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## Russian Cinema: A Very Short Story

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### Abstract

The article about main lines of russian feature film history: from 1898 to modern times. The history of Russian cinema goes back more than a century, it knew the stages of rise and fall, ideological repression and complete creative freedom. This controversial history was studied by both Russian and foreign scientists. Of course, Soviet and Western scientists studied Soviet cinema from different ideological positions. Soviet filmmakers were generally active in supporting socialist realism in cinema, while Western scholars, on the contrary, rejected this method and paid great attention to the Soviet film avant-garde of the 1920s. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the situation changed: russian and foreign film historians began to study cinema in a similar methodological manner, focusing on both ideological and socio-cultural aspects of the cinematographic process.

**Keywords:** history, film, movie, cinema, USSR, Russia, film historians, film studies.

### 1. Introduction

*Birth of the Russian "Great Mute" (1898–1917).* It is known that the French brought the movies to Russia. It was at the beginning of 1896. However, many Russian photographers were able to quickly learn a new craft. Already in 1898, documentary plots were shot not only by foreign, but also by Russian operators. But still 10 years were before the appearance of Russian feature films. Only in 1908, director and entrepreneur Alexander Drankov made the first Russian film with actors under the title *Ponizovaya Volnitsa (Stepan Razin)*. This film was black-and-white, short & sentimental. In the 1910s Vladimir Gardin (*The Noble Nest*), Yakov Protazanov (*Queen of Spades, Father Sergius*), Eugene Bauer (*Twilight of a Woman's Soul, Criminal Passion*) and other directors created a quite competitive cinema, where there was a place for Russian classical film productions, melodramas, detectives, and military-adventures action. The real superstars of the silver screen – Vera Kholodnaya, Ivan Mozzhukhin, Vladimir Maximov – lit up in Russia by the second half of the 1910's.

### 2. Materials and methods

The research material is Russian and Soviet feature films. I try to tell about main lines of Russian feature film history: from 1898 to modern times. In my opinion, the analysis of film production history in the context of the political & sociocultural situation in Russia and USSR is especially important for media educational tasks in the education of future historians, culturologists, media critics, sociologists, philologists, psychologists, and teachers.

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### 3. Discussion

The history of Soviet cinema has always been in the spotlight of film historians. Of course, the Soviet (Ginzburg, 1963; Ginzburg, Dolinskiy et al, 1969-1978; Zhdan, 1969 and others) and Western film history scholars (Barna, 1973; Birkos, 1976; Cohen, 1974; Golovskoy, Rimberg, 1986; Le Fanu, 1987; Leyda, 1983; Marshall, 1983; Rimberg, 1973; Taylor, 1982; 1983; Taylor, Christie, 1988; 1991 and others) studied Soviet cinema from different ideological positions. The Soviet works supported of so-called socialist realism in cinematography; the Western film history works, on the contrary, rejected of this method and preferred of the concentration on the Soviet film avant-garde of the 1920s.

After the collapse of the USSR, the situation changed: Russian (Arcus, 2001; Fomin, 1996; Fomin, Deryabin, 2016; Grashchenkova, 2014; Grashchenkova, Fomin, 2016; Khrenov, 2008; Kovalov, 2016; Margolit, 2012; Moskvina-Yashchenko, 2017; Salynsky, 2009; Troyanovsky, 2002; Zhabsky, 2009; Zorkaya, 2014 and others) and foreign (Beumers, 1999; 2005; 2007; Bordwell, 1993; Brashinsky, Horton, 1994; Christie, Taylor, 1993; Condee, 2009; Gillespie, 2003; Hashamova, 2007; Horton, 1993; Hutchings, Vernitski, 2005; Johnson, Graham, 1994; Kenez, 1992; 2001; Laurent, 2000; Lawton, 1992; MacFadyen, 2003; Martin, 1993; Miller, 2006; 2009; Norris, 2012; Nowell-Smith, 1996; Rollberg, 2009; Schmulevitch, 1996; Shaw, 2013; Shlapentokh, 1993; Strada, Troper, 1997; Taylor, Spring, 1993; Van Gorp, 2011; Widdis, 2003; Youngblood, 1992; 2007; 2012 and others), film historians have begun to explore cinematography in a similar methodological manner, focusing on both the ideological and socio-cultural aspects of the cinematographic process.

By the end of the second decade of the 21st century, there were already many studies of Russian cinema in 1992-2018, in which the authors give not only a general picture of the development of trends, but also creative portraits of individual masters of the screen, analyze specific films.

A great contribution to the development of the history of Soviet and Russian cinema was made by a team of film historians gathered in the magazine *Séance*: they prepared a multi-volume history of modern Russian cinema (Arcus, 2001) and the Scientific and Educational Internet project "Chapaev": History of cinema in the history of the country. History of the country in the history of cinema (Séance, 2018).

I can remember and many other notable works on the history of Soviet and Russian cinema (Fomin, 1996; Fomin, Deryabin, 2016; Grashchenkova, 2014; Grashchenkova, Fomin, 2016; Khrenov, 2008; Kovalov, 2016; Margolit, 2012; Moskvina-Yashchenko, 2017; Salynsky, 2009; Troyanovsky, 2002; Zhabsky, 2009; Zorkaya, 2014 and others).

### 4. Results

#### *In pursuit of the Red October (1918–1930)*

The October revolution of 1917 served as a spectacular springboard to the West for many famous Russian filmmakers. So the first communist film *Sealing* (1918), directed by A. Panteleev, was not really artistic. The time of the fratricidal civil war, right, was not the best time for the development of cinema industry, but after five years of revolutionary impulse and the dream of a world dictatorship of the proletariat, creative young people struck the planet with the novelty of the film language. Thus, the "silver age" of Russian cinema was replaced by the Soviet cinema avant-garde of the 1920s. The Kremlin's ideological censorship at that time was still little interested in the form of artistic "film text". It was this that allowed the genius of Sergei Eisenstein to experiment bravely with "ride editing" in his famous films *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *October* (1927). Their apparent political commitment did not prevent their widespread popularity in the West. Open any foreign book on the history of world cinema (Barna, 1973; Birkos, 1976; Leyda, 1983; Marshall, 1983; Bordwell, 1993; Christie, Taylor, 1993; Kenez, 1992; Martin, 1993; Nowell-Smith, 1996; Rollberg, 2009 and others) – and you will find a special chapter devoted to the cinema of Sergei Eisenstein and his famous contemporaries – Lev Kuleshov (*By Law*), Vsevolod Pudovkin (*Mother*), *The End of St. Petersburg*), Alexander Dovzhenko (*Zvenigora*, *The Earth*), Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg (*The Overcoat*, *The Union of the Great Cause*), Dziga Vertov (*The Man with the Movie Camera*).

Of course, next to the "Kuleshov's effect" and "editing of attractions" there was a quite commercial, entertaining movie by Yakov Protazanov (*The Cutter from Torzhok, The Trials of Three Million, St. Jørgen's Feast*) and Konstantin Eggert (*The Bear Wedding*). But Sergei Eisenstein's leadership, with his metaphorical *Battleship Potemkin* and *October*, was already beyond doubt.

