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Theoretical Concepts of Film Studies in *Cinema Art Journal*: 1945–1955

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Abstract

On the basis of an analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of the sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the second decade of the journal *Cinema Art* (1945–1955) the authors conclude that theoretical works on cinematic subjects during this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party dedicated to culture (including – cinematography) and defending the principles of socialist realism and communist party in cinematography (1946–1955) (Y. Borev, A. Burov, A. Groshev, D. Eremin, A. Karaganov, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, N. Semenov, V. Skaterschikov, V. Sutyryn, etc.)

- theoretical articles opposing "cosmopolitanism," formalism and bourgeois influence, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (1949–1955) (A. Abramov, Y. Arbat, S. Ginzburg, I. Greenberg, I. Dolinsky, D. Eremin, S. Freilich, V. Scherbina, Y. Vostrikov, I. Weisfeld and others);

- theoretical articles critical of bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1945–1955) (G. Avarin, I. Weisfeld, etc.);

- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: the development of color in film, genres, entertainment, film dramaturgy, etc. (1945–1955) (A. Dovzhenko, S. Eisenstein, A. Golovnya, L. Kosmatov, V. Lazarev, A. Macheret, M. Romm, V. Shklovsky, V. Zhdan, etc.);

- theoretical articles balancing between ideological and professional approaches to the creation of cinematic works of art (1945–1955) (L. Belova, V. Frolov, S. Gerasimov, N. Morozova, L. Pogozheva, V. Pudovkin, V. Turkin, G. Tushkan, I. Weisfeld, etc.);

- theoretical articles calling on the authorities to ensure organizational transformations that would promote the intensive development of film studies as a science (N. Lebedev).

Keywords: cinema art journal, 1945–1955, theoretical concepts, film studies, USSR, movie.

1. Introduction

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

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Cinema Art journal (from 1931 to the present) in world science.

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

In the article "Theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal in the first decade of its existence" (Fedorov and Levitskaya, 2022) we investigated the period of the 1930s and early 1940s. In this article we analyze the theoretical concepts of film studies in the *Cinema Art* journal during the second decade of its existence – from 1945 to 1955.

2. Materials and methods

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

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

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

3. Discussion and results

We will dwell on the analysis of film theory concepts in *Cinema Art* journal during the second decade (1945–1955) of its existence, when its editors-in-chief were Ivan Pyryev (1945–1946), Nikolai Semionov (1947), Nikolai Lebedev (1947–1948), V. Grachev (1948), Dmitry Eremin (1949–1951), and Vitaly Zhdan (1951–1955).

On the basis of changes in the political and sociocultural context (see main political and sociocultural events in the Appendix), this ten-year period for the *Cinema Art* journal can be divided into a period of active government intervention in the sphere of culture (including cinema) through strong ideological pressure on artists: 1945–1949; a period of relatively weaker government intervention in the cultural sphere, while maintaining strict ideological dominants and political slogans: 1950–1955.

We also indicate in Table 1 the names of the authors in charge of the journal, the length of time they were in charge of the publication, and the number of articles on the theory of cinema in each year of the journal's publication.

Table 1. Journal *Cinema Art* (1945–1955): statistical data

Year of issue of the journal	The organization whose organ was the journal	Circulation (in thousand copies)	Periodicity of the journal (numbers per year)	Editor-in-chief	Number of articles on film theory
1945	Committee on Cinematography under the USSR	4	3	I. Pyrev (1901–1968)	3

	Council of People's Commissars				
1946	Committee on Cinematography under the USSR Council of People's Commissars (№ 1) USSR Ministry of Cinematography (№№ 2-4)	4	4	I. Pyrev (1901–1968)	2
1947	USSR Ministry of Cinematography	4	7	N. Semionov (1902–1982) (№ 1). N. Lebedev (1897–1978) (№ 2-7)	8
1948	USSR Ministry of Cinematography	4	6	N. Lebedev (1897–1978) (№ 1-3, 5-6) V. Grachev (№ 4)	15
1949	USSR Ministry of Cinematography	4 – 7,2	6	D. Eremin (1904–1993)	38
1950	USSR Ministry of Cinematography	10	6	D. Eremin (1904–1993)	13
1951	USSR Ministry of Cinematography	11,5 – 12,3	6	D. Eremin (1904–1993) (№ 1–2). V. Zhdan (1913–1993) (№ 3–6)	14
1952	USSR Ministry of Cinematography, USSR Union of Writers	7,9 – 15	12	V. Zhdan (1913–1993)	45
1953	USSR Ministry of Cinematography, USSR Union of Writers	11–12	12	V. Zhdan (1913–1993)	28
1954	USSR Ministry of Cinematography, USSR Union of Writers	11,6 – 13,6	12	V. Zhdan (1913–1993)	16
1955	USSR Ministry of Culture, USSR Union of Writers	13,8 – 15	12	V. Zhdan (1913–1993)	12

A break in the issue of the *Cinema Art* journal amounted to four military years – from July 1941 to September 1945. Only when the USSR emerged victorious in the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War, the state considered it possible to resume the issue of the journal. The first issue of 1945 came out in October. The periodicity of the journal was originally planned to be monthly (as stated in the imprint), but in fact turned out differently: in 1945 it came out three numbers, in 1946 – four. As a result, between 1947 and 1951 the *Cinema Art* journal officially came out once every two months, and only in 1952 did it resume its monthly circulation.

The journal's circulation from 1945 to 1955 fluctuated between four and fifteen thousand copies, with a general trend of gradual increase.

Until early 1946, *Cinema Art* was still an organ of the USSR Committee on Cinematography, but then the USSR Ministry of Cinematography was founded, and this journal became its official publication. Since 1952, with the express purpose of increasing the journal's influence on improving the quality of cinematography, *Cinema Art* became an organ of the USSR Ministry of Cinematography and the USSR Union of Writers. Since that time almost half of the journal's print run was taken up by a new script, and the bulk of the theoretical articles focused on improving the quality and other problems of Soviet screenwriting. After the liquidation of the USSR Ministry of Cinematography (as it had failed to justify its hopes for a sharp increase in the efficiency of the film process) in 1955 the *Cinema Art* journal became an organ of the USSR Ministry of Culture and the USSR Union of Writers.

From October 1945 to December 1946 the editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art* was the director Ivan Pyrev (1901–1968). Only a few theoretical articles were published during that period, and this was largely due to the fact that during that period, which lasted less than a year and a half, only seven issues were published.

Film historian V. Fomin is right in that, reading the materials of the *Cinema Art* of the second half of the 1940s, "you just have a real shock and wipe your eyes for a long time, when you turn the cover, read the table of contents, and then with the materials of the main Soviet newsreel. On the one hand, one does not even have to look closely to notice the indelible stamp of that special time, the particularly diligent servility of the editors... The covers, editorials, urgent inserts in the issue and especially the review critique give away the pathological conjuncture, the highest readiness of the authors and editors to obligingly serve the Communist Party power of the time to the highest standard" (Fomin, 2001: 20). But at the same time V. Fomin rightly noted that at the same time the *Cinema Art* also published several articles by S. Eisenstein (Fomin, 2001: 21). Other curious theoretical articles on cinema were also published in the journal of this period.

A similar ideological orientation was characteristic of the *Cinema Art* in the first half of the 1950s. Film historian N. Zorkaya right: in the journal of the period a considerable number of cinematography "thing purely nominal. Replacing some repetitive words (now we call them "key": "screen", "director", "actor", "actress", "portrait") for concepts from other areas of life, such as agriculture, you get the same result - about agriculture do not learn anything. That is because the purpose of this periodical (as well as of other similar publications) is not information, not this or that "learning" (in this case – film studies), but "repetition is the mother of learning", hammering into people's brains several fundamental truths: we live in the best country in the world; the capitalist environment is rotting and becoming poor; the Soviet people toil heroically and build communism; we owe our victories to the great Stalin. ... The *Cinema Art* journal is a perfect example of Soviet ideological discourse. Not the point, not the sense, not the truth, but a conspiracy, hollowing out, muddling through and endlessly chewing the same things to stupefaction" (Zorkaya, 2001: 23). Though, again, there are always exceptions to every rule...

And if in the 1930s the theoretical aspect of the then technical innovation of sound cinema was a key one in the journal, the first issues of the post-war *Cinema Art* dedicated a significant part of the articles on film studies to color cinematography, its role in the future development of screen art.

Thus director A. Dovzhenko (1894–1956) was convinced that in the Soviet cinema "there will be passionate knights of color abundance, not only not tiring and not irritating the audience, but on the contrary, inspiring and delighting the richness and boldness of combinations. There will be aesthetes of faded color, gray rain and wet asphalt; there will be sun worshipers and apologists for nature; there will be opponents of nature, creators of the artificial decorative world. But everyone will decide for himself the quantity and quality of color means to their combinations in ways completely different from the ways of painting" (Dovzhenko, 1945: 7).

Unlike A. Dovzhenko, the art critic A. Fedorov-Davydov (1900-1969) was convinced that "the study of the richest world experience of painting can help cinematography in mastering color. This experience must be studied and mastered" (Fedorov-Davydov, 1945: 11).

Art historian V. Lazarev (1897–1976) emphasized that "the film director can create not only the color composition of an individual shot, but also the color composition of the entire film. In other words, he is forced to project color over time. ...The principal novelty of color cinema lies in the fact that light (much more intense than in painting) can be played in a completely new way, because the director's palette will depend entirely on this or that use of light. And when creating a

color composition, he will always have to remember that it will be perceived by the viewer in time, in a dynamic alternation of shots, and that consequently his color will reach the eye in a fraction of a second, whereas in a painting or fresco the color remains in a static, unchanged state. Hence it is clear that color in cinema must be quite different from color in a painting of the time" (Lazarev, 1945: 4).

Thus, color in cinematography was considered multidimensional, great hopes were placed on its possibilities, which, as practice soon showed, were in many respects justified.

Director S. Gerasimov (1906–1985) once again turned to his favorite topic of the specifics of an actor's work in cinema: "The spectator has the right to demand from the cinematographic play those almost imperceptible details which he does not count on in the theater — he sees an actor's face as if a meter away from himself; he hears his breath and he wants thus to see something most intimate, most secret in the spiritual world of the visible and audible hero. The search for details together with the actor, the multiplication of the sum of the director's observations by the sum of the actor's observations, the joint selection, the high demand for intonation, for mimicry, for gesture are mandatory in cinematography and many times more so than in the theater. Without understanding this, you can not count on the true success, having in his hands even the most coherent, intelligent and meaningful script. It is under such conditions that the variety of pictures can be born which will differ from one another not only in the recognition of the theme set or even the literary development of such a theme, but also in the broad difference of the entire authorial expression, enclosed both in the choice of theme and in the artistic realization of it, that is in the whole sum of the countless details which the great art of cinematography possesses" (Gerasimov, 1945: 18).

Film scholar N. Lebedev (1897–1978), worried about the development of science about cinema, wrote again about the fact that in the USSR "we have neither our own academy, nor a research institute on film art, nor our own creative union (like the unions of Soviet writers, architects, composers, artists), nor a other society. We have neither a central museum of our own, nor museums at major enterprises, nor a film library, nor a library of film literature. Not a single institution of general art history is currently working on cinema issues. The synthetic nature of cinema, the richness and diversity of its expressive tools make studying it extremely complex. A deep, scholarly research of cinema pieces should be analyzed not only from the viewpoint of their ideological, educational and pedagogical value, but also in terms of the formal and stylistic components that make them up, from the perspective of literary drama, directing, acting, acting, visual, musical, cinematographic, etc. This requires the film researcher to have a vast encyclopedic knowledge of all areas of the arts. And since this encyclopedic knowledge is extremely rare, it is necessary to organize teams of specialists from different fields of art history for a comprehensive study of film art. Unfortunately, we have not even begun such a study of film works" (Lebedev, 1946: 3-4).

Here it is worth noting that N. Lebedev showed enviable persistence in his desire to raise the status of Soviet film studies for several decades.

The *Cinema Art* journal in 1945 also published an article by the playwright, writer, and film critic V. Shklovsky (1893–1984), whose theoretical views in the same edition (and, of course, not only in it) were accused of formalism in the 1930s. Reflecting on the nature of film adaptations of literary works, Shklovsky reasonably wrote that "we cannot refuse film staging, as art cannot abandon the past, its rethinking and deepening, just as language cannot abandon its history, but the work of film staging is a philosophical-critical work — not the work of a copyist. We must overcome the imitative naturalism of film staging and move to the discovery of the internal laws of the work of art, to the analysis of that interlocking of thought, images and actions that constitute the content of art" (Shklovsky, 1945: 33-34).

But the most theoretically weighty article published in the *Cinema Art* journal in 1945–1946 was that of director S. Eisenstein (1898–1948), in which he urged film scholars to look at "film close-up: through the lens of close analysis, "taken apart by article", by the wheels, decomposed into elements and studied the way engineers and specialists in their fields of technology study a new design model. This view should be a view of the film from the perspective of a professional journal. There should be a "general" and "middle" view of the film, but it should also be viewed first and foremost as a "close-up" view — an equally close-up view of all its constituent parts. If in the "general plan" view the judgments of our public are unmistakably accurate, sometimes ruthless, but always correct, if in the field of excited and interested analysis of the events and images of the

film we often manage to rise above a simple, indifferent retelling, then in the field of a close professional, "drilling" look inside the merits and flaws of what is done — in terms of high requirements which we are in the nature and obliged to set before our works — we are far from shining with perfection. Without this "third critique," there can be no growth, no development, no steady rise in the general level of what we do. High public appreciation cannot serve as a shield behind which poor editing and the poor quality of the actors' delivery of those infinitely needed words that ultimately determine our approval of the film can hide with impunity. The viewer's interest in the story cannot serve as amnesty for bad photography, and the record box office of a picture that captures the viewer with an exciting theme does not absolve us of responsibility for poorly composed music, poorly recorded sound or (so often!) poor laboratory and mass print work. ...I remember another period of discussion, the declining period of Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, when you could not speak about a picture that had gone well on the screens and say, for example, that it was photologically pale and artistically uninventive. You were accused of discrediting the leading production of Soviet cinema. And a bugaboo was waved at you with the formidable and altogether irrelevant accusation that you were denying "the unity of form and content"! Today it almost sounds like an anecdote, but it was a bad one. It dulled the sharpness of demanding the quality of the film. It cooled the passion for exactingness in art. It has numbed the sense of responsibility on the part of the filmmakers themselves. It has largely fostered indifference to the merits of individual components" ([Eisenstein, 1945: 7-8](#)).

