MODERNISM, SOCIALIST REALISM, AND IDENTITY IN THE EARLY FILM MUSIC OF DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH, 1929-1932

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By
Joan M. Titus, M.A.

****

The Ohio State University
2006

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Margarita Mazo, Adviser
Assistant Professor Danielle Fosler-Lussier
Professor J. Ronald Green

Approved by

Adviser
Graduate Program in Music
ABSTRACT

Since the publication of *Testimony* (1979), a book that portrayed the thoroughly politicized Russian composer Dmitry Shostakovich (1906–1975) as a closet dissident, interpretations of his political status have become intertwined with interpretations of his music. Shostakovich has been labeled a “high-art” symphonist, a “light” music composer, a dissident, and a Communist. His eclecticism and the changing political environment in which he lived are in part responsible for these controversial interpretations of his music and character. Recent scholars have challenged the assumed historical narrative that perpetuates these politicized interpretations: the narrative that describes modernist and experimental composers of the 1920s as tragically having been converted to conservative and propagandistic socialist realist trend of the 1930s. My work seeks to continue the recent reevaluation of the modernist/socialist realist narrative, focusing on Shostakovich’s early film music. By analyzing of his early film scores and discussing their reception, I reveal the aesthetic and political motivations for his negotiation of modernism and socialist realism. In so doing, I redefine Shostakovich as a more nuanced and heterogeneous composer of both film and art music.

My dissertation examines the process of Shostakovich’s renegotiation of his musical identity in his first four film scores as he made the so-called transition from the modernist silent cinema of the 1920s to the socialist realist sound cinema of the 1930s. The analyses of
each film score, including *The New Babylon* (1928–1929), *Alone* (1929–1931), *The Golden Mountains* (1931) and *The Counterplan* (1932) are informed by approaches from film theory and musicology and contextualized through the use of Russian archival materials about the production and reception of film music. Through a detailed examination of narrative device, musical and semantic codes, reception, and a thorough discussion of the concepts of modernism and socialist realism outlined in earlier chapters, my analyses show how the variety of modernist and socialist realist traits allowed for diverse categorizations of these films. Nuanced and contextualized analyses of his early film music contribute to the current debates about the politics of “reading” messages in Shostakovich’s instrumental music, challenging efforts to place his music into simplistic categories.
Dedicated to Kiko and Tom
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation would not have come into being without the help of many institutions and individuals across the world who have provided me with generous and thoughtful support for the past three years. My deepest and most sincere thanks to Irina Shostakovich, Ol’ga Dombrovskaya, and Ol’ga Digonskaya at the Shostakovich Apartment Archive in Moscow for allowing me access to manuscripts, videos, and permission to work with the Shostakovich fond in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI) and Glinka Museum of Musical Culture archives in Moscow. My heartfelt thanks also to Irina Medvedeva and her staff at the Glinka Museum for their kind assistance and support. I am grateful to Vladimir Dmitriev and Irina Popova at the State Film Archive (Gosfil’mofond) in Belye Stolbye for access to their archives and willingness to help. I also thank the staff at RGALI, the State Institute of Film in Moscow, the Russian Institute of Art History in St. Petersburg (RIII), and the library staff at Lenfil’m Studios in St. Petersburg for kind assistance and access to their libraries and bibliography rooms. My thanks also go to Pavel Shulgin and Aleksandr Eremeev at Heritage Institute in Moscow for their generous and thoughtful support.

The research and writing of this dissertation has been well supported by the Ohio State University. I thank the Ohio State Graduate School for the Alumni Grant for Research and the Office of International Affairs for an International Travel and
Dissertation Research Grant, both used for my research trip to Russia. I also thank the Ohio State Graduate School for the award of the Presidential Fellowship, which has provided generous support for the writing of my dissertation. Lastly, I thank the Ohio State Slavic Center for numerous Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, which allowed me the opportunity to study Russian language and culture in the United States and in Russia.

I would also like to thank Manashir Yakubov for his always interesting discussions and his help before and during my research trip in Russia. I also thank Vladimir Padunov and Naum Kleiman for their advice, insights, and suggestions for my research.

My thanks also go to Angela Brintlinger for our ever-useful translation sessions. I also thank Ol’ga Prokopenko and Alexander Burry for their assistance with translations in Chapter Four.

Throughout this process, I have been very lucky to have a remarkably supportive dissertation committee. I sincerely thank my advisor Margarita Mazo, who has been patient and incredibly supportive of my ideas and my work. I also warmly thank Danielle Fosler-Lussier, who has been a critical and supportive listener and editor from the very beginning of this process. I also sincerely thank Ron Green for his help as an editor and his consistently kind support with all things filmic.
Lastly, I lovingly thank my family and friends who have been supportive throughout this entire process. I particularly thank Tom Beardslee for his patience and loving support.
VITA

June 21, 1975………………………………...Born - Tucson, Arizona

1998……………………………………….B.A. Music, University of Arizona

2002……………………………………….M.A. Musicology, The Ohio State University

1998-2006………………………………...Graduate Teaching and Research Associate, 
The Ohio State University

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major field: Music
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract...........................................................................................................................................ii
Dedication........................................................................................................................................iv
Acknowledgments..........................................................................................................................v
Vita....................................................................................................................................................viii
List of Figures..................................................................................................................................xiii
List of Tables...................................................................................................................................xxii
Transliteration and Translation......................................................................................................xxiii

