A Master's Thesis:

The Sublated Style of a Cinema in Transition: Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko from the 1920s – 1930s

by

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A.A., Collin College, 2016
B.A., University of Victoria, 2019

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts
in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies

at the

University of Victoria
Victoria, B.C.

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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ABSTRACT

This Master's thesis examines the period of transition (1928-1935) in Soviet cinema when the avant-garde directors Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko, among others, began to make films under the strictures of a new state-mandated socialist realist aesthetic. It argues, despite the prominence of literature which maintains that socialist realism precipitated a conceptual break that effectively ended avant-garde filmmaking practice, that socialist realism simultaneously preserved, developed, and negated elements of the avant-garde cinema. Using Katerina Clark's *The Soviet Novel* and Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," this thesis first illustrates the programmatic, narrative, and ideological continuities between the aesthetics in Kozintsev and Trauberg's *The New Babylon (*1929), *Alone* (1931), and *The Youth of Maxim* (1935). These films exemplify how socialist realism perpetuated the modified *bildungsroman* plot pre-figured by the avant-garde, further transformed Leninism's spontaneity/consciousness dialectic which ideologically interpellates individuals via social being, and began to utilise continuity editing in place of montage to construct overtonal ideological impressions. Next it explores continuities of visual stylistics in five films by Oleksandr Dovzhenko, *Zvenigora* (1928), *Arsenal* (1929), *Earth* (1930), *Ivan* (1932), and *Aerograd* (1935). Here the concepts of the "transitional film" and the "reduced form of stylistics" are introduced. The claim is made that the films made after the introduction of sound technology and before the official codification of socialist realism in 1934 represent a distinct hybrid of the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics and that a particular mediation of avant-garde stylistics through the new strictures was practiced. In the films of Dovzhenko, the continuing employment of three devices is identified to support the concept of the reduced form of stylistics: the use of the monocle (single element) lens, the poeticization of death, and stylised figure movement. In identifying the trajectories of plot structure, ideology, and stylistic devices in the transition from the avant-garde to socialist realism, this thesis elucidates significant continuities between the two aesthetics that embody a conceptual development, or sublation, in place of a conceptual break, or pure negation.

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INTRODUCTION

In the many bodies of writing on the first twenty years of Soviet cinema there is typically a clear dichotomy between the period before 1934, the "Golden Age", and the period following, where the codification of socialist realism determined all artistic production. This emergence of socialist realism has even been characterised by some as "the end of the Golden Age and the assault on film organizations", a position which wholeheartedly signals a viewpoint that would deny any interaction between the films made in the 1920s and those made after the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934 (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 92, 143). Yet throughout this period many directors, including some of those Soviet directors most well-known in Western Europe and North America, continued working and continued making movies concerning similar thematics. What if, instead of representing the bare negation of these directors' directorial style, the imposition of socialist realism was a conceptual development rather than a conceptual break? This question and the similarities, or continuities, it implies in the work of the avant-garde directors Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko in both their "Golden Age" and socialist realist work is the concern of this thesis.

The pre-conceptions that inform the reified attitudes toward the analysis, and reception, of avant-garde cinema and socialist realist cinema are of course not without referent in the films

of the period. One could hardly watch the final sequence of Sergei Eisenstein's *Strike* (1926), with its montage editing that juxtaposes the slaughter of a cow to the police brutality inflicted upon a strike, and claim that this subject matter is treated in the same visual style as the comparable scene in Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg's *The Youth of Maxim* (1935), where eye-line matches indicative of continuity editing replace avant-garde montage. The intent of this thesis is not to discredit the scholarship that has contributed to the creation of these wholly-separate, reified categories of Soviet avant-garde and socialist realism, but to attempt to step outside of reified categories and to look at the relationships between these films anew.

In a way, this thesis could be said to take an unconscious influence from those studies of the American cinema of the same period, where pre-Hays Motion Picture Production Code films became subject to new controls centring around morality in 1934, the year it began to be strictly enforced. Where directors, as part of a vertically integrated system of film production, made stamps of personal flair upon their work against the grain of the Hollywood studio system. A studio system which declared the general principles:

> "1. No picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience shall never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin.
> 2. Correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment, shall be presented.
> 3. Law, natural or human, shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation." (Shurlock, 142).

In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, filmmakers did not struggle with the restrictions of the studio system and the Hays Code after 1934, but with imposition of socialist realism in 1934 and a fully centralized and nationalized film industry, a situation that was realized in 1929 when the Party issued a decree legitimising the use of all measures by the Party to strengthen its

control over the cinema, and when in 1930 it reorganized Sovkino (Taylor, *Politics of the Soviet Cinema*¸ 121). The new organisation, which was to replace Sovkino in 1930, Soyuzkino finally fully centralized authority over filmmaking under the leadership of the Party. (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 95).

Although it may sound as if this is an attempt to recreate the *Cahiers du cinema* and Andrew Sarris' Auteur Theory in the Soviet context, this is not the case. Instead of creating a hierarchy of Soviet directors whose artistic concerns were powerful enough to override industry restrictions and mandates, in comparison to supposedly lesser-artists who faithfully followed the flow of the medium, this thesis merely extracts a kernel of analytical methodology from these prior practitioners of film criticism. Much like the Hitchcocko-Hawksians identified the re-occurring thematic and visual concerns of Hollywood directors, despite the homogenizing influence of the studios, this thesis will attempt to identify the persistent visual and thematic concerns of Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko from their avant-garde filmmaking to their socialist realist filmmaking. While the *Cahiers du cinema* did so to laud their technical and artistic capabilities as being above the crowd that surrounded them, I do so to gain a greater understanding of these directors' works, the artistic possibilities of filmmaking under Stalin, and the filmic transition of the late 1920s and early 1930s that took place in the Soviet Union. In eschewing the dichotomy presented as a conceptual break between the avant-garde and socialist realism, this thesis looks past the focus on the role of these films as didactic pieces of propaganda beholden to the state's changing political needs and the formalist-realist distinction that constitutes the reified attitude toward these two aesthetics in Soviet film history, and instead it identifies the role and function of narrative and cinematographic devices in films from the period.

Literature Review

The prior scholarship which constructed these reified attitudes has a long history of development. Richard Taylor, in his *The Politics of the Soviet Cinema* published in 1979, contributed toward the historical analysis of Soviet cinema an outlook that primarily focused on "the Soviet cinema in the 1920s from the perspective of its political function in the development of the new Soviet society, to investigate the attitude of the Soviet authorities towards the cinema, and the actual uses to which the cinema was put" (Taylor, ix). This focus foregrounds cinema's role as ideological and political propaganda, a focus which has often dominated the field of research and analysis, and might be responsible for more generalized value judgements pertaining to the artistic quality of Soviet cinema as a whole. This thesis then seeks to emancipate Soviet cinema from this dominating influence, to rescue the analysis of its cinematic outputs from purely politico-ideological means by reincorporating its artistic qualities into an account of the continuities extant in the stylistic shift that occurred between the 1920s and 1930s. Taylor sees this shift as one where "in the 1920s Soviet filmmakers had been able to portray reality as they saw it; in the 1930s they had to portray reality as the Party saw it" (*Politics of the Soviet* Cinema, 157). Stating elsewhere that "[b]y the 1930s cinema had established its credentials and acquired a history and traditions of its own...It had created its own conventions, and those conventions were based not so much on the experimental avant-garde films...but on the relatively conservative mainstream popular cinema" (Taylor, "Ideology and Popular Culture in Soviet Cinema: The Kiss of Mary Pickford", 62).

This attitude places the focus of analysis on ideological and political questions of a film's history rather than on their nature as cinema, and this approach is echoed heavily in Peter Kenez's *Cinema and Soviet Society: From the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (first edition

published in 1992, second edition in 2001). Kenez makes no overtures to "modern film theory and semiotics", but clearly outlines that his approach is intended to be "an examination of the propaganda role of films...to contribute to our understanding of the interaction of culture and politics" (*Cinema and Soviet Society,* 1-2). His hopes for this historical account of the Soviet cinema is to reveal the nature of the changing mentality of the Party and to intimate some sort of understanding of the "mental world of Soviet citizens" (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society,* 2-3). One might say that Kenez's book is a long reception history, counterbalancing the intentions and reactions of filmmakers, Party officials, cultural critics, and Soviet audiences. In this reception history he treats the transition from the 1920s to the 1930s in a similar way as Taylor, remarking that "'socialist realist' cinema to a great extent was founded on the achievements of the golden age", yet even he argues it was a repudiation of avant-garde filmmaking aside from its assimilation of the avant-garde's heroes (*Cinema and Soviet Society*, 65).

In more recent years, Evgeny Dobrenko has continued this type of politico-ideological analysis of Soviet cinema in his book *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History* (2008). For Dobrenko, cinema is an institution through which Stalinism controlled the past. In his schema, history is the basis from which Stalinism derives its legitimacy, and in an attempt to both control and construct a history that would give the Party this legitimacy the cinema engaged in a process dubbed "museumification" (Dobrenko, 1-20). This analysis posits that the functions of a museum are "collection, conservation, and exhibition", where collection is the selection of events that constitute the approved history, conservation is the assemblage of these events into the approved historical narrative, and exhibition is the advancement of this narrative into the exterior world (Dobrenko, 12). Socialist realist cinema under Stalin, as an often-historicising cinema composed of historical revolutionary films, through this process produces history anew as part of the array

of politico-ideological propaganda Stalinism required to manufacture legitimacy in Dobrenko's schema. This museumifying process is characterised by Dobrenko as a product of all of Stalinist culture and ideology, including socialist realist cinema, since he considers Stalinism a traditionalist and anti-modernist reaction to modernisation which regards modernisation as erosion and decay directed by the planned activity of individuals (196). This categorically opposes socialist realism to the "Golden-Age" of Soviet cinema (when the state did not exercise a firm grasp over film production), and the modernist aesthetics of the avant-garde.

Yet against these historical studies of Soviet cinema which opposed the avant-garde and socialist realism, Boris Groys published an account of these two aesthetics which integrated them both into modernism, as they both practiced modernism's aesthetic-political transformational impetus, in *The Total Art of Stalinism* (1992). The effective goal of this study was to abolish the existing reified attitudes toward the avant-garde and socialist realism, where the avant-garde is the victim of Stalinist orthodoxy. Even though the focus of his analysis was a philosophical interpretation of the visual arts, the argument that the avant-garde represented a demiurgic movement concerned with transforming the world in a socialist manner and that socialist realism embodied the completion of this aesthetic-political project might be projected onto the cinema. Unlike the avant-garde, socialist realism "strove not to deautomize but rather to automatize consciousness, to shape it in the desired mold by controlling its environment, its base, its subconscious" (Groys, 44). Socialist realism, just like the avant-garde, sought to transform society, but it did so by resolving the contradiction found in the avant-garde, where the attempted creation of subconscious reactions was inseparable from the conscious application and interpretation of form that impeded the internalisation of a transformative ideology. Automization resolved this de-automized contradiction when it abolished the reliance on

conscious perception to create agents of social change. In doing so, it subjected the bare negation of the avant-garde to the dialectical irony of sublation (Groys, 49-50).

Groys' work is not without its critics though. Irina Gutkin, in *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic* derides his thesis that "socialist realism, rather than being a doctrine invented by political figures, was the culmination of the avant-garde artistic project" as being "a philosophically ahistorical view of the avant-garde, whose goals are defined in Nietzschean terms as an inexorable quest for power" (3). But Gutkin recognized that Groys made key observations that must be further investigated, in particular that socialist realism was the result of "a sophisticated elite cultural discourse, and that it was among the modernist avant-garde that this 'projectionist,' or utopian aesthetic originated" (4). The analytical focus of her study is primarily literature, instead of the visual arts, and she argues that socialist realism is the "culmination of a desire for cultural stability in the aftermath of a protracted revolutionary-period of upheaval that began in the 1890s with the overthrow of the positivist mentality that had dominated Russian cultural and political discourse for most of the second half of the nineteenth century" (4). Socialist realism was neither an invention that could be relegated to either the sphere of politics or of aesthetics, rather it was a result of the interaction of both. Her analysis of the historical development of Russian culture from 1890 to 1934 sees socialist realism not as the product of merely the avant-garde and Bolshevik cultural policies, but as the interaction of a varied cultural sphere that included realism, revolutionary romanticism, symbolism, constructivism, futurism, and other conventional and avant-garde aesthetics. The emergence of socialist realism was then the "result of complex mutations and combinations of several competing mythological belief systems and visionary designs for an ideal society that interacted in the Russian cultural tradition" (Gutkin, 150).

Continuing a critical discourse concerning Groys' book, Petre Petrov elaborates another perspective on the generative interaction between the avant-garde and socialist realism in *Automatic for the Masses: The Death of the Author and the Birth of Socialist Realism* (2015). Petrov shares Gutkin's concern with the ahistorical nature of Groys' thesis, citing the demiurgic visions of the pre-1910s figures Nikolai Fedorov and Vladimir Solovev, but considers the main problem to be Groys' near-complete failure to engage with the modernist gesture of self-effacement and depersonalization (5-6). As one might glean from the title of the work, Petrov's primary analytical concern for the link between the avant-garde and socialist realism is the death of the author. Petrov maintains that both the avant-garde and socialist realism demanded the death of the author as a symbolic act, an act guided by a demanding objectivity, for the avant-garde this imperative objectivity was the result of art that had forgotten its role in society and was under threat of commodification, while for socialist realism it was the natural outcome of the advance of world history and the emergence of socialism (26-31). The socialist realist artist, like the self-effacing modernist artist, had to submit their self to the objectively-unfolding march of historical progress and act out the cultural-ideological performance expected of them in creating a socialist realist text, a performance that embodied the ability to see the emergence of socialism and submitted the author to its unfolding advance as part of its historic construction.

Despite these new approaches to the interpretation of the relationship between the avant-garde and socialist realism, none of these texts by Groys, Gutkin, and Petrov deal directly and at length with this transition in Soviet cinema. Other than a 13-page reading of *The Vow* (1946) in *Automatic for the Masses*, the reader who is looking for an approach to the cinema specifically, that does not reproduce the politico-ideological historical approach of Taylor, Kenez, and Dobrenko, is forced to look elsewhere. One recent text that merits attention, although it is still

primarily focused on industry dynamics and Soviet film history, is Maria Belodubrovskaya's *Not According to Plan: Filmmaking Under Stalin* (2017). Belodubrovskaya attempts a correction of the historical scholarship of the Soviet film industry, examining why under Stalin the film industry failed to be moulded into an institution of mass propaganda, revising the record on Stalin's status as censor, the efficacy of thematic planning, and the autonomy of directors, while also re-integrating Soviet directors under Stalin into the practice of world cinema, rather than just practitioners and creators of Stalinist culture, and suggesting the limits of totalitarianism (2). The result is a re-orientation of the historical record, where the superficial change of centralisation, stasis of directorial generational change, self-censorship of the industry, dearth of screenwriters, and the central role of the director in the cinema's mode of production are all laid bare (Belodubrovskaya, 213-216). For Belodubrovskaya, "Stalin-era cinema was built on the film industry of the 1920s and prepared the cinema of the 1960s," and the example of Hollywood was never out of sight for Soviet filmmakers (2).

Perhaps the most interesting recent text in Soviet film studies is Philip Cavendish's *The Men with the Movie Camera: The Poetics of Visual Style in Soviet Avant-Garde Cinema of the 1920s* (2013). Unlike Belodrubrovskaya, Cavendish's interest is not relationships bound up in the Soviet mode of film production and how this affected the work of Soviet filmmakers, but the formal stylistics, the visual form, of cinema itself: photography. His work engages in a study of the cinematographic style of the directors Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko and their respective camera operators, Eduard Tisse, Anotolii Golovnia, Andrei Moskvin, and Danylo Demutskyi, arguing that these camera operators, who worked in multiple-film partnerships with their respective directors, should be elevated to the level of co-author for their filmic

contributions (Cavendish, 2). Cavendish utilises historical documents, correspondence, the camera operator's scenario, and film analysis itself in an attempt to flesh out the separate influences of the cinematographer and director (1-6), but his attitude toward socialist realism is not far from those reified attitudes this study takes issue with. For Cavendish, socialist realism "rendered the term 'avant-garde' ideologically suspect and thus obsolete" and those who subscribe to the Groysian theory of socialist realism's continuation of the avant-garde's demiurgic ideological impetus "have paid insufficient attention to the visual aesthetics of cinema" since the "radical differences between the two eras from the stylistic point of view can be demonstrated by reference to any of the films made by these avant-garde units during the 1930s and 1940s when compared to those of the 1920s" (1, 8).