It is worth pointing out that the bulk of articles in *Cinema Art* in 1945–1946 was characterized by a calm, analytical tone, without the emotionalism and harshness which were typical of the 1930s.

However, this situation did not last long. Soon the sphere of Soviet cinema (as well as culture in general) came under fire from the authorities, who accused cultural figures, among other things, of "worshipping the West" and "cosmopolitanism."

Of course, the new wave of struggle against bourgeois influence on Soviet culture had its reasons. The beginning of a new round of tensions between the recent allies in World War II was laid in Winston Churchill's Fulton speech at Westminster College on March 5, 1946: "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia; all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject, in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and in some cases increasing measure of control from Moscow. ... Except in the British Commonwealth and in the United States where Communism is in its infancy, the Communist parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilization. ... From what I have seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness. For that reason the old doctrine of a balance of power is unsound. We cannot afford, if we can help it, to work on narrow margins, offering temptations to a trial of strength" ([Churchill, 1946](#)).

As a reaction of the British propaganda apparatus to this speech of Winston Churchill, the BBC began a regular broadcast in Russian on March 26, 1946, directed against the Soviet Union and its satellites. The Cold War had begun...

As early as mid-August 1946, the authorities in the USSR reacted to the Cold War with the West with successive decrees concerning the tightening of cultural policy. One by one, in the second half of 1946, the following Resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party were issued: "On *The Star* and *Leningrad* magazines" ([Resolution..., 1946a](#)), "On the repertoire of drama theaters and measures to improve it" ([Resolution..., 1946b](#)), "On the film *Great Life*" ([Resolution..., 1946c](#)), "On release and use of foreign literature" ([Resolution..., 1946d](#)), in which the harsh accusatory language, familiar to the population of the USSR from the repression era of the 1930s, reappeared.

The main aim of these Resolutions was, on the one hand, to show Soviet cultural activists who had "relaxed" in the atmosphere of Victory that the Soviets would not tolerate any artistic freedom or even minimal dissent (an indirect reminder of the repressive 1930s) and, on the other hand, would not tolerate any bourgeois influence on the Soviet public.

The Resolution "On *The Star* and *Leningrad* magazines" ([Resolution..., 1946a](#)) noted that "it is a grave mistake of *The Star* to give the literary tribune to the writer Zoshchenko, whose works

are alien to Soviet literature. The editorial board of *The Star* knows that Zoshchenko has long specialized in writing empty, meaningless and vulgar things, in preaching a rotten lack of ideology, vulgarity and apoliticality, calculated to disorient our youth and poison their consciousness. ... It is all the more inadmissible to give the pages of *The Star* to such scoundrels and bastards of literature as Zoshchenko... *The Star* magazine also popularizes the works of the writer Akhmatova... Akhmatova is a typical representative of empty senseless poetry alien to our people. Her poems imbued with the spirit of pessimism and decadence, expressing the tastes of the old salon poetry, fixed on the positions of bourgeois aristocratic aesthetics and decadent, "art for art", not wanting to keep pace with its people are detrimental to the education of our youth and cannot be tolerated in the Soviet literature. ... The magazine began to produce works which cultivate a spirit of worshipping the modern bourgeois culture of the West which is not typical of Soviet people" ([Resolution..., 1946a](#)).

In the Resolution "On the repertoire of drama theaters and measures to improve it" the leading Soviet theaters were accused that in many performances the Soviet people are "depicted in ugly-caricatured form, primitive and uncultured, with philistine tastes and manners, negative characters are given brighter character traits, shown as strong, strong-willed and skillful. The events in such plays are often depicted far-fetched and deceitful, which is why these plays create a wrong, distorted picture of Soviet life. ... The Central Committee of the Communist Party considers that the Committee on the Arts is pursuing a wrong policy, introducing the plays of bourgeois foreign playwrights into the repertoire of the theaters. ... The staging of plays by bourgeois foreign authors by the theaters was, in essence, providing the Soviet stage for the propaganda of reactionary bourgeois ideology and morality, an attempt to poison the minds of Soviet people with a worldview hostile to Soviet society, to revive the remnants of capitalism in consciousness and in life" ([Resolution..., 1946b](#)).

A direct reaction to the Cold War with the West was the Resolution "On release and use of foreign literature" ([Resolution..., 1946d](#)), which stated that "A vicious anti-state practice has developed in the purchase and use of foreign literature. ... Ministries, departments and organizations receiving foreign literature have no proper order in the storage and use of such literature and as a result a considerable amount of literature ordered from abroad is not delivered to departmental libraries for official use, but is stolen and deposited by certain individuals. ... The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) notes that the current inappropriate practice of subscribing to and using foreign literature is detrimental to the interests of the state and leads to squandering of currency and dissemination of anti-Soviet propaganda contained in foreign newspapers, magazines and books among part of the population" ([Resolution..., 1946d](#)).

In order to oppose "bourgeois propaganda", the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party decided to reduce currency allocations for foreign literature, to reduce the list of organizations with the right of such an allocation, to prohibit individual allocation of foreign literature, giving the right of individual allocation of foreign literature by specialty only to full members of the USSR Academy of Sciences ([Resolution..., 1946d](#)).

Needless to say, these resolutions have had a major impact on the situation in Soviet cinematography and in the *Cinema Art* journal in particular.

And already cinematography directly affected the Resolution "On the film *Great Life*" ([Resolution..., 1946c](#)), which indicated that this movie "falsely portrayed party workers. The secretary of the party organization at the mine being rebuilt is shown in a deliberately ridiculous position, since his support for the workers' initiative to rebuild the mine could, allegedly, put him outside the ranks of the Communist Party, that he preaches backwardness, uncultivation and ignorance. ... The workers and engineers reconstructing Donbass are shown as backward and uncultured people, with very low moral qualities. Most of their time the heroes of the film are idle, engaged in idle chatter and drunkenness. ... The film testifies to the fact that some workers in the arts, living among Soviet people, do not notice their high ideological and moral qualities, do not know how to truly display them in works of art" ([Resolution..., 1946c](#)).

The Resolution named other "false and erroneous films": the second series of S. Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*, V. Pudovkin's *Admiral Nakhimov*, and G. Kozintsev and L. Trauberg's *Ordinary People*. In particular, it was stated that "director S. Eisenstein in the second series of the film *Ivan the Terrible* found ignorance in the portrayal of historical facts, presenting the progressive army of

oprichniks of Ivan the Terrible as a gang of degenerates, like the American Ku Klux Klan, and Ivan the Terrible, a man with a strong will and character — weak-willed” (Resolution..., 1946c).

As a result, the Resolution stated that "the Ministry of Cinematography, and above all its head, comrade Bolshakov, is poorly managed. Bolshakov, poorly manages the work of film studios, directors and screenwriters, cares little about improving the quality of films produced, and spends large sums of money in vain. The leaders of the Ministry of Cinematography are irresponsible and negligent with regard to the ideological and political content and the artistic merits of films. ... The lack of criticism in the field of cinematography, the atmosphere of nepotism among filmmakers is one of the main reasons for the production of bad films. Art workers must understand that those of them who will continue to treat their work irresponsibly and frivolously can easily be left behind in the advanced Soviet art and out of circulation, for the Soviet spectator has grown, his cultural demands and requirements have increased, and the Party and the state will continue to cultivate in the people good tastes and a high demand for works of art” (Resolution..., 1946c).

In the 1930s, similar "transgressions" by leading cadres in the cinema were punished most severely, up to and including firing squad. During a more "milder" period in the second half of the 1940s, I. Bolshakov (1902–1980), then Minister of Cinematography, even managed to keep his position.

But the threat to the very lives of the leading personnel of the Soviet film industry in the fall of 1946 was very strong, so at a promptly assembled All-Union meeting of workers in artistic cinematography on 14-15 October 1946, two official appeals were made in which the filmmakers promised to immediately correct all the errors identified by the authorities.

The first of these was to Comrade Stalin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers: "Participants at the All-Union Meeting of Workers of Artistic Cinematography discussed the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the film *Great Life*. This Resolution deeply and comprehensively revealed the ideological, political and creative mistakes made in our work. ... Joseph Vissarionovich! We assure you, friend and teacher, that fair criticism of our work will help the workers of the Soviet cinematography – Party and non-Party Bolsheviks – to restructure their work in the shortest possible time so that they will again hear words of encouragement from the people, from the Party, from you, dear Comrade Stalin. All-Union Meeting of Workers of Artistic Cinematography” (Chairman..., 1947: 3).

The second letter was to all workers in artistic cinematography: "The All-Union Meeting of Workers of Artistic Cinematography, having discussed the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the film *Great Life*, appeals to all workers in Soviet cinematography to mobilize all their forces to fulfill the tasks set before us by the Party. ... Many of our directors and screenwriters are lagging behind life and political events, and have sunk into the circle of narrow professional interests which they have forgotten that without a profound knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory, contemporary life and the history of our Motherland it is impossible to become a true artist who can truthfully depict contemporary life of Soviet people and heroically fulfill the great plans of the new Stalinist Five Year Plan. ... The workers of the Soviet cinematography must respond to the historical resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party with their deeds” (Appeal..., 1947: 4).

An editorial in the first issue of the *Cinema Art* reacted to the Resolution "On the film *Great Life*" by accusing the pictures criticized there, stressing that "to please his own formalistic "concept" S. Eisenstein distorted the historical era, distorted the image of a major statesman who played a progressive role in the history of the Russian state, and created anti-historical and anti-artistic film, unworthy of release on the Soviet screen. The director V. Pudovkin, without studying the historical material in detail, undertook to stage the film *Admiral Nakhimov* and also distorted the historical truth” (For..., 1947: 6).

However, a more important event that radically affected *Cinema Art's* work was the struggle against so-called "cosmopolitanism" in 1949, so the rest of the 1947–1948 periodical's materials were ideologically more restrained.

For example, a review of B. Balázs's film monograph "The Art of Cinema" (Balázs, 1945) noted that "this book is instructive and as a human document. The practice of Soviet cinematography forced Balázs, who had been brought up on neo-Kantian aesthetics, to reconsider many provisions of earlier works and to come to a more faithful understanding of the nature and functions of art in public life. And although Balázs has not yet abandoned many of his old formalist views, he (judging by his latest work) is on the way to revising them. Methodologically, the book is

extremely contradictory. Whereas its first part retells to the reader the old, almost unchanged positions of *The Visible Man* and *The Spirit of Film*, the second part, which emerged entirely during Balasz's Soviet period, grew out of his observations and practical work on Soviet cinematography, offers a number of valuable and interesting points, and to a certain extent will prove of considerable usefulness to Soviet cinematic theory" (Burov, 1947: 26).

At the beginning of 1947, director I. Pyrev was fired from his position as editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art* journal. This decision was most likely influenced by the criticism of the *Cinema Art* in an editorial by *Pravda* with the telling title "Advertising instead of Criticism" (Advertising..., 1946). It turned out that in 1946 the *Cinema Art* mistakenly put photos (Yurenev, 2001: 28) from films criticized sharply in the Resolution (of September 4, 1946) about the film *Great Life* (in number one, besides a scene from *Great Life*, a scene from *Admiral Nakhimov* was put in number one), and in double No. 2-3 – a frame from the second series of *Ivan the Terrible*), thus failing to anticipate their subsequent party and government smashing...

The appointment of N. Lebedev (1897–1978) as editor in chief of the *Cinema Art* (he had already signed for the second issue in 1947) led to a significant increase in the number of theoretical articles in the edition. N. Lebedev, during his short time as editor-in-chief, tried to attract the attention of filmmakers to the theoretical foundations of screenwriting, since the improvement of the "social realist and Communist party" quality of scripts should, in the opinion of the authorities, lead to an unprecedented flowering of Soviet cinematography.

Thus the writer, screenwriter, and film historian D. Eremin (1904-1993) stressed that after the 1946 Resolution (Resolution..., 1946) "the leading and fundamental role of the screenplay writer in film production was realized with a new force: the quality of the script, the depth and direction of the ideas in it, the vital truthfulness and substantiality of the conflicts of events and images, of artistic definition of characters and destinies of characters, of brightness and vividness of details to a great extent depends on the quality of a future picture. The image of a positive hero in Soviet cinematography can not be created by desk research. It must grow out of a lively contact of the artist with reality in its most essential and determinative manifestations. That hero cannot be created not as an arithmetic sum of bad and good human qualities, but only as an image of a truly living Soviet man in whom the Communist Party, ideological, highly moral, life-loving, militant strong-willed principles cannot fail to be basic, for it was they who made it possible to overturn the tsarist system, to transform the face of the country, to expel and destroy brazen invaders, to lead millions to the storm of new heights" (Eremin, 1947: 3-4).

D. Eremin believed that the shortcomings "do not lie in the notorious 'specificity' of screenwriting, but are related to questions of ideology. Their nature lies not in the authors' lack of professional skills, not in the weakness of their "craft," but in their insufficient knowledge and comprehension of life, in the lack of some authors' self-awareness that would establish them as active, militant ideologists, as ardent propagandists and deep thinkers, that is, as authors of a new, socialist type. Apparently, this is the direction in which we should work in the future. Increased demands for cinema art, dictated by the high and complex sociopolitical tasks facing our people, call for this" (Eremin, 1948: 10).

Further D. Eremin reflected on the specificity of dramaturgy of film comedies, considering that "the most widespread of the author's "prejudices" is the statement as if our reality completely excludes the possibility of development of film comedy, especially domestic, and as if particularly real is the prospect of inevitable self-elimination of the satirical genre. It is no coincidence that our comic works often lack sharp dramaturgy: all dramaturgy has a conflict at its core, and the conflict on which a sharp comic plot can be built is allegedly absent in our reality" (Eremin, 1948: 9).