## Chapters

1. **Modernism and Socialist Realism**.........................................................................................11
   - Modernism.................................................................................................................................13
   - Russian/Soviet Culture of the 1920s
     - Music......................................................................................................................................19
     - Asaf’yev and Modernism.........................................................................................................25
     - Other Arts...............................................................................................................................34
   - Modernism and Socialist Realism............................................................................................43
   - Shostakovich and Modernism....................................................................................................45
   - Socialist Realism and its Narratives.........................................................................................53
     - Boris Groys’s *Total Art of Stalinism*..................................................................................55
     - Marina Frolova-Walker’s “From Modernism to Socialist Realism in Four Years: Myaskovsky and Asafyev”..........................................................................................60
     - “Stalin and the Art of Boredom”............................................................................................63
     - Mikhail Epstein’s *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture*.........................................................................................65
   - Shostakovich between Modernism and Socialist Realism.....................................................70

2. **Shostakovich, Film Culture, and Film Music Studies**.........................................................85
   - Introduction..............................................................................................................................85
   - A Brief History of Early Russian Film (1896 – 1930)...............................................................88
Film Figures, Issues, and Techniques of the 1920s and 1930s –
  Lev Kuleshov and Early Montage.................................................94
  Vsevolod Pudovkin and “Poetic” Montage.....................................97
  Sergey Eisenstein........................................................................99
  FEKS (The Factory of the Eccentric Actor)....................................104
Music in the “Silent” Era (1896-1930s)........................................110
  Composed Scores and the Beginnings of Sound............................116
Shostakovich and Film Culture......................................................122
Film Music Studies: A Brief Overview.........................................130
  Semiotic-Structuralist and Musicological Approaches –Claudia
  Gorbman’s Unheard Melodies (1987)............................................135
  David Neumeyer, James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and K.J. Donnelly......140
  Post-Structuralist, Psychoanalytic, and Cognitive Approaches –
  Anahid Kassabian’s Hearing Film (2001).......................................145
  Kathryn Kalinak’s Settling the Score (1992)...................................148
  Other Cognitive Approaches.....................................................150
  Reception Studies.........................................................................153
  Approach for Shostakovich Case Studies......................................154

3. The End of a Silent Era: The New Babylon (1929)............................157

  History of the Production..........................................................159
  Film Resources...........................................................................164
  Plot Summary...............................................................................166
  Analysis of the Film...................................................................169
  The Music to the Film –
    Music Production History........................................................178
    Shostakovich’s Musical Process.................................................184
    Analysis of the Music...............................................................190
    Form, Unity, and Continuity –
      Form.....................................................................................192
      Unity and Continuity............................................................197
      Leitmotifs...............................................................................198
      Perceptibility and Imperceptibility.........................................202
      Narrative Cueing, Agency, Coding, and Identifications............206
  Reception of the Film...................................................................216
  Reception of the Film’s Music......................................................223
  Conclusions................................................................................229
4. Beginnings in Russian Sound Film: *Alone* (1929–1931) ........................................... 233

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 233
Synopsis of *Alone* ........................................................................................................ 235
Interpretation and Reception of *Alone* –
  *Alone* as a Transitional Film ............................................................................. 237
  The Polemics of *Alone* ......................................................................................... 240
Sound, Music, and *Alone* –
  Sound and Image .................................................................................................... 242
  Sources ...................................................................................................................... 247
  The Music ................................................................................................................. 250
  Form and Unity ....................................................................................................... 250
Narrative Device and Cueing –
  Recurring and Non-Recurring Motifs ................................................................. 252
  Motifs for the Altai ................................................................................................. 259
  Non-Composed Sounds and Borrowed Music .................................................... 266
Reception of the Music of *Alone* ............................................................................. 275
Conclusions ............................................................................................................... 323

5. At the Threshold of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic, I:
  *The Golden Mountains* (1931) .............................................................................. 285

Introduction to *The Golden Mountains* and *The Counterplan* ....................... 285
Historical Background of *The Golden Mountains* and *The Counterplan* ...... 286
*The Golden Mountains* –
  Production .............................................................................................................. 288
  Plot Synopsis .......................................................................................................... 289
  Film Reception and Analysis ................................................................................. 293
Music to the Film –
  Sources .................................................................................................................... 298
  Production and Process .......................................................................................... 299
  Music Analysis ....................................................................................................... 302
  The Leitmotivic System and the Music/Image Relationship ................................ 303
  Unity, Fragmentation, and the “Symphonic” ....................................................... 314
  Counterpoint, Parallelism, and Diegetic/Non-Diegetic Movement ................... 318
  Borrowing and Sound Effects .............................................................................. 321
Music Reception ......................................................................................................... 326
Conclusions ............................................................................................................... 330
6. At the Threshold of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic, II:

*The Counterplan* (1932)…………………………………………………………………………332

*The Counterplan* – History and Production……………………………………………332

Plot Synopsis…………………………………………………………………………………336

Film Reception and Analysis………………………………………………………………341

Music to the Film –
  Production and Process……………………………………………………………………347
  Sound Technology………………………………………………………………………………350
  Sources…………………………………………………………………………………………351
  Music Analysis…………………………………………………………………………………352
  Leitmotif, Meaning, Form, and Unity……………………………………………………353
  Borrowed Music………………………………………………………………………………363
  Underscoring, Form, and Unity……………………………………………………………366

Music Reception………………………………………………………………………………372

Conclusions……………………………………………………………………………………377

Conclusions……………………………………………………………………………………382

Appendices

Appendix A  Examples from Symphony No.1 and Symphony No.2………………390
Appendix B  Examples from Symphony No.3…………………………………………395
Appendix C  Diagram for Part One of *The New Babylon*…………………………400
Appendix D  Appearance of the *Marseillaise* throughout the Score……………..403
Appendix E  Appearances of *Ça Ira* and the *Carmagnole* throughout the Score……410
Appendix F  Table of Motifs in *Alone*…………………………………………………….417
Appendix G  Appearances of Leitmotifs, Reminiscence Motifs, and Motifs in *Alone*…………………………………………………………………………………………418
Appendix H  Examples from *The Golden Mountains*……………………………………431
Appendix I  Table of Music/Film Interaction in *The Golden Mountains*…………435
Appendix J  Examples from *The Counterplan*…………………………………………437

