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Theoretical Concepts of Film Studies in the *Cinema Art* Journal in the First Decade (1931–1941) of Its Existence

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Abstract

Based on the analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the socio-cultural and political situation, etc.) of the first decade of the existence of the journal *Cinema Art* (1931–1941), the authors came to the conclusion that theoretical works on cinematographic topics during this period can be divided into the following types:

- ideologized articles by Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers activists (1931–1932), emphasizing the dominance of "truly revolutionary proletarian cinema" and an uncompromising struggle with the views of any opponents;

- ideologically reoriented articles (1932–1934), written as a positive reaction to the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations" (1932), many provisions of which (in particular, a clear indication that that the framework of the proletarian literary and artistic organizations) have become a direct threat to the existence of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers; in articles of this kind, activists of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers – until the liquidation of this organization in early 1935 – tried to prove their necessity and loyalty to the "general line of the Communist party";

- Articles containing sharp criticism of "groupism" (including among the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers), "enemies of the people", etc. (1935–1938);

- theoretical articles attacking various types of formalistic phenomena (primarily in the field of montage) in cinema and culture (1931–1941);

- theoretical articles opposing empiricism, "documentaryism", naturalism and physiology, vulgar materialism, aestheticism, "emotionalism" on the basis of Marxist-Leninist ideological and class approaches (1931–1941);

- theoretical articles defending the principles of socialist realism in cinema (1933–1941);

- theoretical articles criticizing bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1931–1941);

- theoretical articles aimed primarily at professional problems of mastering sound in cinema (in particular, the dramaturgy of sound, music), editing, image, film image, film language (for example, the cinematic possibilities of the "zeit-loop" effect), cinema style, genre, entertainment, construction script (plot, composition, conflict, typology of characters, typology of comic devices, etc.), acting, etc. (1931–1941);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideology and professional approaches to the creation of cinematic works of art (1931–1941).

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1. Introduction

Actuality and scientific novelty. In most cases, topics related to the film studies concepts of the *Cinema Art* journal were considered by researchers (Alakshin, 2014; Dmitrieva, 2020; Golovskoy, 1984; Hill, 1960; Kovalov, 2009; Shishkin, 2017; 2018; Vasiliev, 2006, etc.) fragmentarily, without any attempt at a full-fledged theoretical content analysis. Consequently, the analysis of the transformation of the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal – from the year of its foundation (1931) to the present day – is very relevant, both in film studies, cultural studies, and in historical, science studies, philosophical, political science, sociological aspects.

Of course, in the Russian period, the print run of the paper version of the *Cinema Art* declined sharply, however, its influence and audience, given that the demand for movies in the modern world remains very high (of course, taking into account its distribution on various media and platforms), have survived, thanks to the online version of this journal.

In recent years, attempts have been made in the scientific world to analyze individual time periods of the *Cinema Art*: the period of perestroika (Dmitrieva, 2020; Shishkin, 2017; 2018), the modern (Russian) stage (Alakshin, 2014; Vasiliev, 2006). This series also includes our articles analyzing the two anniversary years of the *Cinema Art*, 1967 and 1977 (Fedorov, 2017).

However, none of the researchers (neither in Russia nor abroad) has yet set themselves the task of analyzing the transformation of the theoretical aspects of film studies throughout the entire time interval of the existence of the *Cinema Art* (from 1931 to the present).

We see the applied significance of our research in the fact that the results obtained can be used in the scientific activities of film critics, culturologists, art historians, sociologists, historians, science scholars, scientists studying media culture; find application in the field of film studies, cultural studies, history, journalism, art history, film studies, sociological education (teachers, graduate students, students, a wide range of audiences interested in this topic).

The scientific problem the project aims to solve arises from the contradiction between the relatively detailed scientific development of film studies in general (Andrew, 1976; 1984; Aristarco, 1951; Aronson, 2003; 2007; Bazin, 1971; Bergan, 2006; Branigan, Buckland, 2015; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Freilich, 2009; Gibson et al., 2000; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Humm, 1997; Khrenov, 2006; 2011; Lipkov, 1990; Lotman, 1973; Lotman, 1992; Lotman, 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982) analysis of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the leading Soviet and Russian film studies journal *Cinema Art* (1931–2021).

It should be noted that the works of scientists of the Soviet period devoted to the subject of film studies (Lebedev, 1974; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982, etc.) were often very strongly influenced by communist ideology, which, in our opinion, interfered with an adequate theoretical film process analysis.

Object of study. The object of our research study is one of the oldest in the world and the most representative in its segment theoretical journals in the field of film studies, *Cinema Art*, which (unlike other Soviet periodical film publications) managed to survive in the post-Soviet era.

Subject of study: the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal – from the year of its foundation (1931) to the present day.

The purpose of the project: through a comprehensive content analysis and comparative interdisciplinary analysis, for the first time in world science, to give a holistic description, reveal features, determine the place, role, significance of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal (1931–2021), that is, to obtain a new scientific knowledge that reveals patterns, processes, phenomena and dependencies between them in a given thematic field.

Research hypothesis: through a comprehensive content analysis and comparative interdisciplinary analysis, revealing the features, place, role, significance of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal, it will be possible to synthesize and graphically present the main theoretical models of film studies concepts and predict the future of their development.

Research objectives:

- to study and analyze the scientific literature, to some extent related to the topic of the declared project;

- to study film studies, historical, cultural studies, sociocultural, political, philosophical, sociological contexts, the main stages of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal – from the year of its foundation (1931) to the present day.

At the same time, our tasks will include identifying the transformation of such important scientific components as philosophical approaches (patterns and trends of scientific knowledge, taken in their historical development and considered in a changing historical and sociocultural context); historical stages of development; sociological approaches (study and analysis of the relationship and interaction between film studies and society, changes in the social status of this science), scientific ethics (study and analysis of moral problems associated with scientific activities in the field of film studies); features, models of scientific film criticism creativity; aesthetics of scientific activity (study and analysis of the relationship between film science and art, aesthetic consciousness, the influence of art forms on film criticism scientific activity, etc.); economic problems of scientific film studies, problems of scientific policy in the field of film studies;

- carry out a classification, quantitative and qualitative content analysis, a comparative analysis of the content of film studies theoretical texts in the *Cinema Art* journal (taking into account the tasks outlined above); establish and classify, analyze the main theoretical film studies trends and concepts, the specifics inherent in each historical period of the development of the journal in the contexts mentioned above.

2. Materials and methods

The research methodology consists of key philosophical provisions on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and the social in cognition; scientific, film studies, sociocultural, cultural, hermeneutical, 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; Lotman, 1992; Lotman, 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007 and others).

The project is based on a research content approach (identifying the content of the process under study, taking into account the totality of its elements, the interaction between them, their nature, appeal to facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc.), on the historical approach – consideration of the specific historical development of the declared project topics.

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; methods of empirical research: collection of information related to the subject of the project, comparative-historical and hermeneutic methods.

3. Discussion

Many research of scientists (Andrew, 1976; Andrew, 1984; Aristarco, 1951; Aronson, 2003; 2007; Balázs, 1935; Bazin, 1971; Bergan, 2006; Branigan, Buckland, 2015; Casetti, 1999; Demin, 1966; Eisenstein, 1939; Eisenstein, 1940; Eisenstein, 1964; Freilich, 2009; Gibson et al., 2000; Gledhill, Williams, 2000; Hill, Gibson, 1998; Humm, 1997; Khrenov, 2006; Khrenov, 2011; Kuleshov, 1987; Lebedev, 1974; Lipkov, 1990; Lotman, 1973; Lotman, 1992; Lotman, 1994; Mast, Cohen, 1985; Metz, 1974; Razlogov, 1984; Sokolov, 2010; Stam, 2000; Villarejo, 2007; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982 and others) talking about cinematic concepts. However, so far in world science, an interdisciplinary comparative analysis of the evolution of the theoretical aspects of film studies has not been given in the entire time interval of the existence of the *Cinema Art* journal (from 1931 to the present).

It is known that theoretical concepts in film studies are changeable and are often subject to fluctuations in the course of political regimes. From this it is clear that in Soviet scientific film studies literature (Lebedev, 1974; Weisfeld, 1983; Weizman, 1978; Zhdan, 1982, etc.), as a rule, communist-oriented ideological approaches were manifested.

As for foreign scientists (Kenez, 1992; Lawton, 2004; Shaw, Youngblood, 2010; Shlapentokh, 1993; Strada, Troper, 1997, etc.), in their works on Soviet and Russian cinematography, they mainly turned to political and artistic aspects of cinema, and quite rarely touched upon the subject of theoretical film studies in the USSR and Russia (one of the few exceptions: Hill, 1960).

4. Results

In the course of the study and analysis, we have identified a working version (which will be refined in the course of further research) of the main historical stages in the evolution of film studies theoretical concepts in the *Cinema Art* journal from the moment it was founded (1931, the journal was then called *Proletarian Cinema*) to our days: 1931–1955 (during the generally totalitarian period of the development of the USSR, chief editors: V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, N. Semenov, A. Mitlin, I. Pyriev, N. Lebedev, V. Grachev, D. Eremin, V. Zhdan), 1956–1968 (period of the "thaw", chief editors: V. Zhdan, V. Grachev, L. Pogozeva), 1969–1985 (period of "stagnation", chief editors: E. Surkov, A. Medvedev, Y. Cherepanov), 1986–1991 (perestroika period, chief editors: Y. Cherepanov, K. Shcherbakov), post-Soviet period 1992–2022 (chief editors: K. Shcherbakov, 1992; D. Dondurei, 1993–2017; A. Dolin, since 2017).

In this article, we will focus on the analysis of the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal in the first decade (1931–1941) of its existence, when its chief editors were: Vladimir Sutyurin (1931–1933), Konstantin Yukov (1934–1937), Nikolai Semionov (1937) and Aron Mitlin (1938–1941).

Based on the changing political and socio-cultural contexts (see main political and socio-cultural developments in the Appendix), this ten-year period for the *Cinema Art* journal can be divided into a period of relative creative freedom within the general commitment to "Marxism-Leninism" (1931–1934) and the time of almost complete communist ideological socialistic realism unification (1935–1941).

And although tendencies towards ideological unitarity emerged as early as 1932–1933 (the dissolution of the central council of the society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" (February 1932), the the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations" ([Resolution..., 1932](#)), publication of an article sharply criticizing the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" ([Evgenov, 1932](#)), Decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on the liquidation of the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" (1932); renaming the journal *Proletarian Cinema* in *Soviet Cinema*), in the journal *Proletarian Cinema/Soviet Cinema* in 1931–1934, to some extent, the debatable spirit of the 1920s was still preserved.

In the [Table 1](#) presents statistical data reflecting changes (from 1931 to 1941) in the names of the journal, organizations, whose organ was the journal, its circulation, periodicity. The names of the chief editors are indicated, as well as the number of articles on film theory for each year of publication of the journal.

Table 1. Journal *Proletarian cinema/Soviet cinema/Cinema Art* (1931–1941): statistical data

Year of issue of the journal	Name 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
1931	<i>Proletarian Cinema</i>	Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers	14-28	12	V. Sutyurin (1902–1985)	13
1932	<i>Proletarian Cinema</i>	Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers	6-15	22	V. Sutyurin (1902–1985)	24
1933	<i>Soviet Cinema</i>	Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers	2,7-5	12	V. Sutyurin (1902–1985) K. Yukov (1902–1938)	23
1934	<i>Soviet Cinema</i>	Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers	4-7	12	K. Yukov (1902–1938)	7
1935	<i>Soviet Cinema</i>	Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers	5-6	12	K. Yukov (1902–1938)	3

		(№1). Central Committee of the Cinema Union				
1936	<i>Cinema Art</i>	Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Film Industry of the All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	4,2-6	12	K. Yukov (1902–1938) (№№ 1-5). N. Semionov (1902–1982) (№ 6-11) Editorial board (№12)	11
1937	<i>Cinema Art</i>	All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	4,5-5	12	Editorial board (№ 1-9), A. Mitlin (1902–1941) (№ 10-12)	9
1938	<i>Cinema Art</i>	All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR (№№ 1-2). Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	4,5-6	12	A. Mitlin (1902–1941)	7
1939	<i>Cinema Art</i>	Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	6	12	A. Mitlin (1902–1941)	16
1940	<i>Cinema Art</i>	Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	5-5,2	12	A. Mitlin (1902–1941)	23
1941	<i>Cinema Art</i>	Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR	5	6	A. Mitlin (1902–1941)	7

The first issue of *Proletarian Cinema* for 1931 was, in fact, devoted to the political manifesto of the journal, in full accordance with the directives of its body, the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, attracting the audience to the slogans of the dominant communist-oriented proletariat in cinema (let's not forget that at that time an active process of collectivization was still going on in the USSR, causing resistance from the peasant masses). The very titles of the articles speak eloquently about this: “What does “proletarian cinema” mean, “On the socialist

reconstruction of cinematography”, “For the cinema of the Bolshevik offensive”, “In the struggle for proletarian cinema”.

In particular, one of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers’ ideologists, K. Yukov (1902–1938), wrote that “the next most serious work of the proletarian public, Marxist criticism, proletarian cadres and advanced revolutionary filmmakers is to reveal class hostile attacks, their mistakes and shortcomings, on the basis of consolidation proletarian-revolutionary forces, armed with the methods of dialectical materialism, to forge the right ideological weapon – proletarian cinema” (Yukov, 1931: 29).

Already from the next issue, a theoretical attack began on formalistic phenomena in cinema and culture, which in the USSR of the 1920s still felt quite free.

The editorial of *Proletarian Cinema* emphasized that “the main danger that quite realistically confronts us is attempts, one way or another, to emasculate the political, philosophical meaning of the discussion. These attempts, expressed either in the form of “practicality” (calls to “earthly”, narrow production issues, refusal to discuss large or general problems of cinema), or in the form of reducing the discussion to any one side of the issue (most often reducing it only to the creative questions of one of the areas of cinematic art cinematography) have only one objective meaning – the meaning of class hostility. They come either directly from elements of cinema that are class hostile to us, or from people who capitulate to bourgeois experience in the field of cinematography.

The main form of manifestation of bourgeois theory in cinema is the so-called formalist concept. Formalism is the most complete concept, which dominated the cinema almost completely for a number of years, cultivating significant and, moreover, qualified production personnel. Very often, formalism, merging with the businesslike intelligentsia, with the most up-to-date “theories” that grow on this soil, dresses up in ultra-left garb. The fight against formalism, which began not so long ago, proceeded without due activity. All this makes formalism the main danger on the theoretical front in cinema. ... What is new in the tactics of the Formalists is the desire to extend the concept of formalism to everything possible, and especially to the most outstanding phenomena of cinematography, in order thereby to depersonalize the concept of formalism and deflect the blow from it. What is new in the tactics of the formalists, given the declarative refusal of some of them to defend the formalist theory, is also the spread of the version that formalism is only a theory, that it cannot exist at all in the practice of creative work. In accordance with this tactic, the task of fighting formalism should be to intensify the fight against formalist practice” (Main..., 1931: 2).

The theoretical article of the literary critic M. Grigoriev (1890–1980) “Literature and Cinema” was largely devoted to the fight against formalism, where it was argued that “a weak script inevitably pushes a talented director to formalistic exercises. Insufficient penetration of the director into the script, into his creative method, viewing the script as a pretext for a purely formal game of directorial and camera techniques inevitably leads to an ideological distortion of the script” (Grigoryev, 1931: 15, 17).

In the third theoretical article of this issue of the journal, the formalistic views of S. Eisenstein, L. Kuleshov and V. Pudovkin on the role of montage in filmmaking were sharply criticized: “Eclecticism in film theory and film criticism is a widespread phenomenon. The mission of the eclecticists is to smuggle idealistic, bourgeois theories under the outer cover of sociology, Marxism, dialectics. ... It is known that just in the field of these general questions we have a dominance of eclectic and formalist definitions. For example, the formula that montage as a method of combining cinematographic material is the essence and basis of cinematography is unusually common: from Kuleshov to Eisenstein and Pudovkin, everyone resorts to this formula. But such a point of view is built on the denial of meaning, content in the film image, frame, and, according to its supporters, the meaning and content depend solely on the nature of the combination of montage pieces, i.e. from installation. There is no need to expand on the fact that such a position is anti-Marxist, for it reduces art to a system of techniques, to a form, throwing out the idea, the content. ... In the first place, Marxists put the content of a film work, and this content, expressed in images, is, of course, not located between the frames, not in the methods of combining them, but in the frames. Any attempt to replace this content with montage essentially means formalism” (Mikhailov, 1931: 26).

In the next issue, the *Proletarian Cinema* dealt a theoretical blow to another prominent formalist, this time the well-known literary critic and screenwriter V. Shklovsky (1893–1984) was subjected to an ideological scolding. In a review of his book on screenwriting (Shklovsky, 1931), it was noted that “Shklovsky very subtly pursues a certain tactic that characterizes the “obsolete” of

formalism in practice. Having hidden their theory, but not recognizing that it has been beaten by Marxism, the formalists proclaim the absence of any theory as an indisputable fact that forces them to engage in bare empiricism without methodology. But "where it is thin, it breaks there". There is no empiricism without methodology, however inferior, however meager. So in this case, the ears of formalism stretch out from Shklovsky's empiricism. ... It turns out that, going to "dirty work", Shklovsky did not abandon the tools of formalism and, denying methodology in general, in the name of pure empiricism, he impregnated the latter with formalism. Therefore, his manual for novice screenwriters gives a harmful methodological and creative orientation and does not help to educate the necessary screenwriting personnel" (Mikhailov, 1931: 52, 55).

The article of the film critic N. Lebedev (1897–1978) "For proletarian film journalism" (Lebedev, 1931) was also oversaturated with ideological passages and the struggle against formalism and "aestheticism". In it, he once again reminded readers that "the only correct theory, such the only true scientific method, valid in any field of knowledge, ... [is] the method of Marx-Engels-Lenin – the method of dialectical materialism. ... that proletarian newsreels cannot and must not set themselves any other tasks than those set by the working class and its party at this stage. ... that every newsreel film, every issue of a journal, every department within it should be based on a certain idea, concretizing the line of the party on one or another sector of the class struggle and the construction of socialism. A film of the unprincipled, a film that puts extraneous tasks at the forefront (self-sufficient aestheticism, experimentation in the name of experimentation, biological entertainment, etc.), proletarian newsreels cannot be produced" (Lebedev, 1931: 20-21).

Politics also permeated the articles of the film critic N. Iezuitov (1899–1941) devoted to the theory of educational cinema. First, N. Iezuitov ideologically sharply reminded that "Marxist film studies are a young science. There are many obstacles in the way of its development. ... There are many enemies. Nowhere, perhaps in any of the related fields of the science of art (literary criticism, art history) do so shamelessly and so unveiledly eclecticism, formalism, metaphysics still dominate in theory" (Iezuitov, 1931a: 5). And then he emphasized that "an educational film ... must be an instrument of political education. There is no place for apolitical films in our education system. ... an educational film should be a class film. But not in the liberal-opportunist interpretation, but in the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the class struggle. ... an educational film should be a party film, because our philosophy of dialectical materialism is a party philosophy, and our science is also essentially a party one. Educational films must educate communists, they must have a politically effective character, they must be connected in this way with the tasks of the proletariat and the party in the struggle for socialism and communism" (Iezuitov, 1931a: 7).

In his second article, N. Iezuitov again assured the readers of the journal that "the biggest shortcomings of individual theories of educational cinema are: empiricism, physiology and formalism. The Marxist methodology of educational cinematography will have to thoroughly work out these theories in the near future, because further movement cannot develop without criticism of everything that has been done so far" (Iezuitov, 1931b: 9).

Reflecting on the theory of educational cinema, L. Katsnelson (1895–1938), then a member of the central bureau of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, emphasized that "educational and technical cinematography is not an art, but a field of science. ... entertainment is in the content itself, and no additions, no flavors, no "entertainment" and "artistic" need to be added here" (Katsnelson, 1932: 27-28).

In defiance of the formalists and aesthetes, the editor of *Proletarian Cinema* V. Sutyurin (1902–1985) praised the work of the director-satirist A. Medvedkin (1900–1989): "Comrade Medvedkin takes a different path. For him, the search for a genre is not a formalist experiment. The very need for these searches arises for him not for formal reasons: he proceeds from certain political tasks ... Thus, Comrade Medvedkin's work fundamentally resolutely contradicts formalist practice. ... How much we, building socialism in the USSR, still need to overcome inertia, conservatism, how much more needs to be used to end the struggle against capitalism! ... Before the proletarian satirist – the world of capitalism, the world of colossal, complex exploitative culture; the world is perishing, but still very strong; a world that plunges the working people into hitherto unheard-of hardships, a world of obscurantism, a world that has stumbled into a hopeless (within capitalism) dead end. Burning, furious hatred must boil up in the mind of a proletarian artist at the sight of this world, which still holds hundreds of millions of working people in its paws and strives to destroy socialist construction in the USSR. And, driven by this feeling,

the proletarian artist can raise his satire to such heights that the satire of previous eras has never reached" (Sutyryn, 1931: 5, 7).