This thesis was accompanied by a theoretical justification: "Our development from capitalism to socialism and from socialism, as the first stage of communism, to full communism goes through the active overcoming of all kinds of contradictions, antagonistic contradictions in relations with the world of capitalism and non-antagonistic ones within the socialist system. And wherever the comedy artist directs the fire of self-criticism at the internal contradictions associated with the struggle between the moribund and the nascent in the depths of our society, there arise various, forms of Soviet comedy. At the core of these comedies will be, for the most part, the conflict between the advanced and the backward. The solution to this conflict will be the idea, the author's goal of educating the audience to raise the backward to the level of the advanced. Such a comedy is the most, widespread and organic type of modern Soviet comedy. The satirical in it has not an all-embracing, but a distinct, local character; the main characters and their deeds express the positive

force of society; the content of the main dramaturgical conflict is not of a comprehensive negation and explosion, but a self-critical sense of improvement” (Eremin, 1948: 10).

In her support for the thesis that Soviet film drama had to be put in order, film critic L. Pogozheva (1913-1989) argued that “An analysis of the dialogical structure of a number of scripts leads to the conclusion that many scriptwriters lost sight of the significance of dialogue as an essential component of drama, and began to regard dialogue as a mere means of communication, or, at best, as a means for discovering the character and expressing their authorial attitude toward the events taking place in a script. ... The struggle against the dryness, the bloodlessness, the impersonality, the purported colorfulness of language, against the worn-out layer, the sterility, the monotony, the struggle against the monstrous practice of 'reworking' the dialogue in other people's scripts is the struggle for a true enrichment and purity of language in the script, this basis of the Soviet cinema art” (Pogozheva, 1947: 19, 21).

L. Pogozheva insisted that “the screenplay has earned itself the right to be considered a special kind of literature, and this right should be reserved for it. We don't need to produce "mechanized", "stamped" mass productions of the Hollywood type, we need works of an individual creative style, we need to develop art that testifies to the flourishing of all our people, art that sums up life experience in truly realistic works, that look broadly and boldly into the future. ... The last thing we can have are craftsmen writers who can flourish. The last thing we need now are plot prescriptions built on the experience of bourgeois filmmaking. What we need most is a screenwriter-thinker, for we must approach the evaluation of the screenplay with a semantic criterion, a criterion of the relation of art to reality” (Pogozheva, 1947: 29).

In 1947, the *Cinema Art* published an article by V. Sutyurin (1902–1985), removed from his post as editor of *Proletarian Cinema* in the early 1930s, who also joined the discussion of script-related subjects from his usual emphasis on ideology: “Each film produced today by our studios is a phenomenon of tremendous national importance, of great political significance. Each picture coming out on the screen, plays, or at least, should play a very significant role in the political education of millions of Soviet people. Under these conditions the public responsibility of the screenwriter for the quality of his work, for its political weight and correctness, for its artistic merits is made especially significant. The screenwriter bears this responsibility in full. He is subjected to harsh and fair criticism, public criticism, for every error, mistake, defect. ... On the one hand, we see that the film crew's free handling of the author's idea creates an impossible environment for the work of the screenwriter. On the other hand, we found that the literary script cannot be a dogma for the film crew, cannot be maintained as something absolutely immutable. There is no doubt that the author's active participation in the work of the crew will not only eliminate many reasons for conflicts, but will also contribute to improving the quality of the pictures produced” (Sutyurin, 1947: 7-8).

V. Sutyurin believed that “the question of cinematography's relation to prose and drama... must be recognized as the most important theoretical question... Without it, it is impossible to outline correct goals and objectives in the course of further cinematographic development. It is well-known that the specificity of cinema as a special kind of art was defined in the earliest theoretical works at a time when the creative experience of Soviet cinematography was very limited. Drawing on this creative experience, a whole series of artists, theorists and critics created the concept of "poetic" cinema, which for a certain period of time represented perhaps the only coherent system of theoretical conceptions of cinematic art. However, it soon had to enter into a serious struggle with a different system of views – with "prose" cinema, which quickly accumulated not only convincing theoretical arguments, but also arguments of a creative order” (Sutyurin, 1948: 11).

V. Sutyurin built his article on the opposition of the drama to the novel and the narrative, although he noted that “the drama can and does have elements of narrative form, which sometimes develop to very considerable proportions. Narrative literature may be dramatic, and sometimes is dramatic in the highest degree” (Sutyurin, 1948: 13-14).

Adjacent to this cycle of articles on film dramaturgy were theoretical articles by V. Zhdan (1913–1993), V. Volkenstein (1883–1974), and B. Begak (1903–1989).

In this context, film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003), in full accordance with the official guidelines of the time, reminded the journal's readers that “Socialist realism is neither a circle manifesto nor a dogma, but a method. A method definite enough to equip artists with a large and clear idea, to subordinate creativity to the tasks of serving the people. And at the same time, sufficiently multifaceted, rich, flexible to provide a wide range of individual manifestations,

genuine freedom of creativity. Artists following the path of socialist realism not only reflected, reproduced and explained reality, but also participated in its transformation, like the fighters who "equated a pen to a bayonet" (Weisfeld, 1947: 17), so "revolutionary romanticism is not a good wish; it enters the flesh and blood of Soviet cinematography. It began with *Battleship Potemkin*, *Mother*, and *Earth*. During the period of sound cinema, such films as *Chapaev*, *We're from Kronstadt* and pictures about Lenin continued the revolutionary-romantic tradition. These days the revolutionary-romantic element is increasingly evident along the whole front of cinema, from *The Oath* to *The Rural Teacher*" (Weisfeld, 1947: 21).

On the other hand, writer, screenwriter and literary critic V. Shklovsky (1893–1984) took a far less officious approach to the theme of realism, insisting that "in art, man lives in a part of his soul which is not usually strained. Both the heart and the lungs have enormous reserves. Their capacity is at least tenfold compared to the ordinary demands of life. Man is adapted to exploit and to be happy. In art man learns about himself the unprecedented, but possible. He learns to think, to wish, to perform feats. Realist art considered man and uncovered in him what is not easily discovered in life, but exists" (Shklovsky, 1947: 30).

In 1948, already after the death of director S. Eisenstein (1898–1948), the *Cinema Art* published his theoretical article about the perspective of stereo cinema, which "will give the full illusion of three-dimensionality of its images. In doing so, this illusion is as convincing to the end and does not raise the slightest doubt, just as there is no shadow of a doubt in ordinary cinematography that screen images are actually moving. The illusion of space in one case and motion in the other are just as immutable for those who know perfectly well that in one case we are dealing with a scattering of individual still phases taken from a whole process of motion, and in the other with nothing more than a cleverly devised process of superimposing two normal, flat photo images of the same object, only taken simultaneously at two slightly different independent angles of view. Here and there, the results of spatial and motor persuasion are as crushingly perfect as the characters themselves seem undeniably authentic and alive to us, even though we know perfectly well that they are nothing more than pale shadows, photochemically imprinted over kilometers of gelatin tape, which, coiled up in individual rollers, travels in flat tin boxes from end to end of the globe, everywhere equally impressing the viewer with the illusion of their vitality" (Eisenstein, 1948: 6).

Several articles in *Cinema Art* in 1948 were devoted to professional aspects of the practical work of the director and cameraman in cinematography (Golovnya, 1948: 29-31; Manevich, 1948: 26-28; Romm, 1948: 25-28).

It seemed that the journal gradually began to move away from its former ideological outbursts and accusations, concentrating more on professional creative problems. However, in the second half of 1948, in the pages of *Cinema Art* an unexpected attack began on ... its then editor-in-chief – film scholar and critic N. Lebedev (1897-1978).

It is clear that N. Lebedev himself could not initiate this harsh criticism of his book "Essays on the History of Cinema of the USSR" (Lebedev, 1947). Consequently, there was a strict instruction from "above".

At the beginning of his article about N. Lebedev's book, cinematographer I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) wrote that "old film workers remember the disputes that took place in the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers 20-25 years ago. These were heated fights which, though incomplete, reflected the class struggle on the ideological front. Along with the healthy, viable, revolutionary in the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, it was possible to encounter the reactionary and alien. Much in these disputes was random, petty, transient, and sometimes just nonsense, worthy only of oblivion. The task of the historian, it would seem, was to direct fire against harmful theories, resolutely cut away the insignificant and empty, separate the grains from the chaff, and most importantly, to be able to rise above the positions of the disputing parties. It would be unreasonable, at the very least, to analyze the work of individual artists from the transcripts of their speeches at Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers' discussions, to attach serious value to inessential and incidental statements by directors or critics, and to base methodological generalizations on them. Strange as it may seem, but N. Lebedev took precisely this path, which could lead nowhere but to a dead end. He recalls the notions of "innovators" and "traditionalists" as supposedly determining the balance of power on the cinematic front. ...Moreover, evidently remembering his own past performances in the Association of Revolutionary Cinematographers, he took the side of the "innovators" and began to denounce his yesterday's

opponents, the "traditionalists". ... Choosing as the subject of his research not the struggle for the affirmation of the method of socialist realism in cinema, but an abstract thesis defended from the position of one of the groups fighting in the twenties, he prefers speculation to fact, speculation to real life phenomena" (Weisfeld, 1948: 20-21).

Further, I. Weisfeld, in fact, accused N. Lebedev of an "anti-party line", as he, "spreading creative workers into 'national' and 'non-national' categories ... deviates from the clear instructions of Comrade Stalin, Comrades Zhdanov and Kirov... The methodological flaws of the essay are evident not only in the general structure of the book, but especially clearly in the analysis of individual paintings and in the characteristics of artists. The author often analyzes the phenomenon of cinema art scholastically, without any connection with the life of the people, with the guidelines and organizing work of the party, and therefore comes to deeply erroneous conclusions" (Weisfeld, 1948: 22).

In the finale of his article, in order to somehow soften the above, I. Weisfeld noted that "Lebedev's book has its merits: the presence of extensive and valuable factual material, presented in a known system, and a number of correct generalizations. But still the book discolors, narrows, presents in wrong light the lively, colorful, rich in events, searches and discoveries life of our art" (Weisfeld, 1948: 24).

I. Weisfeld's opinion was warmly supported by film scholars I. Manevich (1907–1976) and L. Pogozheva (1913-1989). They believed that "N. Lebedev tried to consider the development of cinema without a sufficiently deep analysis of its connections with reality and with other arts. Such a study of the history of the synthetic nature of cinematography, out of connection with literature, with the theater and with our entire socialist culture, led the author to a number of formalistic errors and prevented him from creating a correct historical concept of the development of Soviet cinema" (Manevich and Pogozheva, 1948: 16-17).

A similarly harsh criticism in the *Cinema Art* was made of M. Aleynikov's (1985–1964) monograph "Ways of Soviet Cinema and the Moscow Art Theatre" (Aleynikov, 1947).

Film scholar I. Dolinsky (1900–1983) argued that in the book "Ways of Soviet Cinema and the Moscow Art Theatre", "the method by which the author analyzes the phenomena of cinema is deeply flawed. Throughout most of the book M. Aleynikov carefully bypasses the ideological analysis of films, focusing attention only on the evaluation of the formal and aesthetic aspects of the works. ... In M. Aleynikov's book, the life of cinema is completely disconnected both from the entire sociopolitical life of the country, which determined the situation in art, and from the Communist Party's policy on art, which played a decisive role in the education of artists" (Dolinsky, 1948: 24-25).

S. Ginzburg (1907–1974), a cinema critic, rigorously evaluated both books by N. Lebedev and M. Aleynikov: "By reducing the development of Soviet cinema at a certain stage not to the struggle for new revolutionary content, but to the improvement of directorial techniques, Lebedev, naturally, came to underestimate the value of film dramaturgy and actors' creativity. ... Lebedev and Aleynikov books are very different. ... But these two so different books have one and the same flaw in common: they make the wrong assumption, as if the ways of development of Soviet cinema were determined not only by the goals set for it by the Communist Party and the Soviet people, but also by the task of mastering some immanent artistic means" (Ginzburg, 1948: 23-24).

Thus, the main reason for State's angry reaction to the works of N. Lebedev and M. Aleynikov was that these books "glorified formalism", that is, the formal mastery of filmmakers at the expense of insufficient emphasis on the role of the Communist Party and its leader.

Also attached to this criticism was the article "Involuntary Defense of Formalism" (Baramzin, 1948: 28-29), and all of this taken together was largely a reaction to the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the opera *The Great Friendship* of V. Muradeli" (Resolution..., 1948), which drew attention to the fact that contrary to the instructions that were given by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in its decisions on the magazines *The Star* and *Leningrad*, on the film *Great Life*, on the repertoire of dramatic theaters and measures for its improvement, the fight against formalism in the USSR is not conducted to the proper extent.

These articles were followed by an organizational conclusion: N. Lebedev was dismissed from the position of editor-in-chief of *Cinema Art*, and the first issue of this journal for 1949 was already published under the new editor-in-chief – writer, screenwriter and film critic D. Eremin (1904–1993).

But as it soon turned out, the 1948 revival of the struggle against formalism in art was only a prelude to the most important postwar ideological campaign of the regime—the struggle against "cosmopolitanism" – that unfolded on a large scale in 1949.

This campaign began with an article about one anti-patriotic group of theater critics (On..., 1949), published in *Pravda* on 29 January 1949. It says that "socialist realism is just as inseparable from a lively, ardent, loving interest in the life and work of the people, from a deep and noble patriotic feeling, as bourgeois hurrah-cosmopolitanism is from an indifferent, indifferent attitude toward the people and their art, from an indifferent, scorned, cold aestheticism and formalism. ... Barefaced cosmopolitanism is not only anti-national, but also sterile. It is as harmful as those parasites in the plant world that undermine the growth of useful crops. It serves as a conductor of bourgeois reactionary influences hostile to us" (On ..., 1949).

The article went on to say that Soviet art criticism is "the most backward area" and "it is in theater criticism that until recently a nest of bourgeois aesthetics has survived, covering up an anti-patriotic, cosmopolitan, rotten attitude toward Soviet art. An anti-patriotic group of the afterbirths of bourgeois aesthetics has formed in the theater criticism, which penetrates our press and operates most brazenly on the pages of the *Theater* magazine and the *Soviet Art* newspaper. These critics have lost their responsibility before the people; they are the bearers of a deeply repugnant cosmopolitanism which is hostile to the Soviet man; they hinder the development of Soviet literature, they hamper its advancement. ... The sting of aesthetic and formalist criticism is directed not against really harmful and inferior works, but against the advanced and best ones that show the images of Soviet patriots. This is precisely what demonstrates that aesthetic formalism serves only as a cover for its anti-patriotic essence. ... At a time when we are faced with the urgent task of combating homeless cosmopolitanism, against manifestations of bourgeois influences alien to the people, these critics find nothing better to do than to discredit the most advanced phenomena of our literature. This directly harms the development of Soviet literature and art and hinders their progress. ... We are faced not with occasional individual errors, but with a system of anti-patriotic views that is detrimental to the development of our literature and art, a system that must be smashed" (On ..., 1949).