Despite this stance toward socialist realism, Cavendish does admit that certain films, like Pudovkin's *Mother* (1926), enact certain pre-figured devices important to socialist realism, with *Mother*'s "treatment of the 'coming to conscious' paradigm" representing a quintessential example (146). This study will take these pre-figurations of socialist realism as its focus, arguing for an understanding of the relationship between the avant-garde and socialist realism that might be conveyed as a conceptual development rather than a conceptual break. While the politico-ideological historical approach of Taylor, Kenez, and Dobrenko, philosophical approach of Groys and Petrov, cultural studies approach of Gutkin, historical approach of Belodubrovskaya, and the film and visual studies approach of Cavendish have their merits, they all stop short, except for Belodubrovskaya's pioneering work on the film industry, of articulating a theory of the filmic transition itself. In place of accepting the reified attitudes which would consider socialist realism as the gravedigger of the avant-garde form, this thesis articulates the period of transition as a development or a sublation, the simultaneous negation, preservation, and raising

up, of the avant-garde into socialist realism. The films I analyze illustrate how socialist realism perpetuated the modified *bildungsroman* plot pre-figured by the avant-garde, transformed Leninism's spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, and began to utilise continuity editing in place of montage to construct overtonal ideological impressions. Exploring continuities in visual stylistics, I argue for the concepts of the "transitional film" and the "reduced form of stylistics." I claim that some films made after the introduction of sound technology and before the official codification of socialist realism in 1934 represent a distinct hybrid, termed the transitional film, of the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics and that a particular mediation of avant-garde stylistics through the new strictures, named the reduced form of stylistics, in and after them was practiced. Three stylistic devices, which support the concept of the reduced form of stylistics, are identified: the use of the monocle (single element) lens, the poeticization of death, and stylised figure movement.

Methodology

Each chapter will utilise a separate approach to articulate this theory of continuity between the avant-garde and socialist realism, where elements of the "Golden-Age" were sublated into socialist realist cinema. The first chapter lies closer to the approach employed by Irina Gutkin in *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic* in its analysis of three films by the directorial pair Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg. These three films, *The New Babylon* (1929), *Alone* (1931), and *The Youth of Maxim* (1934), span the period of transition. It analyses the narratological continuities in these films as they are determined by Leninist ideology, as well as the on-screen overtonal filmic stylistics, which are elements of the *mise-en-scène* (figure movement, costuming, set design, and lighting), that contribute to the graphic

realisation of this ideology (in dialectical fashion in keeping with the use of sublation, these overtonal stylistics could also be said to simultaneously contribute to and be determined by ideology). The intent of this chapter is to show that, while the avant-garde and socialist realism should not be considered as the same, socialist realism represents a continuation and a further development of the avant-garde's programmatic goal of transforming society in a socialist manner.

The methodological basis for this analysis of the role of Leninist ideology in Kozintsev and Trauberg's film narratives lies in two texts, Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" and Katerina Clark's *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*. Ideological interpellation, that process by which individuals are hailed into distinct subjectivities, or roles, within an ideological systematization of the world, occupies a central role in understanding how these films fit their subjects, or characters, into the schema of Leninist ideology. In Althusser's formulation, "*ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*...[it] 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all)" (Althusser, 264). Althusser sees ideology as a concrete materiality which pervades the lives of individuals, determining their behaviours and beliefs (259-260). In the cinema, a world of pure representation that is the creation of individuals who live in ideology, this is doubly so, because the cinema is a cultural ideological state apparatus itself. A reversal of Althusser's formulation emerges through this doubling, ideology on-screen is no longer the "imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence" but is itself the "system of real relations which govern the existence of individuals" (256-258). For the characters who inhabit the filmic world, the ideology which the filmmaker lives in is not an imagined systematization of human relations, it is the real and

concrete governing force that determines their relations to all that inhabits the film alongside them. The ideological world that exists outside the filmic world, in the life of the filmmaker, determines the social beings and field of potentialities for the characters within.

When this observation is paired with Clark's identification in *The Soviet Novel* of the importance of the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic in Soviet culture, along with elements of two additional texts by Vladimir Lenin which Clark does not analyse, the framework for the filmic interpellation of Leninist ideology becomes apparent. The Leninist spontaneity/consciousness dialectic construes consciousness as "actions or political activities that are controlled, disciplined, and guided by politically aware bodies" while it considers spontaneity to be "actions that are not guided by complete political awareness and are either sporadic, uncoordinated, even anarchic (such as wildcat strikes, mass uprisings, etc)" (Clark, 15). When this dialectic is applied to the social being of individuals as evaluated by Lenin and in Leninism, it determines their field of potentialities. Leninism's evaluation of the revolutionary potential of distinct social beings maintained that the peasantry holds petit bourgeois aspirations because of its dispensation toward land ownership and that the proletariat is spontaneously disposed to trade unionism, but with proper extra-class leadership can become revolutionary (*What is to be Done?*, 41, 32; "Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship", 61-62). The resultant filmic systematization of this, which represents the Leninist ideological schema regarding social being, is that a proletarian character is spontaneously pre-disposed toward the class struggle and is receptive to the dissemination of revolutionary consciousness from extra-class elements, while the peasantry is spontaneously predisposed toward actions which are subordinate to bourgeois ideology and cannot fully internalise revolutionary socialist ideology.

In the analysis of *The New Babylon*, *Alone*, and *The Youth of Maxim*'s narratives, this schema interpellates the behaviours of the various characters throughout, limiting and defining their field of potentialities. The narrative of each film is structured on the "socialist *bildungsroman*" plot, with the *bildungsroman* being a literary genre focusing on a character's formation and education. This type of plot, seen in both the avant-garde and socialist realist films of Kozintsev and Trauberg, becomes the master plot of socialist realist texts, where revolutionary consciousness is internalised by characters through teacher-student relationships, serving as a microcosm of the class struggle and the progress of history (Clark, 16-17). But of course, the susceptibility of a character to the dissemination of revolutionary consciousness is determined by their social being, with the various potentialities being outlined by the Leninist ideological schema. The individual on-screen does not cease to exist in a filmic world of concretised ideology. Between the films analysed, the observed development in the filmic interpellation of characters through Leninist ideology is that, in the transition from the avant-garde to socialist realism, the avant-garde filmic world interpellates individuals via their immediate social being, while socialist realism interpellates individuals via class origin.

The final contribution of the analysis of Kozintsev and Trauberg's work is the fate of the overtonal ideological stylistics, or the elements of editing, *mise en scène*, and cinematography, which contribute to the ideological impression of events within the film. The shift of their employment throughout the directors' 1928-35 oeuvre is analysed in the move from the use of montage, or discontinuity editing, in their avant-garde work, to continuity editing in their socialist realist work. This transition is made apparent in sequences from the films analysed: the montage of the washerwomen and monuments in *The New Babylon*, the costuming of the characters in the Altai in *Alone*, and the use of eye-line match and camera framing in the protest

that takes place in *The Youth of Maxim*. In socialist realism overtonal ideological stylistics began to create impressions through elements of the film's diegesis, primarily the *mise en scène* and cinematography, instead of through the juxtapositional powers of montage, which confirms some of the contributions of prior scholarship regarding the dissimilarity of the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics.

The second chapter bears similarities to Philip Cavendish's work in its focus on the visual style, the cinematographic and editing techniques, employed in five Dovzhenko films: *Zvenigora* (1928), *Arsenal* (1929), *Earth* (1930), *Ivan* (1932), and *Aerograd* (1935). The beginning grounds this analysis in Dovzhenko's personal history and the sociohistoric situation he lived and worked in, as it considers the changes to his directorial style to be a result of the shifting demands on artistic practice in the transition from the 1920s into the 1930s. Dovzhenko's integration into European Modernism and his status as a Ukrainian and "unreliable" artist are instances of his personal history which affected his early directorial voice and his willingness to submit this directorial voice to the state's changing directives (Liber, 45-52, 121-123).

The theoretical gist of this chapter afterwards is to establish the concept of the reduced form of stylistics, or the mediation of avant-garde stylistics through the socialist realist aesthetic. It identifies six devices indicative of Dovzhenko's avant-garde directorial style: the use of a monocle lens, montage editing, the poeticization (or displacement) of death, the use of superimposition, heavily stylised figure movement, and the manipulation of time by adjusting the framerate. Each of these devices is identified throughout sequences in Dovzhenko's first avant-garde film *Zvenigora*, as well as in his subsequent two avant-garde films *Arsenal* and *Earth*. The presence, or lack, of these devices in the transitional film *Ivan,* which is neither fully avant-garde nor socialist realist, is then analyzed in a dialogue with Trudy Anderson's "aperture" concept.

This form of public address, found in socialist realism, is brought in as it pertains to the reduced form of stylised figure movement (43). Finally, the reduced form of Dovzhenko's stylistics are discussed in his first fully socialist realist film *Aerograd*, where it is shown that the use of the monocle lens, the poeticization of death, and stylised figure movement have all survived. By identifying the trajectories of these stylistic devices in the transition to socialist realism, this chapter attempts to elucidate a significant type of continuity between the avant-garde and socialist realism that embodies a synthesis, or sublation.

In engaging these two disparate approaches, one ostensibly oriented toward the functioning of film content and the other toward the functioning of film form, the intent is to avoid reproducing the type of study that either concerns itself solely with the plot and ideology of Soviet films, like Kenez's, or only with the cinematographic stylistics, like Cavendish's.

2

FROM FEKS TO SOCIALIST REALISM: IDEOLOGY AND CONTINUITY IN *THE NEW BABYLON* (1929), *ALONE* (1931), AND *THE YOUTH OF MAXIM* (1935)

The FEKS Collective, or Factory of the Eccentric Actor, was a filmmaking group in the Soviet Union often associated with the pair of directors Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg who worked together as film-directors from 1924 to 1946. Founded in 1921 and originally conceived of as an avant-garde theatre group competing against both bourgeois romanticism and modernist futurism, expressionism, and impressionism, the FEKS Collective like the other modernists of their time, but especially Soviet modernists, took up the mission of forging a new culture and indeed new forms of life for a new society, which is encapsulated in their *Ekstsentrizm* manifesto (1922) in their assessment:

> " YESTERDAY – museums, temples, libraries.
>
> TODAY – factories, works, dockyards.
>
> 2) YESTERDAY – the culture of Europe.
>
> TODAY – the technology of America.
>
> Industry, production under the Stars and Stripes. Either Americanisation or the undertaker."
>
> (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky).

The FEKS perceived the Russian, and European, culture of yesterday as stagnant and the culture of today, in the new Soviet epoch, as a dynamic phenomenon developing with the working masses in the factories, workplaces, and streets. The Americanisation, otherwise known as industrialisation, of society that for the FEKS placed the worker at the centre of cultural life demanded a rethinking of prevalent sociocultural forms and subjects, and for the FEKS the declamatory statement that, "WE VALUE ART AS AN INEXHAUSTIBLE BATTERING-RAM SHATTERING THE WALLS OF CUSTOM AND DOGMA" was a clear indication that they saw art as an iconoclastic tool for forging this cultural and societal change (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky).

With the Civil War ending the previous year, Reds victorious, the task of the day was the construction of new institutions fit for a worker-led socialist society. *Ekstsentrizm* declared as its methods for this construction the "vulgarisation of all the forms" of yesteryear. In the theatre this meant:

> "1. [F]or the actor – from emotion to the machine, from anguish to the trick. The technique – circus. The psychology – head over heels.
> 2. [F]or the director – a maximum of devices, a record number of inventions, a turbine of rhythms.
> 3. [F]or the dramatist – the coupler of tricks.
> 4. [F]or the artist – decoration in jumps." (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky).

While in painting and visual art they demanded the "maximum use of all the forms of the *lubok*" (Russian popular print associated with folk culture, but in their case associated with mass culture like conventional film posters), the "use of artistic concepts for the purpose of agitation and propaganda", the encouragement of cartoonery and caricature, and the study of modern technology like trains, cars, engines, and factories (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky). These expressions within their manifesto devise an artistic mission ideologically

fitting for the socio-historic situation in the fledgling Soviet state. In the minds of many Soviet intellectuals a new culture was desperately needed to accompany the new order, lest people lapse into ways of thinking and behaviour fit for the bourgeois past, and in the eyes of the FEKS this culture was one that would do away with both the bourgeois romanticism of the past and the futurism, expressionism, and impressionism of the present in favour of an art focused on the dynamic everyday life encountered in the music halls, circuses, and cinemas (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky).

This avant-garde tendency central to the FEKS' artistic identity and their ideological mission would seemingly position Kozintsev and Trauberg opposite the stylistic dictates of what in 1934 became the Soviet Union's sole artistic aesthetic. Socialist realism, codified and adopted in 1934 at the first all-union Congress of Soviet Writers, demanded that all art be realist in style and socialist in content. As discussed in the Introduction, in cinema the adoption of socialist realism has been viewed variously as a conservative counter-revolution that opposes the avant-garde films of the 1920s to the socialist realist films of the 1930s and onwards, as a shift in the portrayal of reality via the Party's dictates, and as a traditionalist and anti-modernist reaction to modernization (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 143; Taylor, *Politics of the Soviet Cinema*, 157; Dobrenko, 196). The least hardline of these positions supporting the conceptual break is that of Kenez, arguing that socialist realism adopted a few elements from the avant-garde but largely repudiated it (*Cinema and Soviet Society*, 65). If these evaluations of the relationship between the two aesthetics are taken at face value it would mean that within Kozintsev and Trauberg's own *oeuvre* there would be a clear conceptual break between their avant-garde and socialist realist work with little to no similarity between the two periods. This conceptual break seems an even more imperative result of these evaluations given the fact that Kozintsev and Trauberg were

successful filmmakers under Stalin, which is evidenced by the reception of their first socialist realist film *The Youth of Maxim* (1935) and its subsequent sequels (Leyda, 320-323).

Yet this position is precisely what a close viewing of three of their films, *The New Babylon* (1929), *Alone* (1931), and *The Youth of Maxim* (1935), disproves. These movies demonstrate the key points of continuity from the FEKS' avant-garde filmmaking to Kozintsev and Trauberg's socialist realist filmmaking, where similarities arise in the ideology expressed and the links between this ideology, narrative, and formal stylistics like editing and *mise en scène* (with editing being the joining together of different independent shots and *mise en scène* the devices of setting, lighting, figure movement/behavior, and costumes). Each of these movies fits the genre of the historical revolutionary film, a genre that was a staple during the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union and is represented in each period by movies like Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and Mikhail Romm and Dmitri Vasilyev's *Lenin in October* (1937). These films' focus on revolutionary history easily allows one to see the representation of Soviet socialist ideology, characterized by the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, within them and how the modified *bildungsroman* was prefigured in the FEKS' avant-garde work. This is not to say that avant-garde and socialist realist movies are more or less the same but rather that there are clear continuities between the two that have been ignored in favor of the conceptual break. Both aesthetics share narratives that affirm revolutionary Soviet socialist ideology and the dissemination of revolutionary consciousness between characters through teacher-student relationships which are influenced by a dialectic of spontaneity and consciousness. Yet the overtonal ideological stylistics, the editing and *mise en scène* that work with the narrative to build deeper ideological impressions, of the FEKS' work in the two aesthetics contain clear

differences. These differences are most apparent in the editing while retaining some similarities in the *mise en scène*.

The point of departure for analyzing the ideological narratives of *The New Babylon*, *Alone*, and *The Youth of Maxim* is their common genre of the historical revolutionary film and their use of the teacher-student relationship identified by Clark as an influence of the *bildungsroman* on socialist realism (16-17). This relationship is typically one where an older or more learned figure with a revolutionary socialist consciousness imparts their ideological worldview onto a younger character who then becomes an active subject in the struggle for socialism. This is a process which can be described as the dissemination of revolutionary consciousness, but this dissemination is also determined by a second factor of Leninist ideology, the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic which determines much of a character's role within the plot's structure. As historical revolutionary films *The New Babylon*, *Alone*, and *The Youth of Maxim* all contain this relationship as a major plot element necessary for their depiction of the development, consolidation, or perpetuation of socialist revolutions.

The basis for this dialectic in Leninist thought is found in Marx's statement that "It is not consciousness that determines people's being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines consciousness" (11-12). In the three Kozintsev & Trauberg films to be analyzed, it is precisely social being that determines which side of this dialectic a character falls on, and so it can be said that Leninist ideology determines the actions and consciousness of the characters in these films. When Louise, Elena, and Maxim appear on screen they are interpellated by Leninist ideology and transformed from indeterminate individuals into determinate subjects who are typified representations of their social being. Their status as worker, intelligentsia, woman, or man defines their consciousness and subsequent action. Louise, as a proletarian woman, Elena,

as woman of the intelligentsia, and Maxim, as a proletarian man, in Leninist ideology are all predisposed to certain behaviours and ideas due to their varied conditions of life that arise from their separate social beings.

The trajectory this interpellation takes in the transition from the FEKS' avant-garde to their socialist realist films is one of totalising concretisation. Where in *The New Babylon* the immediate social being of Louise, the Journalist, or Jean interpellates them and allows for the process of becoming (or the dissemination of revolutionary consciousness in Louise's case), in *The Youth of Maxim* all is already decided. Here ideology takes on such a concrete identity as a totalising schema that characters simply inhabit, or are interpellated into, the roles which they have already been assigned on the basis of fixed qualities within this pre-existing totalising ideological schema, abolishing any process of becoming (Petrov, 194-195). Just like Stalinism does to material individuals, socialist realism interpellates filmic individuals into a concretised totalising ideological system. This interpellation no longer takes place through the immediate social being of an individual in Leninist ideology, potentially opening up the subject to a process of becoming, but is now oriented toward the past, specifically class origin, and this is why the process of becoming is said to be abolished.