Inheriting the tradition of harsh, backhanded phrases from the press of the 1920s, *Proletarian Cinema* did not spare the "temperature" for discussions.

It was in this spirit that a discussion about film genres took place on the pages of the journal in 1931.

First, V. Grigoryev published an article "On the Methodology for Determining Film Genres" (Grigoryev, 1931: 16-20), where he argued that "we are on the verge of creating a theory of cinema. In essence, one has to start from the basics, because the currently existing (both here and abroad) theories of style, genre, montage, rhythm, etc., etc., most often built on the basis of formalistic methodology, do not withstand more or less serious criticism. Therefore, the immediate task of film theorists is to work on the main problems of cinematography, to cleanse the theory of cinema from all formalistic layers and to revise all methodological principles from the point of view of Marxist art criticism" (Grigoryev, 1931: 16).

And then the following definition of film genre was proposed: "A film genre is a type of cinematic structure: 1) being one of the sides of style, 2) reflecting through this style one or another side of the class psyche at a certain stage of its historical development, 3) characterized by the organic nature of all components that form a poetic unity, and purposefulness, conditioned by the systems to which this genre is subordinate, 4) being typical of mass film production. Style and genre are in constant dialectical unity with each other. Film style characterizes the main tone of film production, taken in the historical and class context, and the genre is a specific and particular form of style. The unity of style and genre is inseparable, because the genre is determined by the style, and the style takes shape through the genre" (Grigoryev, 1931: 17).

In his article on the theory of film genres, the film critic G. Avenarius (1903-1958) first agreed that "we still do not have a Marxist theory of cinema. The problem of creating this theory is complicated, on the one hand, by the extreme youth of the science of cinema in general, and, on the other hand, by the formalistic confusion that is full of numerous pamphlets and articles written on the main issues of cinema theory (montage, genre, style, creative method)" (Avenarius, 1931: 27). And then he accused V. Grigoriev of formalism, since he "denies the genre as a dialectical category – developing – and comes to the recognition of the genre as" a side of this style". ... Such a "methodology" of genre differentiation is fundamentally mechanistic and anti-dialectical, since it leads to the fragmentation of the general category into many separate existing particulars" (Avenarius, 1931: 30), and therefore it is "just an arrangement of the formalist theory of the genre, as a set of devices" (Avenarius, 1931: 30).

In fact, in 1931, only three theoretical articles in the journal *Proletarian Cinema* escaped the stamps of communist ideology.

For example, in his article, the screenwriter and writer I. Popov (1886–1957) insisted that "the introduction of the creative method, as a conscious method of regulating the internal creative process, marks a new stage for art. ... it is not for nothing that in our time people started talking about the creative method in art and, in particular, about the dialectical method, as a method of artistic creativity; ... the reform of creative consciousness in its essence comes down to the artist's awareness of the peculiarities and originality of his style, i.e. that, being individual, single, ... at the same time, is called upon to express the social and general. ... How is the method put into action? In three directions: firstly, through the ultimate understanding of the idea, the creative goal; secondly, through an exhaustive knowledge of the material, and, thirdly, through the comprehension of formal means" (Popov, 1931: 26).

And the artist and director-animator M. Tsekhanovsky (1889–1965) in his articles "Cinema and Painting" and "The Specifics of Ton Films" wrote that "knowledge of the laws of painting (and, of course, not only futuristic painting) is necessary for filmmakers, but to the same extent as it is necessary to know these laws for both the sculptor and the architect. Therefore, it will be equally true to speak about the laws of sculpture and architecture in the problems of cinema" (Tsechanovsky, 1931a: 7).

Reflecting further on sound cinema, M. Tsekhanovsky wrote in a polemical fervor that "cinema is thoroughly saturated with technology, it contains 99 % technology and 1 % art. There is still not even one percent of art in sound cinema ... by the material of sound film art one should understand: visual and sound objects of filming and the result of filming – montage shots. But these elements become the material of art only when they are organized by the artist into sound-

visual images expressing a certain content (idea). The idea gives impetus and direction to the whole process of melting the material into an art form. ... The material overcome in the process of "remelting" solidifies in a synthetically fused art form, which is, as it were, an "imprint" of an idea, a materialized idea" (Tsechanovsky, 1931b: 12-13).

A few months later, these views of M. Tsekhanovsky were sharply criticized in the same journal and were accused of formalism: "Based on certain facts, it must be assumed that those who consider themselves besieged in some fortifications formalists. One of these facts should be recognized as M. Tsekhanovsky's article "The Specifics of Tonfilms" (Plonsky, 1932: 4).

Further, catching on to M. Tsekhanovsky's reckless assertion that "cinema is thoroughly saturated with technology, it contains 99 % technology and 1 % art" (Tsechanovsky, 1931b: 12), V. Plonsky wrote that "if his positions are true, then this means that all our sound films... are 100 % technique, only technique. ... So, in fact, there is still no cinematography, Soviet cinematography, there is only some one percent" (Plonsky, 1932: 4). On this basis, M. Tsekhanovsky was accused of a "formalist sortie" and other anti-Marxist sins (Plonsky, 1932: 6).

The current discussion was continued by S. Skrytev, who rather pessimistically assessed the state of sound cinema in the USSR in 1932: "By the time the technique of sounding from the screen was mastered, silent cinematography had mastered a great culture ... it was the synthetic nature of cinematography that determined the features of the further development of cinematography. The exceptional attraction of synthetic education, which turned towards the greatest achievement of technology – sound recording – unexpectedly placed the further development of cinematography in front of incredible difficulties. ... Sound turned out to be a direct negation of silent cinematography. And it will be an irreparable mistake if, in future cinematographic practice, the fetishization of sound from anti-cinematographic positions continues, if the understanding of the place and role of sound in cinematography is not based on the principle that allows cinematic art to rise to higher levels of development. Unfortunately, even the great masters of Soviet cinematography in their latest works are engaged in cinematic disarmament. This determines the current state of sound cinema, which to a certain extent resembles the state of silent "illusion" at the moment of its inception" (Skrytev, 1932: 20).

The playwright and theater expert N. Volkov (1894–1965) clearly and quite reasonably disagreed with the position of S. Skrytev: "The appearance of sound cinema for some reason terribly worried filmmakers: would a tone film suddenly turn out to be a theater filmed on film? For some reason, it seemed that if a human voice suddenly sounded from the screen, then this voice would turn a cinematographic actor into a theater actor, and each frame almost into a stage setting. It was also frightening that the sound, which in many cases required long montage pieces, would provide an excuse to use this length to equip films with theatrical conversation of people who feel the ramp in front of them. These fears are undoubtedly imaginary, because they stem from a misunderstanding of the cinematic image. The film image is never only a filmed reality, but represents the result of the interaction between the phenomenon that is in front of the lens and the creative direction of the artist. The film image is optical, and this optical quality should be taken not as a technical, but as a creative moment. This is why a sound tape can look like a filmed theater only when the director reduces the role of the movie camera to a simple recorder of phenomena, and does not see it as an instrument of his volitional impulse and creative intention" (Volkov, 1933a: 65).

In fact, S. Srytev's denial of the achievements of "talking cinema" sharply contradicted the state policy on the intensive development of sound cinematography in the USSR, since sound (among other things) could significantly help the propaganda and agitation functions of the Power. But, in 1931–1933, the publication of such articles in the journal was still possible, as well as controversy on this topic.

The main event of 1932 in the field of ideology and culture was the April Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations" (Resolution..., 1932), many of the provisions of which became a direct threat to the existence of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers.

This resolution, in particular, stated that "at the present time, when the cadres of proletarian literature and art have already grown up, new writers and artists have come forward from factories, factories, collective farms, the framework of the existing proletarian literary and artistic organizations... are already narrow and hinder the serious scope of artistic creativity. This circumstance creates the danger that these organizations will turn from the means of mobilizing

Soviet writers and artists to the greatest possible extent around the tasks of socialist construction into a means of cultivating circle closure, detachment from the political tasks of our time and from significant groups of writers and artists who sympathize with socialist construction. Hence the need for a corresponding restructuring of literary and artistic organizations and the expansion of the base of their work. Proceeding from this, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks decides: to liquidate the association of proletarian writers...; unite all writers who support the platform of Soviet power and strive to participate in socialist construction into a single union of Soviet writers with a communist faction in it: to carry out a similar change in the line of other forms of art; instruct the Organizing Bureau to develop practical measures to implement this decision" ([Resolution..., 1932](#)).

Thus, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks made it clear that the time of the dominant "truly proletarian fighters of the cultural front" in the USSR was over, and the time had come for the unification of all literary and artistic movements under the control of the authorities.

In the same April 1932, an article was published sharply criticizing the Society "For Proletarian Cinema and Photo" ([Evgenov, 1932: 11-15](#)), which, in the spirit of the recommendations of the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations" ([Resolution..., 1932](#)) was liquidated in July 1932.

It is clear that under these conditions, the main task of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers and, consequently, the journal *Proletarian Cinema* was to survive by proving their loyalty to the "communist party line".

In an editorial published even before the Resolution... ([Resolution..., 1932](#)), the leading editorial article of the *Proletarian Cinema* ([For..., 1932](#)), emphasized the need to "strengthen the attack on hostile theories, on formalism in the first place, as the main form of manifestation of bourgeois theory in the field of cinematography ... to subject the theory of "montage as the basis of cinema" to devastating criticism. ... to criticize the vulgar-materialistic, mechanistic theory of "montage of Attractions" by Eisenstein, as well as his other statements alien to Marxism. The task of the offensive on the theoretical front also consists in the fight against conciliation towards bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories, in the fight against "rotten liberalism" ([For..., 1932: 2-3](#)).

As we can see, the "theoretical" blow was dealt not only to S. Eisenstein, but also to L. Kuleshov, D. Vertov, V. Shklovsky and many other "formalists", whose work was generally positively perceived in the 1920s.

Moreover, recognizing that "the release of the magazine once a month, despite the unacceptable slowness of its publication. ... deprived the editors of the opportunity to respond in any timely manner to current topics" ([For..., 1932: 4](#)), the editors of the *Proletarian Cinema* (of course, after agreeing this with the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers) decided it was necessary to switch to a two-week period, while simultaneously reducing the timing of publishing work on the release numbers" ([For..., 1932: 4](#)), making the publication less academic and more accessible in language to a wide audience.

In reality, in 1932, 22 issues of the magazine were published, of which seven were double. At the same time, it was not possible to significantly expand the readership of the *Proletarian Cinema* editors (circulation ranged from 6 to 15 thousand copies), so in 1933 the publication again returned to the monthly issue (with a new drop in circulation – up to 2.7 – 5 thousand copies).

One of the most important theoretical articles in *Proletarian Cinema* in 1932 was "Time in Close-up", where the director V. Pudovkin (1893–1953) substantiated his theory of cinematic slowing down and speeding up time, which he put into practice in the film *A Simple Case* (1932): "Why not put forward for a moment any detail of the movement, slowing it down on the screen and making it in this way especially prominent and unprecedentedly clear? ... I am deeply convinced of the necessity and validity of the new technique. It is extremely important to understand with all depth the essence of filming the "zeit-loop" and use it not as a trick, but as an opportunity to consciously, in the right places, to any extent, slow down or speed up the movement. One must be able to use all possible speeds, from the largest, which gives extreme slowness of movement on the screen, to the smallest, which gives incredible speed on the screen. ... Shooting with a "zeit magnifying glass" has been practiced for a long time. ... But all the directors who used slow motion did not do one, from my point of view, the most important thing. They did not include slow motion in the montage – in the overall rhythmic flow of the picture. ... I'm talking about the varying degrees of slowing down the speed of movement included in the construction of the cut phrase.

A short piece shot with a "zeit-loop" can be placed between two long normal pieces, focusing the viewer's attention at the right place for the moment. "Zeit-loop" in montage does not distort the actual process. She shows it in depth and accurately, consciously directing the viewer's attention. ... Long-term processes, shown on the screen by editing pieces shot at different speeds, get a kind of rhythm, some kind of special breath. ... The "time close-up" has a huge future. Especially in the tone film, where the rhythm, refined and complicated by the combination with the sound, is especially important" (Pudovkin, 1932: 31-32).

It is surprising that, as if not noticing the calls for experiments with form in this article by V. Pudovkin, the *Proletarian Cinema* continued its active attack on film formalists.

This time the target was the book of the screenwriter and director A. Andrievsky (1899–1983) "Construction of a Tone Film" (Andrievsky, 1931).

Literary critic L. Voytolovskaya (1908–1984), in her article entitled "The Program of Militant Formalism" (Voytolovskaya, 1932: 5-9), argued that Andrievsky acted here "as a follower of ... the most reactionary theories, as a faithful student and successor of Kuleshov. ... It is quite natural that A. Andrievsky, proceeding from these formalistic provisions, cannot look for anything else in sound cinema, except for the "montage of sound frames" (Voytolovskaya, 1932: 7).

Further, L. Voytolovskaya spoke out even more sharply, revealing a whole group of the most active "film formalists": "On the example of A. Andrievsky, his scripts and books, we see that formalism is starting to become more active again. The "third stage" in the history of formalism has now arrived. The first stage was characterized by open speeches by such militant formalists as Kuleshov, Shklovsky, Piotrovsky, and others. This was a period of open speeches in the press, declarations, a period of "flourishing" of formalism in cinema. Then came the period of "renunciation" of their mistakes (with Shklovsky), leaving "into practice" (with Kuleshov). It was a stage of "silence", waiting. Now the third period has come, the most dangerous, the most malicious period of pushing through your formalistic worldview under the flag of working "only in the field of film technology." A. Andrievsky's book is not the first to try to push through formalism under the brand name of "innocent" technique. ... It is characteristic that he quotes exclusively formalists: M. Levidov, Glazychev, Shklovsky, Kuleshov, and again Shklovsky, Kuleshov, M. Levidov. This kind of "ring film" convincingly proves that A. Andrievsky appears in the book as a selfless follower, successor and student of the "luminaries" of formalism. And precisely because now their "teaching" has begun to become more active, precisely because formalism is crawling out of the holes of practical affairs – this is precisely why it is necessary to treat with particular ruthlessness such books as "Construction of a Tonfilm", both clearly and smuggling formalist rubbish" (Voytolovskaya, 1932: 9).

As part of the expression of various creative views in the discussion, which was still permissible in 1932, and taking into account the extreme seriousness of the accusations from L. Voytolovskaya, which in the future threaten to "take measures", A. Andrievsky (1899–1983) soon sent a penitential letter in which he acknowledged that his book "The Construction of a Tonfilm" "not only contains a number of formalistic errors, but is also formalistic in its general concept and in its main principles" (Andrievsky, 1932: 52).

Trying to distance himself from further accusations of formalism, A. Andrievsky wrote: "At one time I entered cinematography under the strong influence of the works of Eisenstein and Kuleshev, who, despite great differences in methods, had common formalistic errors. The writing of my book coincides with the period when this influence still weighed heavily on me. This does not mean that I was a supporter of formalism and did not wage a struggle against formalist methodology as a whole, but this struggle was flawed and half-hearted, because at that time I developed a special "theory", which, unfortunately, still spontaneously arises in many film practitioners. The essence of this "theory" is reduced to the division (and practically – to the opposition) of the creative method and the "technology" of art. ... Being taken in abstraction, the "technology" of cinema turns from "technology" into methodology, and, moreover, inevitably into a formalist methodology. This is the depravity of the theory, which considers the abstract "technology" of art as a science auxiliary to Marxist-Leninist art history, and in this place there is a "junction", but not with the frame, but with Trotsky's anti-Marxist and eclectic attitudes in matters of art" (Andrievsky, 1932: 52-53).

The editorial leading article "A decisive change is needed" (A decisive... 1932: 1-4), published in the April issue of *Proletarian Cinema* for 1932, was a reaction to a letter from I. Stalin to the

editors of the journal *Proletarian Revolution* (Stalin, 1931), in which he criticized Trotskyist and other opposition "sally" in the Soviet press.

The Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, struggling to prove their necessity and loyalty to the authorities, of course, could not ignore this Stalinist article, which became "a signal for a decisive offensive against hostile theories about cinema, for the struggle to strengthen the positions of proletarian cinematography" (A decisive... 1932: 1).

Further, the journal *Proletarian Cinema* drew attention to the fact that "there is no renunciation of their mistakes in the formalist camp, that Kuleshov's statement in the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, Shklovsky's speech (at the scenario meeting) were only clever maneuvers in order to hide the hostile Marxist-Leninist theory is the essence of formalism, to disguise itself most subtly and cunningly in order to continue in practice to push through formalist theories and thereby counteract the growth of proletarian cinematography, to oppose Marxist-Leninist theory in cinema ... The communist and Komsomol part of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, having exposed all these tendencies of formalism, declared formalism a theory, with which it is necessary not to discuss, but to brand from beginning to end, as a theory hostile to the interests of proletarian cinematography. ... On the basis of extensive self-criticism, Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers can and must achieve a decisive turning point in its work. For a real restructuring of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographer to face production, its needs, its tasks! Comrade Stalin's instructions must permeate the entire theory, the entire creative and artistic practice of Soviet cinema. For the Marxist-Leninist theory in cinema! For Leninist cinematography!" (A decisive... 1932: 1, 4).

In the same issue of *Proletarian Cinema*, the cameraman V. Nielsen (1906–1938) (Nielsen, 1932: 18-24) joined in exposing the enemies of Marxism-Leninism in cinematographic theoretical concepts, who spoke out categorically against L. Kuleshov's "formalist" theory of montage: "It should not be forgotten that it is precisely the feature film with its specificity, in the absence of a developed Marxist methodology, that is the most fertile ground for the work of the formalist or other bourgeois school. The theoretical struggle against class-alien trends in cinematography, the ideological disarmament of formalist and mechanistic constructions – all this requires the greatest consolidation ... The first definitions of the frame as an element of film are given to us by L. Kuleshov, who can rightfully be called the father of theoretical vulgarization in cinematography" (Nielsen, 1932: 19).

Rejecting the theory of montage by L. Kuleshov (1899–1970), V. Nielsen emphasized that "the main force of cinematic influence, first of all, is the social content of films; her class orientation. Depending on the extent to which the film reveals and displays this social content, we can judge its expressive qualities. Editing is not a self-contained factor in cinematography. Editing is one of the main means of cinematography, which enables the film director, with the help of specific montage methods, to reveal and display the dialectics of reality. ... The montage leads the spectator to those final conclusions that are conditioned by the social task of the script" (Nielsen, 1932: 23-24).

V. Sutyryn, the editor-in-chief of *Proletarian Cinema*, could not stay away from the fight against the malicious film formalists – he chose "documentary filmmakers", that is, director D. Vertov (1896–1954) and his supporters, as the main target of his article. V. Sutyryn believed that Vertov's "movie eyes" – for tactical reasons and for a certain period of time – were ready to allow a small percentage of "feature films", although, in their opinion, "genuinely Soviet, i.e. proletarian cinematography was to consist of "non-fiction", "documentary" films. ... [Now] they no longer talk about the bourgeois nature of any "fiction" film. They are ready to legitimize a certain percentage of this film production for a classless society as well. But, firstly, the percentage is small and possibly smaller, and secondly, they put them in the background in terms of social significance, believing that in the reconstruction period, the primacy should belong to a documentary, non-fiction film" (Sutyryn, 1932: 15). However, "documentalism, like formalism, being an anti-Marxist system of views, is just as hostile, although at this stage it is less dangerous for the young, just emerging Leninist theory of Soviet cinema. It is necessary to wage a decisive struggle against him" (Sutyryn, 1932: 11).

Film director B. Altshuler (1904–1994) focused his theoretical attack on "cinema aestheticism", arguing that "aestheticism is equally alien to both proletarian artistic cinematography and proletarian instructive cinematography. Is it a transfer of the creative method of artistic cinematography? Yes, but someone else's, non-proletarian creative method. Therefore,

perhaps this method is bad, not because it is borrowed from artistic cinematography, but because it is alien, not proletarian” (Altshuler, 1932: 38).