The theoretical basis of the struggle against cosmopolitanism was substantiated in the article of G. Alexandrov (1908–1961), who from 1940 to 1947 worked as the head of the Office of agitation and propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and from 1947 to 1954 he served as director of the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Aleksandrov's article titled "Cosmopolitanism – the Ideology of the Imperialist Bourgeoisie" was formally published in No. 3 of the journal *Questions of Philosophy* for 1948 (Aleksandrov, 1948: 174-192), but in reality this issue was signed for print on June 1, 1949.

From this it is clear why G. Aleksandrov, already after the publication of his article "On One Anti-Patriotic Group of Theater Critics" (On... 1949) and the total positive reaction of the Soviet media that followed, in his article he asserted that "the Soviet public, our press have exposed and defeated the kosmopolitans in philosophy, who ideologically armed the cosmopolitan group that was operating in the field of theater and literary criticism, who were trying to subordinate the least stable part of the Soviet intelligentsia to the influence of reactionary, cosmopolitan ideology. The struggle for Soviet patriotism and against bourgeois cosmopolitanism waged by our Bolshevik Party is at the same time the high school of the communist education of the Soviet people and our intelligentsia, the struggle for the complete liberation of the Soviet people from every influence of rotten, bourgeois "culture" and reactionary ideology. This struggle is of enormous importance for the further development and strengthening of the ideological and moral-political unity of the Soviet society. Homeless cosmopolitans have been trying to undermine our advanced, Soviet culture, to smear all the really advanced works of our literature, art, and science, and to propagate and spread the most backward, hostile to the Soviet worldview.

It is clear why the reactionary, bourgeois ideology abroad and the pathetic renegades anti-patriots in the USSR are operating under the flag of cosmopolitanism. Under the cover of the old cosmopolitan rags it is more convenient for the ruling foreign imperialist clique to try to disarm the proletariat in the struggle against capitalism, to eliminate the national sovereignty of certain countries and to suppress the revolutionary movement of the working class. Under the flag of cosmopolitanism, the American imperialists are deploying preparations for a new war against the USSR and the countries of popular democracy, they are deploying the struggle for world domination. They hide their aggressive imperialist desires and aims under a cosmopolitan mask.

By spreading reactionary, cosmopolitan ideology the enemies of the USSR are trying to weaken the moral and political unity of the Soviet Union and are trying to subordinate the Soviet people to reactionary bourgeois ideology. The bourgeoisie and its ideological lackeys go to any lengths to spread reactionary, cosmopolitan ideology, to pass it off as an advanced, supposedly "international" ideology, to convince the masses that this ideology coincides with the interests of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia" (Alexandrov, 1948: 177).

As we can see, G. Aleksandrov's article clearly viewed the main vectors of the "Cold War" blossoming with the West, as "cosmopolitanism" was presented as a harmful pro-bourgeois, pro-Western phenomenon.

Continuing the state campaign against "cosmopolitanism," in February 1949 two leading Soviet cultural publications – *Literature Paper* and *Soviet Art* – published articles that shifted their critical arrows directly to the *Cinema Art*.

An editorial in the newspaper *Soviet Art* of February 12, 1949, characterized the journal *Cinema Art* relatively mildly as "an occasional publication of random articles" (With..., 1949: 3), and criticized the views of film scholars M. Bleiman (1904–1973) and N. Lebedev (1897–1978), composer L. Schwartz (1898–1962), and director S. Yutkevich (1904–1985).

The tone of the editorial in *Literature Paper*, entitled "Cosmopolitans in Film Criticism and Their Patrons", published on February 16, 1949, was much harsher. It claimed that "The Art of Cinema has become an outspoken mouthpiece for the despicable ideas of bourgeois cosmopolitanism and aesthetics" (Cosmopolitans..., 1949: 2), and named the film critics G. Avenarius (1903–1953) and I. Weisfeld (1909–2003); theatrical scholar, poet, and playwright V. Volkenstein (1883–1974); screenwriter and film critic N. Otten (1907–1983); art critic N. Tarabukin (1889–1956); and composer L. Shvarts (1898–1962) as these very "cosmopolites".

Of course, the then USSR Minister of Cinematography I. Bolshakov (1902–1980) reacted rather promptly to the "anti-cosmopolitan" articles in *Pravda*, *Soviet Art* and *Literature Paper* with full support of the ideas of a ruthless struggle against cosmopolitanism. In early March 1949, *Pravda* published an article by I. Bolshakov entitled "Defeat Bourgeois Cosmopolitanism in Film Art" (Bolshakov, 1949), where he assured the Power and the public that the success of the Soviet film industry would have been even greater if its development "had not been significantly harmed by the subversive activities of an anti-patriotic group of critics and filmmakers. For many years a group of bourgeois cosmopolitans has been operating here under the guise of "critics" and "theorists," who servilely praise reactionary bourgeois cinema and slander our Soviet cinematography and its best works, disorienting the film-makers. This group of bourgeois subversives in cinematography was not only "ideologically" allied to the anti-patriotic group of theater critics, but was also, as has been established, connected with it organizationally. Together they carried out subversive work against the forward-looking Soviet art. ... They made their main nests in the Leningrad House of Cinema, in the Film Commission of the Union of Soviet Writers, and also made extensive use of the pages of the *Cinema Art* journal to propagandize their cosmopolitan ideas. Some of them also exploited themselves as teachers and lecturers, poisoning the minds of our youth with sermons of bourgeois reactionary ideas. The "leader" of the anti-patriotic group of bourgeois cosmopolitans in the cinematography is the Leningrad director L. Trauberg. All of Trauberg's "work" in cinematography has been marked by rabid bourgeois eccentricism, a form of formalism. His cosmopolitanism and anti-patriotism, his bourgeois-aesthetic views are not something accidental or unexpected. He has long taken an anti-people stance, alien to the traditions of great Russian culture. ... Trauberg was actively assisted in his subversive anti-patriotic activities by M. Bleiman and N. Kovarsky as his closest associates. Bleiman, like Trauberg, was a servile servant of bourgeois cinematography, attempting in every possible way to prove its alleged primacy. ...

On December 7, 1947, at the Union of Soviet Writers, Kovarsky organized, under his chairmanship, a discussion of *Cinema Art*. Kovarsky invited the rabid bourgeois nationalist Altman as the main speaker of this meeting, who devoted almost his entire presentation to denigrating honest Soviet film workers who took the correct Party position on film art, and to slandering Soviet films. At the same time, Altman was completely silent about the grossly formalistic and anti-patriotic articles of Otten, Volkenstein, Sutyurin and other bourgeois cosmopolitans and anti-patriots. This is the old tactic of all our political enemies: to blacken honest people and bring their own people out from under fire. ...

Kovarsky was also closely connected with the bourgeois cosmopolitan Sutyryn. Having made his way into the commission of the Union of Soviet Writers as its executive secretary, Sutyryn concentrated all his "activities" on discrediting and denigrating Soviet cinematography and its best works. ...

For a long time a bourgeois aesthete and formalist, N. Otten, has been active in film criticism. This homeless cosmopolitan found a home in the *Cinema Art* journal. In 1948 alone, the journal published three major articles by Otten, which constitute a monstrous mixture of theoretical illiteracy with slander of our Soviet reality and our art. Bourgeois cosmopolitans – V. Volkenstein, N. Tarabukin and others – were also active in this journal. The editorial board of *Cinema Art* made gross political errors, providing the pages of this journal for the promotion of formalist and bourgeois ideas to the homeless cosmopolitans.

The former editor-in-chief of the journal, N. Lebedev, is primarily to blame for these mistakes. N. Lebedev's mistakes are not accidental, because in his recently published book "Essays on the History of Cinema" he made grave formalist distortions, presenting the history of the development of Soviet cinema in a distorted light.

The task of workers in the Soviet cinematography now was to fully expose and defeat the bourgeois cosmopolitans who were trying to hinder the development of the world's most advanced cinematography" (Bolshakov, 1949).

Thus, Minister I. Bolshakov in the sharpest pejorative spirit of the 1930s criticized the *Cinema Art*, its former editor-in-chief N. Lebedev (1897–1978), as well as I. Altman (1900–1955), M. Bleiman (1904–1973), E. Gabrilovich (1899–1993), N. Kovarsky (1904–1974), N. Otten (1907–1983), V. Sutyryn (1902–1985), N. Tarabukin (1889–1956), L. Trauberg (1902–1990), V. Volkenstein (1983–1974) and S. Yutkevich (1904–1985), most of whom were the authors of this edition.

The new editor of *Cinema Art*, D. Eremin (1904–1993), in the first issue of this journal for 1949 (signed for print on March 10, that is, a week after the anti-cosmopolitan article of the Minister of Cinematography I. Bolshakov was published in *Pravda*) published an editorial stating that "fruitless and unable to show our new life in the high works of realistic Soviet art is the one who breaks away from the people, in whom indifference to the fundamental interests of the motherland is born under the influence of bourgeois ideology, who, as a renegade, infuses into our art the pernicious ideas of cosmopolitanism, the contemptible adulation of the decaying "culture" of imperialism, anti-patriotism, the snobbery of bourgeois aestheticism and formalism. Such renegades were stigmatized by the Communist Party critics who denounced in the newspapers *Pravda* and *Culture and Life*, and then in other presses, the bourgeois anti-patriotic group of critics who tried to contrast their antinational, alien to Soviet society views on art with the views of the Bolshevik Party and the healthy artistic taste of the entire people. ... Today an anti-patriotic group of adherents of bourgeois aestheticism and cosmopolitanism which operated in the cinema industry has been exposed. Its leader, inspirer and main supplier of anti-Soviet vile ideas was L. Trauberg; M. Bleiman, N. Otten, V. Sutyryn, N. Kovarsky and others were with him. The spitting of the works of the leading masters of Soviet cinematography from a cosmopolitan, bourgeois-aesthetic standpoint, the setting of their subjective "views" against the views of the Communist Party and the people, the inflated conceit, the adulation of the rottenness supplied by imperialist pseudo-culture – these are the main traits characterizing the activity of L. Trauberg. Trauberg and the "theorists" close to him... The objective point of the journal's activity, which opened its pages to pseudo-critics and pseudo-theorists, was that it did not help cinema art, but in a number of articles it misguided creative workers in questions of theory and allowed propaganda of the harmful, anti-patriotic, anti-party views of cosmopolitan critics alien and hostile to Soviet culture" (For..., 1949: 1).

Further, the article actually retold the main theses of *Pravda's* editorial exposing the "cosmopolitans" and the response to it by Minister of Cinematography I. Bolshakov. True, the list of names of "cosmopolitans" also included other authors of the *Cinema Art* – I. Dolinsky (1900–1983), L. Kuleshov (1899–1970), V. Turkin (1887–1958), and others. At the same time, the former editor-in-chief of the journal V. Sutyryn (1902–1985) was called an enemy of Soviet culture and an ideological subversive in cinema art (For..., 1949: 1).

An editorial in the *Cinema Art* admonished that "formalism arises where the author relies on the 'universal' cinematic experience... rather than striving to actually express concrete phenomena of life. Aestheticism and formalism are inevitable wherever the theorist strives to construct and present his own speculative 'system of principles,' which he then adapts to any art phenomenon, rather than to derive his theoretical principles and critical principles from a comprehensive

analysis of concrete artistic works. Wherever the critic, in essence, is guided in his evaluations by the task of 'properly aesthetic' analysis, forgetting the partisanship of art, the foundations of the Party policy in the art domain, forgetting the educational significance of works of art in the conditions of the revolutionary period. In a word, wherever the basic requirements of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics-the requirements of the Communist Party, of the people, of realism-are forgotten, formalism inevitably emerges and takes root, a vulgar and vulgar bourgeois aestheticism rears its head" (For..., 1949: 3).

It is clear that after the sacking of the offending N. Lebedev, the editorial board of *the Cinema Art* assured the government that it would "guided by the great principles of the Communist party, correct the mistakes it had made and do its best to purge the journal of the influence of cosmopolitans and anti-patriots and turn it into a real fighting organ of cinematic theory and criticism" (For..., 1949: 2).

In support of these statements, the same issue of the *Cinema Art* included a theoretical article by the literary critic V. Shcherbina (1908-1989) titled "About a group of aesthetic cosmopolitans in cinema" (Shcherbina, 1949: 14-16), in which, naming approximately the same names of "cosmopolitan" film critics, he warned readers that they were "characterized by double-handed methods of action": "In their publications, they expressed their anti-people views with caution, in a 'streamlined' and 'elastic' manner, and did not finish them off. Wary of the general public, they did double "critical" accounting. At the same time, unlike their invited speeches in the press, they spoke out more openly in their oral presentations and lectures, choosing as the arena for their subversive work the platforms of the Moscow and especially the Leningrad Film House, where they occupied a leading position, had their own assets, and acted almost uncontrollably. Disregarding their sense of civic dignity and forgetting the great national pedigree of Soviet culture, these theorists falsified facts, denied Soviet cinema originality and independence, and cultivated a disregard for the culture of their native land. For many years these kinless cosmopolitans from the cinema have devoted to one anti-patriotic goal – to prove that our people, in essence, are not the creator of their own cinema art. In doing so, they have attempted, from the standpoint of bourgeois aestheticism, to discredit the basic foundation of socialist realism – the ideality, truthfulness, and nationality of Soviet art. In this way they assisted our enemies in slandering Soviet artistic culture and, in effect, were squires for Hollywood, promoting the ideology of the bourgeois West" (Shcherbina, 1949: 14).

A writer, screenwriter and film critic A. Abramov (1900–1985) also contributed to the exposure of "cosmopolitans" in the pages of the *Cinema Art*. Abramov (1900–1985) in his eloquent article "The Rabblemaking Cosmopolites" (Abramov, 1949: 17-19): "The exposure of the bearers of bourgeois cosmopolitanism hostile to the Soviet people in theater and cinematography criticism with utmost clarity shows to what dire and disastrous consequences deviation from the inviolable foundations of socialist aesthetics can lead, what the positions of aestheticism and formalism are in fact which cover up an anti-patriotic, rotten, cosmopolitan attitude toward our native culture" (Abramov, 1949: 17).