Bibliography………………………………………………………………………………………449
LIST OF FIGURES

Appendix A – Examples from Symphony No.1 and Symphony No.2……………….390

Figure 1  Fragments from the Third movement (measure 1-3, oboes) and Finale (measures 236-241, violoncello) show the reference to the third movement in the Finale. Although not an exact quote, the contour is similar, with a change in the direction the melody. From Yakubov, ed., Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy tom 1, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10.” [The New Collected Works, Symphony No. 1, Op.10] (Moscow: DSCH, 2005), 69 and 119……………….390

Figure 2 (a) The fanfare motive returns at measure 224, (b) the fragment from the introduction of the third movement at measure 249, and (c) a fragment of the second theme of the Finale at 256. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10.” 118 (measures 224-228), 120 (measures 256-258), and 123 (measures 247-249)……………………………391

Figure 3  The beginning of the coda in the finale (measures 259-263), continues to develop the chromatic run developed from the theme 2 fragment (measures 259-260), eliding into the fragment of the introductory theme from the third movement (261-262). From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” 124……………………………………392

Figure 4  At measure 273, the coda shifts rhythm. This rhythm is reminiscent of the fragment of theme 2 of the finale, as the chromatic movement upward is reminiscent of the fanfare theme. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” 127 (measures 273-278)………………….393

Appendix B – Examples from Symphony No.3……………………………………395


Figure 7  (a) Theme 2, in the trumpet, measures 41-44. (b) The opening measure of his theme returns transformed in measure 497. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” 9 (measures 39-44) and 75 (measures 495-501)………………………………………………………………396

Figure 8  An example of the surface ornamentation, i.e., grace notes. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” (measures 288-295), 60……………………………………………………………397

Figure 9  A variation of theme two. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch.20,” (measures 190-196), 37……………………………………………………………398

Figure 10  Beginning of the tonal climax (measure 655). From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” (measures 650-663), 113………399

Appendix C – Diagram for Part One of The New Babylon………………………………………400

Figure 11  Diagram for Part One of The New Babylon………………………………………400

Appendix D – The Appearance of the Marseillaise throughout the Score………………403

Figure 12  “La Marseillaise Anticléricale” (1881) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La IIe République de 1871 à 1918, Volume 8 (Gallimard, 1961), 59……………403
In Part Three, a quotation from the *Marseillaise* found, measures 159-162 from Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitri Shostakovich, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy tom 122, “Novyi Vavilon,” Muzïka k nemomu kinofilm’mu, op.18* [The New Collected Works, *The New Babylon, Music to the Silent Film, Op.18*] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 209. The excerpt and variation of the *Marseillaise* continues until measure 197, with the dotted-note figure becoming material for the subsequent variation.

In Part Four, a brief allusion to the *Marseillaise* in measures 36-37 in the strings, as the soldiers drag the cannons (as indicated in the score), referencing war. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 224 (measures 35-3)…………………………………..404

In Part Five, a full, tonal statement of the *Marseillaise* begins at measures 261ff. as shown here. This statement continues until 286 and then is layered over a quotation of Offenbach’s Cancan. A fragment of the *Marseillaise* returns again at measures 317-321, with a change in scene. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 343 (measures 261-263)………………………………………………………405

Continuation of *Marseillaise* quotation from Part Five. At this point, the *Marseillaise* is layered over a statement of Offenbach’s Cancan. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 349 (measures 286-289)………406

In Part Six, a brief allusion to the *Marseillaise* in the winds beginning in measure 148 in augmentation, which continues until around measure 182. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 391 (measures 148-152)……………………………………………………………………...…407

In Part Six, the layering of the *Marseillaise* (in the horns and trombone) and the *Carmagnole* (in the trumpets) in measures 215-217. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 399 (measures 214-217)……………………………………………………………………...408

In Part Seven, the *Marseillaise* appears in the winds with support in the strings and brass in measure 150 and continues until measure 165, and eventually blends into the orchestral fabric through subtle variation. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 488 (measures 150-152)…………………………………………………………………….409
Appendix E – Appearances of Ça Ira and the Carmagnole throughout the Score

Figure 20 “Ça Ira” (1790) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, *Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La Révolution, Volume 4* (Gallimard, 1957), 79.

Figure 21 In Part Four, beginning in measure 114, Ça Ira appears in the clarinet to signal a temporary truce between the workers and the soldiers. This allusion continues until measure 118, after which it becomes material for variation. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobranie Sochineniy volume 122, “Novyi Vavilon ,” Muzïka k nennonu kinofilm'mu, op.18* [The New Collected Works, The New Babylon, Music to the Silent Film, Op.18] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 234 (measures 114-117).

Figure 22 “La Carmagnole” (1899) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, *Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La Révolution, Volume 4* (Gallimard, 1957), 100-101.

Figure 23 In Part Four, an allusion to the Carmagnole begins in measure 272, continuing in the horns and brass through measure 288, after which fragments of the tune are developed. This allusion appears just as the operetta fails (noted in the score as “Shame! The operetta has flunked.”) and just before the bourgeoisie head to Versailles (noted in the score as, “To the Town Hall!”). From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 267 (measures 272-275).

Figure 24 In Part Five, another allusion to the Carmagnole begins in measure 77 in the strings and continues until measure 93. From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 308 (measures 77-79).