Since in 1932 a real and sharp discussion was still possible (within certain ideological limits, of course) on the pages of the Soviet press, in the next issue the *Proletarian Cinema* gave the floor to the director D. Vertov (1896–1954), who, in response to the attacks tried to justify the accusations against him and, in turn, he himself accused one of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers’ members, film critic N. Lebedev (1897–1978), of Trotskyism (Vertov, 1932: 14).

N. Lebedev did not feel sorry for another documentary filmmaker, V. Erofeev (1898–1940): “So, the newsreel according to Lebedev in 1930 should only deal with “fixing events”, should turn into a means of apolitical information, and “actual topics will be the property of “Publicist Film Factory”. What political illiteracy, what ignorance! ... N. Lebedev cannot understand that, despite the difference in the degree of generalization of the material (resulting from the difference in the nature of the newsreel publication, subject matter and footage), both periodical chronicle and non-periodic newsreel films fulfill the same political tasks, are made on the same documentary material with the help of the same means of production” (Erofeev, 1932: 20-21, 23).

Realizing that serious accusations were made against him (one “Trotskyism” was worth something!) film critic N. Lebedev hastened to answer D. Vertov and V. Erofeev on the pages of the same *Proletarian Cinema*, angrily attacking his “documentary” opponents: “Now “documentalism” – as a creative trend – is no longer there – it has decomposed alive from ideological decay. It is a corpse. But this corpse has not yet been thrown into the dustbin of history. And the “aroma” of his reader had the opportunity to feel on the previous pages, in the articles of D. Vertov and V. Erofeev. There is no one to discuss the former “documentaryism” with. But it still needs to be exposed. This is necessary in order to fight for the purity of the Marxist-Leninist theory of cinema, it is necessary to re-educate those rank-and-file members of this group who are beginning to understand where the former theories of the former “documentary” were leading (Lebedev, 1932: 24).

At the same time, the Soviet film theorist N. Lebedev, not embarrassed by phrases far from academicism, argued that V. Erofeev falsely concluded that he was “a supporter of newsreel,” as a means of apolitical information. Where did Erofeev get this nonsense from? What finger did he suck it out of? (Lebedev, 1932: 28). As we can see, even in theoretical articles of that time it was possible to use, in fact, “bazaar” vocabulary...

The most theoretically important article in *Proletarian Cinema* in 1932 was the work of S. Eisenstein (1898–1948), who had returned from a long trip abroad. In an article titled “Lend!” S. Eisenstein wrote: “I am very upset by the talk about “entertainment” and “entertainment”... something opposite, alien and hostile. ... To capture, not to entertain, to supply the audience with exercise, and not to squander the energy brought by the viewer with them. ... As long as we had exciting pictures, we didn't talk about entertaining. Didn't get bored. But then the “capture” was lost somewhere. The ability to build exciting things was lost, and they started talking about entertaining things. Meanwhile, one cannot realize the second without mastering the method of the first. ... To build cinematography on the basis of the “idea of cinematography” and abstract principles is wild and absurd. Only from a critical comparison with more staged early spectacular forms will it be possible to critically master the methodological specifics of cinema” (Eisenstein, 1932: 19-29).

Thus, S. Eisenstein tried (largely contrary to the ideological dominance imposed “from above”) to pay attention to the spectacular nature of cinema and the need to “catch” the attention of the masses.

Criticism of superficial sociological approaches to the study of the audience was at the center of L. Skorodumov's article “The Spectator and Cinema” (Skorodumov, 1932: 49-61). Several theoretical articles in *Proletarian Cinema* in 1932 were devoted to the professional aspects of the work of screenwriters (Kapustin, 1932: 26-31), animators (Khodataev, 1932: 44-49) and film actors (Mogendovich, 1932: 32-39).

In 1932, *Proletarian Cinema* attacked the theories of bourgeois cinematography, bringing in for this film critic and writer B. Balázs (1884–1949), who at that time worked in Moscow, and film critic E. Arnoldi (1898–1972).

B. Balázs in his article “The Ideology of Bourgeois Cinema” reminded readers that “capitalist film production naturally requires maximum sales. It must go towards the ideology of the broadest masses, while at the same time not abandoning its own. In pursuit of profitability, it is compelled to address itself to the “lower” strata, but only to those whose intellectual and emotional needs it can

satisfy without harming the interests of the ruling class. Consequently, we can talk about the masses, which are least aware of their own interests. First of all, philistinism is the widest market for sales also because its thinking is not inherent in one social stratum. Petty-bourgeois psychology is still alive in a section of the proletariat, in a very large section of the intelligentsia and the big bourgeoisie. In cinema, they are all united by one feeling. And that is why European and American cinematography is ideologically wholly oriented towards philistinism, and not only because the philistine, the petty bourgeois, can afford cheap pleasure. The tradesman is deprived of a clear class consciousness. He, therefore, will not reject everything that is contrary to his economic and social interests” (Balázs, 1932: 32-33).

In a similar vein, he appeared on the pages of *Proletarian Cinema* and E. Arnoldi. In his article “Sound Cinema in the Theories of Western Formalists,” he emphasized that “in America, bourgeois cinematography relies on broad sections of the philistine audience. For the most part, the film acts fairly straightforward. Theoretical and critical shots are guided by the same philistine audience and are grouped around yellow magazines with frank sensational tabloid and advertising installations. The attention of the moviegoer is directed towards unhealthy interests; the ruling class lulls his critical thought, educates him in terms of a superficially sensational attitude towards cinematography. Due to general conditions, revolutionary Marxist theory and criticism of art in general, and cinematography in particular, are in the period of formation and initial deployment of forces, in the conditions of a difficult struggle with the ideologists of the ruling class and representatives of the interests of the petty bourgeoisie of various shades. As a result, the cinematographic theoretical sector in America is distinguished by its quantitative insignificance and low qualitative level. There is a distinct utilitarianism in the approach to cinema art, a desire not to evade the problems of an applied technological order and a tendency to “entertainment” of presentation in order to attract the top of the mass audience” (Arnoldi, 1932: 40-41).

Further, E. Arnoldi extended the ideological thread from Western film studies to Soviet formalism: “We do not know Western cinema well. Even worse we know his theories. Meanwhile, they are of considerable interest. Of course, they are in no way suitable for transplanting onto Soviet soil. But a critical study of them, an acquaintance with the enormous material collected by bourgeois theoreticians, problems that were incorrectly resolved but curiously posed, could be of some use. But the most significant interest of these works is that there, to them, beyond the Soviet border, the roots of the theoretical constructions of our Formalists and other theorists, who are trying to smuggle bourgeois smuggling into Soviet film criticism, go. Knowing enemy positions is the best weapon to fight. Unfortunately, given our current conditions of acquaintance with Western cinema and the established attitude towards it, such arming of our theoretical thought is rather difficult” (Arnoldi, 1932: 41).

Taking into account the trends identified by the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) “On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations” (Resolution ..., 1932), already in the first issue of 1933, the journal *Proletarian Cinema* changed its name to a more generalized and “nationwide” one: *Soviet cinema*, having regained its monthly periodicity. At the same time, it remained for the time being an organ of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers. The responsible editor V. Sutyurin (1902–1985) also kept his post (also for the time being).

In 1933, the journal continued its line of harsh criticism of formalist approaches in cinema.

Director S. Yutkevich (1904–1985) chose as his target the work of the “malicious formalist” L. Kuleshov (1899–1970), emphasizing that montage was once called the “philosopher's stone” of cinema, and it was fiercely defended both in theory and in practice as a dominant moment in the specifics of the new art. At first it was a healthy and progressive phenomenon, but in the later stages of the growth of Soviet cinema, this theory of the “dominant montage” turned into a ballast that dragged cinematography into a quagmire of bourgeois theories. ... Indeed, was it worth making a “revolution” in order to return in practice to the imitation of American detective stories (*Ray of Death*), borrowing everything from this genre except for its most important and obligatory feature — entertaining” (Yutkevich, 1933: 8).

Further, S. Yutkevich, from the standpoint of the the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) “On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations” (Resolution ..., 1932) and socialist realism, very negatively assessed the so-called “poetic cinema”, the supporter of which, as you know, was director A. Dovzhenko (1894–1956): “Soviet cinema lost its audience for a while. The notorious “language of cinema”, for the purity of

which zealous innovators fought so hard, was defined as the language of poetry, painting, etc. Frames were turned into rhymes, chanted like poems, defined as easel movies, the rhythm of montage was defined as the only "free" possibility of their purely compositional cohesion. The "abstruse" cinematography was created. The "self-made" frame, like the "self-made" word in its time, is what the last of formalism tried to defend themselves with. Mistakes, slips of the tongue by great masters, inevitable in any genuine creative work, in any search for new ways of expressing socialist art, were immediately introduced into a dogma, a rule, a recipe. Materialism, non-objectivity, the denial of man, the reduction of the actor's role to a "typical" puppet or "sitter" – everything was woven into a crazy tangle, which with barbed wire "specificity" protected from the onset of reality" (Yutkevich, 1933: 12).

No less menacingly accused L. Kuleshov of formalism and Americanism by screenwriter and film critic M. Bleiman (Bleiman, 1933: 48-57; 51-60).

The theater expert N. Volkov (1894–1965) criticized L. Kuleshov on two theoretical positions at once: "on the functions of editing and work with the actor: the head could be borrowed from one actor, the hand from another, and the figure from a third, and all this, thanks to the dexterity of editing, could create the impression of one and the same person, that is, the viewer was not aware of this arithmetic of the parts of the human body. Kuleshov came to erroneous conclusions. However, while remaining on healthy creative ground, it is quite correct to interpret the actor's film image as a combination of a game actually taking place in front of a movie camera with those imaging techniques that the director and cameraman apply to the actor not only to document him, but in order to elevate the image of the actor to a new, more important artistic height" (Volkov, 1933b: 59-60).

A voluminous theoretical article by the film critic N. Lebedev (1897–1978) "On the specifics of cinema" (Lebedev, 1933: 71-80; 67-73; 48-62) was also devoted to the irreconcilable struggle against formalism: "It is precisely in the identification of ideological production with material production that one must seek an explanation for the fact that for many years we have tried to direct the production of film according to the principles used in the production of matches, furniture and dishes. And this led the "film factories" to "incomprehensible" (for their leadership) breakthroughs and production defeats. It is here that one of the main reasons for the vitality of formalist theories in our cinematography, identifying the screenplay with "raw materials" and "semi-finished products", and the film actor with scenery, accessories and other "materials" "recycled by the factory." For if films are produced in factories, then there must be "raw materials", there must be "semi-finished products", there must be "material", and so on. ... So, the question of what kind of social phenomena – ideological or material should cinema be attributed to, can only have one answer – ideological" (Lebedev, 1933: 74, 76).

Film critic N. Iezuitov (1899–1941) was quite in solidarity with such an ideological and class approach to cinematography: "What are the general conclusions reached by Soviet art science in the doctrine of style? First of all, style is the unity of content and form of art. In contrast to bourgeois art history, which defined style formally, either as the sum of artistic techniques or as the sum of formal features, Soviet science sees class content as formalized in style. Not the content is simple, but precisely the content is formalized, not the content is indifferent and abstract, but the content that has become the product of artistic creativity. Style, therefore, is not what artists and poets want to say about themselves in the language of broadcast declarations, but what is obtained objectively, in practice. ... The complete identification of style with the worldview or creative method of the artist, which is often found among us, obscures the real connections between art and philosophy. Style is a product of a worldview, it is the ideological and artistic result of applying a creative method to the material of reality, the content of style is determined by a class worldview, but the worldview itself is not style. ... style content is class content. This means that the method of cognizing reality in a given stylistic system expresses the ideology of a certain class" (Iezuitov, 1933: 40-41).

Being under strong pressure of criticism accusing him of formalism, S. Eisenstein in his article also emphasized that "the basis of the director's activity is to reveal, reveal and build images and phenomena of class reflected reality in contradiction. It defines the entire method. And in the method of teaching, we kind of reproduce the evolution of the very method of consideration in contradictions, which at the first stages arises from contradictions in consideration" (Eisenstein, 1933: 60).

In his article "The New Quality of Dramaturgy", director A. Medvedkin (1900–1989), contrary to the film theorists who were fond of form, argued that "the art of socialist realism is the

art of the greatest truthfulness. It does not tolerate random, unreasonable positions, unmotivated actions, unlawfully developing characters. Only subject art can satisfy all these aesthetic needs. The plot of cinema also contains a creative solution to the problem of entertainment. The film, captivating the viewer with sharp and exciting plot situations, will enjoy success and love from our viewers. However, the requirement of a plot in itself does not yet determine the new quality of Soviet dramaturgy into which it must develop. The demand for the veracity of Soviet art sets before the Soviet screenwriter the task of a detailed and deep knowledge of the issue that he solves by means of art. This knowledge cannot be limited only to the knowledge of the terminology of certain production processes. It should be based on a comprehensive study of human behavior in the most diverse conditions of reality" (Medvedkin, 1933: 15).

The main theoretical work published in the *Soviet Cinema* in 1933 was, in our opinion, the article by B. Balázs "Sound Cinema" (Balázs, 1933: 62-74).

Reflecting on the nature of sound cinematography, B. Balázs dwelled in some detail on such aspects of it as "auditory performance", sound space, silence, noise, sound angle, close-up, influx, montage, etc., and eventually suggested (and, as it turned out just a few years later, he assumed incorrectly) some further parallel coexistence of silent and sound cinema: "Will sound cinema completely supplant silent cinema? Will color-sound cinematography be and remain the last and final achievement? ... One thing seems to me, in any case, logically necessary: silent cinema, as long as it is possible, will be relegated to its original, purely visual realm. Displaced from the field of human relationships, dramatic conversational plots and actions to subjective-associative, to absolute cinema. Only when the silent film differentiates itself into an essentially distinct art form can it again be resurrected next to the sound film. There is no turning back to silent cinema, but I believe in a forward direction, to a new, even more developed silent cinema" (Balázs, 1933: 74).

In November 1933, the *Soviet Cinema* changed its editor: instead of V. Sutyryn (1902–1985), a former party functionary came to this post: K. Yukov (1902–1938). He was the Secretary of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, editor of the magazine *Cinema Front*, head of the scenario workshop *Sovkino*, deputy chairman of the board of the Society of Friends of Soviet Cinematography, member of the bureau of the film section of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, executive editor of the newspaper *Cinema*. Contrary to the editorial policy of his predecessor, K. Yukov took a course towards simpler language and understandable to the general readership of film reviews, communist party propaganda materials (including those actively citing I. Stalin) and sharply reduced the share of theoretical articles about cinema.

The most theoretically significant article of the *Soviet Cinema* in 1934 was the work of S. Eisenstein "E! On the Purity of Cinematic Language" (Eisenstein, 1934: 25-31), where he attempted to give a conclusive answer to many "proletarian" critics of his theory of montage: "For many, montage and the left-wing bend of formalism are still synonymous. ... Montage is not like that at all. For those who know how, editing is the strongest compositional tool for embodying a plot. For those who do not know about composition, montage is the syntax for the correct construction of each particular fragment of the picture. Finally, montage is simply the elementary rules of film orthography for those who mistakenly compose pieces of a picture ... In films, there are separate good shots, but under these conditions, the independent pictorial qualities and dignity of the shot become their own opposite. Uncoordinated by montage thought and composition, they become an aesthetic toy and an end in itself. ... We are by no means for the "hegemony" of montage. The time has passed when, for pedagogical and educational purposes, it was necessary to make some tactical and polemical excesses, in order to widely master montage as an expressive means of cinema. But we must and must raise the question of the literacy of film writing. To demand not only that the quality of montage, cinematographic syntax and cinematic speech should not be inferior to the quality of previous works, but that it should exceed and surpass them – this is what the cause of struggle for the high quality of film culture requires of us. ... It's time to raise the problem of the culture of film language again in all its sharpness. It is important that all film workers speak out about this. And above all, the language of editing and shots of his films" (Eisenstein, 1934: 26, 31).

The second most important theoretical article of the *Soviet Cinema* magazine in 1934 was the work of B. Balázs "The Dramaturgy of Sound" (Balázs, 1934: 15-24). In it, B. Balázs came to the conclusion that "sound became an organic element of the film only when it received a dramatic function. ... At first, sound received a dramatic function as a material for films in general. Then he received a dramatic function in the plot, in the plot of films. After some time, they understood and

began to apply the dramatic function of sound in a separate scene. And finally, the significance of which has not yet been sufficiently appreciated – in a separate frame. True, these four forms merge in montage into one organic whole of form, but still they are different forms with different laws of construction, with completely different principles of composition. And just because of the appearance of a new element – sound – the special character of each form became completely clear” (Balázs, 1934: 16).

The rest of the theoretical articles of the *Soviet Cinema* in 1934 were no longer so significant.

For example, the fight against formalism, now in film studies, was continued by N. Lebedev (1897–1978) in his program article “On Research Work in Cinema” (Lebedev, 1934: 43-49): “What are the most relevant scientific research problems today? First of all, the problems of film dramaturgy, the problem of the specifics of the script and its texture, the problem of the plot and composition of films in general, the problem of film genres, the problem of staging literary works. ... There is a lot of work to be done here to clean up the film-theoretical stables from the *Left Front of Art*’ formalist manure, on the one hand, and from the husks of *Russian Association of Proletarian Writers*’s bends, on the other. Serious work is to be done here to expose the mistakes of plotless intellectuals, supporters of “montage of attractions”, and so on. ... The leadership of cinematography must resolutely turn its face to scientific work and help it materially and organizationally” (Lebedev, 1934: 49).

Literary critic S. Dinamov (1901–1939), in the spirit of a simplified interpretation of the foundations of socialist realism, argued that “showing a happy life of cheerfulness and confidence of the builders of socialism is a necessary condition for a good and strong plot on the topics of our reality. This raises the question of the ending. We do not need the false and false “happy ending” of contemporary bourgeois writings. Of course, there are catastrophes, failures, difficulties, personal hardships, but the future belongs only to the working class. ... We need plot art, in which the depth of ideas, the perfection of form, the relevance of the subject, the artistry of the language would merge into one with a clear and intense development of the action” (Dinamov, 1934: 8).

And the film critic N. Iezuitov (1899–1941) wrote that “external brilliance, cinematic pyrotechnics, witty writing will never be able to breathe true entertainment into the film. The true entertainment of a film can be found only in the dramatic integrity of the work, in the high artistic unity of the elements that make up the dramaturgy, in ideological tension” (Iezuitov, 1934: 120).

The last issue of *Soviet Cinema* in 1934 opened with a photo portrait of I. Stalin, and ended with a portrait of S. Kirov (1886–1934), who was killed on December 1, symbolically marking the end of another stage in the history of the USSR and the beginning of the era of “great terror”.

The first issue of the *Soviet Cinema* for 1935 was the last in which it was designated as the organ of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers. Apparently still hoping to maintain the status quo, K. Yukov once again assured the “party and government” of devotion to the new course outlined by the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) “On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations” (Resolution ..., 1932), drawing attention to the fact that “the Soviet film critic must be first and foremost a theoretician of cinematography. A theoretician not in the sense of the ability to build complex logical formulas, but a theoretician in the sense of a deep knowledge of the entire practice of cinematic art, the ability to generalize experience, the ability to disassemble a work of cinematic art in its specific images, technological manifestations. The Soviet film critic is a type of art theorist who, knowing his job deeply, must be ahead of the creative processes that are emerging in Soviet cinema art. The Soviet film critic must be able to foresee hostile tendencies in the development of art and mobilize the attention of creative forces to eliminate these tendencies” (Yukov, 1935: 13-14).

But it was already too late: it was decided to put an end to the too “left” Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers (albeit with some delay): in January 1935, at the First All-Union Conference of Creative Workers of Soviet Cinematography, it was decided to dissolve the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, and already in the second issue of the *Soviet Cinema* it was indicated that he became the organ of the Central Committee of the section of Creative Workers of the Central Committee of the Cinema Union (later – the Central Committee of the Cinema Union).

In the third issue of *Soviet Cinema* for 1935, a theoretical article by E. Zilber and I. Krinkin “Overcoming Empiricism” (Zilber, Krinkin, 1935: 6-10) was published, in which they tried to prove the need for an ideological struggle not only against formalism, but also naturalism in cinematography: “The irreconcilable position of socialist realism in relation to naturalism is one of

its fundamental differences from bourgeois realism, within which naturalism had its firm and legalized place. The path to the style of socialist realism lies through overcoming the remnants of capitalism in the minds of people, through overcoming empiricist-naturalistic ideas about reality, about people's destinies. ... The deadly one-sidedness of empiricism is in its straight forwardness and unambiguity, in the fact that the development of the vicissitudes of individual destiny appears as a continuous "necessity", as an exact and only possible replica of the objective course of things. The result is not a unity of the general and the individual, but an identity, a complete coincidence, impoverishing both reality and the individual. As a result, not a typical character rich in content is born ... but an outwardly characterized type (jealous, ambitious), which degrades to a stamp. This is how the types (and clichés) of the wrecker, the enthusiast, the elderly conscientious worker, etc., were born in our time, to which we can now oppose typical individuals: Chapaev, Maxim" (Zilber, Krinkin, 1935: 7-8).