In the next, second issue of the *Cinema Art* (signed for print on April 28, 1949), the criticism of "cosmopolitanism" was continued by D. Eremin (1904–1993), editor-in-chief of this journal, who claimed that "the cosmopolitan aestheticists tried to revise the most important principles of Soviet aesthetics and Marxist-Leninist art theory. Passing off their revisionist, anti-patriotic and anti-scientific views as 'subtle aesthetic analysis,' they attempted in their speeches and articles, at meetings and in private conversations to instill reactionary, idealistic views of art and the nature of artistic creation in the masters of cinema. In this way, the cosmopolitans hoped to delay the process of mastering the method of socialist realism in our art and, consequently, to narrow the possibilities for the emergence of genuinely partisan, popular, highly ideological works of the most important and mass-market art" (Eremin, 1949: 23).

D. Eremin, in particular, reminded that according to "cosmopolitan" "N. Otten, it came out that American directors and screenwriters have and always had more creative possibilities, as they can operate with deeper and more significant social conflicts than the Soviet authors. According to Otten, American artists are helped in this by nothing more or less than "the abominations of capitalist society. "Yes", says Otten, "it is because of the starkness of the contradictions in their society that American screenwriters can raise the most acute questions of life and consequently construct sharp dramatic plots and develop entertaining intrigues. This is why they can rise to tragic heights, to universal, grand generalizations in their work" (Eremin, 1949: 25).

That is why, D. Eremin concluded, “one of the tasks of Soviet film theory is to cleanse it of alien, harmful influences, of all kinds of residues of aesthetic cosmopolitanism, metaphysics and militant idealism. ... This is why they must be firmly and permanently discarded from our path. And to do this, to deprive our cadres of influence, to uproot and destroy the poisonous, hostile to Soviet art ideas of anti-people, aesthetic cosmopolitanism, we must resolutely and comprehensively” (Eremin, 1949: 26).

The literary scholar I. Grinberg (1906-1980) in his article "Preachers of Dead Schemes" published in the same issue (Grinberg, 1949: 26-29) was not lazy to find the roots of cosmopolitanism in some Soviet publications of the 1930s, recalling that among “books, scholastic and aesthetic, imbued with a bourgeois attitude toward art, one of the 'first' places is V. Volkenstein's “The Dramaturgy of Cinema”. Published in 1937, for a long time it introduced harmful formalistic confusion into the minds of young workers in our cinematography and instilled in them pernicious cosmopolitan and bourgeois and aesthetic "theories." B. Volkenstein ignores the ideological content of art. He is interested only in "pure form". He operates exclusively with formal categories, thus confusing our art on the road of thoughtless artifice and craftsmanship. ... He did not avoid it, and V.K. Turkin in his book "The Dramaturgy of Cinema", published in 1938. ... He, like Volkenstein, imposes on our cinematography the deadening, pernicious patterns of degenerate bourgeois drama” (Greenberg, 1949: 26, 29).

Had this powerful campaign taken place in 1937–1938, the fate of the "cosmopolitans without kin" would probably have been quite sad, but in the late 1940s, they were only condemned by the government and the Communist Party and were fired from their positions.

At the same time, in the first half of the year 1949, the situation for many "cosmopolitans" was very disturbing, so some of them tried to rehabilitate themselves before the authorities as quickly as possible.

For example, shortly before this, film critic I. Weisfeld, who had himself been accused of cosmopolitanism, published an article entitled "The Aesthetic of the American Aggressors" (Weisfeld, 1949: 30-32) in the second issue of the *Cinema Art* in 1949, in which he wrote that “the exposure of the anti-patriotic group of critics and film theorists, headed by L. Trauberg showed with full clarity that the preachers of the 'philosophy' of cosmopolitanism were raising the Hollywood aesthetic, they were waging a long and persistent struggle against Soviet cinema, against everything advanced, new, and ideological in our art. Trying to poison the minds of filmmakers with the harmful and vile ideas of cosmopolitanism, the anti-patriots were especially active in the theory and history of cinema. However, it was not the history of cinema in itself interested antipatriots. Not a passion for academic research guided them. They wanted to remake modern Soviet cinema in the American way. They were happy to rob the Soviet artist of a sense of national pride in his Socialist motherland and its powerful culture and art. It is not by chance that the cosmopolitans and formalists directed one of their main blows against Soviet film dramaturgy, the basis of the art of cinema. They proclaimed the reactionary director Griffith the "father of world cinema" and the equally reactionary Riskin, that insignificant provincial American dramatist, the world's first cinematic writer. They pushed for the publication of Hollywood scripts and recommended that Soviet writers learn screenwriting from them! It is indicative in this respect that (fortunately, very few) we have printed and handwritten translations of the most vulgar American "precepts" in which cynical transatlantic entrepreneurs preach cosmopolitanism and pass off their "techniques" of making surrogate scripts and films as immutable laws of art” (Weisfeld, 1949: 30).

I. Weisfeld, in full correspondence with the policies of the Soviets, claimed that “a small group of cosmopolitan film critics tried to disorient our creative workers by proving that professional questions of plot formation are a special world which does not depend on politics and that we can learn form and technology from American screenwriters. This "philosophy" that is foreign to our art has now been debunked. Our film theory and practice, relying on the great teachings of Lenin and Stalin and on the resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on ideological questions, will be able to uproot the remnants of bourgeois ideology in film aesthetics to the end and deploy the positive development of problems important for the further rise of film dramaturgy and the whole Soviet film art” (Weisfeld, 1949: 32).

In the fifth issue of the journal (signed for publication on October 21, 1949), editor-in-chief D. Eremin once again pointed out to his readers that “the nationality of Soviet art is diametrically opposed to the individualistic 'art' of aestheticians and formalists with their antinational preaching

of 'art for art' or art for the select few, with their cosmopolitan and soulless, artisan approach to life and art" (Eremin, 1949: 6).

Thus, practically all the main theoretical efforts of the *Cinema Art* in 1949 were aimed at fighting "cosmopolitanism and formalism".

Against this background, film historian V. Zhdan's article "Image and Imagery in the Popular Science Film" (Zhdan, 1949: 26-31), which did not contain attacks on cosmopolitans and formalists, seemed a kind of "black sheep"...

But, of course, the "Cold War" in 1949 developed not only on the "domestic front" against Soviet "cosmopolitans".

On March 1, 1949 the Central Committee of the Communist Party developed a "Plan of measures to strengthen anti-American propaganda in the near future" (Plan..., 1949), which provided for "systematic publication of materials, articles and pamphlets exposing the aggressive plans of American imperialism in the *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, *Labor*, *Literature Paper*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *Bolshevik* and the press bureau of TASS and the *Pravda* newspaper, the anti-people character of the U.S. social and state system, debunking the fables of American propaganda about the "prosperity" of America, showing the deep contradictions of the U.S. economy, the falsity of bourgeois democracy, the marasmus of bourgeois culture and manners of modern America. ... In order to strengthen the anti-American propaganda on the radio, the All-Union Radio Committee should organize the broadcasting of cycles of popular talks and lectures about the reactionary essence of the foreign and domestic policy of the US ruling circles, about the condition of the working class and workers of America, exposing the fables of American propaganda about the high standard of living of all classes and strata of America. To organize also speeches by prominent Soviet specialists and men of science and culture on the current state of American bourgeois science, literature and art, exposing the reactionary character and decline of culture in imperialist America. To the All-Union Society for the dissemination of political and scientific knowledge to expand the topics and increase the number of public lectures devoted to exposing the aggressive plans of world domination of American imperialism, to debunking the culture, everyday life and manners of modern America... The *Art Publishing House* to prepare and publish within 3 to 4 months a brochure on the current state of bourgeois art in the United States, and to publish in mass circulation satirical posters on anti-American themes. ...The Union of Soviet Writers and the Committee on the Arts under the USSR Council of Ministers shall create within 3-4 months time new plays on anti-American themes by leading playwrights (K. Simonov, N. Virta, etc.). ... The USSR Ministry of Cinematography is to create a feature film based on the work of M. Gorky "The Yellow Devil's Town", and also a film, based on the script of the book "The Truth about the American Diplomat" by A. Bukar; to show existing films on anti-American themes more often and more widely. The anti-American propaganda of the press, radio, and the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge should be based on the following themes: "U.S. capitalist monopolies are the inspirers of the policy of aggression", "The U.S. is the main bulwark of international reaction", "The North Atlantic Pact is the instrument of aggression by Anglo-American imperialism", "American reactionaries as 'saviors' of capitalism from communism", "The U.S. is the international bulwark of colonial enslavement and colonial wars", "American imperialists are stranglers of the freedom and independence of peoples", "Monopolies are nurturing fascism on American soil", "Anti-communist hysteria in the U.S.", "Democracy in the U.S. is a hypocritical cover for the omnipotence of capital", "The U.S. is a country of national and racial discrimination", "The Degradation of Culture in the United States", "Cosmopolitanism in the Service of American Reaction", "The Preaching of Immorality and Animal Psychology in the United States", "The Saleable American Press", "The Decomposition of Motion Picture Art in the United States", "Crime in the United States" (Plan... , 1949).

On April 24, 1949, the USSR began jamming BBC broadcasts. And on September 28, 1949, the USSR broke off diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, which was accused of betraying communist ideas in favor of imperialism.

In the same year in the West, the response to W. Churchill's Fulton call was the signing of the NATO North Atlantic Pact on April 4, 1949, directed primarily against the USSR. The Western media, including cinematography, began to produce more and more anti-communist, anti-Soviet products.

But here it is curious to note that the Soviet Union's fierce struggle with Western influence and cosmopolitanism on the press and radio (television was not widespread then) was

accompanied by a massive release (in 1948-1949 and early 1950s) in the Soviet film distribution of the so-called "trophy films" (mainly made from Hollywood), which undoubtedly had a far greater bourgeois influence on the population than "cosmopolitan" theatrical productions of foreign plays and articles in the *Cinema Art* and in other "offending" publications.

Moreover, the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the release of foreign films from the trophy fund" of June 9, 1949 ([Resolution..., 1949](#)) officially approved this kind of film policy with the purpose of obtaining a commercial profit from the distribution of Western screen products brought to the USSR from the funds of the countries defeated in the Great Patriotic War.

Meanwhile, the echoes of the struggle against cosmopolitanism and formalism in the *Cinema Art* were felt in 1950.

Thus, in the second issue of the journal for 1950 (signed off to print 5.04.1950) subjected to severe criticism of the work of film historians I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) and R. Yurenev (1912–2002): "At the end of the past year, the books "Soviet Biographical Film" by R. Yurenev and "Epic Genres in Cinema" by I. Weisfeld were published. One would have expected that after the defeat of the cosmopolitan critics and formalists, Soviet readers and filmmakers would finally receive works that scientifically explain the ideological and artistic features of Soviet cinema and raise the main questions of its future development. However, both books are such that they force one to reflect again and with all seriousness on the state of our film criticism. ... However, the main thing in these books is still not the merits, but the shortcomings. In taking up the difficult questions of film dramaturgy, method, style, and genre, the authors found themselves unprepared for this kind of work. As we shall see below, both are clearly influenced by the aesthetics of formalism. This is why, contrary to good intentions and along with individual correct thoughts and observations, their books, like those of their associates, are dominated by scholasticism, dominated by an eclectic, or rather comparativist methodology. Indeed: R. Yurenev and I. Weisfeld devoted their books to the problem of genres of Soviet cinema, but instead of scientific study and generalization they, though to varying degrees, are essentially unanimous in inventing preconceived schemes and fitting various works of Soviet cinema to these schemes" ([Balashov, 1950: 22](#)).

And if R. Yurenev, according to the reviewer of the *Cinema Art*, substituted "the problem of genre for the problems of ideology and creative method, since it is well known that the principles of selection and organization of material in Soviet art are the requirements of the method of socialist realism, the Leninist principle of Bolshevik partyism, the basic idea of film" ([Balashov, 1950: 22](#)), then I. Weisfeld, "considering all genres of Soviet film art to be secondary, except epic", contrasted the latter with the former ([Balashov, 1950: 23](#)).

The same article contained severe criticism of the books by I. Dolinsky ([Dolinsky, 1945](#)), B. Begak and Y. Gromov ([Begak, Gromov, 1949](#)), with the same views, and finally a statement that "we face a whole 'genre' trend which, under the guise of an 'objective', art history analysis of problems of dramaturgy and the history of Soviet cinema, in fact develops a priori, formalistic schemes" ([Balashov, 1950: 27](#)).

Writer Y. Arbat (1905–1970) also made similar accusations against I. Weisfeld, stating that his monograph "Epic Genres in Cinema" ([Weisfeld, 1949](#)) "raises serious objections: it contains many fundamentally false and confused statements and formulations – mainly because the author wanted to adapt facts to the scheme he had created to advantage epic genres over all others. Overall, the author's underestimation of the method of socialist realism in cinema is also a serious flaw in the book. ... Scholastic fetishization of a single genre is the main methodological flaw of I. Weisfeld's book. The author does not understand that genre is not the merit of a work, but its genre. Therefore instead of showing the real reasons for the development of epic genres in Soviet cinematography, especially of late, instead of a coherent analysis of what distinguishes Soviet cinematography as a whole, I. Weisfeld by all means seeks to prove only one thing – the advantage of the "epic genre", and does so obviously at the expense of other genres He persistently refuses to admit that the basis of all genres in Soviet film dramaturgy is the method of socialist realism" ([Arbat, 1950: 28-29](#)).

The theoretical article "On the Partisanship of Cinema Art" was also directed against cosmopolitans and formalists, reminding them once again that "the method of socialist realism requires a truthful depiction of life from a socialist point of view. Guided by the policy of the Bolshevik Party, the artist must depict in his works the life of the people, help the Party and the state to educate the people ideologically" ([Zhuchkov, 1950: 3](#)).

In a similar vein, a large "theoretical" article "Questions of Family Morality in Cinematography" was written, which stated that "in the struggle of the Communist Party and all the Soviet people against bourgeois vestiges, our cinema art can and must play a considerably greater role. It can do so with the greater success the more closely and fully it fixes its attention to questions of Soviet morality, to a more profound display of the love and friendship of Soviet people" (Grachev, 1950: 15).