This development of the interpellating process is due to Stalinism's reliance on history as its "basis of legitimacy" (Dobrenko, 19). Stalinist art, i.e. socialist realism, when engaging in the process of historicization adjusts the past into a "historical prototype […] conforming to the present of 'real socialism'" and its corresponding image in art (Dobrenko, 19). Dobrenko terms this process "museumification", because like a museum Stalinist art "carries out the important social function of reforging the past into an ideologically coherent narrative" as "an institution of control over the past" (9-13). This function, although primarily focused on the representation of

history, also determines the development of a new attitude to social being in socialist realism. While Kozintsev and Trauberg's avant-garde work establishes the possibility of becoming through the interpellation of subjects by their immediate social being, their socialist realist work abolishes becoming because of its orientation towards the past. The subject is no longer interpellated by their immediate social being, a fluid category capable of change, but by their class origin, a fixed category, and this shift represents a concretisation of the ideological system interpellation relies upon (a phenomenon also apparent outside art, seen in the new tendency of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to give figures for its social composition based on class origin rather than current social status) (McClosky and Turner, 248-249).

The New Babylon

The New Babylon presents a fictional account of the Paris Commune of 1871. The protagonist Louise, a cloth saleswoman at the New Babylon department store during the Franco-Prussian war, is invited to a ball put on by Paris' bourgeoisie and there meets an unnamed Journalist, played by Sergei Gerasimov, who speaks revolutionary rhetoric. As the French Army suffers defeat by the Prussians, the bourgeoisie and the military withdraw to Versailles and, instead of submitting to a Prussian occupation, the workers of Paris form the Commune to govern themselves and protect the city. The outset of the film sees Louise reveling in the atmosphere of the bourgeoisie's enjoyment of the department store and the ball, counterposed with the suffering of washerwomen and tailors through montage. Before the Army capitulates and withdraws from Paris, leaving the workers on their own, Louise finds herself present at a meeting with the Journalist where revolutionary consciousness is first imparted onto her through his claim that, "When Paris falls it won't be the bourgeoisie who will pay for the war, but the working class." (*The New Babylon*, 24:09-24:15). As the film progresses Louise becomes a

steadfast supporter of the Commune, helping the Journalist to save the workers' guns when the Army attempts their removal. Upon the French Army's return, she opposes their restoration of the old order to Paris, a dedication which at the end earns her an execution at the hands of the Army along with the other communards.

Louise's development of revolutionary consciousness takes place throughout the film as the Commune is established, and this dissemination of revolutionary consciousness by the Journalist is counterposed with the playing-out of spontaneous consciousness in the character of the soldier Jean. Here Leninist ideology and the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic interpellate Louise via her social being as a worker, informing her revolutionary potential's process of becoming, but they also interpellate Jean via his social being as a peasant and the adherence to the spontaneity side of the dialectic this entails, determining his enaction of the counter-revolutionary potential his social being contains. The resultant determinations of Louise and Jean adhere to Leninist formulations of the role of classes, or distinct social beings, in the revolutionary process. These roles in the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic are described by Vladimir Lenin in *What is to be Done?*. Lenin states, "to belittle Socialist ideology *in any* way, to *deviate from it in the slightest degree* means strengthening bourgeois ideology...the spontaneous development of the labour movement leads to its becoming subordinated to bourgeois ideology...for the spontaneous labour movement is pure and simple trade unionism...and trade unionism means the ideological subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie." (41). This general law holds that without the proper leadership of a socialist party, a criterion made clear in that socialist consciousness could only be brought to the workers "from without," that the spontaneous tendency of the class struggle against the exploitation of the

working masses would take the path of the amelioration rather than the annihilation of capitalism (Lenin, *What is to be Done?*, 32).

The New Babylon does not purely depict this dialectic in action among the proletariat, but filters it through another aspect of Soviet ideology which considers the aspirations of the peasantry, revolutionary or not, to be petty bourgeois while the aspirations of the proletariat reflect either the trade union struggle or the struggle for socialism (Lenin, "Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship", 61-64). Soldier Jean reflects and embodies this worldview of the peasantry. The Journalist and Louise first encounter Jean at the same meeting where Louise begins her internalisation of revolutionary consciousness. From the outset, Jean's actions are interpellated by his social being, resulting in the pursuance of his immediate interests. In this scene, Louise gives Jean a piece of bread knowing that he has been outside begging, but when the Journalist tells Jean that, "As long as you don't surrender there won't be any peace!" Jean reacts by throwing down the bread he has been given, eventually declaiming, "I don't want to fight anymore! I want to return to my village!" (*The New Babylon*, 27:58-32:42).

This characterisation of Jean as a village peasant is extended to the French Army's infantry as a whole during the scene where Louise, and later the Journalist, attempt to rescue the workers' guns from being confiscated by the Army. Louise arrives to the guns along with other women carrying milk, where Jean is helping soldiers to move the guns. Faltering under Louise's glare, Jean tells her, "It's tough enough when you're hungry all day", following which the women start to give the soldiers milk (*The New Babylon*, 36:06). Recognizing their good will, the soldiers begin to question their actions when they are asked by the women "Who are you serving?" (*The New Babylon*, 37:48). This results in the soldiers' refusal to fire upon the workers once they have arrived behind the women to defend the guns, but this working-masses solidarity

is short lived thanks to the spontaneous consciousness of the peasantry which determines they act in their immediate interests. Instead of siding with the workers and marching to city hall to support the commune, the soldiers are enticed by their commanding officer's dictum that after retreating to Versailles they will be allowed to return to their villages.

This depiction of the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic in *The New Babylon* represents a direct influence of Soviet ideology on plot structure and narrative, hemming in and informing the teacher-student relationship which becomes central to socialist realism, in this example from Kozintsev and Trauberg's avant-garde work. Without political leadership imbued with extra-class socialist ideology, found in this case in the figure of the Journalist, the spontaneous political action of the peasantry leads towards the satisfaction of immediate interests, for Jean and his fellow peasant soldiers—the ability to return to their villages, which do not attempt to overturn the old capitalist order. But for the proletariat, like Louise, the political leadership of the Journalist is able to transform the fascination with bourgeois decadence, seen at the ball, into a revolutionary consciousness which expresses loyalty to the struggle to establish a new order. Each character, Louise, Jean, and the Journalist, are interpellated into their respective roles through Leninism's evaluation of the revolutionary potentials of distinct social beings. Louise, as a worker, is able to undergo a process of becoming characterised as the dissemination of revolutionary conscious from the Journalist, a figure who is able to impart revolutionary consciousness only because of his extra-class social being as a member of the intelligentsia, representing his subsequent interpellation into this same schema. While Jean is interpellated into his role as a peasant, determined to spontaneously act in order to satisfy his immediate interests, interests that in the Leninist schema are petit-bourgeois aspirations arising from his social being.

The new order established by the Commune is depicted through the techniques of avant-garde montage, the juxtaposition of independent shots intended to create greater meaning through contradiction and conflict. This editing style is a point of difference between Kozintsev and Trauberg's avant-garde filmmaking and socialist realist filmmaking, unlike the continuity represented by plot structure and ideology's place within it. A montage sequence that begins once the working class runs Paris unites shots of the washerwomen and tailors with centuries-old Parisian architecture and the bourgeoisie in Versailles to show the causes and effects of the new order of the Commune.

This sequence begins with the intertitle "Paris as it has been for hundreds of years" before moving onto "this is Paris no more" (*The New Babylon*, 46:35-47:18). Between these intertitles shots of Paris from on high showcase the city's architecture, four gargoyles, and finally the Vendôme column on top of which stands Napoléon I. Immediately after "this is Paris no more," a cobbler hits a hammer against a boot in close-up while the next shot utilizes camera effects to make it appear as if the monument is being pulled down, replicating its actual destruction during the Commune.[1] A close up of a washerwoman's hands at work, then a medium shot of her still at work and asking "Why do we enjoy our work more?" precedes more medium shots of washerwomen, textile workers, and the cobbler working with happiness and laughter about them (47:28). The answer to this intertitle is given by another washerwoman "We work for ourselves and not for the owners, as decided by the Commune!" (*The New Babylon*, 47:50-47:59). The new socialist order of the Commune is clearly constructed in this sequence as

[1] Pudovkin's *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927) uses similar imagery, "demolishing" large architectural ensembles dedicated to the tsars of the past and "putting up" in their place images of industrial modernity. Here cinema performs the act of taking down monuments of the past (which in reality was a huge expense), making an "artistic" contribution to Lenin's Decree on Monuments to the Tsars (1918) and in effect "completing" the work that the state was not physically able to accomplish

responsible for the happiness of the workers who now govern themselves, while the following sequence combines the shots of faces of individual members of the bourgeoisie in Versailles with shots of individual gargoyles on top of the Notre Dame, further cementing the identification of the old order that exploited the working class with the bourgeoisie's removal from Paris.

Alone

Alone is Kozintsev and Trauberg's final avant-garde film, their first sound film (only partial sound), and their first non-FEKS film. Its subject matter is the establishment of the new Soviet order in the countryside in the late 1920s and early 1930s, which was a part of the process of collectivization overturning the New Economic Policy (Kenez, *History of the Soviet Union*, 80-84). In this way it is not a historical revolutionary film in the manner of *The New Babylon* and *The Youth of Maxim*, since it depicts more contemporary events, but it is still historicizing and thematically revolutionary. Elena Kuzmina, a young teacher who has just finished her schooling in Leningrad, is set to marry her sweetheart and she hopes for a nice life in the city teaching well-behaved children. Against her hopes she receives a teaching assignment in the Altai and goes to lodge a complaint, but is told "Those who are in doubt and have only their self-interest in mind are enemies of the Soviet state", leading her to accept her assignment (*Alone*, 23:07-25:16). Once in the Altai Elena sees the laziness and unprincipled behaviour of the chairman of the village Soviet, who spends more time polishing his boots and eating than working, which enables the exploitation of the village by its Bey (a figure equated here with a kulak), who keeps Elena's students from attending school so they can tend his sheep. This situation in the village transforms Elena's begrudging acceptance of her role in Soviet society into her becoming an active voice of Soviet ideology.

The film contains two teacher-student relationships which are essentially a single dialectical relationship between Elena and the village. Her social being and role is similar to that of the Journalist in *The New Babylon* by nature of her higher education and coming from Leningrad, a centre of Soviet power where the new socialist order is firmly in place. The dialectical characterisation of her relationship with the village is a result of the teacher-student relationship being two-way, unlike that of the Journalist and Louise. Initially against her assignment, and therefore opposing Soviet power, the conditions of exploitation of the village children as well as the technological backwardness in the Altai convince her that the Soviet way is correct and that her knowledge will help in establishing this new order in the countryside. Through Elena the village learns that the Bey's herd should belong to them all since they collectively work to tend it and rely on it for subsistence. The last two acts of the film depict this ideological becoming for both sides. Elena departs the village, only to be stranded in the wilderness, to go to the higher Party organization to keep the Bey from illegally selling his herd for his own profit while the village holds the Bey and the chairman of the village Soviet accountable in a public meeting, deciding to elect a new Soviet to replace the old.

But this dialectical characterisation of the teacher-student relationship complicates the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic that also informs this aspect of the plot. Elena occupies not only the position of one who must be taught by proper ideological leadership, but also that of one who is the embodiment of proper ideological leadership. In contradistinction to Louise, who is a member of the proletariat, Elena is a part of the socialist intelligentsia, and this is what enables her to move from the position of disingenuous internalisation of socialist ideology to genuine propagandizer of socialist ideology upon her confrontation by NEP-capitalist exploitation. Elena is interpellated into a similar role as the Journalist in *The New Babylon* because of her social

being, a social being that makes it possible for her to impart revolutionary consciousness onto the working masses. Elena's education of these working masses, in *Alone* the poor peasants of the Altai, is made possible by her position "from without" of the working classes (Lenin, *What is to be Done?,* 32), while the Leninist view of the peasantry as tending towards petty bourgeois ideology is encapsulated through the depiction of the Bey's exploitative practices.

The immediate social beings of the various characters within *Alone* enables a process of becoming to be enacted not only by a singular character and class, but by two distinct social beings, the intelligentsia and peasantry. Elena is able to accede to her role in the Leninist schema, disseminating revolutionary consciousness, and the peasantry accedes to two separate roles, differently distributed in the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, based on a further division of social being particular to the Party's ideological interpretation of the rural situation during the NEP. This stratified interpretation of the peasantry divided the countryside into three class-based, yet intra-class, social groups, the rural entrepreneurs (kulaks), middle peasants, and lower peasants. The kulaks employed agricultural labourers, who were lower peasants, and made roughly twice as much as the middle peasants (Lewin, 48-49).

This new division of the peasantry allows *Alone* to interpellate the peasantry into two separate roles, one where the kulak represents the petit capitalist and exploiter of the countryside and the other where the lower peasant takes on the potentially revolutionary role of the worker due to their exploitation through wage labour. The Bey is clearly interpellated into the role of the former, seen in his desire to maintain the conditions of exploitation in the countryside from which he profits, while the villagers are interpellated into the role of the latter, giving them revolutionary consciousness and transforming them into conscious supporters of Soviet development and the new order in the countryside. Without this further stratification of social

being in the countryside, the peasants would not be interpellated into this role previously reserved for the workers, but due to the fluidity of social being, where a peasant can become a wage labourer and therefore closer to a worker, this possibility of becoming opens up, and this phenomenon is something that won't be seen later in socialist realism.

Unlike *The New Babylon* which utilized montage to build the overtonal ideological impressions between the old order of the bourgeoisie and its exploitation and the new order of the Commune, *Alone* largely uses devices in the *mise en scène*, mainly costuming and settings. The NEP order in the Altai is characterized by the chairman of the village Soviet's slovenliness and the technological backwardness associated with the Bey. The chairman wears his hat with the flaps sticking out, his shirt is often dirty and partially unbuttoned, and he rolls out of bed unkempt to immediately begin eating and drinking tea. The Bey wears a long fur coat and carries a long knife for slaughtering animals and is linked to the village shaman. These costuming devices which signify laziness and superstition are linked to the old order in the countryside, while the plane, or "iron bird", which comes to rescue Elena from the wilderness, signifies the potentials of an order under the village's new Soviet, elected to replace and upturn the NEP that allowed Bey to own the village's herd. The ideological implications here are not just that the new socialist order liberates the village from exploitation, like in *The New Babylon*, but that the new order represents the technologically advanced path toward the future.

The Youth of Maxim

The last of the three films, *The Youth of Maxim*, is a return to the historical revolutionary film in the same type as *The New Babylon*. *Maxim* follows a young worker, whose name is of course Maxim, through his process of ideological development that leads to his membership in the Bolshevik party. Maxim, Dmitri, and Andrei live in St Petersburg and are factory workers.

On one fateful day they help a woman, Natasha, who is handing out Bolshevik pamphlets to escape the foreman and arrest shortly before Andrei is injured by the machine he works, which management has repeatedly neglected to repair. Natasha turns out to be Maxim and Dmitri's Sunday school teacher, and when the police come to question her there they defend her, now having no sympathy for their bosses and the industrialist owners who are responsible for Andrei's death. After another worker dies in their workshop, the workers take to the street in a procession with his body and come to a confrontation with the police. Maxim, now under the influence of Natasha and her Party cell leader Polivanov, makes a speech at the protest, throws pamphlets to the crowd and is arrested, while Dmitri rushes out of a bar drunk to hit a policeman in the head with a brick before his arrest. In jail Maxim shares a cell with Polivanov, an old Bolshevik, and Dmitri is executed. Upon Maxim's release he travels to the countryside to organize with the Party, at the end of the film becoming a full member sent on assignment to a new city.

The Youth of Maxim contains a teacher-student relationship closer to that of *The New Babylon* than of *Alone.* Once again, the teacher-student relationship's ideological transference goes in a single direction rather than in a dialectical two-way relationship. Yet the teacher-student relationship in *The Youth of Maxim* is significant for the gender hierarchy, specific to socialist realism, it introduces. The relative unimportance of Natasha, who could easily have served as Maxim's mentor, in disseminating revolutionary consciousness reveals this gender hierarchy. Natasha initially introduces Maxim and his comrades to revolutionary literature, but because she is a woman she cannot be his true mentor. She instead occupies the place of a motivating love interest for Maxim, which Gutkin remarks only appears in the life of the protagonist if it serves a role in their ideological becoming, and this is precisely the role Natasha

serves in *The Youth of Maxim* (131). Maxim's love is not accepted by Natasha until the end of the film, when he joins the party and kisses Natasha, smiling victoriously.