In his next article, I. Krinkin continued this topic, but in combination with sharp criticism of "groupism", "leftism" and "agitprop", recalling that "at one time, as a reaction to formalism, our cinematography appeared theory of the so-called agitpropfilm. This theory actually abolished or, in any case, reduced the role of cinema as an art to a minimum. Representatives of this theory saw the main task of cinema in popularizing various campaigns by cinema, in filming the political slogans of the day. Along with this theory, the ideas of the *Left Front of Art* were inculcated in the cinema, who preached an immediate response to any events of the day, requiring a one-day work. ... In the practice of artistic cinematography, these theories were expressed in a deliberate disregard for form, in a frontal display of any life phenomena, in a schematic opposition of "positive" and "negative". This is how the images of "100 %" virtues and "100 %" villains were born. ... The resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist party of April 23, 1932 put an end to both the theory and practice of "propaganda". But echoes of it are heard in many movies. ... The main trouble with this kind of movies is that they contain extremely few observations of life and even fewer thoughts about what is being observed. They skim the surface of phenomena" (Krinkin, 1936: 17).

But, of course, the journal did not forget the criticism of formalism in cinema and film studies. So A. Mikhailov argued that "the few works on general issues of cinematography that appeared in previous years were largely created under the sign of formalism. Whether we take the collection of Leningrad art historians "The Poetics of Cinema" (1927) and Kuleshov's book "The Art of Cinema", or turn to Western publications, we can equally establish their dependence on the formalist school of art theory. A characteristic feature of these works was the desire to consider cinema only from the point of view of its formal methods, ignoring its ideological and cognitive significance. The doctrine of montage as the essence of cinema and the subordination of content to montage, the doctrine of "estrangement", of a special perspective on the presentation of material as the main task of the director, the consideration of cinema as a new formal artistic language of gestures and the absolutization of the laws of silent cinema (hence the struggle of formalists against sound cinema and in particular against the word in the film), the denial of the role of the plot, the plot in the film – all this was unusually characteristic of the Formalists" (Mikhailov, 1935: 34-35).

A. Mikhailov also criticized the theoretical concepts of B. Balázs (Balázs, 1935), emphasizing that his "philosophical basis lies, first of all, in the fact that he considers art not as a reflection of the real world, processed by the creative consciousness of the artist, but as an organization really unorganized by the categories of art form. In other words, he stands on this issue not on the positions of Marxism, but on the positions of the formal sociological school and the subjective "organizational theory". ... The theory of cinema ... must rise to the level of a new stage of practice and get rid of the tendencies of formalism" (Mikhailov, 1935: 46-50).

At the same time, A. Mikhailov generally assessed the work of B. Balázs, rather positively: "Bela Balázs is undoubtedly one of the most interesting theorists and critics of cinema. Saturated with great material, replete with sharp characteristics of films, inquisitively seeking knowledge of the essence and methods of cinema, his works, for all their mistakes, were a significant and positive contribution to the creation of the science of cinematography. Let's hope that in the future this contribution from the point of view of Marxist aesthetics and the history of cinema will turn out to be even more significant and indisputable" (Mikhailov, 1935: 50).

In one of the following issues of the journal, B. Balázs published a theoretical article entitled "An answer to my critics" (Balázs, 1936: 39-45), where, admitting his mistakes, he resolutely dissociated himself from the reproaches of formalism that were very dangerous for him: "My the

point of view is directed against the formalism of the Avangard, against the subjectivism of the surrealists, against the bourgeois realism of trifles, and entirely for the socialist realism of Soviet arts. If it seemed to some of my critics that they found unconscious elements of formalism or subjectivism in some of the formulations of the book, then one could still argue with them. But if it is coolly asserted that the whole book is a polemical (hence conscious) program and declaration of the former Formalist group and therefore not needed, then this is more than a mistake. ... The main mistake of my book [“The Spirit of Film”] is its too aphoristic style. It gives rise to misunderstood formulations, insufficiently clear-cut conclusions, which therefore seem unconvincing and unsystematic. ... Having lost the scientific style, my work has lost scientific precision, the power of persuasiveness” (Balázs, 1936: 40-42).

At the same time, B. Balázs wrote that “on the whole, a detailed and conscientious article by Comrade Mikhailov (Mikhailov, 1935) put me at ease. I realized that the essential errors of the book did not stem from thoughts, but from imprecise formulations and partly from a wrong perspective, the result of my preoccupation with the problem of form. But I think that because of this I should not be enrolled as a formalist. We must not forget that form and style remain important elements in socialist realism as well. To reveal their real function is the task of my next theoretical work. But they should not only have meaning for the theorist, they should also give impetus to the artist. They stem from my practice of my art. At a higher level, they must again become art. ... I continue to work and will always be grateful to those comrades who, really working in the Marxist-Leninist way, will help me with their criticism” (Balázs, 1936: 45).

The film critic I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) (Weisfeld, 1936: 46-51) summed up the discussion on the theoretical concepts of B. Balázs in the journal, noting that from his statements “the conclusion naturally arises that socialist realism is a symbolic-abstract art, valuable not by the ideological and cognitive significance expressed in images, but by the semantic-metaphorical, propaganda-poster load of each individual frame. ... While arguing with the Symbolists and citing a number of indisputable thoughts about socialist realism, Balázs nevertheless ultimately asserts principles that are far from socialist realism” (Weisfeld, 1936: 50).

Further, I. Weisfeld recalled that “formalism saw in art only a hieroglyph, a symbol, a sign, “an attitude to the method of expression”, and not a living knowledge of reality in vivid images. Here are the roots of the theory of type and expressive material, and the negation of the actor associated with this; hence the exaltation of montage as the alpha and omega of cinema; definition of the plot as motivation for the reception; the fetishization of technological-handicraft techniques as the root cause of the style and figurative structure of cinema; the canonization of silent cinema and the rejection of sound, color, stereoscopic. All these foundations of “shaping” turned out to be wrong and harmful. But the traditions of formalism still live on among creative workers. They find their reflection, as we see, in cinema theory. The overcoming of these traditions, the further development of the Marxist theory of film art remains an urgent task” (Weisfeld, 1936: 50).

However, in the end, I. Weisfeld, on the whole, positively assessed the work of B. Balázs: “In an article about criticizing “The Spirit of Film”, Balázs clarifies his true positions and admits a number of erroneous provisions in his book (for example, an uncritical attitude towards intellectual cinema). The reason why we once again stopped at an analysis of a number of errors in The Spirit of Film is that Balázs does not criticize his errors decisively and consistently enough and strives to explain too much by the “aphoristic” style of literary presentation. The point is not at all to create some new scheme of interaction between form and content in art, as Balázs is trying to do. No wonder his scheme strongly smacks of scholasticism. It is much more important to establish the true errors arising from the underestimation of the figurative-cognitive essence of art in order to get rid of them more quickly. All criticism unanimously noted the significance and interest of “The Spirit of Film”, the sharp powers of observation of its author, and Balázs’s noticeable desire to free himself from the traditions and errors of the formalist persuasion. But Balázs is characterized by another feature, which is important for a researcher, for a Marxist. Balázs knows and, most importantly, loves the art of cinema, seeks to strengthen its authority, to promote the development of the style of socialist realism. This distinguishes Balázs from many Formalist theorists who treat cinema in an artisanal way, with false objectivism and skepticism. This is once again encouraging that Balázs will create the work that Marxist-Leninist theory expects from him” (Weisfeld, 1936: 51).

In January 1936, the *Soviet Cinema* journal, unexpectedly for many, was renamed *Cinema Art*. O. Kovalov believes that this renaming was due to the fact that “the authorities gradually took a course towards “sovereignty” and nationalism, which at first camouflaged under “people” and

loyalty to traditions – the Soviet “avant-garde” with its spiritual cosmos, the cult of individualism and internationalism was she has nothing to do. The convulsive change of names seems to reflect the instability of the time in which the magazine began to live – the transition from the relative freedom of the 1920s to the stronghold of the totalitarian system” (Kovalov, 2009).

Let's not forget that in the same January 1936, in the editorial of the *Pravda* newspaper entitled "Muddle instead of music" (Confusion ..., 1936), D. Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was sharply criticized, in which a course was clearly set on classical examples of art, and not on artistic experiments.

In 1936, the *Cinema Art* became an organ of the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Film Industry of the All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and, therefore, for many years acquired not an “association-public”, but directly state status.

In this regard, the editor of *Cinema Art* K. Yukov (1902–1938) published an article in which he “shot” at several targets at once (on the *Left Front*, formalism and naturalism in art and cinema): “In the struggle for the place of cinema among the arts, the first theoreticians of cinema tried in every possible way to flaunt all the advantages of cinema, stroke it, lubricate it, keep silent about its weaknesses. In different voices, they sang the incomparable possibilities and advantages of cinema. Formalism in cinema saw a mechanical means of fabricating art. *Left Front* saw cinema as a means of factography of reality. Naturalists and artisans of art saw in cinema the means of the easiest and outwardly complete reflection of reality. The imaginary lightness and simplicity of “work” in cinematography turned many heads. As a result, statements harmful to art have arisen that cinema does not need dramaturgy. The principle of shooting a picture without a script was proclaimed as a virtue and feature of the new revolutionary art. The theory of making films without an actor was asserted. The type replaced the actor, the actor turned into a type” (Yukov, 1936: 32).

However, further K. Yukov undoubtedly made a significant, from the point of view of canonical socialist realism, ideological mistake, recklessly approving the publication on the pages of the *Cinema Art* of an article (Zilver, 1936: 12-15), positively evaluating the script by A. Rzheshesky (1903–1967) *Bezhin Meadow*. According to this scenario, in 1935 S. Eisenstein staged a film of the same name, which on November 25 of the same year was sharply criticized by the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Industry. But officially in 1936, *Bezhin Meadow* was not yet banned (it happened in 1937), so a sharp blow to this film and an article about it was dealt the following year, when screenwriter and film critic N. Otten (1907–1983) reacted very negatively to the position of E. Zilver, “glorifying the script by A. Rzheshesky *Bezhin Meadow* and trying to reinforce the “theory” of the “emotional scenario” on a new basis and with new terminology (Otten: 1937: 30).

The most significant theoretical article in the *Cinema Art* in 1936 was the work of screenwriter and film critic N. Turkin (1887–1958) "Fabula and Characters" (Turkin, 1936: 37-52). It was practically out of ideology and did not contain an iota of "exposure" that was fashionable at that time. N. Turkin argued that “the driving force behind the events that make up the plot is a contradiction, a discrepancy between some interests, feelings, outlook on life, political ideals, etc. other interests, feelings, dominant morality, way of life, social order, political system, etc. – at the same time, a contradiction, reaching a conflict (collision), that is, a collision of contradictory acting forces. The development of such a contradiction or conflict in a dramatic struggle, in a progressive series of events, constitutes the event content of a dramatic work, its plot, its single action. Thus, the plot of a dramatic work (hence, a film play) is a single and complete action, representing the development of a conflict about a dramatic struggle – in a series of successive events – from an event that starts this struggle to an event that ends it in a happy or tragic way” (Turkin, 1936: 37).

Further, he reasonably argued that “the images of people (characters, characters of the play) are called characters in dramaturgy. Without a full-fledged, vivid depiction of characters, there can be no significant dramatic work. ... Thus, when creating a character, it is always important to determine: 1) what a person does (what he wants, what decisions he makes, what he implements); 2) how he does it (deliberately or impulsively, hesitantly or resolutely, enthusiastically or indifferently, cheerfully or grumblingly, etc., etc.); 3) how he differs from other characters in the play – in what he does and how he does it (a matter of clearly distinguishing characters, opposing them to each other)” (Turkin, 1936: 44).

From the typology of character characters, N. Turkin extended a thread to the genre system of a work of art, since “a particular method of characterization is usually associated with certain genres, is their feature. Ready-made simple images, sometimes very schematic, built on one line,

are characteristic of comedy ..., for melodrama (“drama of positions”), for adventurous drama. Complex images characterize realistic drama and realistic comedy of manners. Of course, the boundaries between genres are very often extremely conditional, therefore it is not only conceivable, but also happens in practice, that the images, for example, of an adventurous drama are psychologically complex (let us recall the complex images of Dostoevsky's "detective" novels); or melodrama (“drama of positions”), enriching its images with vivid realistic details, perhaps only with a brighter and more spectacular event fabric will differ from strict realistic drama” (Turkin, 1936: 52).

However, the film critic and screenwriter N. Klado (1909–1990), in his theoretical article “Around the Plot” (Klado, 1936: 40-46), reminded readers that the basis of “every film work is the script. Errors in his design often determine the failure of the picture. The call to build a plot on the principle of theatrical dramaturgy is wrong. Cinematography has its own means of expression. The basic principles of the composition of movie differ sharply from theatrical dramaturgy, the possibilities of which are determined in many respects by the stage, etc.” (Klado, 1936: 40).

In August 1936, the trial of the “Anti-Soviet United Trotskyist-Zinoviev Center” took place in Moscow, the main defendants in which were former rivals and frequent opponents of I. Stalin – G. Zinoviev (1883–1936) and L. Kamenev (1883–1936), sentenced on August 24 to an exceptional measure of punishment and literally a few hours after that they were shot.

On January 23-30, 1937, the process of the “Parallel Anti-Soviet Trotskyist Center” took place in Moscow, at which the former prominent Soviet Communist party and government figures were convicted by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR: N. Muralov (1877–1937), G. Pyatakov (1890–1937), K. Radek (1885–1939), L. Serebryakov (1888–1937), G. Sokolnikov (1888–1939) and others. On February 27, 1937, other prominent party and government figures were arrested: N. Bukharin (1888–1938) and A. Rykov (1881–1938). The former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs G. Yagoda (1891–1938) was also arrested.

As it turned out a little later, I. Stalin decided not to limit himself to the destruction of the civilian communist elite, which to one degree or another interfered with his sole unlimited power. On June 11, 1937, a trial took place on the "Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyist Military Organization" against former prominent military leaders of the Red Army: A. Kork (1887–1937), V. Primakov (1897–1937), V. Putna (1893–1937), M. Tukhachevsky (1893–1937), B. Feldman (1890-1937), I. Uborevich (1896-1937), R. Eideman (1895–1937), I. Yakir (1896–1937). All of them were shot on the night of June 12.

If in the late 1920s – early 1930s the victims of the authorities were mainly peasants who rebelled against collectivization, then in the second half of the 1930s the most resonant blow of repression fell on the Soviet (and not only the opposition) ruling elite, accompanied by much less well-known, but much more massive repressions against hundreds of thousands of citizens of the USSR who occupied less prominent positions.

Among them were many filmmakers. For example, in 1937-1940, many leaders of *Mosfilm* and *Lenfilm*, screenwriters, directors, cameramen, film actors became victims of the Power (see Appendix).

On October 29, 1937, the newspaper *Soviet Art* published a devastating article entitled “Clean up the *Mosfilm* studio” (Zverina, 1937: 6), the text of which gives an idea of the atmosphere that prevailed in the era of the “Great Terror”: “Quite recently, the main reason was revealed that the largest film factory of the Union is not fulfilling its production and artistic plan. It turns out that the now exposed enemies of the people, including the former director of the studio, were operating in the studio for a long time, systematically preparing the collapse of this largest film enterprise of ours. As a result of the ongoing system of wrecking actions, the *Mosfilm* studio came to the anniversary year of 1937 in a state close to complete collapse. The pests "planned" the production of 15 movies a year and stated that this was the limit of the factory's capabilities. But even this wreckingly low plan has been fulfilled this year by less than half. The leading directors of the factory were doomed to idleness all this year. ... Studio executives screamed heart-rendingly about script hunger. By this, apparently, they hoped to justify the gigantic "scenario expenses", which amounted to 744 thousand rubles for 10 months of this year. ... 11 million rubles were spent on the technical reconstruction of the studio. It is easy to imagine the quality of this "reconstruction" if it was led by the vile wrecker Slivkin. ... The activity of Sokolovskaya [she was the director of *Mosfilm* in 1937] was frankly aimed at slandering and slandering Soviet reality in films. Sokolovskaya did not act alone. She relied in her practice on people like Darevsky – a swindler and a clever

filmmaker. Ignoring the camera staff, Sokolovskaya chose her vile enemy Nielsen as her adviser. ... Such is the sad picture of the current state of the *Mosfilm* studios. We must resolutely, in a Bolshevik way, take up clearing and rehabilitating this largest of our film production bases” (Zverina, 1937: 6).

From this it is quite clear that K. Yukov (1902–1938), editor of the *Cinema Art*, struggled to prove (as it turned out soon – unsuccessfully) his devotion to the authorities.

In the second issue of the *Cinema Art* for 1937, K. Yukov wrote: “Renegades against Marxism-Leninism, against the heroic Soviet people who have defeated the capitalist system in their country, against victorious socialism flourishing in the Soviet country, against Lenin's party, against Lenin's best disciple, best friend and leader of all peoples, Comrade Stalin and his faithful comrades-in-arms. ... An eclectic mishmash instead of philosophy, empty phraseology instead of revolutionary theory, a deceitful "spectacular" pose instead of revolutionary actions – this is what always characterized the enemy of the people – Trotsky at all stages. These features of their "teacher" were fully accepted by Trotsky's henchmen, the organizers and participants of the anti-Soviet Trotskyist parallel center Pyatakov, Serebryakov, Sokolnikov, Radek ... – people whose malicious intent was directed against everything that the socialist country lives and will live in its historical development. They have lost their humanity. These are vile and poisonous reptiles. The human is just a mask for them. ... They stabbed in the back a country that was successfully building socialism. But, despite the cunning and deceit, the enemy is caught red-handed, convicted, exposed. The trial of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyist gang, as well as the fair verdict of the court that followed, were a call to quickly eliminate the consequences of sabotage and the misfortunes caused by the enemies of the people. ... The process of the anti-Soviet Trotskyist center obliges the creative workers of Soviet cinematography to take a closer look at the people around them. Greater vigilance is needed. Bolshevik vigilance must be imbued with organizational, creative and scientific work in the cinema. The theme of Bolshevik vigilance should resound in every image of every work of cinematographic art. ... The creative workers of Soviet cinematography with even greater perseverance, even greater energy, will create canvases worthy of a great people, its great party, beloved teacher, leader and friend of Comrade Stalin” (Yukov, 1937: 5-6).

K. Yukov emphasized his complete and unconditional loyalty to the authorities in his “theoretical” article “The Historical Decision”, published in the fifth issue of the journal *Art of Cinema*: “Five years have passed since the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks made a historic decision to restructure the literary and artistic organizations. Five years is not only an anniversary date, but such a historical period in the development of Soviet art, when you need to think again about the meaning and significance of the historical decision of the Party, test yourself, people and those areas of work that this decision concerns, fully reveal and expose criminal mistakes and perversions of the party line in the field of art, committed by the *Russian Association of Proletarian Writers* and its leaders. The victory of socialism in our country, the Stalinist Constitution, the growth of socialist culture during the frenzied struggle against socialism by the Trotskyist-fascist gang of murderers, the German-Japanese mercenaries, reveal in a new way the meaning and significance of the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations. The past five years have shown that in the leadership of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers there were not only people who were mistaken, who made frequent mistakes on certain issues in the development of Soviet literature and art, but also people who were hostile to the party and Soviet power with all their behavior. ... Instead of fighting for an active study of reality, for showing the truth of life and concrete reality, the “creative method of dialectical materialism” was put forward, leading away from these tasks. All this led to the fact that the artistic image, as the main property of every art, was ignored, reduced by Russian Association of Proletarian Writers's "theoreticians" to an empty abstract art criticism category. This eclecticism and "theoretical" hodgepodge confused many artists, knocked them off the right creative path, prevented the creation of bright, sincere, exciting canvases. Instead of rallying the creative forces around the tasks put forward by the party, gang action took root. All this led to the historic decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks to liquidate the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers. The influence of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers and its "theory" also affected cinematography” (Yukov, 1937: 20).

Further, K. Yukov stressed how harmful “the course to unite in the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers only representatives of the so-called proletarian cinematography and the so-called “allies” approaching it turned out to be. ... Instead of expanding its membership, instead of deepening its political and educational tasks, instead of uniting all the creative forces that stand on the platform of Soviet power, the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers embarked on the path of group and circle movement” (Yukov, 1937: 23).