*In the sound networks of "social realism" (1931–1940)*

The arrival of sound in Soviet cinema (*The Way to Life* by Nikolai Eck, 1931) almost coincided with the liquidation of the last islands of creative freedom and the triumph of so-called "socialist realism". The Stalinist totalitarian regime was in a hurry to control almost every "unit" of the film production of that time. So it is not surprising that Eisenstein, who returned from a foreign trip, could not achieve the release of his film *Bezhin Meadow* (the film was destroyed of Soviet Power). And other leaders of the 1920s (D. Vertov, L. Kuleshov, V. Pudovkin) in practice felt the iron grip of the Kremlin censorship. The favorites of the 1930s were the directors who managed not only to master the new expressive possibilities of sound, but also to create an ideological mythology of the Great Socialist Revolution, which turned the world order upside down. The Vasilyev brothers (*Chapaev*), Mikhail Romm (*Lenin in October, Lenin in 18th year*) and Friedrich Ermler (*The Great Citizen*) went in the circle of filmmakers, who managed to adapt their talent to the strict requirements of the era of "aggravation of class struggle" and mass repressions.

But Stalin must be credited with understanding that the cinema repertoire could not consist of "ideological hits" alone. Grigory Alexandrov, a recent assistant to S. Eisenstein, became the official "king of comedy" of the 1930s (*Merry Guys, Circus, Volga–Volga*). And his wife Lubov Orlova – the main star of the Soviet screen.

*Fatal forties (1941–1949)*

The war has dramatically changed the thematic and genre spectrum of Soviet cinema. After the "pilot" short films *Battle Collections* there appeared full-length films about the war (*Rainbow, Invasion, She defends the Motherland, Zoya*, etc.), where the war was no longer a series of easy victories over the caricaturically weak enemy. It was during the war that Sergei Eisenstein shot his last masterpiece in life – the tragedy *Ivan the Terrible*. The second part of this film was banned by Stalin, because in the image of the brilliantly played by Nikolai Cherkasov cruel and insane Tsar Ivan is not so hard to see the hints of vicious absolutism...

The victory over Nazism, conquered at the cost of tens of millions of fellow citizens, has triggered a new "personality cult" outbreak. In the films of the Kremlin court director Mikhail Chiaureli (*The Oath, The Fall of Berlin*), Stalin looked like a real god, causing the ecstasy of mass worship of the Kolkhoz flock. Meanwhile, in the late 1940's "Kremlin mountaineer" was already difficult to track the then repertoire, and he decided to act on the well-known principle – better less, but better. Let the selected Russian filmmakers make only 12 films a year, but it will not be some sort of passable averages, but real example of "socialist realism". For example, epics about Revolution and War (*Unforgettable nineteenth, Battle of Stalingrad*), or historical and biographical stories about scientists (*Zhukovsky, Przhevalsky*), commanders (*Admiral Nakhimov, Admiral Ushakov*) and artists (*Composer Glinka, Belinsky*)... In fact, the best directors of the time (M. Romm, V. Pudovkin and others) joined these exemplary plots. A sharply narrowed entertainment cinema was represented by comedies by Grigory Alexandrov (*Spring*) and Ivan Pyriev (*Kuban Cossacks*).

*From the minimum film production to the "thaw" (1950–1968)*

The minimum film production era ended shortly after Stalin's death. The "thawing" liberalization of the Kremlin's course in the second half of the 1950s caused a sharp increase in film production and an influx of directorial and acting debuts. The most prominent figure of those years was undoubtedly Grigory Chukhrai (*The Forty First, The Ballad of a Soldier, The Clear Sky*). However, the filmmakers of the older generation did not hurry to leave the carpet. *The Cranes Fly* – a true masterpiece by director Mikhail Kalatozov and cameraman Sergei Urusevsky – deservedly won the Palme d'Or at Cannes. By the way, any Russian film – neither before nor after – could not take this "Cannes height"... A little later the same duo shot two famous films with an innovative style – *Unsent Letter* and *I am Cuba*. The second breath came to Michail Romm. In my opinion, in the 1960's he directed his best films – *Nine Days of One Year* and *Ordinary Fascism*.

The refusal from the pompousness of the parade in favor of the problems of "common man" is especially evident in the modest melodrama of Marlen Khutsiev *Spring on Zarechnaya Street*

(co-director was F. Mironer) and *Two Fedor*. These films have been made available to the public without hindrance. On the other hand, Khutsiev's attempt to reach the level of critical understanding of modernity (*I am 20 years old*, *The July Rain*) provoked a sharp opposition from the authorities, who began to gradually "freeze" the thaw. Andrei Tarkovsky's legendary film *Andrei Rublev* (1966) became the most famous victim of these censored cold spells. In the mid-1960s, the Kremlin actually declared war on the Soviet "author's film", which did not fit into the vicious framework of "socialist realism". After *Rublev* (also called *The Passion for Andrei*) on the shelf were the films of Andrei Konchalovsky (*The Story of Asya Klyachina...*), Alexander Alov and Vladimir Naumov (*The Negligible Anecdote*), Andrei Smirnov (*Angel*), Larisa Shepitko (*Motherland of Electricity*), Alexander Askoldov (*Commissioner*)...

At the same time, the "thaw" allowed the screens to release not only Andrei Tarkovsky's "art house" films (*Ivan's Childhood*), Gleb Panfilov's (*No Wade in Fire*) and Larisa Shepitko's (*Wings*), but also gave the audience the pleasure of real entertainment in the comedies of Leonid Gaidai (*Operation "Y"*, *The Caucasian Prisoner*, *The Diamond Hand*), Eldar Ryazanov (*Beware of the Car!*) and Georgy Danelia (*I'm walking around Moscow*). Plus the sensational screen versions of the world literature classics – Oscar-winning *War and Peace* by Sergei Bondarchuk, *Anna Karenina* by Alexander Zarkhi, *Hamlet* by Grigory Kozintsev and *The Karamazov Brothers* by Ivan Pyrev...

The film thaw has become a starry hour for Tatiana Samoilova, Anastasia Vertinskaya, Lyudmila Savelyeva, Vyacheslav Tikhonov, Oleg Strizhenov, Alexey Batalov, Innokenty Smoktunovsky, Evgeny Urbansky, Oleg Efremov and many other remarkable actors of the new generation. And this is despite the fact that in these years still continued to play Boris Andreev, Alexei Cherkasov, Mikhail Zharov, Lydia Smirnova, Nikolai Simonov and other famous artists of the 1930s – 1940s.