Maxim acquires a spontaneous proletarian consciousness through the deaths in his workshop, fomenting his distrust and dislike for the capitalists and their enforcers, but it is his time in prison with Polivanov which teaches him to be a revolutionary. Maxim attacks the guards when they enter his cell and receives a beating, then proceeds to tell Polivanov, "Comrade, let it be the gallows" to which Polivanov responds, "Who told you that I want to perish?" Polivanov proceeds to give Maxim a short speech, propagandizing that "Anyone can perish. Hold on! They'll put the noose around your neck, but you'll get out. The cause is waiting for us out of prison. If you seriously want to be with us, the Party will take you." (*The Youth of Maxim*, 1:07:08-1:08:11). From Polivanov, Maxim learns that to be a revolutionary is not to be a martyr killed by the capitalists, but it is to struggle continuously and intelligently against the old capitalist order to build a new order, one under which Polivanov remarks he'd like to marry in and send his grandchildren to the Socialist university.

Akin to *The New Babylon*, *The Youth of Maxim* again presents the divergent paths of spontaneity and consciousness, but a character's interpellation into this dialectic is now determined by the class origin of those involved in the struggle rather than by their immediate social being. Where *The New Babylon* chronicled Louise and Jean's treading of these paths, *Maxim* follows Maxim and Dmitri. *The Youth of Maxim* provides no history of Maxim's life to inform the audience of his class origin, but there are signifiers to his urban upbringing and therefore proletarian origin in his costuming and character. In his costuming the primary signifier is his wearing of a *kosovorotka*, the skewed collar shirt which is a garment associated with the peasantry and lower classes in an urbanising Russia. Yet the most definite signifier of his

proletarian origin is his street-smart manner, showcased when he is questioned by the factory director, who is fooled into thinking Maxim is but an idiot when he responds to a question about illegal literature by quoting popular underground fiction. Dmitri also has no given history and his costuming only casts him as a worker, but unlike the other protagonists of the film he has a surname: Savchenko (while Polivanov presents an exception to this, he has no given name and so the importance of Dmitri's surname remains). When Savchenko, a Ukrainian name, is coupled with his naïve comedic attitude, momentary accordion playing, and drunkenness the intention is clearly to depict his character as a peasant.

The significance of the distinctions between Maxim and Dmitri's class origins is that it determines their actions within the film's plot, or their respective paths within the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic. Maxim, as a proletarian of proletarian origin, is interpellated into the position of the potentially revolutionary worker and undertakes this process of becoming when he becomes the student of Polivanov. This is because the proletariat's spontaneous disposition to the class struggle is capable of becoming a revolutionary disposition, a potentiality Lenin illuminates when he remarks it is revolutionary "consciousness in an embryonic form" (Lenin, *What is to be Done?,* 32). When Maxim internalises the revolutionary consciousness disseminated by Polivanov he moves from the spontaneous side of the dialectic to the conscious side.

This is opposed to the peasant-origin spontaneous petit bourgeois disposition toward the class struggle Dmitri is interpellated into via his class origin as a peasant (a feature made clear by his Ukrainianness), a disposition which leads him to ruin. Where Maxim is able to learn from Polivanov that the struggle does not need martyrs, Dmitri is sentenced to execution for drunkenly battering in the head of a police officer during the protest. He is unable to receive the knowledge

and guidance of revolutionary socialist ideology because of his nature as a peasant, a nature which leads him to overaction and spontaneous violence during the protest, unlike Maxim's speechifying and pamphlet throwing that is fit for the moment and deems him an acceptable student. This disposition toward spontaneity does not wholly preclude the possibility of Dmitri, and the peasantry, siding with the proletariat against the Tsarist order. Dmitri's interpellation into the position of the peasantry within the Leninist ideological schema determines his ability to engage in spontaneous revolutionary activity, but not revolutionary consciousness, fit for the sociohistoric moment. While he cannot become a revolutionary in the Bolshevik sense, by order of his class origin, he can struggle against Tsarism for the satisfaction of his immediate interests, an interest that for the peasantry is ownership of the land.

In contradistinction to the functioning of interpellation and the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic in *The New Babylon* and *Alone*, in *The Youth of Maxim* arises socialist realism's novel basis for interpellating subjects via class origin rather than their immediate social being, otherwise Dmitri would behave in the manner of a trade unionist or a Bolshevik (like Maxim). Of course, this is not a wholly new phenomenon for socialist realism (i.e. Stalinism) still interpellates subjects on the basis of Leninism (primarily the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic as it determines social being), but it is a development of this already existing phenomenon along new trajectories. In disregarding Dmitri's immediate social being as a worker, albeit one of peasant origin, *Maxim*, and socialist realism, drains social being of fluidity. The fluid nature of class is concretised and is now determined on the basis of class origin, a fixed and unchanging quality. This shift is crucial for socialist realism's representation of the present, it requires a static, or concrete, past with which it can construct an ideological schema of continuity with the present. Socialist realism, in its mandate to depict the present of "real socialism", must utilise the

past as in institution of control over the present by creating this ideological narrative of continuity (Dobrenko, 9-19).

The result of this museumifying process in socialist realism is that all has already been decided based on these concretised qualities located in the past. The range of possible becomings is severely limited. Class, considered as a type of matter composing a portion of identity, is rheologically altered from its fluidity. Where there was once the possible of many different becomings throughout time, based on the potentially changing factor of class, these becomings are solidified into relatively few, all determined by class origin rather than the immediate and fluid social being. Someone who is born a peasant yet becomes a worker can no longer undergo the possible processes of becoming set out by Leninism as the basis of spontaneous and conscious political development characteristic of both social beings. In Stalinism, they may only undergo the process of becoming which Leninism applies to the peasantry, and this is by force of history. Peasant origin unfalteringly leads to petit-bourgeois sympathies and proletarian origin to trade unionism if it is without political-revolutionary guidance. History must remain concrete in the field of social being for the present to remain under control.

Although *The Youth of Maxim* shares the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic and has the same type of teacher-student relationship as *The New Babylon* it is closer to *Alone* in how it constructs overtonal ideological impressions. By the time of its release overt avant-gardist use of montage was grounds for banning a film and as a film released in 1935 the dictates of socialist realism which demanded continuity editing were already in place. The death of the first worker during a workplace accident and the strike it inspires in *The Youth of Maxim* provides an example of this discontinuity in form as well as of the overtonal ideological impressions created by camera framing. In this sequence the use of continuity editing, including eye-line match,

longer takes, and dialogue, replaces the montage technique present in *The New Babylon* in establishing the effect of the workers' strike. As the workers march through the streets carrying Andrei on a stretcher they are stopped by a contingent of police. This encounter cuts shot reverse shot to establish an eye-line match between the marchers and the police, facilitating the depiction of their ensuing conversation. The police chief calls out to the workers "Gentlemen! Go back with peace and good will, we will deliver the dead body to the hospital ourselves!" (Kozintsev and Trauberg, *The Youth of Maxim*, 49:20). After which he repeatedly warns the crowd to turn back. A worker retorts, "Go back with peace and good will? The dead man had also gone back to his machine with good will. So why are you standing? Go back with peace and good will to die!" (Kozintsev and Trauberg, 51:03). Immediately following the worker's remark, the camera cuts back to the police chief who whistles for his men to begin pushing the workers back. As the workers retreat Maxim climbs onto a light post and yells, "Stop! Where are you going? We have nowhere to run. We won't have peace anyway. They are killing us like dogs." before pulling political pamphlets from his shirt to toss into the crowd (Kozintsev and Trauberg, 52:31).

Coupled with this exchange is the way in which the camera frames the police chief and the workers. The police chief is framed in largely negative space, with nothing immediately surrounding him, while the workers are framed in a group surrounded by each other. This overtonal characteristic intimates the strength of the working class, who are framed in mass numbers, against the state, represented by the police chief who is framed alone. Similar in implicit meaning to the montage sequence in *The New Babylon* that depicts the suffering of washerwomen and textile workers while the bourgeoisie shop in the New Babylon department store, the death of a comrade represents the exploitation of workers and their conditions of work which lead them to action, but unlike *The New Babylon*, which creates implicit ideological

meaning through montage this sequence utilizes continuity editing. Instead of using the immediately perceptible technique of juxtaposition *The Youth of Maxim* utilizes an ensemble of imperceptible technique, a combination of dialogue, framing, cutting, and figure behaviour, to show the strength of the workers by framing them together in strength, altogether building sympathy for the workers and achieving a similar meaning as that of the sequence from *The New Babylon* without demanding the conscious perception of montage-form.

` Other examples of *Maxim* utilizing costuming and lighting to build its overtonal ideological impressions are two examples which bear great similarity to individual shots from *The New Babylon*. The opening sequence depicts members of the bourgeoisie celebrating New Years by riding sleighs through the snow-covered streets at night while drinking champagne in their elaborate outfits, the men in expensive fur coats and hats and the women in shiny dresses. The darkness of this sequence and the manner it is shot in, camera in front of the sleighs looking at those riding frontally, bears great resemblance to the chiaroscuro and angle of the Prussian soldiers' charge toward Paris in *The New Babylon*, where they are only differentiated from the surrounding darkness as silhouettes by the brightly lit smoke behind them. Another nearly self-mimicking shot is Dmitri being taken out to the police wagon from prison for his execution. Shot at a high cantered angle, the light that illuminates the scene is light reflecting off the wet cobblestones outside the prison, quoting the high angle shots of the wet cobblestones of Paris during a torrential deluge following the defeat of the Commune just before the Communards' executions. Resemblance aside, which only provides evidence of aesthetic continuity between the FEKS work and socialist realist work of Kozintsev and Trauberg, the overtonal ideological impressions of these two shots signify the bourgeoisie's decadence and irresponsibility as well as the bleak and brute force they use against those who fight for a better world.

Continuities and Conclusions

The close viewing of these three films illustrates the continuities in ideology, narrative, and use of *mise en scène* between Kozintsev and Trauberg's FEKS work and socialist realist work. Those who support the idea of the conceptual break between Soviet avant-garde filmmaking and socialist realist filmmaking maintain that the two aesthetics are much more different than they are similar, but this is not the case. While socialist realist cinema did adopt continuity editing in place of avant-garde montage, many of the same narrative themes and other stylistics continued to be used under socialist realism. In a several instances these characteristics are even developed. This is exemplified by the FEKS', along with other avant-garde directors', pre-figuration of the socialist realist *bildungsroman* plot that features the ideological transformation of one of the films protagonists as well as the interpellation of these characters into the ideological schema that is Leninism. In *The New Babylon*, *Alone,* and *The Youth of Maxim* this ideological transformation is crucial to the plot and the communication of Soviet socialist ideology to the viewer, taking place through the various teacher-student relationships: Louise and the Journalist, the villagers and Elena, and Maxim and Polivanov.

Yet not only does the teacher-student relationship occupy an important place in the continuities between the avant-garde and socialist realism, so does the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic and the interpellating ideology of Leninism that determines it. In all three films the degree of internalisation of revolutionary consciousness from the teacher-student relationships is dependent upon the social being and class origin of the films' characters. This factor of social being occupies great importance in determining the actions of characters within the plot and according to the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic determined by the Leninist interpretation of social classes that places the peasantry in the camp of the petty bourgeois and the proletariat in

the camp of revolution. When "to belittle Socialist ideology *in any* way, to *deviate from it in the slightest degree* means strengthening bourgeois ideology" is a key characteristic of this dialectic, then even with proper ideological leadership the peasantry runs the great risk of supporting counter-revolution as their spontaneous consciousness is aligned with their petit bourgeois aspirations. Even the working class occupies a precarious position thanks to a spontaneous consciousness that leads only to trade unionism (Lenin, *What is to be Done?*, 41).

These facets of Stalinist and Leninist ideology are a major theme in Kozintsev and Trauberg's FEKS and socialist realist films and are informed not by the Bolsheviks alone but by the directors' own early *Ekstsentrizm* manifesto, where they advocated "shattering the walls of custom and dogma" (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky). The assignation of the museum and temple to yesterday and the factory and workyard to today continually presents itself throughout their films in the destruction of the old capitalist order (Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, and Kryzhitsky). The modernist fascination with the emergence of the new, which this tendency represents, is present in all three of these films, and is not just indicative of their earlier avant-garde status but also of their socialist realism in general. This is due to socialist realism's attitude toward shaping the future, an attitude encapsulated in the Stalin quote "What is most important to the dialectical method is not that which is stable at present but is already beginning to die, but rather that which is emerging and developing, even if at present it does not appear stable, since for the dialectical method that which is emerging and developing cannot be overcome" (Groys, 51-52). Here it becomes particularly clear that in its dedication to "the depiction of life in its revolutionary development", which by its own logic is a dialectical development, socialist realism concerns itself just as much with the emergence of the new as does *Ekstsentrizm* (Groys, 51-52).

The presence of this Stalinism as a distinct influence on their socialist realist work is felt most keenly in the trajectory of ideological interpellation. In the avant-garde works of Kozintsev and Trauberg interpellation, and the possible becomings determined by it, is maintained as a fluid yet wholly dependent schema on Leninist ideology, while in their socialist realist work the potential field of becomings is limited by the focus on the past. Where *The New Babylon* and *Alone* allow for processes of becoming to accord based on the immediate social beings of the characters within the films, *The Youth of Maxim* departs from this model. It maintains the same Leninist schema, allowing for the same becomings based on the embodied social beings, but now interpellates characters on the basis of class origin instead of immediate social being. The result is a limited field of becomings, an individual may no longer open up a new process of becoming by fluidly moving from one social class to another but is only able to become what is made possible by the circumstances of their origin. In focusing on the past in this manner Stalinist interpellation is more able to control the present, a capability that becomes most important when in Stalin's schema the emergence of the new takes place in the present. It becomes possible to explain away why an individual who embodies a particular social being may act against the Leninist ideological schema, being the definitive mechanism for explaining this type of Pavel Kurganovism (the villain of *The Party Card* [1936] whose sabotaging of his successful proletarian life is difficult to understand). The past becoming the primary characteristic in interpellating a character via their social being represents another development from the FEKS' avant-garde work that is both a continuity and a divergence, since it maintains the Leninist schema while simultaneously negating it, performing a sublation.

The continuity between the directors' work in each aesthetic is also present in their stylistic choices, not just the common choice of subject matter and ideological representation of

these subjects. The self-mimicking shots from *The Youth of Maxim* showcase a continued artistic interest in representing the dark and off-kilter nature of the world, in their work associated with capitalist society, which bears some resemblance to expressionism despite their earlier professed opposition to it. Against socialist realism's demand for the realistic representation of everyday life in its revolutionary development, these shots are highly stylised in a modernist manner and make it into their socialist realist work (Groys, 51-52). This once again presents a counterpoint to the idea of a full conceptual break and suggests what is instead a conceptual development where many elements of their avant-garde work are either fully transmitted into their later work, like the *bildungsroman* plot, spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, and ideological narratives, or transmitted in reduced form, like the camera framing and *mise en scène*.

This analysis of these three films as a conceptual development rather than a conceptual break allows for the difference represented by the shift from montage editing to continuity editing discussed in the analyses of *The New Babylon* and *The Youth of Maxim*, while it also suggests the necessity of a thorough re-evaluation of this transitional period in Soviet cinema, where the avant-garde ceased functioning outright and began making socialist realist films during the early 1930s. The conceptual break favoured by scholars like Taylor, Kenez and Dobrenko, ignores much of the existing continuities between avant-garde directors' work in both periods in favour of a position of nearly complete discontinuity, and this could partially be a result of two of these three scholars' status as mainly historians of the Soviet film industry rather than practitioners of film studies attuned to the visual language of cinema. While socialist realism certainly should not be considered one and the same as the Soviet avant-garde the continued importance of breaking up the old capitalist order to install a new socialist one is of paramount importance in both aesthetics. It would be more appropriate to say that socialist

realism represents both a negation and a continuation of the avant-garde. It is a sublation absorbing the programmatic goals of the avant-garde and assimilating certain avant-garde stylistics in reduced form. This characterisation is against much of the accepted scholarship on the period but is supported by the continuities in plot structure and ideological narratives found in these three film analyses. The following chapter will focus on these reduced forms of stylistics that socialist realism assimilated through analysing the work of the director Oleksandr Dovzhenko.

3

OLEKSANDER DOVZHENKO: THE REDUCED FORM OF STYLISTICS

While the comparison of Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg's late-20s and early-to-mid-30s films against each other is valuable for the insights they provide for continuity in film narrative, plot structure, and ideology expressed, Oleksandr Dovzhenko's avant-garde and early socialist realist work, including the transitional film *Ivan* (1932), presents a filmography ripe for the evaluation of the continuity and discontinuity between the aesthetics in film form itself. This is in part due to the array of aesthetic approaches Dovzhenko combined in the first film where he found his directorial voice, *Zvenigora* (1928), which by his own reckoning was "perhaps even eclectic in film form" (Dovzhenko, 19-20). *Zvenigora* combined the stylistic elements of Pictorialism, Impressionism, Constructivism, and pre-Revolutionary cinema (Cavendish, 160-163). These stylistic employs were later separated out from each other and utilised by Dovzhenko in *Arsenal* (1929) and *Earth* (1930) in a less-eclectic fashion, while for *Ivan* and *Aerograd* (1935) in reduced fashion, and because of this Dovzhenko's filmography from 1928 through 1935 represents a body of work well suited for theorizing the development of film form, largely represented by cinematography and editing, in the transition from avant-garde to socialist realist stylistics.