K. Yukov also got it from his predecessor as the editor of the journal: “Sutyurin, being a kind of “plenipotentiary representative” of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers in the cinema, asserted the most harmful theory of political enlightenment film. This “theory”, on the one hand, and formalism, on the other, hindered the creative development of Soviet cinema. Under the patronage of Sutyurin and under his direct influence, the “theory” of the political enlightenment of the film not only led to a genre impoverishment of cinema art, but to some extent determined the working methods of some directors, screenwriters and critics. Often the script was created not according to the laws of the figurative development of the plot, not on the basis of the creation of typical characters in typical circumstances, not on the basis of a deep creative study of reality, but according to given schemes and theses. This characterizes the artistic direction of Sutyurin in the cinema. Being an opponent of clear organizational forms of work, Sutyurin opposed the director to the director, declaring the director the leading figure in film production. Sutyurin divided the single creative process of filmmaking into two processes: creative and technical. The organizational coherence and unity of the creative team were broken by the gap between the creative and technical process. Creativity, as the main and leading principle of the entire production process in cinema, was ignored by Sutyurin. Russian Association of Proletarian Writers did not discern in this whole line a tendency harmful to cinematography as an art, and was unable to offer decisive resistance to this whole line” (Yukov, 1937: 23).

It would seem that after such a defeat and taking into account the general situation in the country, V. Sutyurin was waiting for an inevitable arrest, but in reality it turned out differently. V. Sutyurin – with all the vicissitudes of his fate – lived until 1985. But K. Yukov was arrested on February 3, 1938 on charges of participating in a counter-revolutionary organization and sentenced to death, which took place on November 7 of the same year. The authorities at that time did not spare the “waste material”: a similar “execution” fate, as you know, befell, for example, the former People's Commissars of Internal Affairs of the USSR G. Yagoda (1891–1938) and N. Yezhov (1895–1940), for the time being until the time they ruthlessly performed the repressive functions of the state.

In 1937, in connection with the prohibition of the film *Bezhin Meadow*, a serious threat hung over its authors: screenwriter A. Rzheshesky (1903–1967) and director S. Eisenstein (1898–1948).

And here the editors of the journal *Cinema Art* (still under the leadership of K. Yukov) showed a complete understanding of the position of the authorities.

In the fifth issue of the journal *Art of Cinema*, an article was published by screenwriter and film critic N. Otten (1907–1983), where he lamented with ostentatious regret: “We have to return once again to the “theory” and practice of the “emotional script.” It seemed that the dead end into which this “theory” led became obvious to everyone. The loud words, the hype raised by the leaders of this “direction”, were consistently accompanied by the conservation of the works of the screenwriters of this group or the failure on the screen and the prohibition of films staged according to their scripts (*Ocean, Storm, The Way of Enthusiasts, Very Good Life, Five Dawns, By the Blue Sea* and, finally, *Bezhin Meadow*). There is an exactly repeating pattern in the fate of these scenarios, and the history of the two most loud-sounding scenarios by A. Rzheshesky – *Ocean* and *Bezhin Meadow*, as we will see below, is almost identical. This fate of all the works of the “emotionalists” without any additional analysis gave the right to the practical conclusion that the “emotionalists” are creatively fruitless. But along with this, from time to time there were serious, theoretically substantiated speeches, each of which was a complete defeat of both the general provisions and the practice of the “emotionalists”. ... the “emotionalists” themselves limited their functions to the obligation, in the terminology of A. Rzheshesky, to “emotionally infect” the director to work on the material. At the same time, the script ceased to exist as a fact of social significance beyond the indication of the material and the emotion evoked by the material in the screenwriter. The script became a personal affair of the author and director, understood only by the two of them, and therefore not subject to anyone's control” (Otten, 1937: 30, 33).

Further, N. Otten emphasized that “the decision to ban the film *Bezhin Meadow* is very significant for cinematography. It mobilizes for the elimination of the remnants of the “theory” and

practice of the "emotional script". Organizationally, this means: firstly, putting into production only those scenarios that are finished works of art; secondly, the need for an urgent organization of works on the history and theory of cinema, comprehending the past and thereby eliminating the possibility of endless "repetitions of the past"; and thirdly, the organization of the public to raise the quality of the script and to discuss it widely before putting it into production" (Otten, 1937: 35).

If N. Otten sharply criticized screenwriter A. Rzheshesky, then film critic I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) in his voluminous theoretical article attacked a much larger figure in Soviet cinema – S. Eisenstein: "*Bezhin Meadow* was created in an atmosphere of praise, a responsible film about the great battles for the socialist remake of the countryside, a film that, in the opinion of its apologists, was supposed to embody the pinnacle of socialist realism. The cinematic environment, criticism and film leadership showed in relation to S.M. Eisenstein and A. Rzheshesky a rare indifference and superficiality that lulled the vigilant, critical approach to the artist's creative work. It turned out that S.M. Eisenstein told lies about our collective-farm reality, about the movement of millions towards socialism under the leadership of the Communist Party. The film does not contain passionate hatred for the class enemy and genuine love for the hero of collective farm construction, which inspire the creation of great images. S.M. Eisenstein showed in his film an abstract clash of good and evil, endowed the class enemy with such features that make him an objectively noble bearer of his wrong but consistent philosophy, portrayed the goodies in terms of sacrifice. All this turned the film *Bezhin Meadow* into someone else's, cold, obviously politically untenable work. In addition, Eisenstein, who at one time was a standard-bearer in the struggle for Soviet art, whose films not only overthrew the traditions of Khanzhonkov's cinematography, but also affirmed the principles of the new art born of the October Revolution, in *Bezhin Meadow* demonstrated a regression in relation to the means of artistic influence by which he operates, and in combination with the ideological content of things and anti-artism" (Weisfeld, 1937: 25).

Having thus demonstrated his complete adherence to the point of view of the Power, I. Weisfeld further reminded the readers of the journal *Cinema Art* that "Eisenstein, as a director, is distinguished by the fact that he always theoretically comprehends his actions, that in his work he acts as an art historian, critic, who not only stages the film, but also checks the great art history positions that arise in the course of his theoretical work. Eisenstein the director and Eisenstein the theoretician are inseparable. We know that Eisenstein created *October* and *Old and New* on the basis of an outdated incorrect theory of intellectual cinema. And having become convinced of the failures of these films, Eisenstein was also convinced of the fallacy of his theory, which he now condemns with the stern verdict of a theoretician who has realized the falsity of his initial positions. Now the question arises, did Eisenstein accidentally break away from reality, from the living life of socialist society, or did he, as a theoretician, create for himself some kind of illusion, some kind of philosophical mirage that determined his wrong approach to making a film?" (Weisfeld, 1937: 26).

Arguing with S. Eisenstein, who was disgraced at that time, I. Weisfeld emphasized that "the theory of intellectual cinema was based on the denial of figurativeness and imagery, on ignoring the sphere of living human experiences, which were replaced by a productive set of editing combinations that arose after shooting on the editing table, outside and regardless of the scenario. This theory inevitably entailed not only a denial of the emotionality of artistic creativity and a work of art, but also devalued their ideological content, political tendentiousness, and a clear semantic orientation. Now Eisenstein, apparently, realized this, although he recognized intellectual cinema as a "one-sided theory", which, with one side of its own, can continue to positively influence the creative process, just like, say, in his opinion, poetics that arose from detective stories works of Fenimore Cooper, influenced writers such as Balzac, Hugo and Eugène Sue. Despite these unsuccessful attempts to justify to some extent the vitality of the theory of intellectual cinema in our day, it remains a theory that is incorrect, erroneous, and in its decisive points rejected by its author" (Weisfeld, 1937: 26).

At the end of his article, I. Weisfeld gave a kind of communist recommendations/instructions to the famous director: "The work of socialist realism arises not on the basis of a contemplative acquaintance with the facts of reality, but as a result of the active participation of the artist in building a socialist society. This combat function of the artist in the Soviet country contains the source of the great wisdom of his works, artistic expressiveness and that emotional strength that rests on hatred for the enemy, on love for his homeland, for his party. Eisenstein's theoretical scheme, which ignores reality, contradicts the true nature of artistic creativity. ... If Eisenstein wants to honestly and completely draw lessons from the failure of *Bezhin Meadow*, he must first of

all reconsider his theoretical views, understand the viciousness of these views set forth in the program of the directing department, where an extremely insignificant place is occupied by the problem of the image is the decisive and central problem of art. ... The prohibition of *Bezhin Meadow*, just like *Bogatyr*s, politically untenable and anti-artistic works, poses the problem of completely destroying and uprooting all remnants of formalism in artistic practice and theory. ... And since Eisenstein's "theory" is one of the sources of the failure of the production of *Bezhin Meadow*, Soviet art criticism and criticism, Eisenstein himself is obliged to expose it to the end in a combative way. ... Eisenstein will only then be able to truly reorganize if, in his next work, he shows the victories of the Bolshevik Party, its Leninist-Stalinist cadres over all the forces of the old society, and if this work is not carried out on the basis of "his" philosophical concept, excluding the figurative expression of a living reality, but on the basis of a truly partisan understanding of art, its combat role in the struggle for communism" (Weisfeld, 1937: 27-28).

One of the most active authors of the journal *Cinema Art*, S. Eisenstein, undoubtedly read this article, and, perhaps quite logically, suggested that this was not just criticism, but a signal for "taking the most stringent measures", with which 1937 was so rich ... But, most likely, the legendary *Battleship Potemkin*, which by that time had become the banner of revolutionary cinema, became the director's "protective certificate" in this case ...

However, the attack on S. Eisenstein continued further: in the seventh issue of the journal *Cinema Art*, the film critic G. Avenarius (1903–1958) took up arms against S. Eisenstein's theoretical views, arguing that "Eisenstein developed his theory, however, not on the basis of study of concrete reality, but in complete isolation from it. Therefore, all the formulations and provisions that he came up with could not give him the power of orientation and understanding of the internal connection of the surrounding events. Theorizing, Eisenstein did not at all seek to know the objective regularity of creative processes, moreover, very often he needed methodological calculations to explain, approve and motivate his own formalistic creative practice, in order, as he himself said, to "give clarity to the formal arbitrariness of the ideological formulation". (In addition, both in his articles and in the program of his course read at Institute of Cinematography, Eisenstein extremely uncritically used a number of modern "fashionable" theories and theories (Freudianism, Husserlianism, the philosophy of Bergson, etc.). As a result, contradictory theoretical positions and fragments of "fashionable" border of theories predetermined the political failure of his last film. Eisenstein the theoretician carried away the master Eisenstein. This is the great tragedy of the creative path of this undoubtedly very talented artist" (Avenarius, 1937: 40).

According to G. Avenarius, "Eisenstein understood the image not as a result of a complex process of cognition and reproduction of reality, but as a result of subjective selection, as a result of influencing frames and their comparison of some kind of "cinematic" conditions. ... Eisenstein's contradictory statements on various issues of the theory of the frame, arising on the basis of a confused, eclectic philosophical concept of it – statements that evolve from recognizing the frame as a "montage cell" to the assertion that "the frame as such does not exist at all", do not lead him to the correct one, dialectical understanding of the film frame, which, of course, cannot but affect his own theory of framing (i.e., montage proper)" (Avenarius, 1937: 42-43).

Further, following N. Otten and I. Weisfeld, G. Avenarius sharply criticized the banned *Bezhin Meadow*, while supporting the "correct" socialist realist films: "From the point of view of Eisenstein, the best episodes of *Chapaev* and *The Baltic Deputy* should be considered primitive, and the episode of "gods" in *October*, the episode of "wedding" in *Old and New*, the episode of "destruction of the church" in *Bezhin Meadow* – edited "truly associative combinations" ... All this abstruse philosophy of editing, built by Eisenstein, is an eclectic mixture of various terry idealistic theories. Eisenstein's montage theory is undeniably politically harmful and fallacious. This theory was the basis of his work on the script of Rzheshesky's *Bezhin Meadow*. Guided by this theory, Eisenstein distorted the images of the people of our homeland, drawing colors for their image not from modern reality, but from mythology (Pan, Baba Yaga) and the Bible (Samson, a youth). Soviet cinematography now faces a serious and urgent task – to create a truly scientific theory of montage on the basis of an analysis of the best Soviet realistic films" (Avenarius, 1937: 47).

Against this background, criticism of the theoretical views of the writer and screenwriter V. Volkenstein (1883–1974) and his book "Dramaturgy of Cinema" (Volkenstein, 1937) in an article by film critic S. Ginzburg (1907–1974) seems to be quite moderate: "The desire to create a new cinematic terminology based on theatrical terminology is a very big drawback of V. Volkenstein.

By comparing the dramaturgy of the theater with the dramaturgy of the cinema, one cannot establish all the richness and all the specific visual possibilities of each of these arts. V. Volkenstein completely discards the basic cinematographic concepts. As we have already pointed out, he refused to consider the frame as an element of dramaturgy. Later in his book, when speaking about the composition and elements of the composition of a cinematographic work, about the construction of a plot, Wolkenstein in every possible way bypasses another, no less important concept of cinematic theory – he does not say a single word about montage. And after all, montage is a specific form of constructing the plot of a cinematographic work unfamiliar to the theater” (Ginzburg, 1937: 59).

The most distanced article from the ideological conjuncture in the *Cinema Art* in 1937 was the work of the film critic and writer B. Balázs “On the problem of cinema style” (Balázs, 1937: 33-36). B. Balázs first gave an original definition of the key term of his article, arguing that “style is that special character of works of art, which reflects the individuality of the artist, class, nation and historical era. And all these features are reflected synthetically as a single style in each individual work of art, i.e. every work of art simultaneously expresses the style of the artist, the style of his class, the style of his nation and his era. At the same time, it is important to note that each work of art (if it only deserves this name) has its own style, in which its content is formally expressed. There is no such work of art in which the character of the artist, the ideology of his class, the peculiarities of his nation and era would not receive a more or less distinct (if not even immediate) formal expression. It is important to note that this style may not arise on the basis of preliminary theoretical considerations and even in most cases arises independently from them and is often investigated theoretically only “in hindsight”, as a fact” (Balázs, 1937: 33). And then he made a relevant conclusion to this day that “1) style and stylization are different principles of figurative transmission, but they can pass into each other; 2) stylization and realism in art are not mutually exclusive. An artist can stylize very strongly and still be a realist; 3) “natural” is not the same as “naturalistic”. Consequently, this is not an almost unformed copy of reality, but only a certain similarity in the image; 4) naturalness and stylization are two different artistic principles that can be combined in the same work of art. But the more stylized the work of art, the less natural it is” (Balázs, 1937: 34).

The first issue of the *Cinema Art* was ready for the print at January 1938. However, the real publication of this journal was delayed until 3 March, 1938.

During this time, the following events took place: on January 9, the *Pravda* newspaper published an article entitled “What hinders the development of Soviet cinema” (Ermolaev, 1938: 4), on January 18, Boris Shumyatsky (1886–1938), head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography, was arrested (he was shot five months later – 29.07.1938), on February 3, K. Yukov (1902–1938), the former editor-in-chief of the *Soviet Cinema* and *Cinema Art* were arrested (a number of filmmakers were also shot a little later) (see Appendix).

It is clear that the January article in *Pravda*, which mercilessly accused the leadership of the cinematography of crimes, could not have appeared without the knowledge of the authorities. Here are just the main excerpts from its text: “...the work of the film industry continues to be extremely unsatisfactory and causes fair sharp criticism from our public. The plan for the release of films from year to year is not fulfilled. ... The leadership of the cinematography management is not waging any struggle against the corruption that has taken on unprecedented proportions. ... It is absolutely shameful that the leadership of the cinematography management in the person of Comrade Shumyatsky brought cinematography to such a state that there are almost no feature films on the Soviet screen on such important topics vital to the country as the modern Red Army, the Stakhanov movement, socialist construction in the national republics, the Soviet woman, youth. ... A situation has arisen when there are ready-made scripts, unloaded studios, inactive directors, and the plan is not being fulfilled, and the viewer does not receive new films in the required quantity and on relevant topics. ... These results clearly show that B. Shumyatsky, head of the State cinematography management, was captured by the wreckers who made their way to the leadership of cinematography. ... Soviet cinematography can work better and produce many more pictures than it can now. We need a radical restructuring of the entire system of work, the immediate elimination of all the consequences of sabotage, which has taken deep roots in film organizations” (Ermolaev, 1938: 4).

The new management of the journal *Cinema Art* responded to these events with an editorial article, “Tasks of the Journal” (Tasks..., 1938: 12), in which they accused both the top of Soviet

cinematography and the editorial course of the publication under the direction of N. Yukov (1902–1938) of wrecking activities.

The article “The Tasks of the Journal” informed readers that “the exposed wrecking leadership of the State cinematography management did a lot to slow down the development of Soviet cinema. Along with the fraudulent projects of “Soviet Hollywood”, it propagated the theory of “the limits of the capacity of the existing production base, artificially lowered production plans and put the masters of Soviet cinema in such conditions that even this underestimated program was not carried out; it fought in every possible way against the creation of a healthy creative environment and in every possible way planted unprincipled groupism, sycophancy and protectionism; it wiped out young creative cadres; it destroyed screenwriting to such an extent that a screenwriting “hunger” was artificially created, and our best screenwriters were forced to move to work in other areas of artistic creativity; it suppressed any healthy criticism, opposing it with its group assessments of the creativity of individual masters and specific works. In theory, it cultivated bourgeois restorationism.

How did our cinematographic press, and in particular the *Cinema Art*, fight these hostile influences? I must answer honestly and directly: The journal didn’t fight enough, fought badly. The film press, and in particular the *Cinema Art*, cannot boast that it helped to expose sabotage in Soviet cinema, that it exposed bourgeois theories openly and brazenly promoted by B. Shumyatsky and his associates, that it helped to improve the creative environment, that she fought for the Bolshevik organization of film production. The *Cinema Art* preferred to keep silent than to evaluate the numerous books of B. Shumyatsky, in which he openly preached his bourgeois theories. ... The journal has moved away from these immediate political tasks and preferred to them the often toothless and belated review of individual films. The journal struggled insufficiently and badly for the improvement of film production – and this is another and very significant shortcoming of the journal. Cinematography is not only an art, but also a complex and highly specialized production. It is unthinkable to solve a single creative task of Soviet cinema in isolation from production tasks. And the system of a sharp separation of the creative and production process, the system of a kind of “functionality”, carried out by B. Shumyatsky both in his “theoretical” speeches, and in practice, was actually promoted by the journal, which almost abandoned the setting of production tasks.

These were the log errors. Poor “academicism”, detachment from the urgent tasks of Soviet cinematography and fear of sensitive issues led to the fact that the journal was deprived of Bolshevik passion, became apolitical, toothless, passed by the most acute political tasks and naturally broke away from the cinematographic community and did not have sufficient authority” (*Tasks ...*, 1938: 12).

After such sharp criticism and self-criticism, the editors emphasized that “this year the journal faces the most important task of resolutely restructuring all its work. Of course, the *Cinema Art* should by no means renounce the deep development of theoretical and creative problems. But precisely this deep development is possible only if they are studied in their entirety in connection with the solution of production problems. The journal must ruthlessly combat bourgeois restorationism in cinematic theory, resolutely expose the attempts to propagate bourgeois and bourgeois-nationalist views that took place in individual films and scripts. Relying in its work on the active workers of cinema, the journal must fight for the Bolshevik order in film production, for the final defeat of the limiters, for a sharp increase in the release of new films, for the complete mastery of cinematographic technology. The journal should fight for the Stakhanovist movement in cinematography, widely popularizing the successes we have of individual film crews (for example, work on the film *Lenin in October*). The journal must fight for the improvement of the creative environment and the wide promotion of new young cadres, both for creative work and for production, technical and organizational work. The journal should rally all workers of Soviet cinematography around the task set before it by Comrade Stalin of creating new films that “glorify, like *Chapaev*, the greatness of the historical deeds of the struggle for power of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, mobilize them to fulfill new tasks and remind both of achievements and of difficulties of socialist construction”(Stalin)” (*Tasks...*, 1938: 12).

This editorial article was supplemented by the article “On the ‘limits’ and possibilities of Soviet cinematography”, which noted that “from year to year, Soviet cinematography has not fulfilled its production plans for the release of films, despite the fact that these plans, undoubtedly, were underestimated by the State cinematography management and far from did not exhaust the production capacity of the studios. But even the understated plans still turned out to be

"overwhelming" for the State cinematography management. ... The disclosure of sabotage in cinematography really suggests that the main goal of the saboteurs who made their way into Soviet film organizations and in particular into the central apparatus of the State cinematography management was precisely to reduce the number of Soviet films and thereby undermine the role and significance of our cinema both at home and abroad" (Dubrovsky, 1938: 23).