#### *In a quiet movie whirlpool (1969–1984)*

The Thaw came to an end in August 1968, crushed by the caterpillars of Soviet tanks furrowing the Prague bridges... The Kremlin's film reaction was quite tough. Many creative plans were strangled at the root. Many extraordinary films were on the censorship shelf: a strong film about the war *Checkups on the roads* by Alexei German, phantasmagoric *Agony* by Elem Klimov, psychological dramas *Long farewell* by Kira Muratova and *Theme* by Gleb Panfilov... Other outstanding films were punished with minimal circulation and distribution (*Mirror* and *Stalker* by Andrei Tarkovsky, *Parade of Planets* by Vadim Abdrashitov, *My Friend Ivan Lapshin* by Alexei German). But despite everything through the quiet film whirlpool polished by the censorship of Russian cinema time and again broke through the films of class "A". Vasily Shukshin (*Stoves and Benches*, *Red Kalina*), Gleb Panfilov (*The Beginning*, *I beg you words*), Nikita Mikhalkov (*Unfinished Piece for the Mechanical Piano*, *Five Evenings*, *A few days in the life of I.I. Oblomov*, *Relatives*), Vadim Abdrashitov (*Word for Protection*, *Fox Hunting*), Ilya Averbakh (*Alien Letters*, *Explanation of Love*), Roman Balayan (*Flying in Dreams and Realm*, *Kissing*), Rolan Bykov (*Scarecrow*), Dinara Asanova (*Guys*), Sergei Soloviev (*The Rescuer*, *The Heir in a Straight Line*), Georgy Danelia (*Autumn Marathon*), Petr Todorovsky (*Military Field Romance*), Andrei Konchalovsky (*Uncle Vanya*, *Siberiada*)... This is not a complete list of notable names and films of that era.

The attendance of cinemas in Russia at that time was one of the highest in the world. Tens of millions of viewers watched comedies by Leonid Gaidai (*12 chairs*, *Ivan Vasilyevich changes his profession*), George Danelia (*Afonya*, *Mimino*), Eldar Ryazanov (*Irony of Fate*, *Service Romance*, *Station for Two*), spectacular actions of Vladimir Motyl (*White Sun of the Desert*) and Alexander Mitta (*The Crew*). Vladimir Menshov's melodrama *Moscow does not believe in tears* (Oscar prize) and Boris Durov's action movie *Pirates of the 20th century* became absolute box-office records-breakers of those years. And what were the stars – Vladislav Dvorzhetsky (1937–1978), Vladimir Vysotsky (1938–1980), Oleg Dahl (1941–1981), Anatoly Solonitsyn (1934–1982), Yuri Bogatyrev (1947–1989), Anatoly Papanov (1922–1987), Andrey Mironov (1941–1987), Evgeny Leonov (1926–1994), Alexander Kaidanovsky (1946–1995), Nikolay Eremenko (1949–2001)!

Contrary to the vicissitudes of fate at this time, it was at the audience favorite for the "thawing" comedy *Carnival Night* Lyudmila Gurchenko (1935–2011) again ascended the acting Olympus (*Twenty Days Without War* by A. German, *Five Evenings* by N. Mikhalkov). Another

women-stars were Margarita Terekhova (*Mirror*), Nonna Mordyukova (*Mire, Relatives*), Elena Solovey (*Slave of Love*), Inna Churikova (*The Beginning, Vassa*)...

*In the midst of perestroika... (1985–1991)*

The attempt to liberalize the communist regime again, initially quite timid, led to a gradual easing of censorship. Director Elem Klimov (1933–2003) was rehabilitated and became the winner of the Moscow Film Festival in 1985. His picture was called *Go and See*. Perhaps, neither before nor after the Russian cinema did not know such a ruthless degree of naturalism in the image of the Second World War... Klimov very soon led the changes in the then Soviet Union of Filmmakers. Alas, they didn't return to filmmaking...

In the revolutionary peak of perestroika, the pillars of official cinema of the 1960s and 1970s were unfairly thrown off the ship of the present (Sergei Bondarchuk, for example, was among them). Some "shelf" films were finally released, then came the abolition of the list of banned topics and genres for cinema. *Little Vera* (1988) by Vasily Pichul (1961–2015) became the first Russian film with frankly shot sexual scene. But neither this film, nor the scandalous *Intergirl* by Petr Todorovsky could not affect the overall situation of reduced audience. Video distribution, competition from revived television, intensive import of American films, and perestroika's gloomy films did their job: Russian cinema began to lose even its most loyal viewers.

However, perestroika gave rise to a temporary fashion in the West for all Russian films, and Russian films became welcome guests of big and small international festivals. At the same time, prizes often went to debutant directors, among whom, in my opinion, the most notable were Leonid Kanevsky (*Freeze, die, rise again*), Alexander Khvan (*Dominus*), Valery Todorovsky (*Katafalk, Love*) and Pavel Lungin (*Taxi Blues*). The most prestigious international awards (Berlin, Cannes, Venice) were given to the works of Kira Muratova (*Astenic Syndrome*), Gleb Panfilov (*Theme, Mother*), Pavel Lungin (*Taxi Blues*), Victor Aristov (*Satan*) and Nikita Mikhalkov (*Urga*).

The commercial results of the Russian cinema of the turn of the 1990s looked quite different. One of the latest films of Leonid Gaidai (1923–1993), *Private Detective, or Operation Cooperation* did not attract attention and a quarter of the audience of his previous hits. And comedies by Yuri Mamin (*Buckenbard*), Sebastian Alarcon (*Spanish actress for the Russian Minister*), Valery Rubinchik (*Comedy of Lisistrat*), Konstantin Voinov (*Hat*) had an even more modest rolling success. As for such a comedy as *Senit Zon*, it is remembered only by the fact that the press has some semblance of scandal about the indecency of its original name. Neither artistically nor commercially, this opus did not manifest itself in any way...

The unprofessionalism of the "average" Russian genre of cinema turned gangster drama (*The Dinosaurs of the 20th Century*) into a most boring spectacle, detective (*The Mystery of Endhouse*), musical (*Coachman and the King*), melodrama (*I want to love you, A trip to Wiesbaden, Hole*), horror film (*The Family of Ghouls*), action (*Fan*)... It is logical that the mass audience preferred to watch the American action movies (mainly in the video version).

1991, as is well known, was the last year of the Soviet Union and the so-called August putsch. "Hidden" inflation and bewitching emptiness on shop counters (including those in Moscow) reached their climax. The state was still accustomed to financing a substantial part of the 213 Soviet films of 1991, but only a few of them reached the screens of cinemas filled with foreign commercial products. Like mushrooms after the rain, video halls continued to grow throughout the country, where viewers deprived of the opportunity to buy VCRs (then super-deficiency) enjoyed the screens of the monitors showing pirated copies of *Terminator* and *Emmanuelle*. Censorship was no longer in effect, the videotapes with pornographic films were lying on the shelves of any kiosk.

In 1991, the list of artistic and festival successes already looked more modest than in the second half of the 1980s. Sluggish, anemic *Arnavir* can hardly be attributed to the creative peaks of the Abdrashitov–Mindadze tandem. Not the best works were presented by Eldar Ryazanov (however, who shot one of the most popular film of the year – *Promised Heavens*), and Sergey Soloviev (*House under the Starry Sky*). There are less interesting debuts as well. The collage of Oleg Kovalov's *Scorpion's Gardens*, woven around A. Razumny's long-forgotten spy movie *The Case of the Ephermer Kochetkov*, was presented with nostalgic haze, and seems to be the most original in this not too long list. Although there is also a charming retro comedy by Nikolai Dostal *Clouds and Paradise*, and a cheerful parody of Arkady Tigai *Loch – the winner of the water*, and a dramatic parable about the post-Afghan syndrome *The Leg* by Nikita Tiagunov...