The analysis in this chapter looks at the stylistic devices pertaining to cinematography throughout Dovzhenko's films *Zvenigora*, *Arsenal*, *Earth*, *Ivan*, and *Aerograd*, as well as his personal history and the sociohistorical situation which exerted an influence on his style, to argue for a degree of cinematographic continuity between the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics. This analysis sees *Zvenigora* as a film in which all of the elements of Dovzhenko's style are present, represented in his films by the use of a monocle lens, montage editing, the poeticization (or displacement) of death, the use of superimposition, heavily stylised figure movement, and the manipulation of time by adjusting the number of frames per second, while *Arsenal* and *Earth* represent more predetermined and less eclectic applications of this style. *Ivan* provides an example of the transitional film, or the film that is neither purely avant-garde nor socialist realist, but contains significant elements of both aesthetics, while *Aerograd* is Dovzhenko's first fully socialist realist film and only contains reduced forms of avant-garde cinematographic stylistics. This chapter introduces both the idea of the transitional film, which is a unique aesthetic of its own, as well as the concept of the reduced form of stylistics, which is the mediation of avant-garde stylistics through the socialist realist aesthetic.[2]

Dovzhenko's past has some bearing on the analysis of these stylistics for it informed his use of the formal techniques, two examples being the single-objective monocle lens and Constructivist montage, closely associated with his directorial style. Dovzhenko was born in 1894 into a peasant family living near the village of Sosnytsia, Chernihiv Province, in the Russian Empire (Liber, 9). During the First World War Dovzhenko was a teacher and therefore exempt from military service, but when social unrest in the Russian Empire flared up into

[2] Although the mediation of avant-garde stylistics through the state-enforced strictures of socialist realism is the focus of this chapter, the degree to which Dovzhenko did or did not employ these devices hidden within socialist realism as a form of artistic resistance is beyond the scope of this thesis.

revolution and civil war his activities become less clear (Liber, 19-31). In his biography of Dovzhenko George Liber is at pains to reconstruct these years, and conjectures that Dovzhenko was a member of Ukrainian nationalist and socialist organizations during the Revolution and Civil War, only joining the Bolsheviks in 1920, after arrest by the Cheka, thanks to his connections with the Ukrainian Communist group of the so-called Borotbists (31-39). The political organization Dovzhenko belonged to at the outset of the Revolution was the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party, which advocated for national-territorial autonomy for Ukraine within Russia and the development of the Ukrainian language in government and culture (Liber, 33). After the Civil War, Dovzhenko entered the diplomatic service of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and spent time at the consulate in Berlin, where he was exposed to the artistic currents of modernism (Liber, 45-51). In Berlin on scholarship from the Soviet Commissariat of Education he studied at the Higher State School of Representative Arts and took private lessons from the Expressionist painter Willy Jaeckel (Liber, 51-52).

The influence of his political allegiance with ostensibly nationalist Ukrainian socialism and his artistic affiliation with modernist aesthetics is clearly present throughout his avant-garde filmmaking. In narrative and plot the influence can be seen in *Zvenigora* and *Arsenal*, which both pit Bolshevik protagonists against Ukrainian left-nationalists. Avant-garde modernist stylistics are also present in these films, extant in the soft-focus monocle lens of the Haydamaky sequence of *Zvenigora* (16:25) and the Constructivist montage of the train, prior to its crash, which utilizes canted angles and a handheld camera in *Arsenal* (22:00). Some of these stylistic devices, specifically the use of a monocle lens, are attributed by Philip Cavendish to the camera operator Danylo Demutskyi, who worked with Dovzhenko on *Arsenal*, *Earth*, and *Ivan*, because of his history of involvement with Pictorialist photography (243-248). This ignores the use of

Pictorialist stylistics in *Zvenigora*¸ for which the camera operator was the pre-Revolutionary cinema worker Boris Zavelev, as well as in *Aerograd*, which had three camera operators, including Eduard Tisse.

Another aspect of Dovzhenko's personal history which must be analyzed when elucidating the points of stylistic continuity between avant-garde filmmaking and socialist realist filmmaking is the relationship between Dovzhenko and the demands of the Soviet state in cultural production. In 1934 the first all-union Congress of Soviet Writers demanded "of the artist the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development" and along with this came the expectation that formal devices which "impede immediate comprehension" should not be utilized by filmmakers (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society,* 143-144). Although socialist realism was officially defined in this manner in 1934 the pressures and criticisms which informed it had a long history in the Soviet Union, gaining real impetus in 1928 with the start of the Cultural Revolution and the First All-Union Party Conference on Cinema, which stated that "cinema can and must play a large role in the Cultural Revolution as a medium for broad educational work and communist propaganda, for the organisation and education of the masses around the slogans and tasks of the Party" in its resolutions (Taylor, *Politics of the Soviet Cinema*, 117).

While the effects of these pronouncements would be felt by all Soviet directors, who would now have to more closely follow the guidelines of the socialist realist aesthetic as the 1930s continued on, Dovzhenko felt the political pressure of the Cultural Revolution and imposition of socialist realism doubly so thanks to the accompanying attempt to undo some of the progress of Ukrainianisation (Liber, 121-123). Before Dovzhenko made *Ivan* he knew the precarious position he was in, having been dubbed an unreliable artist and having suffered heavy

criticism for *Earth* (Liber, 122). *Ivan* was his attempt to make a politically correct film about industrialization in Ukraine that would not upset the new political order that encompassed the gradual retreat from Ukrainianisation and the emerging guidelines of socialist realism for film (Liber, 122). So it is no wonder that following *Ivan*'s release and subsequent criticism for its complex metaphors, philosophical pathos, and lack of a positive hero, Dovzhenko displayed greater deference to the dictates of socialist realism when making *Aerograd*, a film which has nothing to do with Ukraine (unlike his previous four films), and which resulted in a greater presence of the reduced forms of his style.

While Cavendish argues that Demutskyi was the source of Dovzhenko's avant-garde poeticism and directorial style the presence of these devices in *Zvenigora* and *Aerograd*, films which Demutskyi did not work on, intimate that these stylistics were mutual concerns not attributable to one or the other. Cavendish's argument in favour of this position fails to explain the reduced forms of stylistics in Dovzhenko's first properly socialist realist film, *Aerograd,* or the eclectic use of multiple different stylistic devices in *Zvenigora*. If the source of Dovzhenko's style truly arose from Demutskyi's presence, then the reduction in clearly visible style in this film might be explained away as his absence rather than as a conflict between Dovzhenko's artistic proclivities and the Soviet state's guidelines for cinema. Against Cavendish's position "that the films photographed by Demutskyi represent a significant departure from the aesthetic canons of works that Dovzhenko directed alongside other camera operators" the analysis in this chapter of Dovzhenko's filmic style during the transition from avant-garde filmmaking to socialist realist filmmaking sees Dovzhenko's stylistic developments within this period as characterized by a high degree of continuity. The reduced form of style that arises in the later films is part of a process of change influenced by the shifting demands on artistic practice rather

than the result of the end of his partnership with Demutskyi, who Cavendish locates as the source of Dovzhenko's style and poeticism (244).

Zvenigora

The avant-garde cinematographic and editing stylistics present in *Zvenigora* are most pronounced in three sequences, the Haydamaky sequence at the beginning of the film, the Ivan Kupalo sequence immediately following, and the Varangian invasion sequence beginning at approximately the 49-minute mark. The Haydamaky sequence exemplifies Dovzhenko's tendency to create poetic-lyrical passages focusing on nature and utilizing the monocle lens, which have chromatic and spherical aberrations that hamper a sharp image and distort the image in the frame's edges. The Ivan Kupalo scene provides evidence of Dovzhenko's predilection for playing with time in the way that the framerate is manipulated and in how he directs the actors to perform highly stylised movements, while also mimicking the soft focus of a monocle lens through the use of smoke and dust in the *mise en scène*. The Varangian invasion sequence again showcases his use of the monocle lens and stylised figure movement but also the use of superimposition, the placing of one image over another, found throughout his avant-garde films. The other elements of Dovzhenko's directorial style, the poeticization of death and montage editing, are found throughout the film in less readily identifiable sequences but are present in the sequence depicting the Red guerillas' retreat from an attack by Ukrainian left-nationalists.

The Haydamaky sequence, set during the 18th century and depicting a Haydamaky raid against Poles at Zvenigora, begins with a slow motion long shot of Cossacks riding their horses through a wooded area (*Zvenigora,* 0:00:55), before introducing the Old Man who guards the treasure of Ukraine as he has "for three hundred years... a thousand years..." (*Zvenigora,* 0:01:51-0:02:05). Just like the slow motion of the Haydamaky, the Old Man is shown pulling a

horse with a cart in slow motion when the Haydamaky come upon him and recruit him to show them the way to Zvenigora where Poles are digging up the land looking for treasures. This sequence contains one use of the monocle lens occurring once the Haydamaky return to their horses, after being knocked out by the smoke of the robed sorcerer who protects the treasures, to leave Zvenigora. They are framed in a high angle extreme long shot with a monocle lens that distorts the trees surrounding their horses into a soft focus (*Zvenigora,* 0:16:25).

Many of the shots throughout the Haydamaky sequence, with the opening three shots of the Haydamaky on horseback and of the Old Man serving as an example, focus just as much on the surrounding nature as they do on the human subjects. The slowed down waving of the leaves behind the Cossacks on horseback which are followed by a shot of a single tree on a hilltop, shot occupying the full height of the frame while surrounded by sky, and the later imagess of the Old Man and Haydamaky leader crawling through the high grass all serve to integrate man, horse, land, and sky all into one contiguous and lyrical environment. Even the hunted Poles hide in the trees as part of the environment, while the sorcerer who emerges to protect the treasures of Zvenigora comes out of the ground itself before his face is superimposed onto the foliage of the surrounding trees (*Zvenigora,* 0:12:57). The use of dissolves and cuts during this sequence to transform a treasure chest into a tree trunk or a goblet into a broken glass bolsters this interpretation of the centrality and equal importance of the land to the human subjects who inhabit it. These items which represent the treasure of Zvenigora are revealed to be the environment itself through these cuts.

The Ivan Kupalo sequence, which immediately follows, utilizes the manipulation of framerate, like the beginning shots in the Haydamaky scene, while it also introduces highly stylised figure movement. The women on the riverbank where the Old Man lurks nearby are

performing the festivities associated with the eve of Ivan Kupalo, circling a bonfire and floating wreaths down the river to divine their futures. As the women jump over and encircle the fire, running with hands clasped, the first shot of the bonfire frames them in a high angle long shot with a monocle lens that renders the whole scene out of focus (*Zvenigora*, 0:18:46). Obscured not only by the monocle lens but also the smoke emanating from the fire, this shot sets the precedent for a later shot to utilize the diffusing effect of smoke as if it is soft focus (Cavendish, 261). The smoke creates a soft focus like effect in an eye-level medium shot of the women as they run around the bonfire through the smoke hands clasped, and during this shot the framerate is slowly altered, seemingly showing the women increase their speed as they run, but it is actually the manipulation of the camera which produces this simulation of figure movement (*Zvenigora*, 0:18:58 – 0:19:06).

In a reversal of this camera-effect-as-figure-movement in this sequence Dovzhenko also instructs the actors to perform figure-movement-as-camera-effect. Once Oksana sees her wreath disappear into the River's waters, thanks to the interference of the Old Man, the other women present perform highly stylised figure movement in two separate shots, only one of which will be analyzed here. This is a long shot at a slight high angle of three women, with two tree trunks in the foreground the river in the background with light reflecting off of it, standing perfectly still bent over in a gaze that can be interpreted as looking towards the wreaths and expressing dismay at Oksana's sunken wreath (*Zvenigora*, 0:20:02). This shot, if it were not for the movement of the water and the reflections in it, would seem to be a still image, but when two more women run into the foreground of the frame nearly level with the tree trunks before stopping to stand still it becomes clear that the image is not still but it is the actors' figure movement that produces the effect.

The highly stylised figure movement introduced in the Ivan Kupalo sequence reappears in the Varangian invasion sequence, which is the most technically complicated sequence in the entire film. The Old Man, now present during the period just prior to the Revolution, tells his grandson Pavlo a story about the woman Roksana who one thousand years ago, along with the Old Man, rallied Ukrainians to fight against Varangian invaders in an event that is responsible for the genesis of Ukraine's treasures at Zvenigora. The whole sequence that follows utilizes superimposition and figure movement to create a dreamlike environment. As Ukrainians rally to defend themselves from the Varangians they initially lose, pay tribute, are enslaved, and then fight against the Varangians again. The individual shots that are combined throughout the sequence begin as a double exposure. One of the component shots of this double exposure provides the environment the actors move within, shot out of focus in a style akin to a monocle lens, while the another shot provides the action, where the actors move about in sharp focus on top of the out of focus environment, and eventually this double exposure is heightened to what is at least a quadruple exposure. During this sequence the battle is depicted both as masses of people fighting, superimposed on top of each other, but also as stylised figure movement. When the Ukrainians initially fight the Varangians the Varangians' movements are stylised as slow motion, like that of the women in the Ivan Kupalo sequence. When the Ukrainians attack the Varangians they walk forward slowly and stop before them with heads bowed, allowing the Varangians, who stand straight-backed and straight armed, to lower their swords onto their necks, as if their arms are levers, to ritualistically behead them (*Zvenigora,* 0:52:50 – 0:52:59). These same actions are performed with roles reversed by the Old Man, who performs these ritualistic stylised movements in beheading Varangians (*Zvenigora,* 0:52:59 – 0:53:07).

The last two noted elements of Dovzhenko's directorial style, montage editing and the poeticization of death, occur in *Zvenigora* during the scene where the Red guerrillas retreat from a village under nationalist attack.[3] The montage in this sequence combines shots of the nationalist cavalry riding into the village and artillery guns firing with the intercutting of infantry soldiers firing their rifles and villagers hiding from the combat. All of these actions, which are not depicted together simultaneously in one shot, are isolated from each other as individual shots combined only by montage. The interpretation of these shots as a singular event relies on the montage forcing the viewer to consciously participate in the construction of meaning from the juxtaposed shots. This type of editing is typical of avant-garde montage as opposed to continuity editing, which utilizes cutting to maintain a clearly and immediately perceptible narrative, and would typically provide an establishing shot that depicts all of these actions within one contiguous environment and singular shot.

Following the nationalist attack on the village the Red guerrillas decide to retreat, leaving the women behind. As they ride away on horseback Timosh lags behind, his wife following him and demanding he not leave her. As she runs beside his horse holding onto his saddle Timosh commands her to return to the village, but she refuses, and in the process brings him to a complete stop while his unit rides forward. When one comrade turns around to tell Timosh to "Speed up. Hey, leave women there" (*Zvenigora,* 1:07:07), Timosh's wife responds "Oh, this is my death, Timoshko, come back! Come back, Timoshko! Kill me or come back..!" (*Zvenigora,* 1:07:19). The sequence then cuts to a high angle close up of Timosh's wife's face, her arms

[3] It is important to note that although I recreate the film's representation of this conflict, in which the two opposing forces are defined only as Reds and nationalists, for simplicity's sake, the reality was much more complicated. Alongside the Russian Revolution there was a Ukrainian Revolution where many different models for the governance of Ukraine were contested. Unlike in *Zvenigora*, nationalism and socialism were not mutually exclusive ideologies and the Bolsheviks were not the sole representatives of the fight for socialism in Ukraine (Yekelchyk, 67-68). Both belligerents in the film are Ukrainian and the nationalists are not necessarily right wing, although the film positions them in this manner.

outspread, to a close up from behind Timosh of him bending down to embrace her, to a medium shot from behind his wife of their embrace, and then back to a close up from behind Timosh of him removing himself from the embrace and looking towards his unit while removing his rifle from its position strapped around his neck (*Zvenigora*, 1:07:24 – 1:07:32). As he raises it the cutting increases drastically in speed, again showing a high angle close up his wife's face with arms outspread, to Timosh frontally in medium shot continuing to raise his rifle, back to his wife in the same position, to Timosh in portrait staring down the sight of his rifle, then to an eye level semi-profile medium close up of his wife's face, back to Timosh in profile sighting his rifle, to his wife in semi-profile speaking a word, to a close up of horse's hooves running, and finally to a high angle shot looking down at his wife's shadow cast onto the road (*Zvenigora,* 1:07:32 – 1:07:35). As the camera lingers on her shadow it moves as if her legs are giving out underneath her, her arms raise into the air, and she falls into the road, one arm collapsing into the frame, limp, while the rest of her body remains out of the picture (*Zvenigora,* 1:07:35 – 1:07:41). This sequence, utilizing quick cutting montage, poeticizes her death in highly dramatic fashion by displacing the act of killing from the screen.