Cinema Art published and the Resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On improving the organization of the production of motion pictures" dated March 23, 1938 (Resolution..., 1938: 7-8), which stated that "in the organization of the production of feature films, there are major shortcomings leading to systematic non-fulfillment of the film release program, mismanagement, squandering of public funds, the production of a large number of defects, the rise in cost and delay in the production of films" (Resolution..., 1938: 7), and therefore it is necessary "to limit the functions of directors according to scripts mainly to the development of directorial scripts. Film studios should start releasing directors from their unusual functions as screenwriters and switching them to work in their specialty. ... to compact the working day in film studios, with the loading of pavilions in three shifts, using the 3rd shift to install the scenery" (Resolution..., 1938: 8).

But the main event in the USSR in the first quarter of 1938, of course, was the trial of the anti-Soviet "bloc of Rights and Trotskyism" held on March 2-13, conducted by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR. The main defendants in this case were former prominent party and government figures: N. Bukharin (1888–1938), A. Rykov (1881–1938), N. Krestinsky (1883–1938), H. Rakovsky (1873–1941), former People's Commissar Internal Affairs G. Yagoda (1891–1938) and others. Almost all of them were shot.

The editors of the *Cinema Art* journal, like practically the rest of the Soviet press, responded to this process with an angry editorial titled "The Fascist Reptile Destroyed": "With a feeling of immeasurable anger, the peoples of the Soviet country and the working people of the whole world learned about the monstrous and disgusting crimes of the eternally damned, a bloodthirsty gang of conspirators, fascist dogs – Trotsky, Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda and their henchmen, plotting to turn back the history of mankind, take away from the 170 million Soviet people all their conquests, a happy, prosperous and joyful life and give it to be torn to pieces by capitalists and fascist bandits. Having absolutely no grounds for counter-revolutionary anti-Soviet activities in our country, these bastards from the "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites", who are in the service of foreign intelligence services – the Gestapo, Intelligence Service, etc., carried out the will of the latter, prepared sabotage, espionage, wrecking and by terrorist acts, the overthrow of the Soviet system and the dismemberment of the great and mighty Soviet Union, setting itself the goal of wresting Ukraine, Primorye, Belarus, the Central Asian republics, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan from the USSR in favor of the fascist states, and restoring capitalism in our country. Their atrocities are monstrous and unheard of. The heart beats faster, the fists clench when you read the indictment and the testimony of the bandits at the trial.

It was they – the chief bandits from the fascist gang – Trotsky, Bukharin and their company back in the spring of 1918, together with the "left" and right Socialist revolutionaries, organized a secret conspiracy to overthrow the Soviet government, arrest and kill V.I. Lenin, I.V. Stalin and J.M. Sverdlov – the closest, dearest and most beloved leaders of our people and all working people. On August 30, 1918, they organized the villainous attempt on the life of V.I. Lenin. ... It was they – these fascist spies, bandits and murderers Trotsky, Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda and other participants in the anti-Soviet conspiracy – who killed the favorites of the people S.M. Kirov, V.R. Menzhinsky, V.V. Kuibyshev and A.M. Gorky. They killed the beloved son of A.M. Gorky M.A. Peshkov. It was they, these vile vile dogs from the "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites", beasts in which there is nothing human, who organized and prepared the murder of our wise, great and beloved I.V. Stalin and his best associates V.M. Molotov, K.E. Voroshilov, L.M. Kaganovich, N.I. Yezhov and others. A shiver runs through the body when you learn about the insidious, terrible and gravest crimes that these bandits committed together with the tsarist guards, provocateurs, "Left" and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and bourgeois nationalists. ... But their insidious plans failed, they failed to enslave the free Soviet people. Our glorious intelligence, led by the faithful son of the people, the best Stalinist – N.I. Yezhov, uncovered this conspiratorial gang in a timely manner and presented it to Soviet people's justice in all their bestial guise. The Supreme Court fulfilled the will of the 170 million people – the fascist gang was wiped off the face of a happy, joyful Soviet land. The same fate will befall all those who will still try to sharpen their swords against our mighty

socialist motherland. The defeat of the Trotsky-Bukharin-Rykov fascist gang is the greatest victory of our people, of our great party of Lenin and Stalin. It mobilizes us again and again to increase Bolshevik vigilance, to master Bolshevism, to the final uprooting and extermination of all enemies of socialism, under whatever guise they hide. Having wiped out a gang of fascist reptiles from the face of the earth, the Soviet people, rallied around the great, invincible party of Lenin-Stalin, around their beloved leader and teacher Comrade Stalin, confidently and firmly continue their glorious path of struggle and victories – forward and forward to communism! (*Fascist...*, 1938: 5-6).

At the same time, in 1938, the *Cinema Art* published articles more familiar to its specialized status.

S. Yutkevich (1904–1985) once again spoke out in support of social realism, emphasizing that “if directorial cinematography created only individual works, then the task of cinematography at a new stage is to create such a base for a broad realistic style that would allow pictures to be counted not by units, but dozens, which would create a school of Soviet cinema, a school of art of socialist realism. This requires both creative disputes, and the reorganization of production, and much greater attention to theoretical issues, and, finally, an obligatory critical study of the historical heritage. Disregard for theory has affected us in a kind of nihilism with which we approach everything that has been done in the history of world cinematography. ... The real creativity of the director, from my point of view, is not in inventing staged effects, it can be realized and tested only at a live meeting with the actors. The most difficult thing is here, in this room, without scenery or any other effects, just to set up a stage” (Yutkevich, 1938: 50, 56).

S. Yutkevich was echoed by S. Gerasimov (1906–1985): “Now the director’s task is to find ways to create a large acting team in the cinema, such a team that could fully satisfy the lawfully grown demands of our art, help our Soviet film actor take a leading place in world cinema. The Soviet film actor must concentrate in himself, with the nobility and clarity of the task, such a wealth of performing qualities, such a versatility of the pictorial scale, that any actor of the West, who to this day captivates us with the ease of acting and the elegance of the drawing, would recede into second place. ... the education of an actor not from the outside, but from the inside has become the main principle of all our work. The theory of photogenicity has logically fallen away, the theory that held back, deadened, entangled cinematography. The actor becomes freer, and there is no need to be limited by what has been achieved, because realism is unlimited from our point of view, it provides unlimited possibilities” (Gerasimov, 1938: 47, 52).

Film expert N. Klado (1909–1990) wrote approvingly that “The Government Resolution puts creative workers of cinematography in the places characteristic of their profession. Long dispute resolved. The film director will direct the films, and the film writers will write the scripts. There is no diminution of the director's rights in this. This does not mean that all directors have written bad scripts. On the contrary, many beautiful films were created according to scripts written by directors. It only means that people who consider directing their calling, who have chosen this particular path of life, should receive opportunities for maximum creative disclosure in this particular profession. This means that the director must be so busy with work in his main specialty that he will have no time to write a script, just as a screenwriter should have no time to stage films. The ruling does not deny the authorial participation of the director in the creation of the film, but this participation is limited to the directing work itself” (Klado, 1938: 53).

However, the most significant theoretical work published in the journal *Cinema Art* in 1938 was an article by screenwriter and film critic V. Turkin (1887-1958), practically devoid of ideologization, entitled “On the Film Plot and Screenplay” (Turkin, 1938: 28-31).

In it, V. Turkin, in our opinion, reasonably emphasized that “the plot for cinema in terms of its volume and structure is closest to a dramatic short story and a theatrical play. It should be based on a dramatic conflict that is serious enough in its content and tense enough in terms of the degree of its expression. This conflict should be revealed primarily in the behavior, in the actions of the actors. But there is a rather significant difference between stage action and cinematographic action. In cinema, thanks to its technique of close-up photography, the possibilities of action are richer and more varied. Small gestures, the smallest movements of the face, a barely perceptible sigh, a quietly thrown word, which from the stage would hardly have made an impression, would have gone unnoticed” (Turkin, 1938: 28).

As a result, V. Turkin gave a reasonable definition of the main elements of the film's plot: “In its simplest form, the scheme for unfolding a dramatic plot is as follows: the outbreak of a conflict – a catastrophe – a denouement. In a more expanded form: exposition (introduction into

action, initial display, setting, actions, first acquaintance with the characters and their preliminary characterization, preparation of the plot) – the setting of the action (i.e. conflict relationships between the characters) – the ascending growing action of the culmination, if it is in the script, – the culmination (i.e. the moment of the highest tension of the action in the middle of the action, the decisive turning point in the action) – the subsequent increasing movement of the action towards the catastrophe (i.e. the last decisive clash of the acting forces at the end of the action) and, finally, the denouement (in which the results of the dramatic struggle that took place are briefly shown, their dramatic relationship is “unleashed”)” (Turkin, 1938: 30).

From January to September 1938, the journal *Cinema Art* was published without indicating the name of the editor; only the editorial board appears in the imprint of this period (without listing any names). In October, the journalist A. Mitlin (1902–1941) was appointed editor-in-chief of the journal.

At the end of 1938, another important state event took place, which significantly influenced a new round of ideologization of the press. The Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks “On the organization of party propaganda in connection with the release of the Short Course in the History of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks” of November 14, 1938 noted that “in the propaganda of Marxism-Leninism, the main, decisive weapon should be the press – magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and oral propaganda should occupy a secondary, auxiliary place. The press makes it possible to immediately make this or that truth the property of all; therefore, it is stronger than oral propaganda. The splitting of the leadership of propaganda between the two departments led to a belittling of the role of the press in the propaganda of Marxism-Leninism and, thereby, to a narrowing of the scope of Bolshevik propaganda, to amateurism and disorganization. ... To note the isolation of our theoretical journals from the pressing issues of life and the struggle of our party, their self-closure and tendencies towards academicism. Oblige editorial boards of theoretical journals to restructure their work” (Resolution..., 1938: 9, 11). Propaganda work was considered in a similar vein during the XVIII Congress of the Communist Party held on March 10-21, 1939.

The editors of the *Cinema Art* duly responded to the “communist party call” to intensify the ideologization of the press with the editorial “The Tasks of Soviet Film Criticism” (Tasks..., 1939: 5-6): “The main drawback of our criticism is that it did not become the leader of Soviet cinema artists that it does not help them well (and sometimes does not help at all) to comprehend their own experience, to understand achievements and shortcomings. Criticism often passively registers (“this is bad, but this is good”), and does not generalize. She views films as isolated phenomena at best in connection with the general development of this or that artist, but she almost never sees behind them the expression of those deep processes that determine the path of all Soviet socialist art. Therefore, the significance of such criticism turns out to be unimportant for the artist. A playwright, director, actor can still find in critical articles correct assessments of individual elements of their work, but they will not find an analysis of the ideological and thematic task they have set for themselves, they will not find out to what extent the style of the work corresponds to this task. ... The second drawback of criticism – not all, of course, but part of it, and, moreover, the least – is timidity, fear of direct and clear assessments, a tendency to reasoning built according to the scheme “on the one hand, one cannot help but confess, on the other hand, one must admit”. Such, so to speak, “creative method” of criticism “leads to the fact that other critical articles are perceived by the reader as a kind of rebus. The reader can never find out how the author relates to this or that work, whether he likes it or not. The fear of direct and clear assessments is essentially a consequence of the inability to analyze the work, its theme, the consequence of ignorance of the material of the work. ... Unfortunately, our criticism is characterized by excessive good nature. It sometimes justifies the ideological and artistic weakness of a work by the importance of the (sometimes purely external, formal) theme posed in it, the novelty of the genre, the youth of the artist, etc.” (Tasks..., 1939: 5).

The editors of the *Cinema Art* were convinced that the Soviet “critic should be the leader of the artist. He must have more knowledge than the artist, his logical thinking must not be lower than the emotional thinking of the artist, he must see farther and wider. Therefore, the struggle to raise the ideological and theoretical level of Soviet film criticism, which will allow it to overcome its shortcomings and rise to the level of the best achievements of our art, is of such importance” (Tasks..., 1939: 5-6).

But the communist party ideological peak of the 1939 in the *Cinema Art* journal was a “theoretical” article by the film critic N. Lebedev (1897–1978) entitled “Stalin and Cinema” (Lebedev, 1939: 18-21). N. Lebedev, who did not get tired of fighting the “film opposition” reminded that “everyone remembers the theories of the formalists who denied the importance of an entertaining plot in the cinema, neglected to work with the actor, called for the construction of films according to the method of “installation of attractions”, for the replacement of the actor “typical” and “sitter”. Comrade Stalin gave instructions on the need to create highly ideological films with a strong entertaining plot and talented acting. Only under these conditions will the viewer be captured by what is happening on the screen, only then will the ideological essence of the work reach him” (Lebedev, 1939: 20).

But the main thing is that in his article N. Lebedev proclaimed that “Stalin's definitions of the high role of masters of art as “engineers of human souls”, the style of our era as “the style of socialist realism”, which includes elements of revolutionary romance, the need for a dialectical combination in our art national forms with a socialist content are not only a huge contribution to the aesthetic theory of Marxism-Leninism, but also practical instructions to artists for the most correct movement forward. ... The greatest thinker and brilliant strategist of progressive mankind, Comrade Stalin, is at the same time the best friend of art, the best teacher and educator of film masters” (Lebedev, 1939: 18, 21).

The scale of mass repressions began to gradually subside after N. Yezhov (1895–1940), the former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR, was arrested on April 10, 1939.

In the same year, the most important events of the decade took place on the international arena: on August 23, 1939, the “Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union” was concluded, and on September 1, the Second World War began with the German invasion of Poland.

The first issue of the journal *Cinema Art* for 1939 opened with a fundamental theoretical article by S. Eisenstein (1898–1948) “Montage 1938” (Eisenstein, 1939: 37-49). Her appearance was due to the fact that the director completely rehabilitated himself in the eyes of the authorities by staging the military-patriotic film *Alexander Nevsky*, the successful premiere of which took place on December 1, 1938.

As fate would have it, *Alexander Nevsky* became the only film by Sergei Eisenstein to be released in theaters in the 1930s. The reliance on the actor's type, “vertical montage” and “montage of attractions”, characteristic of Eisenstein's silent cinema, gave way here to a frank film opera, in which, however, there were no arias, but Sergei Prokofiev's music sounded powerfully.

At the same time, N. Cherkasov, who played the role of Prince Alexander Nevsky, believed that Eisenstein wanted to stage a picture “military-defense in content, heroic in spirit, party in direction and epic in style” (Cherkasov, 1953: 124). It is no coincidence that the film was perceived in those years as a hint of an impending military clash with Germany, which was to give a fitting rebuff...

However, neither the costume theatricality, nor the conventionality of texture (due to production necessity, many winter scenes of the picture had to be shot in the summer) did not prevent Sergei Eisenstein from deploying impressive battle scenes on the screen. The famous massacre on Lake Peipsi was filmed especially effectively, which carried heavy-weight dog knights under the treacherous ice ... And Nevsky's famous phrase: “Whoever comes to us with a sword, he will die by the sword” in the 1940s turned into a battle slogan...

In the article “Montage 1938”, S. Eisenstein clearly and conclusively responded to the sharp criticism that had been leveled at him in previous years: “There was a period in our wine when montage was proclaimed “everyone”. Now the period when editing is considered “nothing” is coming to an end. And, not considering montage to be neither “nothing” nor “everything”, we consider it necessary now to remember that montage is just as much a necessary component of a film work as are all other elements of cinematographic impact. After the pro-montage storm and the anti-montage onslaught, we need to revisit and revisit his problems. This is all the more necessary because the period of “denial” of montage destroyed even its most indisputable side, the one that could never and never be attacked. The fact is that the authors of a number of films of recent years have so completely “dealt” with montage that they even forgot its main goal and task, which is inseparable from the cognitive role that every work of art sets itself – the task of a coherently consistent presentation of a theme, plot, action, actions, movements within the film episode and within the film drama as a whole. Not to mention the excited story, even a logically coherent, simply coherent story in many cases is lost in the works of even very outstanding

filmmakers and across the most diverse film genres. This requires, of course, not so much criticism of these masters as, above all, a struggle for the culture of montage, which has been lost by many. Moreover, our films are faced with the task of not only logically coherent, but precisely the most excited emotional story. Installation is a powerful help in solving this problem. ... One extreme was the fascination with the questions of the technique of combining (montage methods), the other – the elements to be combined (the content of the frame). More attention should be paid to the very nature of this unifying principle. That very beginning, which for each thing will equally give birth to both the content of the frame, and the content that is revealed through this or that comparison of these frames” (Eisenstein, 1939a: 37-38).

In the same year, the *Cinema Art* published another important theoretical article by S. Eisenstein – "On the Structure of Things", where he again defended his creative principles and argued that “composition in the sense that we understand it here is a construction that primarily serves to embody the attitude of the author to the content and at the same time make the viewer relate to this content in the same way. ... the connection of my eccentric theater with my pathetic cinema is deeply consistent and organic, no matter how unexpected it may look at first glance!” (Eisenstein, 1939: 14, 16).

Against this background, the theoretical article of another famous director – V. Pudovkin – looked like a kind of "work on the mistakes." V. Pudovkin (1893–1953) wrote that “the leading and basic style of our Soviet art is socialist realism. The best weapon in the fight against alien formalistic and naturalistic tendencies in art is the living practice of realism. This living practice is just the Stanislavsky system” (Pudovkin, 1939: 35).

An attempt to combine the experimental Soviet cinema of the 1920s with the socialist realist cinema of the 1930s was contained in the article “Dramaturgy of the Historical Revolutionary Film” (Nesterovich, 1939: 22-25): “The skill of the screenwriter is mainly expressed in the following: 1) the idea; 2) the plot organically develops from the main idea of the work: nothing should be introduced from outside in the form of journalistic annotations; 3) the idea of the work is visually concretized in images; 4) the idea of the work should be revealed not in words, but in situations, and the dialogue should become their organic manifestation; 5) clear, precise, impactful dialogue develops the action and moves it; 6) each image is developed to the extent required by the development of the main idea of the work. No matter how interesting an individual image may be in itself, a screenwriter who wants to create an integral, complete work must subordinate it to the main idea, otherwise he risks creating a portrait gallery, and not a work of art. The form of a work in all its minor details must be determined by the idea of the work. Philosophically speaking, the form must be adequate to the content. ... Soviet cinematography has in its arsenal two types of original Soviet dramaturgy. The first completed type is the *Battleship Potemkin* and *We are from Kronstadt* with the development of a collective mass psychology, which is revealed against the backdrop of major historical events. The second type of Soviet dramaturgy, initiated by *Chapaev*, either approaches the historical chronicle or constitutes a complete historical genre, like *Lenin in 1918*, with its inherent development of images of individuals and their worldview against the backdrop of major social phenomena” (Nesterovich, 1939: 22, 25).

Quite recently, the film critic I. Weisfeld, who spoke sharply about the work of S. Eisenstein, in 1939 appeared on the pages of the *Cinema Art* with a theoretical article devoid of polemics, in which it was argued that “a detail in its dramatic function is one of the strong expressive means that leaves deep impression on the viewer. But not only this function is limited by its value. The ability to master the detail is the ability to see the world at close range, in all its unique concreteness. The more vigilant, the sharper the eye of the artist, the more observant he is, the brighter the image he created, capable of impressing the viewer (reader). ... The development of a culture of detail is the problem of overcoming schematism, because schematism is, first of all, the absence of nuances and details that make up an integral artistic image” (Weisfeld, 1939: 37, 45).

The articles, modest in their theoretical contribution, were not oversaturated with ideology: “Construction of an Episode and a Scene” (Sokolov, 1939: 50-55), “Hyperbole in the Cinema” (Luchansky, 1939: 26-30), “Film Music and Its Theorists” (Volkov-Lanit, 1939: 39-43).

With the appointment in the summer of 1939 of the former party functionary I. Bolshakov (1902–1980) to the post of chairman of the Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, a tendency was outlined in the Soviet cinema to increase the number of feature films produced (57 in 1939 against 44 in 1938). At the same time, the film

directorate, in accordance with government directives, once again turned to filmmakers with a demand to create "correct films".