The director V. Pudovkin (1893–1953), who had himself been repeatedly criticized for formalism in his films, tried to rely on Stanislavsky's authority in his article supporting Socialist Realism: "Each of us knows from personal experience that ideality, subjective taste, formalistic tricks, and separation from the life of the people, from the creative activity of the people mean the death of art and the death of the talent of the artist. What Stanislavsky conditionally calls "super-tasks" became for us a very concrete part of practical public activity. ...There can be two cases in the work on a play or a film: either the director and the actor discover the hidden but truly existing truth of life in the scene, or they introduce the inevitable and necessary for fruitful work correction suggested by their sense of truth which is brought up by practical experience of realistic play. In both cases, a clear and distinct method in the work is necessary. This method was discovered by Stanislavsky in the field of theatrical art. In the art of cinema, Stanislavsky's method received tremendous new opportunities for its fruitful development" (Pudovkin, 1951: 25).

There were still few theoretical articles that avoided ideological passages in the *Cinema Art* in the early 1950s. Thus film scholar V. Zhdan (1913–1993) (he took over from D. Eremin as editor-in-chief from the third issue of *Cinema Art* in 1951) continued his theoretical research in the relatively "neutral" field of popular science films (Zhdan, 1950: 7-10; 1951: 9-13). Theoretical articles by cinematographers A. Golovnya (1900–1982) (Golovnya, 1952) and L. Kosmatov (1901–1977) (Kosmatov, 1952: 192-107; 1953: 106-113) did not go overboard in their analysis of the features of visual images on the screen.

On June 20, 1950, *Pravda* newspaper published I. Stalin's article "Marxism and Questions of Linguistics. Regarding Marxism in Linguistics" (Stalin, 1950), which understandably caused hundreds of positive reactions in the Soviet media.

The *Cinema Art* also responded to it with a series of theoretical articles.

For example, film scholar S. Freilich (1920–2005), continuing his general critique of formalism, wrote that "the study of language as the basic tool and material of artistic literature acquires now a special significance for film literature – the youngest and therefore still the least studied kind of literature – in light of Comrade Stalin's work on linguistics. For a long time, formalists of various shades, defending the "specificity" of the cinematographic form, opposed the screenplay as the linguistic expression of the future screen image, and denied that the screenplay belonged to literature. Proponents of "emotional", "intellectual" and "narrative" cinema undermined the ideological and artistic foundations of film dramaturgy, destroyed its true identity, fenced it off from fiction, harming our cinematography. Not seeing in the language of the script the carrier of the idea-thought, they relegated the script to a half-finished product, a technical document, allegedly just a certain message for the creativity of the actor and director" (Freilich, 1951: 11).

Film critic L. Pogožheva (1913–1989) stressed that "advanced Soviet cinema, which had a comprehensive method of socialist realism and followed the best traditions of national Russian art, assumed a realistic solution of dialogue and language in general, both in contemporary and in historical scripts and films. The rejection of naturalism, naive stylization, rhetoric and dead quotation should be complete and unconditional. Bad, poor language and traditions alien to us have no place in truthful Soviet cinema" (Pogožheva, 1951: 12).

In short, the general position of the *Cinema Art* on this issue was unanimous in saying that "Comrade Stalin's work "Marxism and Questions of Linguistics" is of enduring, historically important importance. Wise and clear answers to the most pressing questions posed by the era of building communism, are given in this work. Comrade Stalin's ingenious statements comprise the answers to the questions posed by the creative practice of cutting-edge Soviet cinematography. Only on the basis of these statements can Soviet cinematography as a powerful instrument of spiritual influence on the masses fulfill the tasks it faces" (Solovyov, 1951: 7).

It should be noted that the *Cinema Art* in the first half of the 1950s was very typical for the publication of this kind of pseudotereotic articles by "ideologically aligned" authors who, sprinkling their lines with quotations from the works of Stalin, A. Zhdanov, and others. The "true Marxist-

Leninists" juggled with banal phrases about the people, partyism, socialist realism, etc. For example, philosopher V. Skatershchikov (1922–1977) wrote: "The viewer demands a greater number of highly original, artistic films which reflect the multifarious life of our great time, the life and work of workers, collective farmers and intellectuals. To master mastery, to be able to embody the great ideas and events of the building of communism in artistic images which last for centuries – such is the honorable and responsible task which faces the Soviet art. There is no doubt that our remarkable cinema art, inspired and guided in its development by the great Lenin-Stalin Party, will solve this problem with honor" (Skatershchikov, 1951: 33).

The theoretical articles of the philosopher A. Burov (1919–1983) (Burov, 1953: 69), the film scholars A. Groshev (1905–1973) (Groshev, 1953: 105), A. Karaganov (1915–2007) (Karaganov, 1953: 45), and others were written in a similar ideological spirit.

On April 7, 1952, the *Pravda* newspaper published an editorial entitled "To overcome the backwardness of dramaturgy" (Overcome..., 1952). In this article they unexpectedly criticized the recently widespread "theory of non-conflict" in the depiction of Soviet reality, when the good competed on the screen with the excellent, and the excellent with the ideal. *Pravda* stressed that "the struggle of the new with the old evokes all kinds of conflicts of life, without which there is no life and therefore no art. ... We do not have everything perfect, we have negative types, there is a lot of evil in our life, and a lot of fake people. We should not be afraid to show the flaws and the difficulties. We need to treat the flaws. We need Gogols and Shchedrins... By truthfully depicting the shortcomings and contradictions of life, the writer must actively affirm the positive beginning of our socialist reality and help the victory of the new. ... Our dramatists must uncover and relentlessly expose the vestiges of capitalism, manifestations of political nonchalance, bureaucracy, sluggishness, servility, conceit and conceit, servility, bad faith in their assigned work, careless attitude to socialist property, expose everything vulgar and backward that hinders the forward motion of Soviet society" (Overcome..., 1952). It is clear that such turns of phrase as "the theory of non-conflict", "varnishing of reality", etc. could only have arisen with the sanction of the Power.

It is possible that this campaign was conceived as one more reason to remove "critics" who had become undesirable to the regime. Perhaps it was simpler than that: the Kremlin wanted to make Soviet art more entertaining and spectacular, and thus bring in profits for the State.

The reaction to the new party-state campaign of the Minister of Cinematography I. Bolshakov (1902–1980) was expected. In his article in the *Cinema Art*, he immediately stressed that "the main drawback of many film scripts is the absence in them sharp dramatic conflicts taken from our lives. This can be explained by the fact that the "theory of non-conflict" that recently existed among playwrights found supporters among screenwriters as well. According to this "theory," our Soviet reality supposedly contains no struggle between the positive and the negative, no negative human types and, consequently, there can be no dramatic conflicts in works of art. The vicious "conflict-free theory" in practice led to a sharp backwardness of our dramaturgy, because it pushed the playwrights to distort our Soviet reality, to create amorphous dramaturgical works. In fact, the development of our Soviet society is based on the laws of dialectics, on the basis of a struggle between the old and the new, between the emerging and the dying, between the progressive and the conservative and the rigid. In our Soviet reality, there are still people who are bearers of the remnants of capitalism, who come into conflict with the advanced Soviet people. All these vitally truthful conflicts must be reflected in our films" (Bolshakov, 1952: 6).

A leading article with the eloquent title "The basis of film drama is the truth of life" (Basis..., 1952: 3–10) stated that "*Pravda's* editorial article "To overcome the backwardness of drama" is not only a program document for the development of our drama theory and practice, but is of great importance for the development of all Soviet art. Analyzing the reasons for the backwardness of our playwrights, it criticizes harshly but fairly the incorrect understanding by playwrights and critics of some questions of the theory and practice of Socialist Realism, especially the question of the conflict as the basis for a dramatic work" (Basis..., 1952: 3).

In her article "We Need Gogols and Shchedrins!", the film critic L. Belova (1921–1986) points out that: "One of the reasons why the critical element lagged behind in film drama lay in the 'theory' of non-conflict, which prevented art from reflecting reality fully and deeply. Many authors avoided or portrayed the contradictions and conflicts of life in a diminished form that did not correspond to reality. As a result, life was portrayed in a one-sided and sometimes simply distorted manner, which contradicted the basic law of Soviet art, which requires fidelity to reality.

By creating an incorrect representation of life, the authors of conflict-free works reduced the cognitive value of art as well as its active educational role” (Belova, 1952: 58).

The culturologist and philosopher Y. Borev (1925-2019), philosopher and aesthetician V. Razumny (1924-2011), referring to the speeches of I. Stalin and G. Malenkov, noted that “sharpening and exaggeration are important for scourging satire. We need Soviet Gogols and Shchedrins, we need their creative manner of typification to depict false people, to expose evil, to fight against everything old and obsolete” (Borev, Razumny, 1953: 61).

The “theoretical” articles published in the journal in support of the above-mentioned editorial text of *Pravda* (Kryuchenchnikov, 1952: 88-96; Manevich, 1952: 83-91; Maseev, 1953: 12-28; Semionov, 1952: 3-7; Skaterschikov, 1952: 108-115; Solovyev, 1952: 82-88) were in the same spirit.

At the same time, the *Cinema Art* once again reminded us that the struggle against “the theory of non-conflict” must still be combined with adherence to the laws of socialist realism and the struggle against formalism.

Thus philosopher A. Burov (1919–1983), speaking out against formalism and against the works of M. Zoshchenko and A. Akhmatova which were harmful to the Soviet people, wrote that “by his ingenious definition of the method of Soviet art as the method of socialist realism, Stalin put an end to the harmful Russian Association of Proletarian Writers’ identification of the artistic method with dialectical materialism. The Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, as the vulgarizers of Marxism, did not understand, or did not want to understand, that the Marxist philosophical method is universal in the sense that it is the general methodological basis for all branches of human knowledge, but that each branch must have its own, private method, which is determined by the specificity of the subject of research itself. Just as it is impossible to extend the laws of mechanics to the life of organisms and the laws of biology to the life of society, it is just as impossible to use the methods of scientific investigation used in mechanics for the study of organisms and the methods of biology for the study of the life of society” (Burov, 1952: 72).

And the film critic D. Pisarevsky (1912-1990), also once again scolding M. Zoshchenko and A. Akhmatova, in his article “Stalin's Principle of Socialist Realism – the Highest Achievement of the Science of Art” reminded readers of the journal that “having formulated the principles of socialist realism, I.V. Stalin brilliantly summarized the provisions of Marx, Engels, and Lenin on the creative method of realist art, enriching these guidelines with the experience of building socialist culture and the development of the world's most ideological, most advanced Soviet art” (Pisarevsky, 1952: 29).

Often accused in earlier years of formalism, the screenwriter and V. Turkin (1887–1958) in his article “Dramatic Conflict and Character” also paid tribute to quotations from speeches by Stalin, Malenkov and Suslov and emphasized that “the representation of life in its contradictions and conflicts is a necessary condition, an obligatory requirement of the socialist realist method. The first precept of socialist realism is to write the truth, to study deeply, to understand and depict reality in its revolutionary development. A grave and harmful mistake was made by those artists and writers, by those art theorists and critics who, separating the demand for the ideological orientation of art and its partisanship from the task of truthfully reflecting reality, did not consider it necessary to see and depict the contradictions in which life is developing, growing, developing and winning the new. To justify their superficial depiction and varnishing of life, they created “theories” of nonconflict, weakened plot, and weakened drama (“minor dramaturgy” and “dramaturgy of the episode”), bragging about these empty notions as supposedly innovative slogans, and as the leading edge of the field of drama. Works without conflict, with a weakened plot were at the same time works without heroes, without a bright and active characters. The characters were a bare, schematic, devoid of inner life, devoid of any colorful individual characterization. And they could not be, because they are not given a reason to express themselves more or less energetically and brightly in action, in the struggle with other people in overcoming their own shortcomings, weaknesses, vestiges of the past. Such schemes were presented as realistic, typical images, although in fact they resembled something like a “summarized” photograph of many faces on a single photographic plate, since in essence they were the same naturalistic copy, only less distinct, of worse quality, rather than an artistic portrait, enriched by the image, the type” (Turkin, 1953: 19).

In the early 1950s, even during Stalin's lifetime, the Soviet press began to raise the question of increasing the number of films shot annually. It would appear that the Soviets, who had unleashed a “trophy” expedition of Western films into Soviet distribution, came to the conclusion

that the "small pictures" policy, under the motto "less is more", was not bearing the anticipated fruit, and Soviet film production was effectively overshadowed by bourgeois film production. So in the draft directives of the XIX Congress of the Communist Party (1952) strongly recommended to further develop film and television. To expand the network of cinemas, increasing the number of film projectors in five years by about 25 percent and also to increase the production of films.

Hence it is clear why it was in 1952 that the *Cinema Art* became not only the organ of the USSR Ministry of Cinematography, but also of the Union of Soviet Writers, and that its second issue for 1952 (signed for print on 28 February 1952) contained a leading article entitled "More Good and Different Films!" ([More..., 1952: 3-9](#)).

On April 7, 1952 the *Pravda* newspaper published an editorial entitled "To overcome the backlog of dramaturgy" ([Overcome..., 1952](#)), and on August 28 the same year *Pravda* published an editorial entitled "To the new rise of Soviet film art" ([To..., 1952](#)).

The new Communist Party and government trends were soon picked up by the editors of *Literature Paper*, who published an article entitled "More Good Films!" ([More..., 1952: 1](#)).

This editorial, in fact, combined both trends: improving the quality of film dramaturgy by combining the efforts of the Union of Soviet Writers and increasing the number of new Soviet films put on the screen: "Comedy disappeared from the screen. There was not a single adventure film after *Bold People*. Few children's films were produced. Far from reducing the whole inexhaustible multitude of thematic and genre possibilities of cinema to only one of them (even the most important one), the Ministry must see to it that the studios also write good scripts which, while satisfying the ideological and artistic demands of the Soviet public, would show the life of the Soviet man in its various manifestations, raise fundamental questions of ethics and morals, help to develop the new and struggle against anything backward that holds back progress. The increase in the production of films would help involve an incomparably wider creative cadre in the work, facilitate the growth and improvement of young people and thus most fully ensure the normal development of our cinema art, its progressive movement, its natural constant growth" ([More..., 1952: 1](#)).

On this wave, another editorial was published in the September issue of the *Cinema Art*, which called right in the title for "Increase the output of films!" ([Increase, 1952: 3-13](#)).