Quite unexpected for connoisseurs of filmography, Leonid Maryagin (1937–2003), who for many years has been in the "second tier" of Russian cinema, was the appearance of the political drama *Enemy of the People – Bukharin*, unlike most of the "exposés" of the perestroika era, in my opinion, is not outdated today...

Interest in Russian "perestroika" on the part of selectors from Cannes, Venice and Berlin has not yet faded, but Russian films have increasingly received prizes from secondary international festivals.

There were no significant cash dividends, nor did they bring any revealing and expository movies about the Stalinist camps (*And in Russia, again, the days of penitence...*) and the films on the topic of the Afghan war and its consequences (*Afghani, Beast*) and terrorism (*Mad Bus*), nor pseudo-erotic comedies (*Bolotnaya Street, or Means against Sex*), neither melodrama about prostitutes (*The Highest Class*), nor criminal and domestic "black" (*Dirty, Beyond the Last Line, Deadline, Nelly, Pimp Hunt, Russian Roulette, Vultures on the Roads*), nor fantasy (*Temptation of B., Scorpion's Poison*), no "horrors" (*Drinking Blood*)... The vast majority of these so-called "films for the mass audience" were distinguished by the same inescapable disease of Russian class "B" cinema – unprofessionalism (plus, of course, the technical poverty of the production).

*Private film business returns... (1992–2019)*

1992. The economic reforms of the new Russian government resulted in a sharp depreciation of the ruble, with the total deficit of products and goods continuing for the first time. It was this year that a considerable number of Russian citizens made millions of dollars in the purchase and sale of imported goods alone, some of which were invested in the film business for reasons of prestige, friendship, and, most importantly, for the purpose of "laundering" shadow money.

Theoretically, a considerable number of new Russian films could have been released in 1992 – 172, the lion's share of which was made with money from private companies, banks, joint-stock companies, and other organizations. However, in practice, perhaps, contrary to the hopes of some new Russian film traders, the American movies dominated in cinema theaters.

Experiencing a truly second director's birth of Kira Muratova (1934–2018), each of his films 1990's turned into an event of national culture, time and again carrying out their plans, not realized in the years of censorship and persecution. The film *Moscow Parade (Prorva)*, directed by Ivan Dykhovichny (1947–2009) whose fascinating "Stalin's Empire" visual image scared off the selectors of many festivals, shone with calligraphy of "great style"...

Unfortunately, the films of such old masters of Russian cinema as Marlen Khutsiev (*Infinity*) and Igor Talankin (*The Devils*), in my opinion, seemed to me already at the premiere to be a pseudo-significant and unbearably boring archaic. Khutsiev's *Infinity* was perhaps the most long-awaited and disappointing premiere of the year. And the prize she won at the Berlin Festival can probably be regarded as a tribute to the old master's past (and undoubtedly!) achievements...

The year 1992 pleased several very strong genre films, which, unfortunately, had almost no effect on their box-office destiny. The adventurous comedies *Meet Me in Tahiti, Genius*, "Hitchcock's" thriller *Thirst for Passion*, caustic satire *Comedy of strict regime* in a different socio-cultural situation could probably make their creators very wealthy people.

Yet these pictures are still the exception rather than the rule. No less than a hundred movies of 1992, both in artistic and genre terms, looked dishearteningly miserable. Undoubtedly, most of the "authors" of this hack were laypersons, God knows how they found money for their debuts. However, the lack of censorship was not reflected in the works of many famous filmmakers, who apparently decided to say goodbye to their former professional "creations". Why, for example, Sergei Nikonenko needed to shoot his vulgar *Brunette for 30 kopecks* (as, however, most of his director's works of the 1990s). Neither sex, nor violence, nor "exposure" with the "darkness" again did not help the Russian film market players to achieve at least a minimum of audience success...

1993. A year of new economic and political upheavals (the October storming of Russian TV building and the Parliament House in Moscow). The Moscow International Film Festival, held in July 1993, was probably the first time in its history to experience a shortage of viewers. Crowds of people eager for an "extra ticket" seem to have become a thing of the past.

After watching enough the "tidbit" and forbidden in the Soviet times Western films, the mass audience chose to watch films on TV and video (already at home, rather than in the video halls), without being tempted by the amazing color rendering of the festival's Kodak colors, or by the loud names of filmmakers.

Perhaps, for the first time in many years, Russian cinema sounded very modestly at international film festivals. Sergey Ovcharov's *Barabaniada* and Vladimir Khotinenko's *Makarov* warmly received by Russian critics watched much cooler abroad.

Russian film production has decreased again (152 feature films). In 1993, for example, there were fewer notable debuts (Sergei Ursulyak is one of the few exceptions). The "old guard" was represented by only three names: Petr Todorovsky (*Anchor, More Anchor!*), Georgy Danelia (*Nastyia*) and Eldar Ryazanov (*Foretelling*). Good commercial cinema has also almost disappeared. In addition to Dmitry Astrakhan's melodrama *You Are My Only One* and Yuri Mamin's comedy *A Window to Paris*, I can probably highlight only Alexander Mitta's *Lost in Siberia*...

1994. Russians have started to get used to filled counters of the shops. More and more families have become owners of video equipment. A relatively calm year in political terms at the very end of it is tarnished by the beginning of the Chechen war, which official propaganda for a long time tried to portray as a kind of minor conflict.

Year of undoubted benefit to Nikita Mikhalkov. "Oscar" and the prizes of Cannes and other festivals, no matter how outraged the ill-wishers there are, do not just get there. Nikita Mikhalkov's drama *Burnt by the Sun*, in my opinion, is a serious artistic success not only of the cinematic year, but also of decades. Against the background of this success the works of other directors of the older generation looked much less advantageous. Neither Andrei Konchalovsky's post-Perestroika comedy *Riaba Chicken*, nor Ivan Dykhovichny's stylish but anemic *Music for December*, nor even Kira Muratova's exquisite *Hobbies* have become true events of the year.

The golden times of the early 1990's, when the number of directors increased exponentially, are gone. Businessmen were investing less and less in unprofitable film production. State support for the cinema has also been steadily declining. As a result, the total number of films was halved to 68. However, the well-known principle of "less, but better" does not always work. No more good commercial films in 1994 than in the previous year: *The Road to Paradise* and... I don't even know what to continue with.

The list of successful debutants also looked unusually short in 1994 compared to previous years. Former cameraman Denis Yevstigneyev proudly made his debut as a director of the "new Russian" film *Limita*. In the "young" competitors he essentially had only Valery Todorovsky with *Moscow Evenings* and Sergei Livnev with *Sickle and Hammer*...

1995. A year of senseless continuation of the Chechen war, with a very relative stabilization of the Russian economy. The property stratification of Russians was marked by an obvious gap between the wealth of tens of thousands and the poverty of tens of millions...