Figure 25 In Part Six, the Carmagnole appears just after the Communards received the news that the army had broken through the barricade (measure 59ff). From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 379 (measures 59-66).

Figure 26 Part Six, the layering of the Marseillaise (in the horns and trombone) and the Carmagnole (in the trumpets) in measures 215-217. From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 399 (measures 214-217).
In Part Eight, two bars after the score indication, “We will meet again,” uttered by Louise, a full statement of Shostakovich’s version of the 
*Carmagnole* appears in measure 142 and continues until the end of 
the manuscript (measure 157), which also passes by the score 
indication, “Vive la commune!” From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 
526 (measures 141-144)………………………………………………...416

Appendix F – Table of Motifs in *Alone*……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...417

Figure 28 Table of Motifs in *Alone* ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...417

Appendix G – Appearances of Leitmotifs, Reminiscence Motifs, and Motifs 
in *Alone*…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………418

Figure 29 The opening of Number 6, the “How good life will be” episode. The 
overall form of the section is: *Instrumental (Intro-A-A-B-Intro) – Song 
(C-C-D-D′-D) – Instrumental coda (E-E-F)*, of which this page shows 
the beginning of the “A” section. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., 
*Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy* [The New 
Collected Works], *tom 123, “Muzika k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” [Dmitry 
Shostakovich: New Collected Works, Volume 123, Music to the Film 
*Alone, Op.26*] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 28 (measures 7-18)……..418

Figure 30 From Number 6, the beginning of the song “How good life will be” 
(section C). From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 35 (measures 89-100)………………………………………………………………………………………………… 419

Figure 31 From Number 6, the beginning of the instrumental coda (section E). 
From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 45 (measures 185-193)…………………..420

Figure 32 The beginning of Number 14, an exact repetition of the song part of 
Number 6. From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 70 (measures 1-13)……………….;421

Figure 33 Number 15, music for the Altai region. From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 73 
(measures 1-17)……………………………………………………………………………………422

Figure 34 Number 16, music for the Altai region, continued from Number 15. 
From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 73 (measures 1-10)…………………………………423
Figure 35  The leitmotif of the bai’s “rattling” voice. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 100 (measures 1-9)………………………………………………424

Figure 36  The reminiscence motif/section of the “snoring” scene. This leitmotif reappears in Numbers 33 and 43, both in the same key, but without trombone glissandi in Number 33. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 112-113 (measures 1-18)………………………………………………425

Figure 37  The second statement of the “Russian Lot” leitmotif, with text. The first appearance is in Number 20, in piccolo (as above), over images of the Altai. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 105 (measures 1-36)…………426

Figure 38  (a) from the scene of Kuz’mina and the children dancing in the cold. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 131, (measures 44-47). Compare Shostakovich’s score with the original (b) from Mikhail Druskin, Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya [Russian Revolutionary Song] (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye muzikal’noye izdatel’stvo, 1959), 46…………………………………………………………………..427

Figure 39  The leitmotif of Kuz’mina’s dreams as a teacher. This leitmotif reappears in Number 42 (Kuz’mina’s deathbed) in a different key. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 97 (measures 1-21)………………………………428

Figure 40  The hurdy-gurdy leitmotif as it appears in the first reel (Number 3 in the score) in full orchestration. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 16 (measures 1-36)……………………………………………………429

Figure 41  The hurdy-gurdy leitmotif in hand organ (Number 13 in the score). This leitmotif reappears in Numbers 18 and 19, where Kuz’mina is in the hut and the sounds of the shaman and hammering layer over the tune. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 68 (measures 1-31)……………….430
Appendix H – Examples from *The Golden Mountains*………………………………...431

Figure 42 (a) My transcription of the main melody of the song, “If I Only Had Mountains of Gold,” as played in E-flat major in the horns in the overture to the film, sounding over the introductory credits. (b) A version of the song “Zlatie gorë,” for piano and voice, as it appears in a published edition, measures 6-23. See B. Zharov, *Lyubimye russkiye narodnye pesni* [Favorite Russian Folk Songs] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1985), 56-58 for the entire score for this song………………………………...431

Figure 43 (a) The Waldteufel waltz, “Les Violettes,” upon which Shostakovich based his music. From Emile Waldteufel, *Die schönsten Walzer*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Henry Litolff’s Verlag), 4 (measures 1-17 of Number 1). (b) The waltz as it appears in the suite version of the film score. In the scene of the gift of the watch, the waltz appears as seen here in the suite. The main theme is played by Hawaiian guitar, with orchestral accompaniment. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobraniye Sochineniy v sorok dvukh tomakh, tom 41 “Muzïka k kinosfilmam, partitura,”* [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, volume 41, Music to the films, orchestral score] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 122 (measures 1-22)………………………………...432

Figure 44 The Introduction (“Vstuplenie”) from the suite of *The Golden Mountains*. This is the beginning of the A section (of ABA’) that corresponds to the transition of scenes from the son at the piano to the factory. From Yakubov, “*Muzïka k kinosfil’mam, partitura,”* (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 117 (measures 1-6)………………………………...433

Figure 45 The beginning of the fugue that corresponds to the images of the strike of the Baku and Petersburg workers. From Yakubov, “*Muzïka k kinosfil’mam, partitura,”* (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 145 (measures 1-28)…………………………………………………………………434

Appendix I – Table of Music/Film Interaction in *The Golden Mountains*………………435

Figure 46 Table of Music/Film Interaction in *The Golden Mountains* (in order of appearance)…………………………………………………………………………………435
Appendix J – Examples from The Counterplan………………………………………..437

