *Intervention* (directed by G. Poloka), and the film almanac *The Beginning of the Unknown Age* are banned from distribution.