And in early 1953, the then Minister of Cinematography I. Bolshakov (1902-1980) came out with an article in *Cinema Art*. Under pressure from criticism from the authorities, he admitted that "indeed, over the past two years, we produce few good films and poorly used the available opportunities. The main reason for this is that the Ministry did not ensure a large inflow of high-quality scripts, which left some of the leading directors without productions, and some film studios are not fully loaded with work. The Ministry and the film studios made little effort to ensure high quality scripts and often included in their plans gray, mediocre work which had to be either reworked or eliminated from production plans in the process of filming. Great harm to film dramaturgy caused by the notorious "theory" of non-conflict. Some writers were trapped in this "theory", which had a negative impact on their work. The film industry began to receive a lot of mediocre, plotless scripts, amorphous in their composition, because the muted conflict in a drama or a script inevitably leads to the weakening of drama, to the sluggishness of action, to the impoverishment of artistic images, to the distortion of Soviet reality. The "theory" of non-conflict, which pushes artists to blur the negative phenomena in our society, to blunt criticism as a driving force for our development, has done particularly great harm to the development of such an important genre as comedy. Over the past two years, we have almost completely disappeared film comedies" ([Bolshakov, 1953: 3-4](#)).

Against this background the editorial board of the *Cinema Art* since 1952 publishes a whole series of theoretical articles proving the necessity to produce films of entertainment genres.

For example, film scholar I. Weisfeld (1909–2003) reminded readers that "in the adventure script, dramatic conflict is particularly distinct, aggravated and manifests itself in the form of open clashes, irreconcilable struggle, often dangerous for the lives of the characters. There is nothing to do here with the "theories" of non-conflict and lack of plot. Those who are afraid to show the victory of the new in the struggle against difficulties, against the negative phenomena in life, who do not possess the weapon of laughter to denounce the enemy, usually dismiss the adventure script as a 'low' genre" ([Weisfeld, 1952: 71](#)).

The writer G. Tushkan (1906-1965) further picked up on the pathos of this article, noting that "authors of adventure works are often accused of allegedly 'following Western models'.

This accusation is in most cases illegal. Not a single Soviet adventure novel or movie, even though there may seem to be some overlap between certain plot devices and those of Western detectives, advocates gangsterism, racism, superstition, eroticism. None of the authors of Soviet adventure works try to instill in the reader and viewer the desire to enrichment as the main goal of life, to incite their bloodthirstiness, intimidate them with horrors or call for military violence of one nation over another. ... Once the brake in the form of the "theory" of non-conflict, which excluded the development of a sharp plot, has been removed, great opportunities open up before the genre of adventure and science fiction, it is only necessary to support it, to help new authors creatively. By combining criticism of mistakes with an indication of the ways in which they can be overcome, we will achieve a high ideological and artistic level of works in this interesting and important genre" (Tushkan, 1953: 78, 85).

In his desire to separate Soviet adventure films from the harmful bourgeois films of the detective genre, the writer N. Toman (1911–1974) went even further, arguing that in Soviet "adventure literature there is a direction erroneously called detective. Mainly, these are novels and stories in which some mystery or riddle (the secret of a bourgeois intelligence agent, a scientific or technical mystery) is consistently revealed. Conditionally, I would call such stories analytical, but by no means detective stories, for this is not only a misnomer, but also a politically harmful one, reducing our adventure literature to hate-mongering gangster novels... The analytical method is especially widely used in stories and novels devoted to exposing agents of bourgeois intelligence services. These are the works that we often call detective because of the seeming similarity of the exposure of the spy with the capture of the criminal. But is not it obvious the absurdity of such an external analogy? In the eyes of our discerning readers and viewers, is the detective who caught the crime of the gangster who robbed the bank similar to the dedicated Soviet counterintelligence officer guarding a state or military secret?" (Toman, 1953: 66-67).

This aversion to the detective genre and the erroneous attribution of it exclusively to bourgeois cinema was also supported by screenwriter N. Morozova (1924–2015): "Refusal to work in the field of the adventure genre means disregard for one of the kinds of ideological weapons, and a very effective weapon. The Soviet adventure film, like any work of socialist realism, is imbued with high ideology and is designed to educate our people and our youth in the spirit of communism. That is its basic and essential difference from bourgeois adventure and detective films (these two notions have become almost synonymous in bourgeois art) which are destined to distract people's masses from the class struggle and educate them in the spirit of misanthropic ideas... The detective film and novel are now in the hands of imperialists one of the strongest means of poisoning the minds of people with the fascist ideology. Incidentally, the replacement in reactionary bourgeois art of the genre definition of "adventure" by the definition of "detective" also seems symptomatic, since under imperialism the most acute "adventure" is murder. The Soviet adventure film is based on completely different principles. Whereas the actions (deeds) of the hero in the reactionary, bourgeois film are aimed at crime, robbery and violence in the name of profit, the actions (deeds) of the hero in the Soviet adventure film are aimed at creation, at struggle in the name of humanity and progress. The hero's activity as an indispensable requirement for the work of adventure genre is perfectly consonant with our era – the era of great achievements and great things. Our time gives full scope for the activity of the brave, courageous, noble hero, inspired by the high goal of building communism" (Morozova, 1953: 53).

In order to make an even stronger argument for the usefulness of "ideologically correct" adventure themes for Soviet cinema, N. Morozova emphasized that "there is a rather widespread viewpoint that in the adventure film, where the viewer's interest is focused mainly on the event side, on the rapid alternation of exciting and sometimes incredible adventures, on spectacular and unexpected plot twists, in this film there is no place for in-depth characterization of the hero, no place for creating a complete artistic image. Inextricably linked to this opinion is another – that originality and exceptionality of events in the adventure film inevitably come into conflict with the realistic portrayal of reality. Both of these points of view are not true as applied to the Soviet adventure film. ... To summarize, it may be said that the distinguishing qualities of the Soviet adventure film are its high ideality, the typicality of the characters, the sharpness of the plot, and, finally, the realistic portrayal of reality, the exceptionality of events as an indispensable requirement of the genre" (Morozova, 1953: 54-55).

The *Cinema Art* also spoke out in support of the science fiction genre, as "science fiction, which has the ability to have a great educational impact on children and young people, should

instill in our youth feelings of patriotism, devotion to their nation, instill curiosity, measure in the power of science, love of labor, honesty, discipline, courage, comradeship splices. Therefore, the author, writing a fantastic scenario, must pay special serious attention to the image of man – a bold, daring innovator, tireless worker and a fiery fighter for the ideas of communism. But the character of man, his rich spiritual world cannot be illuminated with sufficient depth outside the big, sharp conflict of life. In the fabric of each story science fiction work should be intertwined a variety of conflicts – small and large, everyday life and worldview. No matter how the cosmonauts were united by the unity of purpose, they will not lose the difference of their characters, their individual views, assessments of objects and phenomena. There are as many people in a "starship" as there are characters, a clash of which may generate conflicts. The deeper man gets into the bowels of nature, the more it resists and tries to keep its "secrets". Consequently, in the "cosmic" scenario it is possible and necessary to reflect man in action, in the struggle with nature – a struggle active, courageous, culminating in the victory of man” (Makartsev, 1953: 100).

The genre of film comedy was also supported by the journal. The writer and theater historian V. Frolov (1918–1994) recalled that “Comrade Stalin's words enable one to conclude: Soviet comedy must be funny, artistically valuable, have a fascinating form, plot, comic provisions, juicy language, full of humour; at the same time the form must flow organically from the content, from the comic conflict, serving to reveal ideas and vivid characters” (Frolov, 1952). Other authors (Vinokurov, 1952: 62-69; Podskalsky, 1954: 38-51) also defended the comedy in its social realistic and Communist party interpretation.

But in the article by V. Shklovsky (1893–1984), “On the genres of 'important' and 'unimportant'” there were no quotes from Stalin and Malenkov, not even from Marx, Engels, and Lenin. V. Shklovsky believed that “the issues of cinematic genres must be resolved in view of the uniqueness of cinema as an art with special means of conveying and analyzing phenomena of reality. Creating new genres we must not be afraid of the "conditional", "area" genre, the so-called comic. Comic is a short comedy, a situation comedy, with an actor who very often moves from one tape to another, acting in a familiar environment to the viewer, but in this environment reveals its unexpected features, satirically illuminating reality. We must not be afraid of conventional satirical comedy. We must also develop lyrical comedy. ... Staying true to reality and precisely in order to convey it, Soviet cinematography must, on the basis of its inherent possibilities, develop all the variety of genres” (Shklovsky, 1953: 30).

A. Macheret (1896–1979), a filmmaker and film critic, believed that “the problem of genres is one of the least developed areas of Soviet film studies. And not only cinematography – to analyze this problem has not made sufficient efforts on a broad front of the theory of art. And still, one should not underestimate what has already been done. Soviet art criticism has decisively demolished the old idealistic view of genres. The view of genres as fixed, non-historical, immutable, once and for all established categories of form, sharply separated from one another, not allowing interpenetration and having exhausted all possible genre diversity, has been shattered. If nowadays there is no doubt about the legality of the combination of elements of different genres in one work and about the author's right to break their borders, if the old genre varieties are dying out and the new genre varieties are born, then we owe it not only to the creative practice of our art development, but also to the theoretical mediation by the Soviet art critics. However, works concerned with the consideration of genre problems suffer from a serious drawback: as a rule, their main attention is concentrated not so much on the positive side of the question, as on the negative: the struggle against the dogmatism of idealistic aesthetics, which erected insuperable barriers of formal classification between the various genres” (Macheret, 1954: 66).

The cinema critic N. Lebedev (1897–1978) returned to his favorite subject when he published an article "On Theoretical Work on Film Art" (Lebedev, 1952: 112-117), again urging the authorities to create a complex of “research institutions with the following structure: 1) a sector of general film studies with offices: general film theory; film history of the USSR; film history of the countries of people's democracy; film history of capitalist countries; 2) a sector of feature film studies with offices and laboratories: art film theory; screenwriting; directing; acting; set design; film music and sound design; animation; 3) newsreel and documentary sector with rooms and laboratories: documentary film theory; newsreel cameraman skills; documentary film directing; 4) popular science, educational and research film sector with classrooms and laboratories: theory and methodology of popular science film; methodology and technique of educational films for universities and secondary schools; film direction of scientific and educational film; camerawork of

scientific and educational film; special types of filming; 5) sector of economy and organization of cinematography with the offices: economics and organization of film production; distribution; film network; economics of foreign cinematography; 6) All-Union Film Museum with the departments of artistic cinematography, newsreel and documentary film, popular science, educational and research cinematography, economics and organization of cinematography, film technology, cinematography of people's democracy and cinematography of capitalist countries; 7) a state film library with film depositories, screening halls, a reference-film department, etc." (Lebedev, 1952: 115-116).

In 1953, the *Cinema Art* reacted rather sharply to the article by K. Piotrovsky "What is the 'theory of cinema'", published on the pages of *Soviet Art* (Piotrovsky, 1953). The editorial of *Cinema Art* asserted that "in his doubts and hasty judgments K. Piotrovsky left no stone unturned in film studies, completely crossed out all the efforts of researchers in the field of film art. He has made it his mission to scold and to scold at all costs. He does not understand any other kind of criticism. Piotrovsky's critical "concept" must be seen as nothing other than an attempt to weaken the struggle for craftsmanship in art and for attention to the specifics of individual arts and cinema in particular, as an attempt to revive the long condemned morals of Russian Association of Proletarian Writers' criticism" (On..., 1953: 111).

At the same time, the *Cinema Art* continued to struggle against bourgeois film studies, pointing out, for example, that "there are no serious works on film theory, drama, acting or directing in the United States. In advertising and charlatan booklets on "How to Become a Movie Star" or "How to Write and Sell a Script," which flood the book market, genuinely creative problems are either not addressed at all, or are posed and resolved in terms of Hollywood-adopted clichés and standards. The art of cinema is viewed exclusively as "business", the specificity of cinema is reduced to "high royalties", questions of genre are interpreted as questions of "serial production of similar films", the criterion for artistic quality is declared to be "box-office success" ... Along with pamphlets such as these, there are also many books whose authors, in presenting the aesthetic principles of contemporary Transatlantic culture, openly propagandize reactionary imperialist ideology" (Avarin, 1952: 123).

And it would be, in our opinion, erroneous to claim that after Stalin's death in March 1953 the *Cinema Art* immediately became "thawed".

On the one hand, soon after Stalin's death cinematographer I. Manevich (1907-1976), in fact, spoke out against the dominance of films, dramas, the creation of which the USSR Ministry of Cinematography carried away in the early 1950s: "Not every performance should be turned into a film-play. You need a strict selection. A performance film cannot replace an original feature film. Cinema cannot depend on the theater. It seems to us that we must give up completely the shooting of theatrical dramatizations of novels and novellas. By recreating only outstanding productions, cinema must otherwise turn directly to screenings of literary works" (Manevich, 1953: 98).

But on the other hand, even in 1954 the "ideologically correct" theoretical articles in the pages of the *Cinema Art* continued to rely on quotations from Stalin's works (see, for example: Groshev, 1954: 27-32). And the leading article published in the December 1954 issue of this journal devoted to the 75th anniversary of I. Stalin, stated directly: "Under the banner of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, under the banner of the Communist Party, under the leadership of its Central Committee, the Soviet people, the builder of communism, are moving toward a new rise of economy and culture, toward new victories in their peaceful creative labor and in response to all provocations and machinations of international reaction are consolidating the indestructible power of the socialist state – a reliable bulwark of peace throughout the world" (Stalin..., 1954: 4).

Overall, in 1954–1955, during the transition of power in the USSR from G. Malenkov (and the supporting part of the Kremlin elite) to N. Khrushchev (and his supporters), the impression could be gained that the *Cinema Art* was gradually becoming more of a film history and art journal than an ideological one.

Thus, the film critic G. Kremlev (1905–1975) wrote that it was not only about "a completely insufficient number of films devoted to the hero of our day, but also about the fact that even the best of these films, reproducing the truth, did not grasp its fullness. The narrowness and limitedness of their reflection of life sometimes manifested itself in a distortion of truth – they look pale and far from perfect when you compare them to our immensely rich reality and to the increased demands of people who are not satisfied with the private achievements of cinema art, more than modest in comparison with their past successes. ... This is what confused some authors! In their desire to present scientific and objective data about the hero they lapsed into such

objectivism that they almost completely withdrew and reduced their role to the faithful reproduction of facts and events, weaving in and out of their hands instead of disposing of them by the right of the artist. The pedantically understood historical truth sometimes dominated over the truth of art, creative fantasy was hardly in flux, rationality froze emotions, factography and chronicle substituted for drama” (Kremlev, 1954: 63, 66).