Figure 47 Excerpt from a Fragment Number 10 the “Song of the Counterplan” from the music to the film Michurin. This fragment shows the song sung by full chorus with orchestral accompaniment, much in the manner as it appears in the opening credits of The Counterplan. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobraniye Sochineny v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, volume 41, Music to the Films, Orchestral Score] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 477 (measures 1-6)……………………………………………………………………………….437

Figure 48 “Mne grustno” (“I Am Sad) in its original form here is used as a leitmotif throughout the film. From A. Dargomyzhsky, Izbrannye romansï i pesni [Selected Romances and Songs] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1981), 42……………………………………………………………438

Figure 49 Entitled “Scherzo” in the sketches and in the Collected Works, this section accompanies Babchenko’s lunch. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 475 (measures 1-36)……………………………………………………………….439

Figure 50 First page of Fragment Number 1 of the Collected Works. This is where Shostakovich begins in the White Nights, with the entry of the bicyclists on the embankment. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 193 (measures 1-18)………………………………………………………………………………440

Figure 51 From Fragment Number 1, where the strings enter at rehearsal 4, indicating a shift in texture, initiating the montage of St. Petersburg. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 194 (measures 19-37)………………………………………………………………………………441

Figure 52 From Fragment Number 1, where the xylophones enter, over images of workers. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 196 (measures 53-65)………………………………………………………………………………442

Figure 53 The beginning of a shift in texture from xylophone to winds and strings, from Fragment Number 1. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 199 (measures 108-120)…………………………443
Figure 54  The shift to the violin solo is the beginning of Fragment Number 2 in the Collected Works, corresponding with the couple’s conversation about love. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 206 (measure 1-30)………………………………………………………………444

Figure 55  Excerpt from Fragment Number 3 of the Collected Works. This fragment is a continuation of fragment No. 2, which moves away from the violin solo. It begins with a low volume wind introduction that segues into a delicate wind and harp version of The Song of the Counterplan, beginning at rehearsal 4. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura,” 208 (measures 1-29)…………………………………….445

Figure 56  The “Song of the Counterplan” as it appears in the newspaper Komsomol’skaya Pravda, 11 November 1932. The song appears here in the same key and meter as it does in the manuscripts and in the published excerpt in the Collected Works (see Figure 47 above).…446

Figure 57  “The Partisan’s Song” from Mikhail Druskin, Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya, [Russian Revolutionary Song] (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye muzykal’noye izdatel’stvo, 1959), 51. The second phrase begins with the F-natural leap in the second staff…………..447

Figure 58  “Uralskaya Ryabinushka.” From Yu. G. Ivanov, Nam nel’zya bez pesen [We are Never Without Song] (Smolensk: Rusich: 2004) as cited online at http://a-pesni.naord.ru/drugije/uralriabin.htm……….448
LIST OF TABLES

1.1 Aspects of Modernism.................................................................................14
3.1 Part One in “Blocks”..................................................................................194
5.1 Scene of Vasily’s attack...............................................................................316
The transliteration system used in this document follows the U.S. Board on Geographic Names and the system used in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2001. These systems are similar to the Library of Congress system (without diacritics), with the exception of the use of “ya,” “yu,” “ye,” and “y” instead of “ia,” “iu,” “e,” and “i.” As recommended by the Chicago Manual of Style, I do not follow this system for names of well-known figures that have a commonly used equivalent in English, such as Tchaikovsky or Eisenstein. For quotations, I retain the original spelling of the source. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
INTRODUCTION

There should be a complete mutual understanding between composers and [film] directors. For this, both [fields] should be studied, for a composer without knowledge of the laws of cinema cannot fulfill his work so that it may have an organic blending with the film’s dramaturgy.¹

– Dmitry Shostakovich

The Russian composer Dmitry Shostakovich (1906–1975) remains a thoroughly politicized figure among specialists and music fans, as he was over the course of the twentieth century. Shostakovich has been categorized as “high-art” symphonist, “light” music composer, dissident, and Communist; all of which are labels that can be applied given the interpreter’s agenda. Shostakovich, however, is a figure who resists categorization. Shostakovich’s eclecticism and the constantly changing political environment in which he lived are in part responsible for these controversial interpretations of his music and character. Since the publication of Testimony (1979), a book by Solomon Volkov that portrayed Shostakovich as a closet dissident, interpretations of his political status have become intertwined with interpretations of his music, ranging from those who “read” messages in his music to serve their political ideology, to those who wish to ignore potential meaning altogether as a way to avoid

controversy. I argue, however, that Shostakovich’s multivalent music and persona allow for greater complexity than previous simplistic interpretations of his oeuvre have suggested.

This complexity has been recognized before. In his criticism of “reading” Shostakovich’s music, Richard Taruskin argues,

Maybe incertitude – irreducible multivalence – is essential to the experience of the symphony as a work of art. There is more to an artwork, one has to think, than there is to a note in a bottle.

Taruskin concludes,

Definitive reading, especially biographical reading, locks music in the past. Better let it remain supple, adaptable, ready to serve the future’s needs.

In these statements, Taruskin embraces the many possible Shostakoviches that could exist in analyses of the composer’s works. This possibility of multivalent reading stems in part from Shostakovich’s variety of interests and his musical multiplicity. Many of his contemporaries have noted that the foundation of his character was eclectic and his music reflected the multiple facets of his personality. This multiplicity surfaced in his early years, particularly from 1928-1932, when he wrote many genres and styles of music. Shostakovich was a composer of his time who absorbed and participated in the ever-changing culture in his early years, as he did throughout his life.

During his formative years of the twenties and early thirties, his adaptability was known. He was able to slide between various and sometimes opposing facets of musical,

---

4 Ibid., 496.
literary, cinematic, and theatrical subcultures, discriminately choosing what suited his compositional approach for the project at hand. As the well-known Russian scholar Mikhail Druskin has noted,

...His future as an artist was conditioned and formed by those years [1920s]. Shostakovich had many diverse and significant sides to him, comparable to the multifarious levels of artistic and cultural life of the time.