Arsenal and *Earth*

Where *Zvenigora* eclectically combined many different avant-garde artistic trends in its use of stylistic devices *Arsenal* and *Earth* represent more determined applications of these aesthetics and devices. No longer wholly combining Pictorialism, Impressionism, and Constructivism, Dovzhenko separated the elements of these aesthetics into each subsequent film from the Ukraine Trilogy. *Arsenal* depicts the First World War, the suffering stemming from it, and the uprising of the workers at the Kiev Arsenal in 1918 in Constructivist style, while also showcasing Dovzhenko's interest in stylised figure movement, the manipulation of time, and the

poeticization of death. *Earth* depicts the modernization and collectivization drive taking place in the countryside in the late 1920s through the mid 1930s in Pictorialist style. It contains a drastic increase in the use of the monocle lens and continues Dovzhenko's poetic-lyrical depictions of nature, while utilizing overtonal montage editing instead of the fast-paced montage associated with Constructivism.

The Constructivist and Dovzhenkian stylistics in *Arsenal* are extant throughout the film in the montage of the Arsenal's machinery in the process of production during the First World War sequence at the beginning of the film, the departure of the train without its engineer, and in the execution sequence following the defeat of the uprising. The short montage during the war sequence depicts the turning of wheels, gears, and lathes along with rows of artillery shells and their measuring during production. This sequence follows in the Constructivist tradition of utilizing art to depict the processes of production, which is also used in Dziga Vertov's Constructivist classic *Man with a Movie Camera* to link together artistic production and industrial production. In *Arsenal* the role of this montage is less clear. It is placed between sequences that present the alienation and degradation of people in bleak war-affected landscapes, hinting at the role of military industry in perpetuating the suffering and violence of the war this sequence depicts.

The departure of the train showcases another aspect of Constructivist style in the use of cantered camera angles and the handheld camera. Timosh and his comrades returning from the front are held up by soldiers representing the Ukrainian People's Republic who demand they lay down their weapons. Defying their authority, Timosh and others open the train carts' doors to reveal machine gunners at the ready and order the train to depart, holding the engineer at gunpoint and then leaving him at the station. As the train departs the station a low angle medium

close up shot of a soldier with an accordion sitting in the top of a train cart is shown before cutting to a canter angle long shot of the train moving away along the tracks from the bottom right corner of the frame to the top left corner of the frame (*Arsenal,* 0:22:05). This then cuts to another canter angle, but not a medium shot, of the train moving towards the camera, but still from the bottom right of the frame to the top left (*Arsenal,* 0:22:23). This framing of the train's movement creates a dynamic impression of its power as it moves across the screen in a diagonal line, reminiscent of the double exposures showcasing industrial works in *Zvenigora*.

The start of the Uprising sequence provides an example of Dovzhenko's interest with manipulating time. As the workers of the Arsenal decide it is time to "start working," the sequence depicts their preparations to fight in juxtaposition to the anxiety of the bourgeoisie throughout the night (*Arsenal,* 0:56:31). Once the firing is set to begin a close up of a wheel slowly turning at the Arsenal is stopped, becoming a still image, while the subsequent medium shot of man at his desk is also a still image (*Arsenal,* 1:00:02 – 1:00:12). A short succession of shots follows where the man is shown both in still and moving images, with the moving images freezing in frame until a sequence of still images move from framing him in medium shot, medium close up, and extreme close up (*Arsenal,* 1:00:10 – 1:00:29). After this the fighting begins and many people evacuate Kiev. Once they are outside of the city the interior is depicted in three more still images of police frozen on the street. Whereas in *Zvenigora* the manipulation of time was utilized to accentuate the ritualistic nature of the folk ceremonies performed and the trans-historical narrative, here the still images comment on the anxiety of the bourgeoisie and the contestation of their order. Once they have evacuated the city and the Uprising is in action, the police enforcers of their order are frozen in place, depicting Kiev in a frozen contested-time as it waits between the end of the old order of capitalism and the new Bolshevik order of the future.

The last sequences from *Arsenal* to be analyzed, the destruction of the Free Ukraine armoured car and the Storming of the Arsenal sequence, contain examples of the poeticization of death and stylised figure movement. In the Free Ukraine sequence a participant in the uprising lays in the road feigning death. As the armoured car approaches he rises from the ground, tosses a grenade underneath it, which destroys the Free Ukraine, and is then captured. When he is faced with execution, he disobeys the executioner's commands. This conflict between faltering executioner and unwilling prisoner is composed of eye-level shot reverse shot cutting, and high angle long shots simultaneously depicting them both in the same space. It is intercut with a battle somewhere in Kiev, and so the drama of the attempted execution is implied to represent a particular episode that is reflective of the general conditions in the fight between nationalists and communists. Even though the communists may be losing the battle, their resolve is stronger than that of the nationalists, and this is overtly obvious in the inability of the nationalist to execute his prisoner looking him in the eyes. The communist prisoner walks toward his captor and takes the pistol from his stunned hands before turning it towards him. As he pulls the trigger, executing his captor, the act of killing is replaced by a shot of spent artillery shells on the ground emitting smoke before returning to a long shot of the communist standing alone, the nationalist dead on the ground, with smoke from the pistol wafting through the air (*Arsenal,* 1:17:46 – 1:18:50). Again, like in *Zvenigora*, the visual depiction of killing is displaced, poeticizing it.

The Storming of the Arsenal contains repetitive stylised movements, similar to the beheadings in the Varangian sequence, in the execution of the participants of the Uprising. A nationalist officer executes prisoners from the arsenal with his pistol one at a time, and as each execution cuts shot reverse shot from prisoner to executioner he slowly raises his pistol up from his side, firing, then lowers it back down to his side. After a series of executions take place a

montage of women's faces and shots of the arsenal's machinery standing still accompanied by intertitles asking, "Where is father?", "Where is the husband?", "Where is the son?", "Where is the metalworker?" and "Where is the smith?" precedes an uninterrupted shot of the officer raising, firing, and lowering his pistol repeatedly, echoing the movements of the Varangian and Old Man in *Zvenigora* (*Arsenal,* 1:23:49 - 1:24:39).

In *Earth* the opening of the film contains the elements of Pictorialist and Dovzhenkian style, represented by the use of a monocle lens, the poetic-lyrical depiction of nature, and overtonal montage. The interaction of overtonal montage with the shots of nature and people which utilize a monocle lens creates a poetic-lyrical passage that, like the Haydamaky sequence from *Zvenigora*, integrates man and nature into each other. Yet unlike *Zvenigora*, which comments on the value of nature as a treasure, this sequence from *Earth* represents the relationship between man and nature as one of a regenerative folk cycle akin to that described by Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World*, only without the grotesque (21). In another departure, or development, from *Zvenigora*, which used the monocle lens sparingly on account of Zavelev's objections the use of the monocle lens is drastically increased in *Earth*, which is likely the influence of the camera operator Demutskyi's history of involvement with Pictorialism (Liber, 87-88; Cavendish, 243-248).

The start of the sequence is a succession of four long takes of grass in the fields and hills being buffeted by wind, before cutting to a medium close up of a woman's head next to a sunflower (*Earth,* 0:01:09 – 0:01:59). This then cuts to a close up of a sunflower, two shots of apples still on the branch united by a dissolve, then two more shots of apples still growing on trees, and then a dissolve to a close up of a single apple shot with a monocle lens, introducing this lens to the sequence (*Earth,* 0:02:00 – 0:02:33). From this point onwards, the majority of the

shots in the sequence utilize the monocle lens, especially those whose subjects are people instead of nature. The character of Simon is introduced in the shot following the soft focus close up of the last apples, and he is framed in a medium close up lying down with a pile of apples next to him (*Earth,* 0:02:42). As he lays on the ground, Petro asks him if he is dying, to which he responds, "I'm dying, Petro." (*Earth,* 0:03:02). After an exchange between Simon, Petro, and Vasyl about Simon's death and hard-working life, Simon sits up, surrounded by apples and hay, and is given an apple to eat before his death. While he basks in the sunlight, whose rays are glowing and exacerbated by the qualities of the monocle lens, he holds the apple in both hands eating it in a childlike manner. This childlike quality is further emphasized by the shot reverse shot cutting that alternates between the medium shot of Simon eating his apple, looking off towards his left, a medium long shot of an infant playing with a pile of apples that lie next to him, and a medium close up of a young child, partially seen in the frames of the infant, eating an apple while looking forward and to his right (*Earth,* 0:07:22 – 0:08:19). The implication of this shot reverse shot is that while Simon eats his last apple before death, he is happily watching the beginning of the two children's, playing and eating, life cycle.

Throughout the whole sequence the use of the monocle lens imparts a glowing quality to the shots that melds together the light, people, and nature within them. This effect of the lens obliterates the boundaries between objects on screen by rendering them indistinct thanks to the extremely soft focus, creating "the concept of merging with surrounding reality" and "a sense of unity, harmony, completeness and connectedness." (Cavendish, 273). But not only does the lens unite all of the screen's subjects as one, but so does the overtonal montage. The shots that are juxtaposed next to each other contain elements of each other. The first shot with a human subject is of a beautiful young woman placed next to the beauty of a sunflower, only their heads visible,

drawing a line of equivalence between them. When Simon is introduced it is after the montage of apples and lying next to him on the ground is a pile of apples. The children who are juxtaposed to Simon's death are also shot next to and eating apples, while all throughout the sequence shots of the field are once again intercut. The life-death cycle implied by the shot reverse shot of Simon and the children where the young and the old exist together side by side, one leaving the world and the others growing into it, is united with the intercut shots of nature, the fields, sunflowers, and apple trees, to create an interconnected system akin to a folk-cycle of life. Altogether these devices work in concert to produce another instance of Dovzhenko's poetic-lyrical depiction of nature.

IVAN

By the year of *Ivan*'s release the Soviet film industry had entered more fully into the transition to socialist realism and partially because of this *Ivan* can be judged as both socialist realist and avant-garde. This is exemplified by Kenez's reading of *Ivan* as the avant-garde swan song of Dovzhenko and George Liber's construing of the film as being an incomplete example of the socialist realist aesthetic (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 104; Liber, 124-130). What these attempts to fit *Ivan* into either the earlier avant-garde or later socialist realist aesthetics lack is a reading of the film as an irreducible product of Soviet cinema's transition period, as neither avant-garde nor socialist realist but as a "transitional" film encompassing major elements of both aesthetics. Viewing the film in this manner allows one to see the employment of devices without prejudice toward classifying the film into these familiar styles while also bringing to light the continuities between Dovzhenko's avant-garde style, analyzed in *Zvenigora*, *Arsenal*, and *Earth*, and socialist realist filmmaking, to be analyzed in *Ivan* and *Aerograd*.

There are many minor examples in the area of camera framing which illustrate continuity between the Constructivist aesthetic, and stylised figure movement, of *Arsenal* and the aesthetic of *Ivan*. Some such examples are the tableaus of collective farmers, posed in stationary positions (calling to mind the postures held by the peasant women in the Ivan Kupalo sequence of *Zvenigora*), who watch the excess labourers from their village leave for the dam construction site. These villagers are all shot from low angles with elements of the figures in the frame producing diagonal, often intersecting, Constructivist compositions. The first tableau is of a man holding a Party flag pointed toward the ground, pole positioned diagonally across the frame with its tip stretching before him and end behind, with three men behind him, each standing in such a way that their varying heights create a second line in the background ranging from shortest on the right to highest on the left (*Ivan,* 11:09). This then cuts to a shot of two sousaphone players whose shoulders and heads contribute to another diagonally composed line through the screen, now lowest on the left and highest on the right (*Ivan,* 11:17). As the crowd of villagers march toward the camera in the next few shots the point of view eventually inverts so that they are walking away from the camera and another shot composed of intersecting lines arrives on screen. Occupying the bottom third of the frame is the horizon and clouds above it, each forming a horizontal line through the screen, and moving from the left side of the frame to nearly the right side is a series of poles, likely for telegraph (*Ivan,* 12:13). On the right they are closest to the camera and reach nearly the height of the upper horizontal line created by the top of the clouds while on the right, as they fade into the distance, the line of poles lowers to the level of the horizon intersecting both horizontal compositions. Following this are two shots in which the placement and posture of figures once again constructs diagonal lines across the screen. In the first seven peasant women stand so that they create a line from the bottom left corner of the

screen to the upper middle frame (*Ivan,* 12:40). The woman in the foreground rests a flag on her shoulder, which forms another diagonal line oriented in a similar manner across the screen, but in a nearly horizontal fashion, while in the background two wires cross the frame with their lowest point being on the right border of the frame, just above the flag, and highest point the top middle of the frame. The next shot is quite similar, four men stand shortest and furthest from the camera on the left and tallest and closest to the camera on the right, once again with wires in the background reaching from the right border halfway up the frame to the top border midway through the frame (*Ivan,* 12:46).

While these tableaus all illustrate Dovzhenko's continued predilection for stylised figure movement (or figure placement here) and use of the Constructivist aesthetic in *Arsenal,* Ivan's arrival at the site of the dam's construction showcases Dovzhenko's lasting interest in Impressionism. In *Zvenigora* and *Earth* Impressionist style is accomplished primarily through the use of the monocle lens, but this lens makes little to no appearances in *Ivan,* and so the chief example of Impressionist style is created in separate, although similar, fashion. After arriving at his lodgings near the dam, Ivan goes to a window to look out at the site of its construction (*Ivan,* 17:50). There he sees a mass of concrete pillars, protruding cranes, and criss-crossing wires all shrouded in heavily billowing steam and smoke (*Ivan,* 17:55). Like the monocle lens, which amplifies the glowing quality of light on photographed surfaces, the smoke and steam that permeates the frame and moves throughout the space of the dam diffuses the shafts of light that fall upon the construction site. This diffuse light (which recalls Andrei Moskvin's cinematography in *The New Babylon*) performs a similar effect as the monocle lens would on the image. The sharpness of the image is softened by it and the light itself becomes a subject of photography, even though the chromatic and spherical aberrations of the monocle lens are not

present. The accompanying montage, which cuts between shots of Ivan's figure lit by passing trains, buckets lowered by cranes, trains crossing the dam while billowing steam, and water rushing across the dam at immense speeds, is bookended by these Impressionist images of the site and Ivan hypnotically gazing upon it (*Ivan,* 17:46-20:23). This enclosure of the sequence between highly Impressionist compositions nearly mythologizes the space of the dam. It rises up, bathed in the glow of the sun and shrouded by clouds of steam and smoke, above the power of nature and the workings of humankind, acceding to the place of a technological Olympus produced by humanity.

Two more sequences of the film further exemplify *Ivan*'s similarities to Dovzhenko's avant-garde work in the area of montage. These are the opening shots of the Dnipro River and the death of a worker during the building of the dam on the Dnipro. The opening sequence stretches approximately 4 minutes long and features shot after shot of the Dnipro either statically or tracking by boat. This sequence can be split into four sections which work together to create a metaphor of the trans-historic passage of time, the disruption of a past harmony, and the coming modernization in which collective labour restores this harmony by making nature serve humanity's purposes. In the first the camera is largely static and focuses on the breakup of ice and its passage downstream with the accompaniment of an exalting orchestral soundtrack (*Ivan,* 0:01:46 – 0:03:15). The fourth minute of the film oversees the second section of the sequence where the Dnipro is now ice-free and accompanied by the traditional singing of peasants (*Ivan,* 0:03:16 – 0:05:14). The camera is no longer static, moving along the river, and the water is more placid. In it the reflection of the sky can be seen and the landscapes occupying the upper third of the frame take on a greater prominence in the shots. The final section, arriving in the film's sixth minute, focuses on the Dnipro's rapids. The camera is once again static, somewhat buffeted by

the force of the river, and the soundtrack shifts to a threatening orchestral piece, powerful and domineering (*Ivan,* 0:05:15 – 0:05:49).

These sections encompass Dovzhenko's metaphor of collective labour as the restorer of harmony. The placid traditional way of Ukrainian life, implicitly led by the peasants overheard singing in the soundtrack, is disrupted by the changing of seasons and the breakneck pace of the river, which are associated with the overturning of these peaceful ways of life by modernity's industrializing forces. The pre-historic Dnipro is frozen in place, but as the ice cracks and moves down river history progresses and the folk life and melodies of the peasants emerge alongside the calm waters of the river. Yet time no longer stands still, and as the folk life of the peasants fades into the past so does the placid Dnipro. History reaches the speed of the rapids. These powerful currents upset old forms of life, with their speed standing in for the chaos and pace of life of industrialization and modernity, but this chaos is not permanent. The threatening orchestral piece and the rapids are penetrated by shots of men sailing the river by boat, shirtless and glistening from hard work, who move and chant in unison to navigate the treacherous currents (*Ivan, 5*:34-6:45). As these men work collectively to overcome the Dnipro's danger the orchestral piece is transformed into a triumphant tune that accompanies their chanting, collective labour successfully harnesses the power of the Dnipro, and therefore so can it master history (*Ivan,* 5:50).