An editorial article by the *Cinema Art* titled "Let's improve the quality of Soviet films!" (Let's..., 1940: 3-4) proclaimed: "Our cinematographic community, our film critics, who are indebted to the art of cinema, should have pointed out to these artists the true cause of their mistakes. Analyze these errors. When evaluating films, proceed from the only criterion of criticism – reality, from a comparison of the content of the films with the life of our country. But this only true criterion has been largely lost by criticism, it has been replaced by narrowly professional assessments. Critics often judged films only by how cleverly they built the plot or portrayed characters that were unusual in character. Of course, the skill of building an intrigue, the ability to present the characters in all their individual characteristics is extremely important. But it decides, determines the value of a work of art, first of all, the political purposefulness and significance of the ideas invested in the work, the fidelity of the artist's eye, his observation, the ability to see and reflect reality in its development. Each of our films must have a precise political focus. He must mercilessly smash the enemy and passionately propagate the new that is growing, winning and has already won in our country. This must be understood by those unfortunate "critics" who are trying to push our artists onto the path of superficial originality, imitation of false and meaningless bourgeois films. Such aesthetic critics must be given a resolute rebuff" (Let's..., 1940: 3).

The points contained in this editorial were developed in full in an article titled "Let's Raise Film Criticism to the Heights of Cinematography" (Nesterovich, 1940: 44-46).

This article began polemically pointed: "A critic is a more qualified spectator". This view of the role of the critic is so ingrained in cinematography that not only creatives, but critics themselves are beginning to view their profession in this way. There is nothing more false, more harmful both to the growth of criticism and to the cause of cinematography than such a view. In the critic, it generates a sense of irresponsibility. Indeed, if the critic is only a spectator, although he is "more qualified" (this does not change the essence of the matter), then what demands can be made of him and what can he give? After all, critical work for him is not a profession, not a serious occupation that requires great knowledge and relevant skills, but "inspirational", free digressions and the field of cinema. But, apparently, a critic-spectator with the same sense of responsibility can make his critical excursions into other areas of art. What a serious person, accustomed to respecting his judgments, would talk about color, color, light, and so on in movie, if he does not feel competent in these matters? In order not to be ridiculous, this person will not call himself a critic and will not judge the pictorial merits of the work, but at best will express judgments about the general idea of the work, leaving the rest to be judged by a specialist. But the complexity of critical activity lies not only in understanding specific expressive means and evaluating their use by the artist. The main task of the critic is to analyze the idea of the work, to parse it, in a kind of verification of the correctness of the picture that the artist has created. The analysis of a cinematographic work is therefore even more difficult than the analysis of works of other arts, because of the synthetic character of cinematography. But when it comes to cinema, it turns out that everyone can consider themselves competent, ready to sign up for criticism and "authoritatively" evaluate the work on the film. There is nothing surprising in the fact that such tastefulness, which characterizes a number of articles about films, is often covered up by the surprising and strange "scientific" nature of their construction, juggling with scientific terminology, giving the appearance of analysis to the most superficial and hasty assessments. This lightweight, incorrect point of view on the tasks of film criticism, unfortunately, was also reflected in the works of the critics themselves. This point of view determined the taste in many articles devoted to cinema, substitutions for serious analysis, ideological analysis of the work, i.e. the most important decisive task of criticism is peremptory and by no means conclusive assessments" (Nesterovich, 1940: 44).

As a result, the conclusion followed that "the main task of criticism is to educate the artist ideologically, to awaken his theoretical thought, helping him to understand the people and events depicted by him. We have pointed to one side of the activity of criticism, which is directed to the needs of the artist. The other side should face the viewer. The ideas of the film need to be conveyed to the viewer, you need to help him understand the work of art in a deeper and more versatile way. This is an important cultural and educational task of criticism. ... The critic must penetrate the figurative structure of the work and analyze the idea in its complex cinematic form. ... Critical articles are a responsible political matter. They must creatively help the artist and educate the taste

of the mass audience. We need to raise film criticism to the level of the heights of our cinematic art” (Nesterovich, 1940: 46).

In this context, the theater critic B. Reich (1894-1972) emphasized that “I know only one unconditional law in the art: truthfully depicted reality must be rich in inner dynamic life. If this indisputable condition is met, then the work has a certain artistry, and even without strict observance of all the laws of dramaturgy or cinematography, it makes an impression on the reader or viewer. ... The form of dramatic art is obvious. In the drama, people are given who act directly; therefore, the character of a dramatic representation can be imagined as if the events, thoughts, inner motives, actions – with their consequences – of all the actors (and not just one person) were instantly sketched in the process of their development. ... in *Chapaev, Great Citizen, Deputy of the Baltic*. Why did the creators of these films manage to create such images? One of the reasons is the understanding that participation in the great conflicts of our age leads to the identification and formation of characters, that where strong characters are at work, conflicts reach greater intensity” (Reich, 1940: 5, 8).

In connection with the state directive to shoot for the audience not only ideologically verified films, but also tapes of entertainment genres, four theoretical articles on the comedy genre were published in the *Cinema Art* in 1940.

Director S. Yutkevich (1904–1985) drew the attention of readers that “the comic film is fraught with a huge variety of creative techniques, is, as it were, a laboratory of inventiveness, expressiveness and cinematic skill. We have every opportunity to create this laboratory. We have splendid comic actors, inventive directors, inventors of funny tricks who will help at first the collective of comic actors, and, finally, we will also find poets of the funny, who later, having become infected with the charm of these comic images, will create for them a worthy support, thereby pushing the boundaries of the genre, and will create that high comedy, the appearance of which we so long for. And, most importantly, we have many millions of cheerful and happy Soviet people who have created their own heroes and insistently demand that the folk cinema reflect their aspirations in the great art of the funny. What are we missing? What is missing is continuous practice, which is the only way a comic film can grow. We lack confidence in the masters of the funny, who not only need to be allowed, but need to be pushed, helped, directed their talent, invention, will and mind to uninterrupted experimental work” (Yutkevich, 1940: 18).

Film expert I. Sokolov (1902–1974) recalled that “in a comedy, characters can be positive or negative. They should evoke sympathy and antipathy in the viewer. It is impossible to say dogmatically that only positive characters should be shown in Soviet comedy. Both the layman and the real hero can equally be characters in the Soviet comedy. The good character in comedy is an extremely important and difficult problem. Showing a negative character is easier than showing a positive character. A positive character in a comedy must be a real and charming person” (Sokolov, 1940: 24).

Further, I. Sokolov presented a typology of comic techniques for constructing an episode, a scene and a detail, which is absolutely not outdated today: “the discrepancy between reality and illusion violates our ideas about real things; the discrepancy between the object and its purpose shifts and breaks the usual relationships of things and causes laughter; the discrepancy between reason and effect will create ridiculous exaggerations and distortions; the discrepancy between cause and effect breaks and turns upside down the real relations of things; the discrepancy between the goal and the means will create unjustification, alogism and even idiocy in the behavior of the characters; the discrepancy between the figure of a person and his act creates the most unexpected characteristics of the character; mixing big and small is one of the most common comic devices; the combination of the incompatible creates the possibility of playing with concepts” (Sokolov, 1940: 21-23).

Film critic I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) in his article focused on the construction of a comedic intrigue, denoting that “under intrigue is generally understood to mean the mainspring of the action, such a way of organizing it, which is expressed in the struggle of one character or group of characters against another character or groups of actors. Moreover, the intrigue gives the action continuity and dynamism, which arouse the viewer's interest in it throughout the film. ... The comedic intrigue will be the more interesting and vital, the deeper and brighter the conflict between the characters is planned. By working out the expressive means of film comedy, the artists of the Soviet cinema will be able to discover, first of all, the breadth of outlook, the brightness of philosophical generalizations, observation, accuracy and fidelity of intonation – the intonation with

which they talk about the remarkable properties of a person of the era of socialism” (Weisfeld, 1940: 38, 40).

Literary critic and film critic E. Dobin (1901–1977) devoted his article to the problems of eccentricity, believing that “it would seem that an eccentric has the ability to sharply and strongly reveal deviation from the norm, the comic or tragicomic nature of this deviation. The extraordinary strength of Chaplin's eccentricity lies in the fact that the artist, with bitter laughter, stigmatizes the abnormality of the norm of the capitalist world order. An eccentric can have both philosophical vigilance and psychological depth and generalizing thought – this is what Chaplin teaches” (Dobin, 1940: 51).

It would seem that in his theoretical article “Typical and Exceptional,” F. Karen completely insured himself against any attacks, arguing that “the most typical characters that can most deeply and comprehensively reveal the most typical features of our time, our people, our spirit, are images of such exceptional and extraordinary people like Lenin and Stalin. In the same way, the images of Kirov, Chapaev, Shchors, Sverdlov, Dzerzhinsky created in our art are typical to a high degree” (Karen, 1940: 34).

However, the philosopher I. Astakhov (1906–1970) in his article “On typical characters and speculative theories” accused F. Karen of “operating with a speculative method: he takes as a starting point not real life, the artistic reflection of which is a typical image, but something exactly the opposite. The starting point for him is the “type”, constructed by him “logically and speculatively”. Further, he suggests that the artists of the word and cinematography “clothe this type in the flesh and blood of a specific image ... endow it with features”, etc. In other words, F. Karen first takes a clean, i.e. speculative abstraction, and then offers to fill this abstraction with life. This is the method of speculative idealistic philosophy, which takes “pure nothing” as its starting point, i.e. speculative representation, and then fills it with known content. “Pure nothing” as a result of “becoming” turns into a speculative “something”, in turn, “something” becomes “being”. ... F. Karen does not understand that the creative process can proceed from the individual to the general and vice versa, and denies both. He does not understand that a typical character is an artistic generalization of the essential phenomena of life, and not a logically speculative category. He adjusts the most diverse epochs under the same standard of “extraordinary and exceptional”, he does not understand that the great theory of Marxism-Leninism teaches us to approach the phenomena of life and art not abstractly, scholastically, not speculatively, but concretely historically” (Astakhov, 1940: 31, 33).

Another theoretical article by I. Astakhov was devoted to the aesthetic subject and feeling. Here, in full accordance with the then ideological guidelines, it was stated that “capitalism, which has reached the present level of development, poses the most terrible threat not only to the material, but also to the spiritual impoverishment of the masses. Having become a gigantic brake on the spiritual development of the masses, capitalism turns its side deeply hostile to the development of the artistic demands and aesthetic abilities of the masses. Only the proletarian revolution is capable of destroying the gloomy prison of the people's spiritual vegetation, only it can bring the titanic possibilities of human rebirth out of captivity, only its victory ensures the unlimited improvement of aesthetic tastes, needs and the objects corresponding to them” (Astakhov, 1940: 14).

In 1940, a discussion about the theory of the educational film also passed in the *Cinema Art* journal: about the characteristic and indispensable for the artistic image, and just the opposite of this – with the most complete elimination of everything that distinguishes a given specimen of the studied species from other specimens, all those random individual strokes and dashes, without which the artistic image is unthinkable (Toll, 1940: 62).

These views of B. Toll were sharply criticized by N. Zhinkin (1893–1979), who also specialized in popular science and educational cinema: “B. Toll not only explains why scientific cinema is not an art, but also explains where the harmful, in his opinion, idea that scientific cinema is an art came from. She finds, according to Toll, ground in the hidden traditions of our directors, who, like wolves – no matter how you feed them, all look into the forest – into artistic cinematography. ... A popular educational film sets itself not only educational tasks. He achieves their resolution through the use of plastic expressive means of cinema, i.e. means of art, giving a single fusion of thoughts and feelings. The situation is not that, comrade directors, if you like, use the means of art, but if you want, do not use them in scientific cinema. No. We quite consciously put forward the task of using these means: only their use allows you to create a film that leaves a

complete impression. ... And what does B. Toll offer us? Prohibit the directors of a scientific film from using the means of art. This, they say, is none of their business – every cricket know your hearth. With the slogan “Down with the art from the educational film”, B. Toll is trying to reverse the educational cinematography, to force it to abandon the correct paths it has outlined. You have to be yourself either very cold, a person who understands nothing about art, or very far from scientific cinematography, in order to put forward such an at least inhibiting thesis – away from art. ... By this we emphasize that we also do not believe that every film should be a work of art or be created by means of art. The fact is that a film, including a scientific one, can be art. It depends on the task set before the film” (Zhinkin, 1940: 52-53).

Literally in the next issue of the *Cinema Art*, B. Toll no less sharply replied to N. Zhinkin that he “misleads the reader, saying that Toll proposes to “prohibit the directors of a scientific film from using the means of art.” Equally wrong is the attempt to attribute to me the slogan "Down with the art from the educational film" (Toll, 1940: 63).

In this dispute, the editors of the *Cinema Art* took a conciliatory position, emphasizing in the final article that “for the true masters of scientific cinematography, who work in this field in principle and with love, it is not the name that is important, but the essence of the work and the struggle for quality. And when the pedagogical quality of educational films reaches the level of the best works of artistic cinematography, then the dispute about the term will lose all expediency” (To..., 1940: 59).

The most significant theoretical works in the journal *Cinema Art* in 1940–1941 were again articles by S. Eisenstein (1898-1948).

In his article “Once again about the structure of things”, it was emphasized how important “it is exactly how the general dialectical position about the unity of opposites finds its application in the field of composition. It finds its expression in the circumstance that, under any given compositional conditions, both the direct solution and its direct opposite are equally true and impressive. This phenomenon takes place in the very treasury of human expressive manifestations – in nature itself. So, for example, in a moment of horror, a person not only retreats from what inspires him with horror, but just as often, as if spellbound, reaches out and approaches the one who instilled this horror. So "pulls" to itself the edge of the cliff. So "pulls" the criminal to the scene of the crime, instead of rushing away from him, etc. In a composition that draws its experience from the material of reality, these circumstances can be immediately detected even in the most trivial examples. If, for example, it is decided that a certain moment of the role should be spent on a frenzied scream, then it can be said with confidence that a barely audible whisper will act just as strongly in this place. If fury is resolved at maximum movement, then complete “petrified” immobility will be no less impressive” (Eisenstein, 1940: 27).

And in the article “Vertical Montage”, which is significant in volume, S. Eisenstein reminded readers that he wrote “in the article “Montage 1938”, giving the final wording about montage: “Piece A, taken from the elements of the theme being developed, and piece B, taken from there. However, in comparison, they give rise to an image in which the content of the topic is most clearly embodied ..., i.e. “Image A and image B must be chosen from all the possible features within the theme being developed, they must be so sought out that their comparison – precisely them, and “from other elements – evokes in the perception and feelings of the viewer the most exhaustive image of the theme itself...”. In this formulation, we did not at all limit ourselves to determining to which qualitative series A or B belonged, and whether they belonged to the same category of measurements or to different ones” (Eisenstein, 1940: 16).

And then S. Eisenstein compared cinematographic montage with an orchestral score: “So many lines of a musical scale, and each is given to the part of a certain instrument. Each partita develops by progressive movement along the horizontal. But no less important and decisive factor here is the vertical: the musical interconnection of the elements of the orchestra with each other in each given unit of time. Thus, by the progressive movement of the vertical, penetrating the entire orchestra and moving horizontally, the complex, harmonic musical movement of the orchestra as a whole is carried out. Passing from the image of such a page of a musical score to a sound-visual score, one would have to say that at this new stage one more line is added to the musical score. This is a line of visual frames successively passing into each other, which correspond plastically in their own way to the movement of music and vice versa” (Eisenstein, 1940: 17).

Among the few theoretical articles that the *Cinema Art* published in 1941, one can single out the work of film critic I. Sokolov (1902–1974), where it was proved that “dramatic conflict (internal

contradiction) does not consist in the fact that one opposite is mechanically passes into the other, not in the fact that, for example, victory (happiness) is on one side, and defeat (unhappiness) on the other, and that defeat (unhappiness) will be mechanically replaced by victory (happiness), but that one and the same moment is both a positive and a negative moment (for example, both victory and the possibility of defeat...), that opposites arise from within and pass into their opposite (for example, happiness arises from misfortune, victory is born from defeat, or vice versa). ... Dramatic conflict is a contradiction of opposites. Dramatic conflict is not an external contradiction, but an internal one. The bifurcation of the one (the divergence of two close principles) or the transition to the opposite (the convergence of two opposite principles) creates a dramatic conflict. A dramatic conflict (plot) is an internal contradiction of opposites, an internal emergence of opposites; the source of the dramatic conflict lies within the action, within itself' (Sokolov, 1941: 44, 48).

A certain surprise for the readers of the *Cinema Art* was the appearance in the March issue of an article by the recently persecuted and sharply criticized "formalist" L. Kuleshov (1899–1970) entitled "Culture of Director's Creativity". In it, the famous director and cinema theorist rightly drew attention to the fact that "the form of directorial scripts adopted at the studios is very outdated. The sound part of the picture is developed extremely approximately and primitively, no sketches of frames are made. The footage for all frames is usually set underestimated. There are no serious, thoughtful explications on the thing and its individual components. ... Most directors consider the use of new, more advanced scenario forms of directorial development and explication to be shameful, almost degrading to creative dignity, permissible only for students of the Institute of Cinematography. Attempts to use them are considered formalistic inventions or nonsense of dry, uncreative people. At best, a carefully crafted director's script and explications are welcome, but... for others, but for me, my creative individuality, this is not the case" (Kuleshov, 1941: 11).

In 1941, instead of the planned 12, only six issues of *Cinema Art* were published. The sixth issue was signed for printing on June 11, 1941, and on June 22 the Great Patriotic War began, interrupting the publication of this journal for four years...

5. Conclusion

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the first decade of the existence of the journal *Cinema Art* (1931–1941) showed that theoretical works on cinematographic topics during this period can be divided into the following types:

- ideologized articles by Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers' activists (1931–1932), emphasizing the dominant of "truly revolutionary proletarian cinema" and an uncompromising struggle against the views of any opponents (at that time, an active process of collectivization was still underway, causing resistance from the peasant masses) (V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, N. Lebedev and others);

- ideologically reoriented articles (1932–1934), written as a positive reaction to the Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations" (Resolution ..., 1932), many provisions of which (in particular, a clear indication that that the framework of the proletarian literary and artistic organizations... – narrow and hinder artistic creativity) have become a direct threat to the existence of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers; in their articles, the activists of the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers V. Sutyurin, K. Yukov, and others) – right up to the liquidation of this organization in early 1935 – tried to prove their necessity and loyalty to the "general line of the Communist party";

- articles containing sharp criticism of "groupism" (including among the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers), "leftism" and "agitprop", "enemies of the people" (1935–1938) (K. Yukov, A. Dubrovsky, I. Krinkin and others), although many prominent writers and cinematographers, including S. Eisenstein, joined the call to severely punish the "enemies of the people" in 1937–1938 outside the *Cinema Art* – on the pages of central newspapers);

- theoretical articles attacking various types of formalistic phenomena (primarily in the field of montage) in cinema and culture (1931–1941) (G. Avenarius, E. Arnoldi, M. Bleiman, M. Grigoriev, N. Iezuitov, N. Lebedev, A. Mikhailov, V. Nielsen, V. Plonsky, V. Sutyurin, I. Weisfeld, L. Voitolovskaya, N. Volkov, K. Yukov, S. Yutkevich and others); these attacks were not accidental, since as a kind of "islands" of creative freedom, experiments with form were alien and even

dangerous for the spread of the ideology of social realism by the Power in the USSR, as a unified method that leveled the individuality of artists;

- theoretical articles opposing empiricism, "documentaryism", naturalism and physiology, vulgar materialism, aestheticism, "emotionalism", defending Marxist-Leninist ideological and class approaches (1931–1941) (B. Altshuler, N. Iezuitov, I. Krinkin, N. Lebedev, N. Otten, V. Sutyryn, K. Yukov, and others);

- theoretical articles defending the principles of socialist realism in cinema (1933–1941) (G. Avenarius, S. Gerasimov, N. Lebedev, V. Pudovkin, I. Weisfeld, S. Yutkevich and others);

- theoretical articles criticizing bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1931–1941) (E. Arnoldi, G. Avenarius, B. Balázs, and others); to a large extent, they were close to the fight against the above "...isms";

- theoretical articles aimed primarily at professional problems of mastering sound in cinema (in particular, the dramaturgy of sound, music), editing, image, film image, film language (for example, the cinematic possibilities of the "zeit-loop" effect), cinema style, genre, entertainment, construction script (plot, plot, composition, conflict, typology of characters, typology of comic devices, etc.), acting, etc. (1931–1941) (B. Balázs, S. Eisenstein, N. Turkin, V. Pudovkin, N. Volkov, I. Popov, S. Skrytev, I. Sokolov, M. Tsekhanovsky and others);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideology and professional approaches to the creation of cinematographic works of art (1931–1941) (B. Balázs, S. Gerasimov, V. Pudovkin, S. Yutkevich and others).

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Appendix

The main dates and events related to the historical, political, economic, ideological, socio-cultural and cinematic context in which the publication of the journal *Cinema Art* was carried out in 1931–1941.