...So, from his first creative efforts, Shostakovich...occupied an independent position and defined his own terms in art without submitting to the aesthetic of the recognized authorities. He also did not succumb to passing fashion or temporary enthusiasms for new music, but accepted them with discrimination.5

Shostakovich’s ability to accept or deny the multiple musical opportunities presented to him has led in part to the complex and varied reception of his personality and music over the course of the twentieth-century. It has also led to the diverse categorizations of Shostakovich as “modernist,” “socialist realist,” “dissident,” “Communist,” and “light” or “high art” composer.

The idea of Shostakovich being able to adapt to any trend as he desired, modernist or conservative, brings to question some categorizations of the composer. Often in the West, it has been favorable to cast Shostakovich as a composer with modernist leanings, obviously played out or hidden in his music, depending on his contemporaneous political trends and the politics of current reception. It is crucial, however, to consider Shostakovich as a nuanced individual, who constantly negotiated his role as composer and civic artist under Stalinism. Caryl Emerson provides a similarly nuanced perspective in regard to this issue:

It is a lesson that Western observers of the Russian scene have been slow to learn: that this culture, whether tsarist or Stalinist, was not divided into collaborators versus martyrs. The double-voiced collaborators most often became the martyrs. And many of these martyrs, reflecting on their duty as creative artists, would seek ways to re-accents their work so as to continue to serve.6

This perspective of Shostakovich as a composer who constantly negotiated his individual personality with current trends in the arts and politics challenges the modernism and socialist realism narrative that has prevailed in earlier scholarship: the narrative that describes modernist and experimental artists of the 1920s as having been tragically converted to the conservative and propagandistic socialist realist trend of the 1930s.

Instead of presuming a simplistic transition from one monolithic trend to another, scholars have recently been challenging the implied dichotomy of the two trends. They have shown that there are overlapping connections or shared tropes between elements of modernism and socialist realism, ultimately revealing that the boundary between the two concepts is far more fluid than previously thought.

The instability of this boundary is apparent in musical culture as well. Many composers who were often categorized as modernist throughout the twenties, including Shostakovich, wrote for the socialist cause. As early as the thirties, writers like Leonid Sabaneyev observed this overlapping of modernism and socialist realism in musical trends. Current scholars such as Levon Akopian and David Haas have also noted that modernist composers wrote for socialist content. More generally in Shostakovich studies, pioneering works such as David Fanning’s *Shostakovich Studies* (1995) and Richard Taruskin’s *Defining Russia Musically* (1997) were among the first to reevaluate Shostakovich as a versatile composer who resisted categorization as either a radical

---

dissident (modernist) or loyal Communist (socialist realist) in his musical and personal life. Recent texts such as Laurel Fay’s *Shostakovich: A Life* (2000) and Malcolm Brown’s, *Shostakovich: A Casebook* (2004) build upon this work and provide a balanced view of a composer who renegotiated his identity in his music and public persona. It therefore comes as no surprise that Shostakovich may be interpreted as an individual who negotiated his compositional personality through the combination of musical innovation and socialist goals.

These conversations about Shostakovich’s diverse and adaptable musical nature, however, rarely included a discussion of his film music. Shostakovich himself recognized that film music involved the intersection of cinema and music, as quoted above, requiring the composer to have knowledge of cinematic techniques so that his music may be organically blended with the film. Only recently has the topic of film music become a serious endeavor in film studies and musicology, which requires scholars to bridge the gap between the two disciplines much in the way that Shostakovich advocated an understanding of both fields. In the general film music scholarship in the United States, the majority of the film music books have been written by film scholars such as Claudia Gorbman, Kathryn Kalinak, and Royal S. Brown. Musicologists and music theorists such as David Neumeyer, James Buhler, and Martin Marks, among others, have recently added a musicological voice to the field of film music studies, indicating a significant shift in the valuation of film music. In the area of Shostakovich studies, John Riley’s book, *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film*, is the first major publication in the West on the topic of Shostakovich’s film music. The book provides an overview of all of Shostakovich’s film scores and films for which his music was
compiled. Although it is useful to have an English language book on Shostakovich’s film scores, the text is brief, providing only cursory examinations of the composer’s film work and does not utilize Russian archival materials. Conference presentations in Europe and America have occasionally included discussions of Shostakovich’s film music, but were often focused on either his first two film scores *Novyi Vavilon (The New Babylon)* and *Odna (Alone)* or two of his last film scores, *Gamlet (Hamlet)* and *Korol’ Lir (King Lear)*. Not surprisingly, the Soviet film scores that the composer created during Stalinism have yet to be addressed in Western musicological scholarship.

It is within this context that I explore an “Other” Shostakovich. This “Other” Shostakovich was a young composer obsessed with “light” music and adept at composing narrativistic, film, and theatrical music. I use this term “Other” to underscore the marginalized reception of his film and “light” music and suggest the idea, recently proposed by myself and Margarita Mazo, that Shostakovich’s identity in his music and his public persona were multi-faceted and constantly renegotiated in his early years as they were in his later years. My dissertation therefore seeks to reevaluate the modernist and socialist realist narrative by examining the process of Shostakovich’s renegotiation of his musical identity in his first four film scores as he made the so-called transition from the modernist silent cinema of the twenties to the socialist realist sound cinema of the thirties.