The focus on a trans-historical narrative in this opening sequence, the upturning of traditional life (or a harmony disrupted), is reminiscent of the earlier trans-historical narrative in *Zvenigora,* where characters exist throughout a plot that seemingly jumps back and forth between hundreds of years of Ukrainian history. It also serves as a prologue for the coming film, as a metaphor for the whole story: the construction of socialism will master the forces of nature

and restore the harmony of old forms of life. Instances like this in *Ivan* lead one to prejudice the film as avant-garde. The whole sequence has no intertitles or dialogue and much like in the montage of the Soviet avant-garde's silent films the viewer is forced to construct meaning through the intersubjective relationship between the shots juxtaposed, but this time along with the implications created by the soundtrack. This addition of sound as a component of montage distinguishes it from silent cinema, where the filmmaker, in the construction of meaning through montage, could not fully rely on the proper execution of the score in every cinema. The absence of intertitles or obvious meaning and reliance on sound as a component of montage also means that the interpretation of this sequence, being composed solely of shots of the river until men finally appear at its end, is unclear, and this was a point of criticism from reviewers (Liber, 126). Possible alternate interpretations of this sequence are then indicative of its avant-garde nature by its demand on the viewer to actively discern meaning, as well as its criticism being indicative of what is to come in Dovzhenko's next film, *Aerograd*.

The second of the earlier named instances of avant-garde montage within *Ivan* (yet certainly not the only other) is the death of a worker crushed during the construction of a dam on the Dnipro. As cranes swing about carrying excavated material from the site of the dam the orchestral soundtrack dominates and creates suspense through the sustained use of vibrato that accompanies the quick cuts of the crane performing the same movement repetitively (a movement that is directed by a single man, which parallels this sequence to the rowing men directed by a single person in the opening sequence). The bucket attached to the crane is dropped down two times, with the camera tilting to follow it, and on the third drop it hits part of the construction site eliciting the scream of a man (problematizing the overcoming of nature in contradistinction to the earlier sequence) (*Ivan,* 0:38:50 – 0:38:59). Immediately after the

scream, not even allowing it to finish, the film cuts to an extreme long shot of a train firing black smoke into the sky and the soundtrack cuts to complete silence (*Ivan,* 0:38:59 – 0:39:08). Ten seconds later it returns to the construction site, showing four workers carrying the dead man's body (*Ivan,* 0:39:09 – 0:39:31).

The construction of this sequence not only poeticizes the worker's death through its representation without mimetic realism, but it also utilizes non-realist sound editing (i.e. non-synchronised sound). Where socialist realism would demand the mimetic representation of the worker's death, potentially even romanticised or mythologized, *Ivan* once again utilises the principles of avant-garde montage. The death is portrayed poetically instead of materially, the shot of the train emitting black smoke and travelling away from the camera producing the idea of a life leaving this world. Dovzhenko's buttressing up of this shot against the prior dropping bucket again incorporates sound directly into its filmic montage, which was not possible in silent film. This is in accordance with Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and Grigori Alexandrov's "Statement on Sound", an article which argued that sound in film should be utilized not to create a greater sense of verisimilitude or mimesis, but that it should be used contrapuntally to the visual component of the montage. The mimetic use of sound would demand the accompaniment of the sound of a train along with the visual image, but Dovzhenko chooses complete silence, which creates an introspective and subdued attitude towards the death in place of a more crudely materialistic air the direct representation of his death would produce. In this sequence the incorporation of sound editing into the visual montage raises the use of avant-garde montage to a new level not possible in silent cinema, akin to the film's opening sequence, yet these developments in Dovzhenko's filmmaking do not mean that *Ivan* bears no similarities to the coming socialist realism.

The socialist realist characteristics of *Ivan* are most prevalent in the film's plot and genre, but also in its use of sound as part of the film's montage (assigning to its audial components not only an avant-garde stance of contrapuntalism but a socialist realist one as well). *Ivan* fits firmly within the genre of the construction film remarked upon by Richard Taylor and Ian Christie, a genre composed of such socialist realist films like *Counterplan* (1932) and *Komsomolsk* (1938) (*The Film Factory,* 15). These are film dramas dealing with the construction of new industrial works, cities, or other emblems of modernity that represent the efforts of the Soviet state to industrialize. Key to this genre, as it provides the drama aspect, is the master plot of socialist realism Katerina Clark outlines in *The Soviet Novel* (9-10). This master plot is the acquiring of a socialist consciousness by a protagonist thanks to the teaching of an older comrade, and the use of this new consciousness to overcome obstacles, which in the case of the construction drama would often be barriers to the project's completion.

In *Ivan* this scenario plays out near completely. The beginning of the film sees Ivan and his father as peasants living on a collective farm visited by a representative from the dam's construction project who seeks to recruit labourers from the countryside. Ivan and his father decide to join the detachment of labourers leaving the collective farm and soon find themselves in the new industrial world being built at the dam. Once Ivan is at work he tries his hardest to be the best possible worker, but even at his best he can't win a productivity competition, leading him to decide he must pursue an education to become a proper socialist and modern worker. During the scene where he decides to undertake this education, a conference of the dam's workers, an accident is discovered in the dam's construction which threatens the whole project's completion. The workers rush out to fix the dam, return to the conference, and then the film ends with Ivan attending school. This plot arc encapsulates the general structure of the socialist realist

construction drama. The protagonist acquires a socialist consciousness which they then use to overcome an obstacle presented to the completion (or over-completion) of the project. But even while this structure retains many similarities to socialist realism not all would consider it to be fully socialist realist. This is due to Ivan's nature as an unexceptional hero, or rather someone who is led than someone who chooses to lead, an important distinction made by Dovzhenko (Liber, 130).

The structure of the film's level of obedience to socialist realist strictures, Liber's objections notwithstanding, contrast with the audial component of the film, which both obeys avant-garde technique and socialist realist technique. This is evidenced by the manner in which the film not only produces examples of contrapuntal sound but also in *Ivan*'s "emphasis on public address" (Kaganovsky 21), a phenomenon referred to as "aperture" by Trudy Anderson (43). This use of public address, or aperture, was a way for the film to directly address the masses with the voice of Soviet power. This socialist realist employment of sound is seen throughout *Ivan*¸ and will also be seen to play a large role in the continuation of Dovzhenko's directorial style in *Aerograd*. The scene of the peasants' recruitment, the project director's phone call demanding increased scrutiny of the site's safety regulations, and the speeches delivered at the conference of workers all showcase socialist realist fondness for public address. *Ivan* articulates the ideology of Soviet modernization with this fondness, most potently in a Party official's claim after the repair of the dam that, "Today we have completed our labour manoeuvres. The winner of these manoeuvres turned out to be the one who was the best at handling equipment and who has his feet washed better and foot wraps wrapped properly. He, who was politically conscious and who had all the details of technical behaviour considered and joyfully realized, is the winner." (*Ivan,* 1:14:00-1:14:35).

These few examples from *Ivan* exemplify why the "transitional film" should not be easily categorized into either the avant-garde or socialist realist aesthetics, while also providing ample material for analyzing the development of socialist realism and the continuities between the two aesthetics. At the same time, they provide evidence for why the introduction of sound technology should not be considered as the sole catalyst for the introduction of socialist realist style in place of the avant-garde style present in silent cinema. This issue is explored at length in Lilya Kaganovsky's *The Voice of Technology*, since the transitional film combines sound technology, avant-garde stylistics, and socialist realist stylistics to create a wholly separate aesthetic. The simultaneously avant-garde and socialist realist use of sound implies that the public address common to socialist realist film may not be purely an invention of the practitioners of socialist realism, in the same way that the mythologization of revolutionary heroes in *Chapaev* (1934) was present in earlier avant-garde works like *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) or *Arsenal* (1929). In the realm of visual language one clearly sees the use of avant-garde montage throughout the film, analyzed here in the opening sequence of the Dnipro and the worker's death at the construction site. Yet this is also combined with the socialist realist plot structure of the construction drama. When the articulation and interaction of these varied components are analyzed together, without isolating them from each other, a highly diverse film emerges that does not represent solely the avant-garde or socialist realist aesthetic. This diversity may also function as a future road map for illuminating the previously ignored continuities between the aesthetics, especially in Dovzhenko's next film, *Aerograd*.

Aerograd

Where *Ivan* still allowed for uncertainty of meaning, seen in its opening sequence on the Dnipro, this uncertainty contributes to the easily interpretable employment of similar stylistics in

Aerograd. The opening sequence of *Aerograd*, while also a poetic-lyrical passage, is more easily identifiable as singing the glory of Soviet modernization, evinced by the song which plays over the shots of the airplanes and taiga. This quality of certainty also applies to the whole film. Where *Ivan* allowed for contradiction and nuance in its portrayal of Soviet reality, *Aerograd* is saturated with certainty, and this is demonstrative of socialist realist style. *Ivan* may depict reality as Dovzhenko saw it, *Aerograd* depicts reality as socialist realism demanded, but this does not mean devices indicative of his directorial style are completely absent from the film. The poetic-lyrical depiction of nature, stylised figure movement, monocle lens, and poeticization of death all make appearances in this film despite its obedience to socialist realist dictates, in fact appearing in reduced form due to the need to follow the aesthetic demands of socialist realism.

The opening sequence of *Aerograd* starts with an intertitle which states "Long live the city of Aerograd, which we, Bolsheviks, must build on the shore of the Great Ocean." (*Aerograd,* 0:01:46), before cutting to a shot from the side of an airplane flying through the clouds. As the subsequent shots continue to show this singular airplane among the clouds, two men sing in chorus, saying goodbye to their mothers and telling them not to wait for them, because the city of Aerograd calls them like the motherland (*Aerograd,* 0:02:20 - 0:02:44). This call is then identified not just as the call of the motherland, but that of the state, something remarked upon by Kaganovsky when she claims that throughout *Aerograd* sound technology is utilized as the "'voice of power'" (163). The two voices identify the planes flying above the clouds as bearing Soviet stars and their comrades as the ones building the "incredible city" of Aerograd (*Aerograd,* 0:02:44 – 0:03:09). Following the end of their song the screen depicts in rightward panning shots, which then become overhead shots taken from a plane, the forests, which cover the entirety of the rolling hills and mountains of the taiga (*Aerograd,* 0:03:36 – 0:04:37). These shots

of the forest then transition to the wide expanses of the lakes and Amur River, and finally the rough waters of the Japanese Sea, the camera dipping deep and rising high on the waves (*Aerograd,* 0:04:37 – 0:05:26). The final shots of this over five-minute sequence depict the dominance of Soviet naval craft on the Sea of Japan and Soviet aircraft in the sky above before the first narrative intertitle is introduced (*Aerograd,* 0:05:33 – 0:06:11).

The lyrics to the song at the beginning of this sequence mark the divide between certainty and uncertainty in *Aerograd* and *Ivan*. While Demutskyi's wide angle shots of the Dnipro accompanied by folk song create a poetic-lyrical image linking together the Ukrainian peasantry and the land, they do not attempt to construct a concrete interpretation of the sequence's significance. In *Aerograd* these similar poetic-lyrical shots of the taiga, the sky above it, and the surrounding rivers, lakes, and sea function in a strikingly similar manner (with both *Ivan* and *Aerograd* seemingly drawing heavy influence from the opening sequence of *Earth*). Yet in this instance the lyrics of the song instruct the viewers' interpretation, removing from it the de-automizing tendency of *Earth* and *Ivan,* to be replaced by the automizing tendency of socialist realism which effectively filters these earlier avant-garde stylistics through the socialist realist aesthetic (Groys, 44). The lyrics in the first few lines contain the poetic-lyrical content, speaking of the taiga's call being like the motherland, then in the last half of the song they contain the voice of the state hailing the power of the Soviet Union and warning of the threat from abroad crawling through the wind and fog that is present in the Far East and has been spotted by night sentries (*Aerograd,* 0:03:09 – 0:03:36).

These lyrics enclose and automize the interpretation of the rest of the sequence. As the camera moves from sky, to taiga, to rivers, to sea, and back to Soviet power over these entities, the music that accompanies it, as well as the dynamism of the shots themselves increases in

tension. The placid shots of the taiga and the calmness of the rivers are transformed by the energy contained in the waters of the Sea of Japan, identified by intertitle. These waters violently bounce the frame of the camera up and down as the waves pass underneath the boat it is mounted upon, and the music assumes a character of stress (*Aerograd,* 0:05:18 – 0:05:26). The sea is therefore linked to the enemies spotted by the night sentries, with the speed and tension in the music creating a triangular link between these earlier lyrics and the power of the water on screen. After this shot those of the Soviet aircraft and watercraft are introduced, both moving in formation, and the melody from the two male voices is reintroduced in orchestral fashion into the soundtrack (*Aerograd,* 0:05:33 – 0:06:11). This development transforms the tension of the music into a triumphant theme, intimating to the viewer the Soviet state's power over the dangers that may exist where Aerograd will be built while simultaneously commenting on the ability of the Soviets to harness the might of nature.

The stylised figure movement in *Aerograd* is present in three moments, that of Vasili Khudiakov's introduction, Stepan Glushak's oral defence of Vasili, and Vasili's execution by Stepan, but all of these instances bear similarity to the aperture at the film's end. In each of these moments the characters are shot in a frontal tableau framing them in a medium shot, each instance being separate shots from the action taking place within the diegesis yet having a bearing on the diegesis, while they look directly into the camera, as if they are directing their speech to the viewer. In the first case a dissolve cut separates the tableau of Vasili from the conversation he is having with Stepan so that he can once again answer "no" to whether or not he has seen the samurai Stepan is hunting (*Aerograd,* 0:16:20). The second tableau of Stepan and Vasili is connected by dissolve cut to interrupt an argument between Stepan and his comrades who suspect Vasili so that the two of them may speak in tandem "fifty years of our friendship

passed in the taiga like a single day" (*Aerograd,* 0:36:06). In the last tableau there is no dissolve cut that separates it from the surrounding shots. Stepan leads Vasili through the forest until they find a spot for his execution and when the frontal tableau of Stepan begins he is looking down. As he looks up to the camera, with shade from a tree covering a little more than half of his chest and indicating his uncertainty, he speaks "I'm killing a traitor and an enemy of the working people. My friend Vasili Petrovich Khudiakov, sixty years old. Be witnesses of my sorrow" as if he is trying to convince not only himself but the viewer of the necessity of his actions (*Aerograd,* 1:03:48 – 1:04:14).

This differs from Dovzhenko's use of stylised figure movement in his earlier films, where the ritualized or halted movements aid in the on-screen simulation of folk ceremonies, ancient history, *kolkhoz* ceremony, or executions. Here they hold a great degree of similarity with aperture, a device Trudy Anderson identifies as "a signal hallmark of socialist realist musicals" where the characters directly address the audience with the intention of extending filmic reality into material reality, instead of identifying the constructed nature of filmic reality (43-44). This is evinced by Stepan's need to absolve himself of the guilt he feels for killing his friend of fifty years by speaking directly to the viewer, but also by the similarity these frontal tableaus hold with the aperture at the end of the film. In this aperture, Stepan stands next to a Soviet flag on a cliff overlooking the ocean, surrounded by Soviet pilots and navy men, removing his hat to address both filmic reality and material reality. In a typical example of aperture, he thanks the military men about him and states that his dreams of the taiga have come true because this most beautiful place in the world is protected by the power of the Soviet state, embodied in these young men (*Aerograd,* 1:15:39 – 1:16:55). In the comparison of this typical use of aperture with

Dovzhenko's stylised figure movement throughout the film, the effects of filtering Dovzhenko's directorial style through the socialist realist aesthetic is again apparent.

The use of the monocle lens in *Aerograd* is significantly less than in *Earth*, a film dominated by its influence, but it still makes appearances throughout. The first use follows Vasili Khudiakov's introduction into the film, where an extreme long shot of Stepan standing in the forest is shot with the monocle lens as he yells in an echoing voice the story of how he gained the name of Tiger's Death (*Aerograd,* 0:16:25). The second is during the montage of the young boy from the Far East who is crossing through the taiga to become a pilot at Aerograd (*Aerograd,* 45:03). While he runs down a forest hill in one shot, moving from behind the camera to far in front of it, the surrounding trees are distorted by the monocle lens' spherical aberrations. The third instance is just prior to Stepan's execution of Vasili. As they both stand in frame, Vasili in foreground Stepan in background, the monocle lens distorts the surrounding foliage and felled tree trunk running beside them (*Aerograd,* 1:03:03). In the final use of the monocle lens in the film, Stepan carries the body of the escaped samurai out of the forest, distorting the trees another time, to put him into a plane (*Aerograd,* 1:09:06). In each of these instances the monocle lens is employed to impart a mystical effect onto the forest of the taiga around people who have lived there their whole lives, Stepan, Vasili, and the young boy, helping to construct a feeling of life and timelessness associated with the forest.