The writer, screenwriter and film historian V. Shklovsky (1893–1984) insisted that “just as it is wrong to translate from one language into another, trying to find a correspondence to each word, it is just as wrong to literally translate phenomena of one kind of art into another. ... It is just as wrong to blindly copy a story understood only as a collection of incidents, not as an elucidation of reality through plot juxtapositions. ... The work of film staging should be conducted in such a way that the cinematographic work brings the literary work closer to the reader, rather than replacing it. At the same time this work enriches cinema with literary experience. The literary experience cannot be directly replicated in the cinema, but can become an occasion for a new analysis of reality” (Shklovsky, 1955: 22, 27).

However, in August 1955, literally on the eve of the thaw, the *Cinema Art* unexpectedly returned to the fight against formalism and cosmopolitanism, and sharply opposed the classic of Soviet cinematography – the film director Lev Kuleshov (1899–1970).

This time L. Kuleshov was accused of a "formalistic" speech at a scientific conference of the Institute of Cinematography professors: “Throughout this entire speech in which Professor Kuleshov justified his past formalistic mistakes, the common thread runs through the idea that one can be a formalist, an idealist, and at the same time create realistic works of cinema. Prof. Kuleshov argued that the directors S. Eisenstein and V. Pudovkin, creating realistic and highly communist ideological films such as *Battleship Potemkin*, *Mother* and others, were formalists. Indeed, S. Eisenstein, V. Pudovkin and some other directors at the time were formalistic errors. But even *Battleship Potemkin* and *Mother* are remarkable works of Soviet cinema, not because their authors were formalists, but precisely because in these works they creatively overcame formalism.

The whole history of Soviet cinema shows that only those directors created films which were perfect in their ideological and artistic sense of art and which stood on the Marxist-Leninist position in their understanding of art and waged an uncompromising struggle against formalism, cosmopolitanism and other manifestations of bourgeois ideology. The extemporaneous fabrications on the address of S. Eisenstein and V. Pudovkin only needed Professor Kuleshov to justify his own mistakes. It was strange to hear at a scientific conference that Kuleshov, a communist professor, was "unbearably tired" of criticisms of "montage theory", "problems of the sitter", mistakes of "intellectual cinema" and so on. ... If research work had been properly carried out in the Department of Film Directing, if research reports and lecture transcripts had been systematically discussed, if mutual visits to lectures had been organised, then the confused theoretical position of Professor Kuleshov would have long been noticed. The department could have helped its colleague to overcome these mistakes. But... he was beyond criticism of his companions in the department. But Prof. Kuleshov is one of the oldest workers in the cinematography and one of the oldest in the Institute. His voice is listened to by young teachers and students” (Vostrikov, 1955: 65-66).

Ironically, V. Zhdan (1913–1993), editor-in-chief of the *Cinema Art*, was severely reprimanded for publishing on its pages an article about the Chinese poet and literary critic Hu Feng who dared to oppose Mao Zedong.

So in the end, even the reanimation of harsh criticism of formalism did not help V. Zhdan to keep his position: in 1956 he was dismissed from the post of editor of the *Cinema Art* (which, however, did not become an obstacle to his further professional career in the following decades).

5. Conclusion

Our analysis of film studies concepts (in the context of sociocultural and political situation, etc.) of the second decade of the journal *Cinema Art* (1945–1955) showed that theoretical works on cinematic subjects during this period can be divided into the following types:

- theoretical articles written in support of the Resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party dedicated to culture (including – cinematography) and defending the principles of socialist realism, Communist Party in cinematography (1946–1955) (Y. Borev, A. Burov, A. Groshev, D. Eremin, A. Karaganov, D. Pisarevsky, V. Razumny, N. Semenov, V. Skaterschikov, V. Sutyrin and others);

- theoretical articles opposing "cosmopolitanism," formalism, and bourgeois influence, contrasting them with communist ideology and class approaches (1949–1955) (A. Abramov, Y. Arbat, S. Ginzburg, I. Greenberg, I. Dolinsky, D. Eremin, S. Freilich, V. Shcherbina, Y. Vostrikov, I. Weisfeld, and others);
- theoretical articles critical of bourgeois film theories and Western influence on Soviet cinema (1945–1955) (G. Avarin, I. Weisfeld, etc.);
- theoretical articles devoted mainly to professional problems: the development of color in film, genres, entertainment, film dramaturgy, etc. (1945–1955) (A. Dovzhenko, S. Eisenstein, A. Golovnya, L. Kosmatov, V. Lazarev, A. Macheret, M. Romm, V. Shklovsky, V. Zhdan, etc.);
- theoretical articles balancing between ideological and professional approaches to the creation of cinematic works of art (1945–1955) (L. Belova, V. Frolov, S. Gerasimov, N. Morozova, L. Pogozheva, V. Pudovkin, V. Turkin, G. Tushkan, I. Weisfeld, etc.);
- theoretical articles calling on the authorities to ensure organizational transformations that would promote the intensive development of film studies as a science (N. Lebedev).

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Appendix

Key dates and events relevant to the historical, political, economic, ideological, sociocultural, and cinematographic context in which the *Cinema Art* journal was published in 1945–1955.

1945

May 2: the capture of Berlin by Soviet troops.

May 7: the Act of Germany's surrender is signed.

May 9: end of the Great Patriotic War.

June 5: the signing of the Declaration on the assumption of supreme power in Germany by the governments of the USSR, the United States, Britain and France.

June 24: Victory Parade in Moscow on Red Square.

June 26: The charter of the United Nations is signed.

August 6: American atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

August 8: the USSR announces its entry into the war with Japan.

August 9: American atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

August 15: Emperor Hirohito of Japan announces Japan's surrender.

August 20: the USSR establishes the Special Committee on the Use of Atomic Energy under the leadership of L. Beria.

September 18: The U.S. Army Joint Chiefs of Staff adopted Directive 1496/2, Fundamentals of Military Policy Formation, which identified the USSR as the principal adversary.

October 24: The UN Charter came into force.

October: resumption after a four-year hiatus (July 1941 to September 1945) of the publication of the *Cinema Art* journal.

December 14: The U.S. Joint Military Planning Committee issues Directive No. 432/D, concluding that the only effective weapon against the USSR is atomic bombing. It was proposed that in the event of a conflict to drop 196 atomic bombs on 20 cities of the USSR.

December 29: L. Beria was relieved of his position as People's Commissar of Internal Affairs.

1946

March 5: Fulton speech by Winston Churchill at Westminster College.

March 19: L. Beria is appointed deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

March 20: Resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the creation of the USSR Ministry of Cinematography. I. Bolshakov is appointed Minister of Cinematography of the USSR.

March 26: The beginning of regular broadcasting of the BBC in Russian.

August 14: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the magazines *The Star* and *Leningrad*".

August 26: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the repertoire of dramatic theaters and measures to improve it".

September 10: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the film *Great Life*".

September 14: Resolution of the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the issue and use of foreign literature".

October 14-15: All-Union meeting of workers of artistic cinematography.

December 16: Decree of the USSR Council of Ministers # 2711 of December 16, 1946 "On serious shortcomings in film production organization and facts of squandering and embezzlement of public funds at film studios".

1947

February 17: Creation of the Russian edition of the *Voice of America* in the United States, broadcasting to the USSR.

March 12: U.S. President H. Truman's nomination of the task of containing the advance of communism in Europe.

March 28: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On Courts of Honor in USSR Ministries and Central Departments": it was supposed to establish a special body in each department – a "court of honor" to consider "anti-patriotic, anti-state and anti-social deeds and actions committed by leading, operative and scientific employees of USSR ministries and central departments, if these deeds and actions are not subject to criminal punishment".

October 20: Hearings begin in the U.S. of the Commission of Inquiry into Un-American Activities on the subject of Communist infiltration in Hollywood.

1948

January: speech by a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party A. Zhdanov at a meeting of Soviet musicians.

February 10: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the opera *Great Friendship* by V. Muradeli.

June 21: The USSR began a blockade of West Berlin.

June 28: anti-Hugoslavia statement Kominform.

August 31: death of a member of A. Zhdanov (1896–1948).

November 20: secret decision of the bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers about the dissolution of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

1949

January 29: Publication of the editorial "On one anti-patriotic group of theater critics" in the newspaper *Pravda*.

February 15: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the anti-party actions of the Central Committee member of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), comrade Kuznetsov A.A. and candidates for the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), comrades Rodionov M.I. and Popkov P.S.". The beginning of the "Leningrad case".

March 1: The Plan of Action for strengthening anti-American propaganda in the near future was developed in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

March 3: Publication in the *Pravda* newspaper of an article by the Minister of Cinematography, I. Bolshakov, "To smash bourgeois cosmopolitanism in cinema art".

March 5: N. Voznesensky was removed from the post of Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the USSR.

April 4: The signing of the NATO North Atlantic Pact.

April 24: The USSR begins jamming the BBC's Russian-language radio broadcasts.

May 11: The end of the USSR's blockade of West Berlin.

June 9: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party "On the release of foreign films from the trophy fund".

August 29: The USSR conducted the first tests of a nuclear bomb.

September 28: The official break-up of relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia.

December 21: The USSR celebrated the 70th birthday of Stalin.

1950

February: U.S. Senator J. McCarthy announces that he has a list of 205 Communists working for the U.S. government. The peak of the anti-communist era of "McCarthyism".

June 20: publication of Stalin's article "Marxism and Questions of Linguistics. Regarding Marxism in Linguistics" (*Pravda*. 20.06.1950).

June 25: the outbreak of war in Korea.

1951

June 23: USSR proposed at a UN meeting that talks begin on an armistice in the Korean War.

1952

April 7: publication in the *Pravda* newspaper of an editorial entitled "To overcome the backlog of dramaturgy" (*Pravda*. 7.04.1952).

August 28: Publication in the *Pravda* newspaper of an editorial "To a new rise of Soviet film art" (*Pravda*. 28.08.1952).

September 4: Publication in the *Literature Paper* of an editorial titled "More Good Films!" (*Literature Paper*, 107 (2980): 1. 4.09.1952).

October 5-14: XIX Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

1953

January 13: in the Soviet Union the arrests on the "medical case" began.

March 1: the radio station *Liberation from Bolshevism* (*Liberation*) began broadcasting, which became *Radio Liberty* in May 1959.

March 5: death of I. Stalin (1878–1953).

March 5: a joint meeting of the Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party, the USSR Council of Ministers and the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet: L. Beria is appointed first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Minister of Internal Affairs.

March 14: the Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party elected the Secretariat of the Central Committee (N. Khrushchev, S. Ignatiev, P. Pospelov, M. Suslov, N. Shatalin).

March 15: the USSR Supreme Soviet approved G. Malenkov as the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.

March 15: Liquidation of the USSR Ministry of Cinematography (in accordance with the law "On reorganization of the USSR ministries"): the management of cinematography was transferred to the USSR Ministry of Culture. P. Ponomarenko (1902–1984), a party functionary, was appointed USSR minister of culture.

March 27: An amnesty was declared in the USSR, during which about a million prisoners (mostly convicted in criminal cases) were released.

April 3: the "doctors' case" is stopped.

May 3: The *Deutsche Welle* radio station starts operating.

June 19: The Rosenbergs, accused of spying for the Soviet Union, are executed in the United States.

June 26: the arrest of L. Beria, Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, first deputy head of the USSR government and member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of Communist Party.

July 2-7: the Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party on the case of L. Beria.

July 23: the end of the war in Korea.

August 5-8: Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, where Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers G. Malenkov announced a new economic course, providing for the priority development of light and food industry, production of consumer goods, budget cuts in military programs.

August 29: The Soviet Union conducted tests of the hydrogen bomb.

3-7 September: The Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party on Agriculture: it was proposed to reduce the agricultural tax by 2.5 times, to increase the size of the household plots of collective farmers, the development of the collective farm market. N. Khrushchev was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of Communist Party.

September 21: The USSR Council of Ministers and the Central Committee of Communist Party issued Resolutions "On Measures for Further Development of Cattle Breeding in the Country and Reduction of the Norms of Compulsory Delivery of Cattle Breeding Products to the State by Collective Farmers, Workers and Employees", "On Measures for Further Improvement of the Operation of Machine-Tractor Stations", "On Measures for Increasing the Production and Storing of Potatoes and Vegetables on Collective and State Farms in 1953–1955".

December 23: The execution of the former Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, first deputy prime minister of the USSR, a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of Communist Party L. Beria (1899–1953).

1954

January 25: Resolution of Central Committee of Communist Party "On serious shortcomings in the work of the party and state apparatus".

February 23 – March 2: The Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party. The Central Committee of Communist Party resolution "On a further increase in grain production in the country, and the development of virgin and fallow lands," on March 2.

March 9: Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR G. Alexandrov (1908–1961) appointed Minister of Culture of the USSR.

March 27: Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Central Committee of Communist Party "On the increase in grain production in 1954–1955 by the development of virgin and fallow lands".

December 15-26: Second All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers.

End of the war in Indochina which had lasted since 1945.

1955

25-31 January: The Plenum of the Central Committee of Communist Party. Resolution "On Comrade G.M. Malenkov," which relieved him of his duties as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

February 8: the appointment of N. Bulganin to the post of Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

March 21: Minister of Culture of the USSR G. Alexandrov (1908–1961) is dismissed in connection with a sex scandal. G. Alexandrov was sent into "exile" to Minsk, where he was appointed head of the sector of dialectical and historical materialism at the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences.

March 21: N. Mikhailov (1906–1982) was appointed Minister of Culture, holding that post until May 4, 1960.

May 14: Signing of the military pact of the Warsaw Pact, which included the Eastern European countries (except Yugoslavia).

May 27: Khrushchev's speech in Belgrade, which served to restore interstate relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia.

July 18-23: negotiations on the détente of international tensions between Khrushchev and US President D. Eisenhower in Geneva.

September 9-13: establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany.

September 20: signing of the Treaty between the USSR and the GDR, defining the status of Soviet troops in the GDR.