1931

The continuation of collectivization and the fight against the so-called "kulaks" (the active phase of which began as early as 1929), accompanied by a severe summer drought, which led to a significant decrease in the gross grain harvest (694.8 million centners in 1931 against 835.4 million centners in 1930).

January: as a result of the merger of the journals *Cinema and Life* (editor: J. Rudoy) and *Cinema and Culture* (editor: P. Blyakhin), the former political worker, journalist and organizer of film production V. Sutyurin (1902–1985) was appointed the editor of the journal *Proletarian Cinema*. Since the release of the first issue of this journal, the *Cinema Art* has been counting its history.

June 1: Premiere of the first sound film – *Start in Life* (directed by N. Ekk), which enjoyed great success with the audience.

S. Orelovich (1902–1937), a former Chekist and later organizer of film production, was appointed director of *Sovkino/Mosfilm*.

September: *The Society of Friends of Soviet Cinema and Photography* (until June 1930 it was called the *Society of Friends of Soviet Cinema*) was reorganized into the *Society for Proletarian Cinema and Photo*, the number of members of which reached 110 thousand.

Publication of an anti-Trotskyist article by I. Stalin in the journal *Proletarian Revolution: Stalin I.* (1931). On some questions of the history of Bolshevism. *Proletarian Revolution*. 6(113).

1932

February: dissolution of the central council of the society *For Proletarian Cinema and Photo*.

April 23: Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations", 23.04.1932.

April: publication of an article sharply criticizing the *Society For Proletarian Cinema and Photo* (S. Evgenov. (1932). Get the *Society For Proletarian Cinema and Photo* out of the impasse, rebuild work from top to bottom. *Proletarskoe photo*. 4: 11-15).

July 14: Resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on the liquidation of the *Society For Proletarian Cinema and Photo*.

October: one of the former political leaders of the USSR – L. Kamenev (1883–1936) – was expelled from the party for non-information in connection with the case of the "Union of Marxist-Leninists" and sent into exile in Minusinsk.

December: Beginning of mass famine in the USSR caused by collectivization and crop failures.

1933

January 12: The joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks decided to purge the party and stop admission to it in 1933 and on the "anti-party group" of the former People's Commissar for Supply of the RSFSR N. Eismont (1891–1935), former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the RSFSR V. Tolmacheva (1887–1937) and others. At the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks I. Stalin announced the liquidation of the "kulaks" and the victory of socialist relations in the countryside.

January-March: continuation of mass famine in the USSR caused by collectivization and crop failures.

January: *Proletarian Cinema* journal is renamed into *Soviet Cinema* (this renaming was most likely due to the fact that the authorities headed for the unity of "the entire Soviet people", without the former ideological emphasis on the dictatorship of the proletariat).

February 11: Resolition of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On the organization of the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Industry under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR". B. Shumyatsky (1886–1938) was appointed head of the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Industry.

November: former party functionary, responsible Secretary of the Board of the *Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers*, editor of the journal *Cinema Front*, head of the scenario workshop *Sovkino*, deputy chairman of the board of the *Society of Friends of Soviet Cinematography*, member of the bureau of the film section of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, deputy executive editor of the newspaper *Cinema* K. Yukov (1902–1938) was appointed editor of the journal *Soviet Cinema*.

December: L. Kamenev (1883–1936) was again reinstated in the Communist party and appointed director of the scientific publishing house *Academia*.

December 26: theater and film director L. Kurbas (1887–1937) was arrested in the case of the "Ukrainian military organization".

1934

January 26 – February 10: XVII Congress of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

July 10: Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On the Formation of the All-Union People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR".

July 10: G. Yagoda (1891–1938) was appointed People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR.

August 17 – September 1: First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers.

October 9: Establishment of a trade union of film and photo workers.

December 1: First Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks S. Kirov (1886–1934) was shot dead by a former Komsomol and party functionary L. Nikolaev (1904–1934).

December 1: Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR "On Amendments to the Current Criminal Procedure Codes of the Union Republics", which gave the right "to the investigating authorities to conduct cases accused of preparing or committing terrorist acts in an expedited manner. The judiciary should not delay the execution of sentences".

December: former political leaders of the USSR G. Zinoviev (1883–1936) and L. Kamenev (1883–1936) were arrested, expelled from the Communist Party and convicted in the Moscow Center case.

December: B. Babitsky (1901–1938) was appointed director of *Mosfilm*, where he worked until his arrest and execution in 1937.

1935

January 8-13: First All-Union Conference of Creative Workers of Soviet Cinematography, where a decision was made to dissolve the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers.

February 21 – March 1: International Film Festival in Moscow.

May-July: B. Shumyatsky (1886–1938), head of the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Industry, and a group of filmmakers accompanying him make a foreign business trip to Europe and the USA in order to adopt the best practices of Western sound film industry.

December 16: The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks established the All-Union Committee for the Arts.

1936

January 1936: the journal *Soviet Cinema* was renamed *Cinema Art* (there is a version that this renaming was due to the fact that the authorities wanted to emphasize that from now on cinema should not become entertainment, not even a means of political agitation and propaganda, but the Art of socialist realism in the service of the entire Soviet people).

January 28: An editorial in the newspaper *Pravda* (titled "Muddle Instead of Music") sharply criticized D. Shostakovich's (1906–1975) opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*.

June: liquidation of the *Mezhrabpomfilm* studio (*Soyuzdetfilm* was founded on its basis).

July 4: Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks "On pedagogical perversions in the system of the People's Commissariat of Education".

August 19-24: Trial of the "Anti-Soviet United Trotskyist-Zinoviev Center". The main defendants: August 24: G. Zinoviev (1883–1936) and L. Kamenev (1883–1936), sentenced on August 24 to an exceptional measure of punishment.

August 25: G. Zinoviev (1883–1936) and L. Kamenev (1883–1936) were shot.

September 26: Party functionary N. Yezhov (1895–1940) is appointed People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR.

November 25 – December 5: The Congress of Soviets of the USSR, at which (December 5) a new Constitution of the USSR was adopted, according to which the Supreme Soviet of the USSR became the supreme body of state power in the USSR.

Former Chairman of the All-Union Committee for Radio and Broadcasting P. Kerzhentsev (1881-1940) was appointed head of the All-Union Committee for the Arts, where he worked until 1938.

1937

January 23-30: Trial of the "Parallel Anti-Soviet Trotskyist Center", where the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR convicted former prominent party and government figures: N. Muralov (1877–1937), G. Pyatakov (1890–1937), K. Radek (1885–1939), L. Serebryakov (1888–1937), G. Sokolnikov (1888–1939) and others.

February 27: arrest of prominent party and government figures: N. Bukharin (1888–1938) and A. Rykov (1881–1938).

March 28: arrest of the former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs G. Yagoda (1891–1938).

April 8: L. Katsnelson (1895–1938), former first deputy director of *Lenfilm* for production and technical issues, was arrested on charges of counter-revolutionary activities.

May 27: B. Babitsky (1901–1938) dismissed from the post of director of *Mosfilm*.

June: former party functionary S. Sokolovskaya (1894-1938) was appointed director of the *Mosfilm* film studio.

June: N. Semenov (1902–1982), who worked in this position until December 1937, was appointed editor of the journal *Cinema Art*.

June 11: Trial in the "Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyist Military Organization" against former prominent military leaders of the Red Army. Defendants: A. Kork (1887–1937), V. Primakov (1897–1937), V. Putna (1893–1937), M. Tukhachevsky (1893–1937), B. Feldman (1890-1937), I. Ubovich (1896–1937), R. Eideman (1895–1937), I. Yakir (1896–1937). All of them were shot on the night of June 12.

July 10: arrest on charges of espionage and sabotage of the former director of the *Lenfilm* A. Piotrovsky (1898–1937).

July 17: S. Orelovich (1902–1937), former director of the *Mosfilm* studio, was shot.

July 18: the execution of the theater and film actor N. Canan (1892–1937), who played in the films *Khaz-Push*, *Two Nights*, etc.

July 30: Order "On the operation to repress former kulaks, criminals and other anti-Soviet elements" was issued.

August 3: A. Slivkin (1886–1938), deputy director of *Mosfilm*, was arrested.

- September 3: the execution of the writer and screenwriter N. Borisov (1899–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *Ukraine, Hero of the Match* and others.
- September 10: the execution of the screenwriter, playwright and poet S. Tretyakov (1892–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *Eliso, The Salt of Svanetia*, etc.
- September 19: the execution of film actress Y. Mirato (1898–1937), who played in the films *Mysterious World, Moon Beauty, Princess Larisa, Shut up, sadness ... be quiet..., Not born for money*, etc.
- September 23: the execution of the director and cameraman of documentary cinema I. Valentey (1895–1937).
- September 27: the execution of the theater and film actor N. Nademsky (1892–1937), who played roles in the films *Benya Krik, Berries of Love, Zvenigora, Arsenal, Earth, Ivan, Deputy of the Baltic, Prometheus*, etc.
- September 28: the execution of screenwriter V. Zazubrin (1895–1937) (*Red Gas, Cabin on Baikal*).
- October 8: Arrested and further convicted by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR for "espionage" the operator of the films *Merry Fellows* (1934) and *Circus* (1936) V. Nielsen (1906–1938).
- October 9: theater and film director L. Kurbas (1887–1937) (director of the films *Vendetta, Arsenals*, etc.) was sentenced to execution.
- October 12: arrest (on charges of espionage and participation in a counter-revolutionary organization) of the director of the *Mosfilm* studio S. Sokolovskaya (1894–1938).
- October 15: the execution of the theater and film actress P. Tanailidi (1891–1937), who starred in the films *Ismet* and *Almas*.
- October 29: The newspaper *Soviet Art* publishes a devastating article entitled "Clean up the *Mosfilm* studio" (*Soviet Art*. 1937. 50(396): 6).
- October 29: the execution of the writer and screenwriter A. Volny (1902–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *Sunny Campaign, New Motherland*, etc.
- October 31: the execution of the film director F. Lopatinsky (1899–1937), who directed the films *Duel, Karmelyuk*, etc.
- November 3: the execution of the theater and film director L. Kurbas (1887–1937).
- November 14: the execution of the writer and screenwriter D. Buzko (1890–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *The Forest Beast* (1925), *Taras Shevchenko* (1926) and others.
- November 15: The former director of the *Sovkino* factory (since 1934 — *Lenfilm*) A. Piotrovsky (1898–1937) was sentenced to death, the sentence was carried out on November 21, 1937.
- December 16: actor D. Konsovsky (1907–1938), who starred in the films *House of the Dead, Deserter, Traitor to the Motherland*, and others, was arrested.
- December 22: arrest (on charges of participation in a terrorist counter-revolutionary Trotskyist organization at *Mosfilm*) of the former director of *Mosfilm* B. Babitsky (1901–1938).
- November 24: the execution of the writer and screenwriter N. Oleinikov (1898–1937) (author of the scripts for the comedies *Wake Lenchka, Lenchka and Grapes*, etc.); poet and screenwriter V. Erlich (1902–1937) (co-author of the script for the film *Volochaev Days*).
- November 29: Director and screenwriter D. Maryan (1892–1937), who directed the films *Life in the Hands, Dreamers* and *In the Far East*, was shot.
- December 2: shooting of cameraman N. Yudin (1895–1937), who made the films *Dreamers, State of Siege*, and others.
- December 3: the shooting of cameraman N. Efremov (1903–1937), who made the films *Whims of Love, The Devil, Swedish Match, Dangerous Age, Secret of the Tall Lady* and many others.
- December 8: the execution of screenwriter G. Shkrupiy (1903–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *Blue Packet* and *Spartacus*.
- December 15: the execution of screenwriter, writer and journalist A. Zorich (1899–1937), the author of the scripts for the films *Don Diego and Pelageya, Love, The girl is in a hurry to meet*.
- December 20: shooting of film director N. Dirin (1891–1937), director of the films *My Son, Why Is It So?, Merry War*, and cameraman P. Chupyatov (1883–1937), who made the films *On the Far Shore, Forest Side*, etc.
- December 23: arrested and further convicted Z. Darevsky (1901–1938) from *Mosfilm* Studio.

December 30: Execution of screenwriter, journalist, editor-in-chief of the magazines *Journalist* and *Screen A. Kurs* (1892–1937), scriptwriter of the films *Your Friend*, *Great Comforter*, etc.

(1937): film actor P. Pirogov (1904–1937), who starred in the films *Peasants*, *For the Soviet Motherland*, and others, was shot; director and screenwriter P. Svorkov (1891–1937), who staged the films *Gold Bottom*, *End of the Cranes*, etc.; director and actor S. Khodzhaev (1892–1937) (film *Before Dawn*).

1938

January–September: *Cinema Art* journal is published without the name of the responsible editor. Only the editorial board appears in the imprint of this period (without listing any names).

January 5: actor D. Konsovsky (1907–1938) sentenced to death.

January 7: B. Shumyatsky (1886–1938) was removed from the post of head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography by decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

January 7: S. Dukelsky (1892–1960) was appointed head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography of the Committee for the Arts.

January 9: *Pravda* newspaper publishes an article entitled "What hinders the development of Soviet cinema" (G. Ermolaev (1938). What hinders the development of Soviet cinema. *Pravda*. 9.01.1938. 9(7334): 4).

January 12: the execution of the actor S. Shagaid (1896–1938), who played in the films *Aerocity*, *Rich Bride*, etc.

January 18: arrest (on charges of counter-revolutionary activities and espionage) of the former head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography B. Shumyatsky (1886–1938).

January 20: the execution of the cameraman of the films *Merry Fellows* (1934) and *Circus* (1936) V. Nielsen (1906–1938).

January 29: the execution of the cameraman K. Bauer (1880–1938), who made the films *Idols*, *Song of Triumphant Love*, etc.

February 3: former editor of the *Soviet Cinema* and *Cinema Art* K. Yukov (1902–1938) and Deputy Chairman of the All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR J. Chuzhin (1898–1938) were arrested on charges of participating in a counter-revolutionary organization and sentenced to death.

February 15: actor D. Konsovsky (1907–1938) died shortly before the appointed date of execution.

February 19: screenwriter and journalist I. Chubar (1897–1938) was shot.

February 28: the execution of film actor B. Schmidtsdorf (1908–1938), who played in the films *Royal Sailors*, *Ai-Gul*, *Wrestlers*.

March 4: the execution of cameraman D. Kalyuzhny (1899–1938), who made the films *Downpour*, *Karmelyuk*, and others.

March 2-13: Trial of the anti-Soviet "bloc of Rights and Trotskyists" in the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR. The main defendants: former prominent party and government figures: N. Bukharin (1888–1938), A. Rykov (1881–1938), N. Krestinsky (1883–1938), H. Rakovsky (1873–1941), former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs G. Yagoda (1891–1938) and others.

March 10: The former director of *Mosfilm*, B. Babitsky (1901–1938), was sentenced by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court on charges of participating in a counter-revolutionary terrorist organization to "the death penalty" and shot on the same day. One of the former leaders of *Mezhrabpomfilm*, Y. Zaitsev, was also shot.

March 10: Z. Darevsky (1901–1938), former director of *Mosfilm*'s feature film studio No. 2, was shot.

March 15: execution of the former deputy director of *Mosfilm* A. Slivkin (1886–1938).

March 15: execution of former prominent Soviet party and government figures: N. Bukharin (1888–1938), A. Rykov (1881–1938), N. Krestinsky (1883–1938), G. Yagoda (1891–1938) and others.

March 23: Resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On improving the organization of the production of motion pictures".

March 23: Resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On the Formation of the Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR".

April 18: the execution of the cameraman F. Zandberg (1907–1938), who made the films *Do I Love You?*, *Moonstone*, etc.

April 21: execution of the former first deputy Head of the Main Directorate of the Film and Photo Industry under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR J. Chuzhin (1898–1938), chairman of the All-Union Committee for Arts under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, V. Stepanov (1895–1938), director and cameraman of documentary films.

May 8: the execution of the film director, screenwriter and artist B. Shpis (1903–1938), who directed the films *The Avenger*, *Engineer Gough*, and others.

May 18: the execution of the actor V. Portnov (1896–1938), who starred in the films *House in the Snowdrifts*, *Fragment of the Empire*, *Peasants*, etc.; the execution of the former first deputy director of *Lenfilm* for production and technical issues L. Katsnelson (1895–1938).

May 31: the execution of the actor and employee of the *Soyuzdetfilm* studio I. Kapralov (1891–1938), who starred in the films *Locksmith and Chancellor*, *Diplomatic Courier's Bag*, *Two Mothers*, and others.

June 3: Execution of documentary and popular science film director D. De Marchi (1902–1938).

July 29: the execution of the former head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography B. Shumyatsky (1886–1938).

August 22: L. Beria is appointed First Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR N. I. Yezhov.

August 26: the execution of the former director of *Mosfilm* S. Sokolovskaya (1894–1938).

August 28: the execution of film actress G. Egorova-Dolenko (1898–1938), who played in the films *Grunya Kornakova*, *Dawns of Paris*, etc.

September 3: shooting of documentary filmmaker A. Tamm (1897–1938).

September 6: shooting of the documentary filmmaker A. Dalmatov (1873–1938).

October 10: the execution of theater and film actor P. Borisov (1890–1938), who played roles in the films *Star of Olympia*, *Stella Maris*, and others.

October 22: shooting of documentary and animation filmmaker G. Knoke (1898–1938).

October 30: shooting of documentary filmmaker V. Bulla (1883–1938).

October: journalist A. Mitlin (1902–1941) was appointed editor of the journal *Cinema Art*.

November 7: the execution of the former responsible editor of the *Soviet Cinema* and *Cinema Art* K. Yukov (1902–1938).

November 14: Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks "On the organization of party propaganda in connection with the release of the Short Course in the History of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks".

November 25: L. Beria is appointed People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR.

November: the execution of the actor and director A.-M. Sharif-Zade (1892–1938), who directed the films *In the Name of God* and *The Game of Love*, etc.

1939

February 9: the execution of film actor A. Safoshin (1895–1939), who played in the films *Prisoners of the Sea*, *Alena's Love*, *Girl from Kamchatka*, etc.

March 10-21: XVIII Congress of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

April 10: arrest of the former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR N. Yezhov (1895–1940).

June: Head of the Main Directorate of Cinematography of the Committee for Arts S. Dukelsky (1892–1960) was appointed People's Commissar of the USSR Navy.

June: former party functionary I. Bolshakov (1902–1980) was appointed chairman of the Committee for Cinematography under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR.

August 23: The "Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union" is concluded.

31 August: Nazi staged attack on a German radio station in Gleiwitz, which became the pretext for the German attack on Poland.

September 1: Nazi German troops invade Poland: World War II begins.

September 17: by agreement with Germany, the Red Army occupied the eastern territories of Poland, populated mainly by the Ukrainian population.

September 18: joint Soviet-German communiqué stating that the task of the Soviet and German troops "is to restore order and tranquility in Poland, disturbed by the collapse of the Polish state."

September 21: A Soviet-German protocol is signed on the procedure for the withdrawal of troops to the final demarcation line in Poland.

September 28: Treaty of Friendship and Border signed between the USSR and Germany.

November 26: The USSR announced a provocation by the Finnish border guards.

November 29: rupture of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Finland.

November 30: Beginning of the Soviet-Finnish War.

December 21: I. Stalin's 60th birthday is solemnly celebrated in the USSR.

1940

January 27: the execution of the writer and screenwriter I. Babel (1887–1940), the author of the scripts for the films *Benya Krik*, *Wandering Stars*, *Odessa*, etc.

February 2: the execution of the theater and film director, actor, screenwriter V. Meyerhold (1874-1940), the director of the films *Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strong Man* (where he also acted as an actor), the performer of one of the roles in the film *White Eagle*.

February 4 or 6: the execution of the former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR N. Yezhov (1895–1940).

March 12: conclusion of a peace treaty between the USSR and Finland.

June 14: Paris is occupied by German troops.

June 22: The French government signs an armistice with Germany.

August 3: The Supreme Soviet of the USSR accepted Lithuania into the USSR.

August 5: The Supreme Soviet of the USSR accepted Latvia into the USSR.

August 6: The Supreme Soviet of the USSR accepted Estonia into the USSR.

September 27: The Tripartite Pact on the military-economic alliance of Germany, Italy and Japan is signed.

1941

June 22: German troops invaded the territory of the USSR. Beginning of the Great Patriotic War.

July: Temporary cessation (due to the outbreak of war) of the publication of the *Cinema Art* journal.

September 1: the death of editor of the *Cinema Art* A. Mitlin (1902–1941) as a result of being wounded by a fragment of a German bomb.