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. My analyses of each film score, including *The New Babylon* (1928–1929), *Alone* (1930–1931), *The Golden Mountains* (1931), and *The Counterplan* (1932) are informed by approaches from film theory and musicology and contextualized through the use of Russian archival materials about the
production and reception of film music. Each chapter engages a thoroughly interdisciplinary approach and relies upon primary and secondary resources in both English and Russian. Original documents, letters, reports, musical manuscripts, and other materials from archives such as RGALI (Russian State Archive for Literature and Art), the archive in the Glinka Museum of Musical Culture, Gosfil’mofond (State Film Archive), and the Shostakovich Apartment Archive in Moscow provide the foundation of the primary materials used in this document. Published writings, including diaries, letters, essays, press, and film scholarship of people involved in the filmmaking process were also consulted, as was film and film music scholarship in both Russian and English.

The first two chapters outline the concepts of modernism and socialist realism and situate Shostakovich in the film culture of the twenties and thirties. Chapter One, “Modernism and Socialist Realism,” presents my own conceptualization of musical modernism and socialist realism in relation to Shostakovich’s role as a composer in the musical culture of the twenties and early thirties. Scholarly research from musicology, literary studies, and art history support my assertion that Shostakovich’s film and non-film music of the late twenties and early thirties has traits of both musical modernism and socialist realism that allowed him to operate well within the developing socialist realist film aesthetic.

Chapter Two, “Shostakovich, Film Culture, and Film Music Studies,” discusses the emergence of Shostakovich as a film composer during the transition from silent to sound film. It also presents an analytical approach that attempts to bridge the gap between film studies and musicology by combining the structuralist-semiotic approaches of film theory with music analytical techniques common to musicology and music.
cognition studies of the perception of film music. As noted by musicologist Anahid Kassabian, musical identification processes result from the construction and reception of musical ideas, or “codes,” that are part of film narration. I suggest that Shostakovich’s experience as a silent cinema pianist and his natural talent for the continual re-creation of the meanings of these “codes,” as seen in his opera The Nose (1927–1928), prepared him to be an effective film music composer.

The last four chapters present case studies of the four films, demonstrating that the variety of modernist and socialist realist traits, beginning with the predominantly modernist The New Babylon and ending with the presumably socialist realist The Counterplan, allowed for diverse categorizations of these films, as revealed through a detailed examination of narrative device, musical and semantic codes, and reception. Chapters Three and Four, “The End of a Silent Era: The New Babylon (1928–1929)” and “Beginnings in Russian Sound Film: Alone (1929–1931),” present case studies on two films by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Traube. Shostakovich’s first film score, The New Babylon, shows strong connections to Russian modernism, while the propagandistic content of the film foreshadows the socialist realist aesthetic. The music’s role in the film and its interaction with the image, including the aligning of the musical form with film editing and the role of leitmotifs, were significant issues for Shostakovich and the directors. Additionally, the agit-prop (agitational-propaganda) content of the film, i.e., its socialist bent, added a different layer of meaning to the film overall. My discussion of the complexity of the film’s reception reveals that aspects of modernism and the poor performance of the score in the cinema houses ultimately overshadowed the film’s propagandistic content and led to the film’s canonization as “modernist.” Shostakovich’s
second film score, for the first Russian sound film, *Alone*, reveals traits of modernism in film and musical language which are modified to accommodate the socialist realist trend and complement the new sound technology. Shostakovich’s own sketches, the directors’ writings, in-studio reports, and daily press provide a point of departure for analyzing how this score is a modernist means to socialist realist end.

Chapters Five and Six, “At the Threshold of Socialist Realism, I – *Golden Mountains* (1931)” and “At the Threshold of Socialist Realism, II – *The Counterplan* (1932),” present case studies of two sound films by directors Sergey Yutkevich and Fridrikh Ermler, the former film an example of dismal failure and the latter film, brilliant success. *The Golden Mountains*, a song-based, seemingly socialist realist film, used modernist film techniques and a significant amount of underscoring (background music), compared to other song-based films of the thirties. In contrast, *The Counterplan* used less underscoring and made its theme song, “The Song of the Counterplan,” central to the score. Compared to *The Golden Mountains*, *The Counterplan* was enormously successful because it used the song as leitmotif in a convincing and politically acceptable socialist realist musical language. The positive reception of the press showed the song’s popularity and its resonance with official nationalistic sentiments, which actively advertised the film and led to its overall success. This film score was regarded by political officials and those critical of Shostakovich’s music post-1936 as a significant turning point in the composer’s film music career after the official establishment of socialist realism.

As the following chapters show, redefining Shostakovich as a film music composer sensitive to musical and political trends shows how it was necessary during the
tumult of the Cultural Revolution to move fluidly between the aesthetics of modernism and socialist realism. Examining Shostakovich’s film music from interdisciplinary perspectives, involving musicology and film theory, also informs his non-film music by contributing to the current debates about the politics of “reading” his instrumental music, challenging efforts to place his music into simplistic categories. Ultimately, reassessing Shostakovich as a film composer who renegotiated his modernist musical style to be acceptably socialist realist without producing khaltura, or hackwork, integrates the “Other” into a more complete Shostakovich.
CHAPTER 1
MODERNISM AND SOCIALIST REALISM

There has long existed a debate over the dichotomy of modernism and socialist realism in cold war reception of the Russian arts in the post-revolutionary period. This dichotomy has often worked in tandem with the well-known perception of the 1920s as a time of experimentation and freedom (modernism) and the 1930s as a time of ultra-conservatism, or an artistic “desert” (socialist realism). As with any binary set of labels, the reduction of the twenties and thirties as ambiguously “modernist” or “socialist realist” is underdeveloped and resists a nuanced interpretation of the creative work of innovative artists, musicians, and writers of the period.