The number of Russian films has fallen to 46. In view of the reduction in the number of private producers with a strange hobby of investing in unprofitable films, a significant proportion of the films are again fully or partially financed by the state. After an unusual pause, the duo of Abdrashitov-Mindadze delighted Russian film buffs with the dramatic comedy *Piece for the Passenger* (prize at the Berlin Festival). Savva Kulish (*Iron Curtain*) and Petr Todorovsky (*What a Wonderful Game*) performed retrodramas about the life of postwar youth. The press accepted their works quite discreetly. A lot of controversy was caused by Vladimir Khotinenko's dramatic comedy *The Muslim*, but truly under the storm of applause of Russian journalists was premiered, in my opinion, a few monotonous on comedy techniques *Features of the national hunt* (main prize of Kinotavr Film Festival). Against the background of these noisy premieres, the ironic and psychologically subtle film of Georgy Danelia *Eagle and Tails* (by the way, this happened with the previous work of the master – the sad comedy fairytale *Nastyia*) – was put on the back burner.

I must say that it was Danelia who became one of the few (together with Muratova, Mikhalkov and Ryazanov) directors who managed to put in the 1990s three or more films, was as it were outside the fashion because of his stubborn unwillingness to adapt to the social and critical situation.

1995 was the year a significant return of Roman Balayan, the creator of the legendary *Flights in Dream and Reality*. Alas, his film adaptation of Turgenev's *First Love*, contrary to expectations, can only be called the main failure of the year...

With the notable debut in feature films in 1995, things are not dense. Apart from Alexei Uchitel and Oleg Kovalov, it seems that there is no one else to name. The once hopeful debutants of the late 1980's and early 1990's – Igor Alimpiev, Lidia Bobrova, Sergei Debizhev, Valery Ogorodnikov, Sergei Popov, Svetlana Proskurina, Sergei Snezhkin, Oleg Teptsov, Arkady Tigai –

came out of the "film game" for almost five years. Perhaps, they were not adapted to the cruel rules of the market, where everyone must manage to get money for the next production...

Entertaining cinema in the mid 1990's, in addition to *Hunting...* was kept on the melodrama *American Daughter*, stuntman *The Crusader* and comedies *Moscow Holidays* and *Shirley-Myrlee*, which by then standards had quite a decent audience success, at least – on video. Vladimir Menshov, the author of the comedy *Shirley-Myrlee*, undoubtedly hoped to regain the former reputation of the box-office favorite. However, viewers, who had learned to go to the cinema, preferred to wait for the new film of Menshov on video & television (in a coupe with a pushy melodrama by Yevgeny Matveev *Love in Russian*).

In 1995, the first Russian cinema with a real multichannel sound Dolby – "Kodak-Kinomir" – appeared in Moscow (by the beginning of the XXI century there will be about fifty of them in the capital, and halls with new equipment will appear in all large and medium Russian cities).

1996. A year of countless political scandals in the Kremlin's top ranks and a fierce election battle for the presidency. The year of the inglorious end of the so-called first Chechen war. It was at this time that the Russian cinema finally responded to it as a *Caucasian prisoner* by Sergei Bodrov. Against the backdrop of the lowest number of films shot in Russia in the 1990s, Sergei Bodrov's war drama looked like an undisputed leader, which was immediately noted by the press and the festival jury. The film was also distributed well on vide...

The old guard was presented in 1996 by Gennady Poloka (1930–2014), Eldar Ryazanov (1927–2015) and Vladimir Motyl (1927–2010). However, Motyl's melodrama *Horses carry me...*, alas, did not resemble at all a strong professional level of his *White Sun of the Desert*.

The number of Russian cinema–1996 was reduced to three dozen titles. As a matter of fact, a remake of the "epoch of a low movie numbers" has come...

1997. Thanks to the strong parable of the duo Mindadze–Abdrashitov's *Dancer's Time*, Pavel Chukhrai's melodrama *The Thief*, K. Muratova's black comedy *Three Stories* and A. Sokurov's drama *Mother and Son*, the overall picture looked quite decent. At the Moscow film festival held in the summer of 1997, one of the main awards received *Mother and Son*. The most popular (relative to the rest) film of the year was a criminal drama by Alexei Balabanov *Brother*, with its characteristic moral relativism. Valery Todorovsky brought to the heart of the audience in a European way elegant *Land of the Deaf* with magnificent acting works by Dina Korzun and Chulpan Khamatova.

However, on the whole, "epoch of a low movie numbers" continued (the annual Russian production amounted to 32 films). However, whatever Russian filmmakers shot there, and whatever prizes they received at the festivals, young viewers continued to watch not author's films, but entertainment films of mass culture, mostly American.

1998. The year of the next financial crisis (August 1998). Since the summer of 1998, many Russian films have been frozen: still 35 tapes extent reached the screens. The older generation presented, in fact, only two films of "international class" – *Day of the Full Moon* by Karen Shakhnazarov and *Krustalev, the car!* by Alexei German. Alas, A. German's wonderful film was not understood at the Cannes Film Festival. Alexei Balabanov became a triumphant of domestics' film prizes with *About Freaks and People* – a film of a very slippery moral sense (in the Soviet times, this movie would probably be accused of pathology and perversion). Former film critic Nikolai Lebedev debuted a good "Hitchcock" thriller *Snake Spring*. And the former successful screenwriter Peter Lucik (1960–2000) started as director with gloomy anti-utopia called *Suburb* (unfortunately, this work was the last in his bright, but short creative life).

1999. Year of voluntary resignation of President Boris Yeltsin, the next parliamentary elections and the resumption of full-scale war in Chechnya. Year of the attempt to revive the Moscow Festival. The year of Nikita Mikhalkov's romantic melodrama *The Barber of Siberia* and the insulting failures of such famous masters as Vladimir Khotinenko (*Strastnoy Boulevard*) and Vasily Pichul (*Sky in Diamonds*). In my opinion, the favorites of the press included such medium paintings as *Blockpost* and *Barack*. And at the Festival de Cannes, the script prize went to Alexander Sokurov's meditative drama *Moloch*, telling of Hitler's "peaceful life".

The total number of Russian films in 1999 slightly exceeded the level of the previous two years (41 full-length feature films).

2000. This year was marked by the completion of the hard work of Gleb Panfilov on the film *The Romanovs: The Crowned Family* and the large-scale *Russian Rebellion* by Alexander



Proshkin (screenings of Alexander Pushkin's *Captain's Daughter*). Both works have demonstrated the author's professionalism, but, alas, have not become as popular with the general public as, say, *Pan Tadeusz* in Poland... Conventionally "young" Alexei Uchitel gave the adherents of exquisite retrostyles a love melodrama about well known Russian writer Ivan Bunin – *His wife's diary*. Balabanov's *Brother–2* became the most popular Russian hit of the year. At the end of the film season, Sergei Soloviev, who hadn't filmed for a long time, pleased his fans. His *Tender Age*, which won the main prize of "Kinotavr", became a kind of cocktail of poetic style of "good old Solovyov" times *One hundred days after childhood* and *Black Rose...* with *House under the starry sky*. Neither at Berlin nor at the Venice festivals Russian cinema was shining. The exception was Pavel Lungin's *Wedding*, which was rinsed in Cannes...