The poeticization of death occurs in *Aerograd* in a scene shot much like that in *Zvenigora*. Unlike *Arsenal* or *Ivan,* the moment of death is not poeticized through montage, where a new image displaces the moment of killing to connect it to war, as in *Arsenal,* or to modern technology, as in *Ivan,* but like *Zvenigora* the partial presence in the frame of the subject whose death is the focus is used. Vasili's death is poeticized when, after Stepan's short speech

into the camera, a medium shot of Vasili shows him yelling into the forest so that his voice's echoes abound. This medium shot then cuts to a close up of Stepan, rifle sighted on Vasili, and then back to a medium shot of Vasili, except in this medium shot only Vasili from the waist down is in frame, occupying the left third of the screen (*Aerograd,* 1:04:29 – 1:04:37). This shot continues as Stepan's rifle fires, echoing loudly like Vasili's voice, and Vasili falls to the ground, now wholly in frame, whispering "mama" as he dies (*Aerograd,* 1:04:34 – 1:04:46). This framing of Vasili's legs instead of his upper body displaces his death from the screen by removing the intimacy of the moment, while it also poeticizes it by accentuating the shame Stepan feels in killing his friend. The unwillingness of the camera to look Vasili in the eyes, like the Ukrainian nationalist in *Arsenal,* solidifies the shame felt throughout this sequence, while also linking together filmic reality and material reality by forcing the viewer to share Stepan's shame through the point of view adopted by the camera.

Conclusion

Throughout these five films the continuity of Dovzhenko's avant-garde directorial style, whose basis is extant in *Zvenigora'*s eclecticism, is made apparent in the ways that these devices are employed, redeveloped, and reemployed. The use of a monocle lens, montage editing, the poeticization of death, the use of superimposition, heavily stylised figure movement, and the manipulation of time by adjusting the frames per second all persist throughout his work in the late 1920s through the mid 1930s, providing evidence of a greater continuity between the Soviet avant-garde and socialist realism. Dovzhenko's personal history of involvement with political movements in the Russian Empire and emergent Soviet Union also inform his responses to the developing influence of the Soviet state on his filmmaking. The specific manner he employs these devices as reduced forms of his stylistics in his later transitional and socialist realist

filmmaking exist in part thanks to this influence. The existence of the transitional film as a work neither purely avant-garde nor socialist realist, distinct from each, allows one to see how the introduction of sound technology into Soviet cinema did not determine the larger abandonment of avant-garde style in itself. Kaganovsky, opposed to the positioning of sound as the death knell of the avant-garde, notes how the transition to sound allowed for an "innovative, experimental, and challenging" use of this new technology that reflects the complexity of the shift to sound and shift to socialist realism, but this line of argument can be expanded (4). Some of the films made in the transition to sound do not purely reflect complex developments, but rather form a whole new category of the transitional film, a hybrid model of avant-garde and socialist realism.

Dovzhenko's past as a Ukrainian left-nationalist is clearly present throughout *Zvenigora*, *Arsenal*, *Earth*, and *Ivan*. The poetic-lyrical sequences, like that of the apples in *Earth* or of the Dnipro in *Ivan*, are all related to the land of his birth, while the narratives in these films also all concern conflict between Bolshevik Ukrainians and Ukrainian nationalists, with the latter variously depicted as left and reactionary. The only film analyzed within this paper that does not draw on this part of his personal history is *Aerograd*. Yet like the other films it is still a type of revolutionary historical film, its subject matter dealing with the extension and maintenance of Soviet modernization in the Far East and the combatting of counter-revolutionary domestic forces and interfering foreign agents who threaten this process.[4] The lack of a Ukrainian-centric outlook in *Aerograd* can be interpreted as a move by Dovzhenko to not exacerbate his perceived status as an unreliable artist, and this conjecture is mirrored in the way his directorial style is communicated into this film (Liber, 122).

[4] In contemporary newspapers *Aerograd* was advertised as a defensive (*oboronnyi)* film (Granovskii). This is a type of military drama, but its semi-combination with the construction drama sub-genre, and depiction of the extension of the revolution to distant areas, fits it into the larger category of the revolutionary historical film.

This communication takes place in reduced form, or the filtering of his directorial style through the stylistics of socialist realism. In *Aerograd* Dovzhenko's stylised figure movement and manipulation of time, seen most heavily in *Zvenigora* but also present in *Arsenal* and his other films, becomes combined with the socialist realist device of aperture. This new device was part of socialist realism's tendency to turn film into the voice of Soviet power and to integrate filmic and material reality. The poeticization of death is reduced in Dovzhenko's socialist realist works, although still present. Whereas in *Arsenal* or *Earth* this poeticization is combined with overtonal montage that creates greater implicit meaning, the connection with war in *Arsenal* or the folk cycle in *Earth*, in *Aerograd* it is a melodramatic, or romantic device, a quality imparted by socialist realism's legacy of drawing on revolutionary romanticism (Gutkin, 38-39).

Montage editing is another device which is severely changed by the reduced form of stylistics. In *Zvenigora, Arsenal,* and *Earth* montage is directly related to implicit meaning as an overtonal montage, or montage intended to create implicit meaning and link together seemingly disparate phenomena. While in the transitional film *Ivan,* the signature avant-garde device is still present as an overtonal montage, seen throughout the production ballet just before the worker's death and in the poeticization of the worker's death, in *Aerograd* it does not produce implicit meaning. The opening sequence depicting the Far East performs a sort of montage that combines sound and image, but it is not able to function without the intertitles that interject throughout or the speechifying of the male voices who sing in chorus. The demand for certainty in socialist realism shifts montage into another automizing device where meaning is constructed on screen instead of by the perceptive capabilities of the viewer utilized by overtonal montage. Unfortunately, superimposition, like overtonal montage, is one of the devices that was unable to

survive the filtering process of reduced form. Appearing in the Haydamaky sequence of *Zvenigora* and throughout the other films, in *Aerograd* it makes no appearance.

These different stylistics associated with Dovzhenko's avant-garde films are thus transported into his socialist realist work. Where scholarship has always accepted some degree of continuity between the avant-garde and socialist realism, extant in Kenez's comment that "socialist realist' cinema to a great extent was founded on the achievements of the golden age" this scholarship has typically ignored continuity in cinematography, a stance represented by another position of Kenez's that socialist realism was a repudiation of avant-garde filmmaking aside from its assimilation of the avant-garde's heroes (*Cinema and Soviet* Society, 65). Yet the devices noted throughout each of the Dovzhenko films analyzed here show that even in cinematography there is a significant degree of continuity, continuity that represents a synthesizing of Dovzhenko's avant-garde style with the socialist realist aesthetic.

4

CONCLUSION

"The proposition according to which 'an alienated reflection of self-alienation, is not self-consciousness, but alienated self-consciousness' implies its extrapolation: 'a true reflection of self-alienation, however true, is not the self-consciousness of a non-alienated being, but true self-consciousness of a being in alienation.'"

István Mészáros, 182.

"Freud's theory is a 'projection' of certain objective relations of the external world into the world of the psyche. What finds expression there is, in the very first instance, the extremely complex *social interrelationship between doctor and patient.*"

Valentin Voloshinov, 40-41.

These two quotes encapsulate the general approach this thesis has taken toward the analysis of the relationship between the Soviet avant-garde cinema and socialist realist cinema. In both Istvan Mészáros' exploration of Marx's theory of alienation and Valentin Voloshinov's critique of Freudian psychoanalysis a similar observation is made: that in coming to expression a phenomenon cannot exist outside of the relationships it is embedded within, and therefore it is mediated through and by these relationships. In the Soviet cinema of the transition taking place from the late 1920s into the early-mid 1930s these relationships are the confluence between the

programmatic goals of the avant-garde, the directorial stylistics of filmmakers and their collaborators, and the ever-developing and changing politico-cultural demands of the Soviet state as determined by the Party, among many other unnamed forces at work. The result for directors like Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko is an avant-gardism that "cannot exist outside" socialist realism, a "projection" of avant-gardism through the lens of the stylistic dictates determined at the 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers onto the silver-screen of socialist realism. It is a mediation and a development of the avant-garde films of the 1920s into the new Soviet aesthetic of socialist realism, simultaneously preserving and negating certain elements of the earlier aesthetic: sublating the avant-garde.

This filtration of Soviet avant-garde directors' persistent stylistic and thematic concerns through the dictates of the socialist realist aesthetic bears some semblance to the Hays Code era Hollywood, where directors contended with the prohibitions and prescriptions regarding the portrayal of crime, sex, vulgarity, profanity, religion, national feelings, and so-called "repellant subjects" (Doherty, 361-364). Despite the restrictions in both national film cultures, directors were able to continue to produce films characteristic of their directorial styles, even if the recognisability of these characteristics became gradually more or less readily observable. In Western Europe and North America, this situation resulted in the formulation of the auteur theory, identifying a group of directors who were masters of the cinema and communicated their visions regardless of industry restrictions. Yet the attitude toward the work of Soviet directors who straddled the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics is vastly different. Their socialist realist films are considered either lesser, completely compromised, or thorough protestations, and these reified attitudes inform the approach taken in their interpretation and analyzation.

Casting off these reified attitudes and attempting to look anew at the transition from avant-garde to socialist realism in the work of Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, and Oleksandr Dovzhenko has been the primary concern of this thesis. The resultant observations have led to the articulation of a theory based on the idea of conceptual development rather than what I have termed the conceptual break favoured by earlier scholars. Instead of socialist realist cinema only assimilating the avant-garde's heroes, as Kenez puts it, or representing a traditionalist reaction to modernity, as Dobrenko claims, here it develops upon elements found in Soviet avant-garde filmmaking while simultaneously dispensing with others (*Cinema and Soviet Society*, 65; 196).

The programmatic, narrative, and ideological continuities between the aesthetics is extant in the Kozintsev and Trauberg, the so-called FEKS directors', films *The New Babylon*, *Alone*, and *The Youth of Maxim*. Within these works the pre-figuration of the socialist *bildungsroman* plot, the teacher-student relationship where extra-class elements disseminate revolutionary consciousness onto proletarians, may be seen in the relationships between Louise and the Journalist, in *The New Babylon*; and the state, Elena, and the peasants of the Altai, in *Alone*; before it becomes fully embodied in their socialist realist blockbuster *The Youth of Maxim*. The complicated and evolving Leninist nexus between social being and the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic which interpellates the films' characters is critical to the functioning of these films' narratives and provides an example of the ideological continuity between the aesthetics. In each film, the hero's accession to their role is made possible by the combination of the teacher-student relationship with the Leninist determination of revolutionary potential, or the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, via social being. They exist within a world of concretised ideology that prescribes the field of possible actions on the basis of social being.

The proletarian heroes Louise and Maxim are only capable of becoming revolutionaries thanks to their proletarian status, which in the Leninist ideological schema orients them spontaneously toward trade unionism and when politically organised toward socialist revolution, whereas the counter-revolutionary Jean and the ill-fated Dmitri are bound to their fates as members of the peasantry, class elements who organically develop a petit-bourgeois ideological consciousness.

In place of dispensing with the Leninist interpellation of characters seen in Kozintsev and Trauberg's avant-garde work, under socialist realism this interpellation was developed further. Where the characters of *The New Babylon* and *Alone* are interpellated via their immediate social being, Louise as a wage worker and Elena a member of the socialist intelligentsia, in *The Youth of Maxim* this interpellation occurs on the basis of social origin. Maxim is interpellated into his role as a revolutionary worker, and eventual Bolshevik, because of his proletarian origins, indicated by his street smart nature and *kosovorotka*, while Dmitri is interpellated as a peasant, even though he works in the same factory as Maxim, because of his Ukrainian origins and his drunkenness. The Leninist ideological schema that prescribes their actions undergoes a mutation in the transition from avant-garde to socialist realist aesthetics. Class, that once fluid category, becomes solidified in socialist realism, contributing to an even more strict interpellation of the filmic world.

Although the FEKS directors did not discard the narrative and ideological devices which lay at the core of their films when transitioning into socialist realism, they did discard elements of their overtonal ideological stylistics, or the elements of editing, *mise en scène*, and cinematography which contribute to the ideological impression of events within the film. This shift, seen in the move from montage, or discontinuity editing, to continuity editing, is made apparent in the analysis of three scenes from the films analysed: the montage of washerwomen

and monuments in *The New Babylon*, the costuming of characters in the Altai in *Alone*, and the eye-line match and camera framing of the strike in *The Youth of Maxim*. In the transition to socialist realism over-tonal ideological impressions began to be created through elements of the film's diegesis rather than through the juxtapositional powers of montage, confirming some of the contributions of prior scholarship regarding the dissimilarity of the avant-garde and socialist realist aesthetics.

These specifically cinematic elements, editing and cinematography, provided the focal point in the chapter on Dovzhenko as a means to fully articulate the theory of conceptual development, because to leave out those elements which make the cinema itself possible would be to engage in what is tantamount to the literary criticism of the cinema. Identifying Dovzhenko's directorial stylistics in the use of the monocle lens, montage editing, the poeticization (or displacement) of death, the use of superimposition, heavily stylised figure movement, and the manipulation of time by adjusting the number of frames per second, it is possible to show the continuity in visual style in his filmography between 1928-35 that I have termed the reduced form of stylistics. *Zvenigora*, as his first avant-garde film and that which contains all the elements of his style, provides the template of his directorial voice, while *Arsenal* and *Earth* represent determined applications of these stylistics in collaboration with the camera operator Danylo Demutskyi. In these two films the eclectic combination of Pictorialism, Impressionism, Constructivism, and the pre-Revolutionary cinema of *Zvenigora* was discarded. In *Arsenal* Constructivism became the concentrated style, while in *Earth* Dovzhenko utilised Pictorialism.

The transitional film *Ivan* exhibits some of the initial mediations of his avant-garde style through what would become socialist realism. The introduction of sound in *Ivan* did not lead

directly to the socialist realist aesthetic, but an unstable mixture of avant-gardism and socialist realism. Montage, once practiced as the juxtaposition of independent shots to create overtonal impressions, is now practiced utilising sound and images and stylised figure movement becomes aperture, a form of public address that also relies on the new audial component of the cinema. While in *Aerograd*, Dovzhenko's first completely socialist realist work, the reduced form of stylistics is exhibited *en totale*. The Constructivist montage, the production ballet on the dam, has disappeared and in its place automized montage whose sound is saturated with certainty, extant in the lyrics of the opening sequence, replaces it. Yet Dovzhenko's poetic-lyrical depiction of nature, stylised figure movement, monocle lens, and poeticization of death all appear in *Aerograd*, mediated and reduced by the dictates of socialist realism. Stylised figure movement is again aperture, like in *Ivan*, the monocle lens is restricted to its application in photographing the taiga forest, enhancing its beauty and timeless nature, and the poeticization of death is accomplished not through overtonal montage, but through camera framing of the *mise en scène*.

This analysis of the visual continuities through the reduced form of stylistics completes the articulation of the theory of conceptual development between the Soviet avant-garde and socialist realist cinema. The ideological and narrative structures of the avant-garde were preserved and developed further by socialist realism, resulting in a more concretised application of the Leninist ideological schema, while the visual stylistics were forced to take on a life underground, mediated through the dictates of socialist realism and exhibited less openly. Soviet filmmakers therefore practiced filmmaking as they desired to the best of their ability within the socialist realist aesthetic, an observation in agreement with Maria Belodubrovskaya's *Not According to Plan*. While some avant-garde directors were more able to do this than others,

Kozintsev and Trauberg providing successful examples, this evaluation of the relationship between the two aesthetics is preferable to those reified attitudes that deter inquiry into the real interactions of avant-gardism and socialist realism.

The purpose of reframing the relationship between the avant-garde and socialist realism as a conceptual development is to de-mystify these reified attitudes surrounding it, and to legitimise the study of socialist realist cinema as cinema, and not purely as political propaganda. This is not intended as a value judgement on either aesthetic, claiming artistic equivalency, but a necessary re-opening of the field so that the links between pre-1934 and post-1953 Soviet cinema may be more accurately understood and investigated. While this thesis has inquired into the transition between these aesthetics and articulated the course of its developments through the analysis of era-films, more inquiry into these relationships is needed. The films beyond the year 1935, which I have not included in this study, provide ample material to continue developing a theory of continuities. The further mutation of socialist realism during World War II and the emergence of the High Stalinist aesthetic are opened up by the re-evaluation of the period of transition, encapsulated in the films analysed in this thesis released between the years 1928 and 1935.

In particular, an investigation into the continuities between films by directors who worked in the 1920s and directors who began their work in the 1930s is sorely needed, and there are many avenues that can be taken. The quasi-expressionist stylistics shared by films like Lev Kuleshov's *By The Law* (1926) and Ivan Pyryev's *The Party Card* (1926) represent one of these trajectories, and even the relationship of thoroughly socialist realist filmmakers to their post-1953 work can be re-investigated in this new light. Mikhail Romm, whose first film *Pyshka* (1934) was released during socialist realism's inaugural year, is one such director. The theory of

conceptual development may provide new insights into how this director who worked the majority of his career under the strictest period of the socialist realist aesthetic was able to produce a film like the anti-war melodrama *Nine Days in One Year* (1962) and train a future director like Andrei Tarkovsky.

Perhaps the reified attitudes that have cast socialist realist cinema as a reaction to the avant-garde intent on destroying all the characteristics which made up its filmic aesthetic is a result of preceding scholarship emphasizing difference, or perhaps it is due to the vitriol with which Soviet critics of the era attacked the avant-garde, or even the emphasis on state repression Western European and North American repertory cinemas place on Soviet filmmakers when advertising and screening their work. Any and all of these voices may have contributed, but what has become clear after this mode of inquiry it is that socialist realist cinema must be excavated from the tomb of history and investigated anew.

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