2001. The shooting of 53 Russian feature films has been completed. Two famous actors – Oleg Yankovsky (1944–2009) and Alexander Abdulov (1953–2008) – made their film director's debuts. However, the Christmas comedy *Come see me* (directed by O. Yankovsky and M. Agranovich) was much warmer than *Bremen musicians and Co* by A. Abdulov, where he carefully imitated the style of films of Mark Zakharov. Finally, the premiere of the long-awaited screen version of Vladimir Bogomolov's military spy novel *The Moment of Truth* (Russian–Belarusian coproduction *In August of the 44th* by Mikhail Ptashuk) took place. Returning from Germany, Alexander Mitta confirmed his class of master of the entertainment genre in the TV series *Border / Taiga Romance*.

At the Cannes Film Festival, Alexander Sokurov's premiere of *Taurus*, a kind of post-scriptum to the "Cinema Leniniana" of the past decades, took place without much success. Despite the frozen entourage of "brothers" and "cops", the most notable debut of the year was the *Sisters* of Sergei Bodrov–Jr (1971–2002). Fruitful writers/actors Ivan Okhlobystin and Renata Litvinova to be popular.

2002. They're making 61 movies. F. Yankovsky's debut (*On the Move*) was successful. Notable works were presented by middle generation directors: Valery Todorovskiy (*Lover*), Alexander Rogozhkin (*Cuckoo*). Military dramas *Star* by N. Lebedev and *War* by A. Balabanov caused a wide resonance in the society and at festivals of the Russian level. Among the masters of the older generation A. Konchalovsky distinguished himself – his parable *House of Fools* deservedly received the prize of the Venice Festival.

2003. Film production, which has recovered from the default of 1998, is beginning to increase slowly (75 feature films). Until then, the debut of the film director Andrey Zvyagintsev – an existential parable *Return* – becomes a triumphant (two Golden Lions) at the film festival in Venice and brings a significant arrival at Europe and America. The debut of B. Khlebnikov and A. Popogrebsky (*Koktebel*) was not so brightly, but also interestingly. Alexander Sokurov presents his unique project – the allegory *Russian Ark*, and Alexei Uchitel – an improvisational *Walk*.

The older generation, represented by the Abdrashitov–Mindadze tandem, draws attention to the gloomy parable *Magnetic Storms*. Criminal drama of P. Buslov *Boomer* characterized by greater truthfulness of the psychological relationships of the characters and has a success with the youth audience (not on the big screen, but on video and DVD). The author of Bulgakov's best screen adaptation (*Dog's Heart*) V. Bortko brilliantly directed Dostoevsky's novel *The Idiot* for television.

2004. Among the 83 films shot for the big screen in 2004, the most convincing are the works of "middle generation" directors – dramas by V. Todorovsky (*My half-brother Frankenstein*), P. Chukhrai (*The Driver for Vera*), D. Meskhiev (*Ours*), V. Khotinenko (*72 meters*).

T. Bikmambetov, with the strong support of the Russian First Channel presents fantasy blockbuster *Night Watch*, which became a hit in Russian cinemas, where the main part were the audience of teenagers and young people. Contrary to expectations, *Night Watch* was received coolly abroad, but for the director received the ticket to Hollywood.

Since 2004, a sharp expansion of the production of Russian TV series – over a hundred annually.

2005. 82 feature films. The young directors drew the attention of a wide audience (*Ninth Company* by F. Bondarchuk) and critics/intellectuals (*Garpastum* by A. German Jr.). Alas, these works have not received any significant prizes in the international arena. As, however, and drama *The Sun* by Sokurov. The most professional works in the sphere of entertainment cinema were the

screenings of Boris Akunin's novels *The State Counselor* (directed by F. Yankovsky) and *The Turkish Gambit* (directed by D. Faiziev).

2006. The number of Russian feature films has increased to 106. The debutants (*Peter FM* by O. Bychkova, *Euphoria* by I. Vyrypaev) again pleased the audience. After several unsuccessful works, K. Serebrennikov made an eccentric and harsh film (*Pretending to be a victim*). B. Khlebnikov confirmed his class in *Free Swimming*. P. Lungin skillfully played at the religious conjuncture (*The Island*) To the number of underestimated movies of the year, in my opinion, can be attributed to the screening of the novel by Strugatsky *Wild Swans* in the masterful performance of K. Lopushansky and filigree *Dottedness* by A. Eshpai with a remarkable acting work of E. Simonova.

This time the directors of the older generation, alas, were not able to compete with either young colleagues on the big screen. E. Ryazanov's long-awaited drama *Andersen. Life without love* was anemic and prolonged. But on the screen small (TV) the old guard became the absolute leaders: talented series *Master and Margarita* by V. Bortko) and *Doctor Zhivago* by A. Proshkin immediately entered the classic "golden fund" of Russian cinema.

2007. The continuing increase in film production (146 films for cinemas and 142 for television) has led to a familiar effect in the early 1990s: an increase in the flow of weak, unprofessional movies. Against this background, even Popogrebsky's modest drama *Simple Things* turned out to be a positive event of the year. A. Balabanov's naturalistic criminal drama *Cargo 200* caused fierce controversy, dividing both ordinary viewers and sophisticated film critics/filmmakers into two irreconcilable camps of supporters and opponents of the "bloody trash" about a maniac-killer.

Once again, A. Zvyagintsev brilliantly demonstrated his skills, whose exquisite parable *Exile* was awarded at the Cannes Film Festival. The prize at the Venice Film Festival and the Oscar nomination were awarded to N. Mikhalkov's new work *12* (remake of *12 Angry Men*).

2008. The year of the global economic crisis could not radically affect the inertial nature of the increase in film production. Of course, some film projects have been halted, but 162 Russian feature films have already been produced in 2008.

Valeria Gai-Germanica made her uncompromising debut on the big screen (the school drama *Everybody dies, but I stay*). Among the films of the young generation it is also worth noting the *Paper Soldier* by A. German, Jr. The older generation was represented by a retro drama from the era of the 1970s *Vanished Empire* by K. Shakhnazarov.

Once again, the contribution of the middle generation of filmmakers was significant. The brightest event of the year was V. Todorovsky's *Stylish Youth (Stilyagi)*, which was a rare musical genre for Russian cinema. The drama *Prisoner* by A. Uchitel and *Wild Field* by M. Kalatozishvili (1959-2009) also attracted the attention of the audience. The remake of an old Soviet hit – *Irony of Fate. Continuation* – was the most popular film of the year (and decades).

On television, the undisputed leader was the series *Liquidation* by S. Ursulyak, dynamically and psychologically convincingly recreated the criminal atmosphere of Odessa in the second half of the 1940s.

2009. The number of feature films reaches almost two hundred (194). The disappointments of the year were for me *Tsar* by P. Lungin and *One and a half rooms* by A. Khrzhanovsky, obviously far from the best works of these Russian screen masters. On the other hand, *Buben, drum* by A. Mizgirev, was awarded at Locarno film festival. B. Khlebnikov presented the tragicomedy *Crazy Help*.

2010. 160 new Russian feature films. The most noticeable phenomenon of 2010 year was the drama of A. Uchitel's *Edge*, nominated for the Golden Globe award. The festival's success was bonus for the films *How I spent last summer* by A. Popogrebsky and *Ovsyanka* by A. Fedorchenko. The favourite of the Russian film critics became gloomy and depressive *Stoker* (directed by A. Balabanov). Unfortunately, the late TV premiere of Mikhail Kazakov's drama series *The Charm of Evil* (which lay on the shelf for four years) was almost unnoticed.

2011. 204 new Russian feature films. Directors of the older generation were presented by the dramas *Once upon a time one woman* by Andrey Smirnov and *Burnt by the Sun – 2* by Nikita Mikhalkov. Both films did not have any success, but the critics, who generally wrote sympathetically about the film by A. Smirnov, did not spare the critical arrows at the address of N. Mikhalkov. Alexander Sokurov became a triumphant: his film *Faust* received a prize at the

Venice Film Festival. A great audience success fell to the share of the film *Vysotsky. Thank you for being alive* by Pyotr Buslov, a relatively young director. Festival success, as always, fell to the share of Andrei Zvyagintsev – his psychological drama *Elena* was, perhaps, the most significant picture of the year.

2012. 213 new Russian feature films. Among the older generation of films there is a parable on the military material *White Tiger* by Karen Shakhnazarov. The middle generation of the directing made the audience happy with the sports drama *Legend number 17* by Nikolai Lebedev. Relatively young directors paid public attention with melodrama *Treason* (directed by Kirill Serebrennikov), ironic dramas *Cococo* (directed by Avdotya Smirnova) and *A Long and Happy Life* (directed by Boris Khlebnikov). Alexei Andrianov, filming the popular novel by Boris Akunin, of course, hoped that his detective "*The Spy*" would become a successful commercial project, but, despite the confident director and the participation of famous actors, the film for some reason passed through the screens without much success.

2013. 198 new Russian feature films. The viewers were finally able to see the long-awaited parable of Alexei German (1938–2013) *It's hard to be a god*, which was shot as long as 14 years. Konstantin Lopushansky recalled his psychological drama *Role*. Unfortunately, the film *Chagall & Malevich* by another senior director – Alexander Mitta was, in my opinion, a creative failure. Great controversy among the audience and film critics caused the movies of the middle generation – Fedor Bondarchuk (*Stalingrad*) and Alexander Veleinsky (*Geographer drank the Globe*). The younger generation of Russian directors present the satirical comedy *Bitter!* by Zhora Kryzhovnikov and erotic drama *Locust* by Yegor Baranov.

2014. This year was marked by a protracted crisis in Ukraine, which affected the global political situation and the political and economic life of Russia. In total, 187 new Russian feature films were released in Russia this year. Andrei Konchalovsky (*White Nights of the Postman Alexei Tryapitsyn*) and Nikita Mikhalkov (*Sunstroke*) presented their new works. Konchalovsky's film deservedly won a prize at the Venice Film Festival, but I. Bunin's prose in the interpretation of N. Mikhalkov caused fierce controversy in the journalistic community. The socially critical film *Leviathan* by Andrei Zvyagintsev also expected a surge of contradictory opinions. The young director pleased viewers and film critics with the sharp social dramas *Fool* (directed by Yuri Bykov) and *Correction Class* (directed by Ivan Tverdovsky). Unexpectedly weak was Alexei Uchitel's drama *The Eight*.

2015. Russia has entered a prolonged zone of sanctions pressure exerted on it by the United States and the European Union. There were 180 new Russian feature films, but there were practically no films that really became events of the year, including significant box office returns (at least none of Russia's films in 2015 could be included in the top ten hits of 2011–2019).

2016. 178 new Russian feature films. Among the artistic achievements of the year the leader, undoubtedly, was the drama *Paradise* by Andrei Konchalovsky, awarded at the film festival in Venice. Unfortunately, *Snea-kers*, the movie of another brilliant representative of the older generation of Russian directors – Sergei Solovyov – was extremely unsuccessful, as in the artistic, there and in the commercial sense. The interest of the audience and the press was aroused by the sharp story *The Crew* by Nikolai Lebedev, the musical-dramatic film about the ballet *Bolchoi Theatre* by Valery Todorovsky and the exquisite thriller *Dame Peak* by Pavel Lungin. Social criticism of Kirill Serebrennikov's *Student* caused a storm of controversy, probably comparable to the reaction to the *Leviathan* by A. Zvyagintsev.

2017. 170 new Russian feature films, including the sports drama *Moving Up*, which has headed the top ten most popular box office films of the decade. Russian film critics have actively supported new socially acute dramas on modern material – "*Arrhythmia*" by Boris Khlebnikov, *Nonlove* by Andrey Zvyagintsev and a finely luxurious parable by Rustam Khamdamov *The Bottomless Bag*. Russian film critics have deservedly criticized the film *Crimea* (directed by Alexey Pimanov) for its political conjuncture and very weak artistic level.

2018. 164 new Russian feature films, including box-office hits: the military thriller *T-34*, football drama *Coach* and the comedy *Policeman from Rublevka*. Kirill Serebrennikov's *Summer* and Alexei Fedorchenko's *Anna's War* were among the film critics' favorites. Negative reaction of the press was received by juncture movies *Crimean Bridge. Made with love!* and *Tanks*. Great interest of the audience caused TV series – satire *House arrest* by Petr Buslov and criminal drama

*Ordinary Woman* by Boris Khlebnikov. The success of these series confirmed the trend of transition of a considerable number of Russian talented directors to television.

## 5. Conclusion

The history of Russian cinema goes back more than a century, it knew the stages of rise and fall, ideological repression and complete creative freedom. This controversial history was studied by both Russian and foreign scientists. Of course, Soviet and Western scientists studied Soviet cinema from different ideological positions. Soviet filmmakers were generally active in supporting socialist realism in cinema, while Western scholars, on the contrary, rejected this method and paid great attention to the Soviet film avant-garde of the 1920s. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the situation changed: Russian and foreign film historians began to study cinema in a similar methodological manner, focusing on both ideological and socio-cultural aspects of the cinematographic process.

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## Attachment

### *Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1930s*

Alas, no precise data. However, there is no doubt that the following movies are almost certainly included in the top ten hits of the decade (according to the release date)

*The Way to Life* (1931) by Nikolai Eck  
*Funny guys* (1934) by Grigory Alexandrov  
*Chapaev* (1934) by Vasiliev Brothers  
*Youth of Maxim* (1934) by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg  
*Dashless* (1936) by Yakov Protazanov  
*Circus* (1936) by Grigory Alexandrov  
*Volga–Volga* (1938) by Grigory Alexandrov  
*Alexander Nevsky* (1938) by Sergei Eisenstein  
*A foundling* (1939) by Tatyana Lukashevich  
*Tractor Drivers* (1939) by Ivan Pyryev

### *Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1940s*

(the total number of viewers for the first year of the film screening)

1. *Young Guard* (1948) by Sergey Gerasimov, 42.4 millions.
2. *The fall of Berlin* (1949) by Mikhail Chiaureli, 38.4 millions.
3. *The Tale of the Siberia* (1948) by Ivan Pyryev, 33.8 millions.
4. *Star* (1949) by Alexander Ivanov, 28.9 million.
5. *At six o'clock in the evening after the war* (1944) by Ivan Pyryev, 26.1 millions.
6. *Meeting on the Elbe* (1949) by Grigory Alexandrov, 24.2 millions.
7. *Rainbow* (1944) by Mark Donskoy, 23.7 millions.

8. *Stone flower* (1946) by Alexander Ptushko, 23.1 millions.
9. *Arinka* (1940) by Yuri Musicant & Nadezhda Kosheverova, 22.9 millions.
10. *The scout's feat* (1947) by Boris Barnet, 22.3 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1950s*

1. *Silent Don* (1957) by Sergei Gerasimov, 46.9 millions.
2. *Lubov Yarovaya* (1953) by Jan Frid, 46.4 millions.
3. *Above Tissa* (1958) by Dmitry Vasilyev, 45.7 millions.
4. *Carnival Night* (1956) by Eldar Ryazanov, 45.6 millions.
5. *Marriage to a dowry* (1953) by Tatyana Lukashevich & Boris Ravenskikh, 45.3 millions.
6. *Outpost in the mountains* (1953) by Konstantin Yudin, 44.8 millions.
7. *Ivan Broukin on the virgin lands* (1959) by Ivan Lukinsky, 44.6 millions.
8. *Brave people* (1950) by Konstantin Yudin, 41.2 millions.
9. *Kuban Cossacks* (1950) by Ivan Pyryev, 40.6 millions.
10. *Soldier Ivan Broukin* (1955) by Ivan Lukinsky, 40.3 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1960s*

1. *Diamond Hand* (1969) by Leonid Gaidai, 76.7 millions.
2. *Caucasian prisoner* (1967) by Leonid Gaidai, 76.5 millions.
3. *Wedding in Malinovka* (1967) by Andrei Tutyshkin, 74.6 millions.
4. *Operation "Y" and other adventures of Shurik* (1965) by Leonid Gaidai, 69.6 millions.
5. *Shield and Sword* (1968) by Vladimir Basov, 68.3 millions.
6. *New Adventures of the Elusive* (1969) by Edmond Keosayan, 66.2 millions.
7. *Amphibian Man* (1962) by Gennady Kazansky & Vladimir Chebotarev, 65.4 millions.
8. *War and Peace* (1966) by Sergei Bondarchuk, 58 millions.
9. *Strong in spirit* (1968) by Victor Georgiev, 55.2 millions.
10. *Elusive Avengers* (1967) by Edmond Keosayan, 54.5 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1970s*

1. *And the dawns here are quiet...* (1973) by Stanislav Rostotsky, 66.0 millions.
2. *Gentlemen of good luck* (1972) by Alexander Sery, 65.0 millions.
3. *The Tabor goes into the sky* (1976) by Emil Lotyanu, 64.9 millions.
4. *Red Kalina* (1974) by Vasily Shukshin, 62.5 millions.
5. *Afonya* (1975) by Georgy Danelia, 62.2 millions.
6. *Crown of the Russian Empire, or Elusive again* (1973) by Edmond Keosayan, 60.8 millions.
7. *Ivan Vasilyevich changes his profession* (1973) by Leonid Gaidai, 60.7 millions.
8. *Stepmother* (1974) by Oleg Bondarev, 59.4 millions.
9. *Service Romance* (1978) by Eldar Ryazanov, 58.4 millions.
10. *Destiny* (1978) of Evgeny Matveyev, 57.8 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1980s*

1. *Pirates of the 20th century* (1980) by Boris Durov, 87.6 millions.
2. *Moscow does not believe in the tears* (1980) by Vladimir Menshov, 84.4 millions.
3. *Crew* (1980) by Alexander Mitta, 71.1 millions.
4. *Little Vera* (1988) by Vasily Pichula, 56.0 millions.
5. *Sportloto-82* (1982) by Leonid Gaidai, 55.2 millions.
6. *Petrovka, 38* (1980) by Boris Grigoriev, 53.4 millions.
7. *A man from Boulevard des Capucins* (1987) by Alla Surikova, 50.6 millions.
8. *Tehran-43* (1981) by Alexander Alov & Vladimir Naumov, 47.5 millions.
9. *The most charming and attractive* (1985) by Gerald Bezhanov, 44.9 millions.
10. *Love and pigeons* (1984) of Vladimir Menshov, 44.5 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 1990s*

Alas, no official data are available. At the same time, it is obvious that the leaders of the rent of the 1990s were *Shirley–Myrli* (1994) by Vladimir Menshov, *Features of the national hunting...* (1995) by Alexander Rogozhkin, *Brother* (1997) by Alexey Balabanov and *The Barber of Siberia* (1999) by Nikita Mikhalkov.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 2000s*

1. *Irony of fate. Continuation* (2007) by Timur Bekmambetov, \$ 49.9 millions.
2. *Admiral* (2008) by Andrei Kravchuk, \$ 33.7 millions.
3. *Day watch* (2006) by Timur Bekmambetov, \$ 32.0 millions.
4. *The Best Film* (2008) by Kirill Kuzin, \$ 27.5 millions.
- 5 *9 Company* (2005) by Fedor Bondarchuk, 23.6 millions.
6. *Christmas trees* (2010) by Timur Bekmambetov and others, \$ 22.7 millions.
7. *Our Russia. Eggs of Fate* (2010) by Gleb Orlov, \$ 22.2 millions.
8. *Inhabited Island: Film First* (2009) by Fedor Bondarchuk, \$ 21.8 millions.
9. *Wolfhound of the Grey Dog family* (2007) by Nikolai Lebedev, \$ 20.0 millions.
10. *Black Lightning* (2010) by Alexander Voitinsky and Dmitry Kiselev, \$ 19.7 millions.

*Hit parade of Russian cinema of the 2011–2018*

1. *Moving upwards* (2017) by Anton Megerdichev, \$ 53.9 millions.
2. *Stalingrad* (2013) by Fedor Bondarchuk, \$ 51.8 millions.
3. *Christmas trees 3* (2014) by Olga Kharina & Dmitry Kiselev, \$ 38.0 millions.
4. *Viy* (2014) by Oleg Stepchenko, \$ 34.3 millions.
5. *Three Strongmen on the far shores* (2013) by Konstantin Feoktistov, \$ 31.1 millions.
6. *T–34* (2018) by Alexey Sidorov, \$ 30.0 millions (prognosis).
7. *Legend #17* (2013) by Nikolai Lebedev, \$ 29.3 millions.
8. *Vysotsky. Thank you for being alive* (2011) by Petr Buslov, \$ 28.0 millions.
9. *Ice* (2018) by Oleg Trofim, \$ 26.5 millions.
10. *The policeman from Rublevka. New Year's Surplus* (2018) by Ilya Kulikov, \$ 26.0 millions (prognosis).