To discuss this period, specifically the mid-twenties through the early thirties, there must be a desire to seek out the complexities that pervaded the culture. Scholars in various fields, including musicology, art history, literature, and history have sought to reveal how the so-called move from modernism to socialist realism was a slow, multifaceted, and disintegrated process. Some of these scholars, including Boris Groys, Irina Gutkin, Mikhail Epstein, and Marina Frolova-Walker have found different approaches to challenging the simplistic “modernism to socialist realism” narrative.

This chapter presents my interpretations of musical modernism, socialist realism, and the narratives that involve these two concepts in relation to Shostakovich’s place as a
composer in the culture of the twenties and early thirties. Specific texts central to my discussion include David Haas’s *Leningrad’s Modernists: Studies in Composition and Musical Thought, 1917-1932*, Esti Sheinberg’s *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich*, Boris Groys’s *The Total Art of Stalinism*, and Mikhail Epstein’s *After the Future*. Each of these texts presents different theories on modernist and socialist realist trends in relation to music, visual art, and literature. Haas and Sheinberg present music-analytical approaches to Shostakovich as a modernist composer, revealing his connections to theatrical, literary, and musical culture of the twenties. Groys and Epstein present revised chronologies of the ideas of what can be classified as modernist and socialist realist and expand the boundaries of these concepts to include ways of understanding art and literature from this period as something other than the usual dichotomous, historical definitions of modernism and socialist realism.

With these approaches and Shostakovich’s musical multiplicity in mind, I assert that Shostakovich was a particular “brand” of musical modernist who modified his style to accommodate the early features of socialist realism that began to appear in the late twenties and early thirties. His combination of modernist musical techniques, such as those found in *The Nose* (1927-1928) and later his Fourth Symphony (1935-1936), with the “agit-prop” (agitational-propaganda) content for which he was often commissioned to write, created a kind of modernism that allowed an easy transition to socialist realist

---

music. I include brief discussions of his First Symphony (1925), Second Symphony (1927), Third Symphony (1929) and his Piano Concerto No.1 (1933) to demonstrate how certain features of “agit-prop” modernism and early traits of socialist realism easily coexisted.

Perhaps even more so than other musical genres, Shostakovich’s film music reveals this negotiation of musical features of modernism and socialist realism that some have presumed to be opposed. His early film scores have been regarded by Russian film historians as having set the standard for music in propagandistic films that would become increasingly common over the course of the following decades. As I discuss in later chapters, his film music appears to have been the central genre for his stylistic experimentation and may also reveal the degree of nuance in his negotiation and so-called transition from “agit-prop” modernism to socialist realism.

**Modernism**

Modernism has been interpreted and applied to musical cultures in multiple, diverse, and complex ways throughout the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Although modernism acts as a larger construct for a variety of cultural features in different countries in the twentieth-century, my discussion of modernism narrowly focuses on musical characteristics and aesthetics of modernism relevant to a later discussion of Shostakovich’s position in Soviet Union in the twenties. Three recent historical narratives interpreting the transition of modernism to socialist realism also

---

2 “Agit-prop” is a shortened name for agitational propaganda. This phrase was applied to media that was designed to rouse the spirit of the people towards the cause of the Party.

factor into this discussion: 1) Socialist realism as a continuation of modernism, 2) Socialist realism as a rejection of modernism, and 3) Socialist realism as postmodernism.

Modernism is generally understood in the West and in the Soviet Union as a trend that rejects previous traditions and requires constant change. Change, although fundamental, is only one aspect of modernism. In Western Europe and the Soviet Union, definitions of modernism involve multiple criteria. Below, I have compiled a brief table of interrelated concepts that describe the musical practices and philosophy of modernism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novelty (Differentness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break with tradition &amp; discontinuity with the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear, teleological view of past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of “new language”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-consciousness of present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of high versus low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress → utopia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.1: Aspects of Modernism**

Modernism of the twenties in Europe and the Soviet Union involved the desire for constant change, novelty, and a rejection of the artistic past. In his essay, “A Tradition Against Itself,” Octavio Paz asserts that modernism is not a tradition, since it requires change and therefore a rejection of things immediately perceived as traditional. Instead, he states, “The modern is characterized not only by novelty but by otherness.” He later explains that this otherness, or a thing that constantly changes and therefore is always the “Other,” can also be described as “differentness,” or “...the knife which splits time in

---


two: before and now.” Thus, the idea of “otherness” and “differentness” emphasizes the continual changing of things “modern.” Overall,

Modernity is a polemical tradition which displaces the tradition of the moment, whatever it happens to be, but an instant later yields its place to still another tradition which in turn is a momentary manifestation of modernity.7

For Paz, therefore, history is defined in terms of cycles of change, where change is perpetual and necessary. This idea of change, which seeks to split time into the past and present, continued into the socialist realist aesthetic, where “realism” became the new modernism.

Modernist composers, including Arnold Schoenberg, have also discussed their “New Music” in similar terms, providing what many have considered a “modernist” perspective of their music.8 In his “New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea,” (1946) Schoenberg defines the “New Music” as

music which, though it is still music, differs in all essentials from previously composed music. Evidently it must express something which has not yet been expressed in music. Evidently, in higher art, only that is worth being presented which has never before been presented.9

Part of the discussion of this “New Music” included the development of a “new” language that challenged the tonal system, as in the case of the Second Viennese School and other European modernists, was reflective of the contemporary moment, and created

---

a new identity in theory and practice that allowed separation from nineteenth-century composers such as Richard Wagner and Franz Liszt. In reference to early modernists such as Igor Stravinsky and Schoenberg, Leon Botstein states that

The self-conscious search in the years immediately before 1914 by composers and performers for a language of music adequate to and reflective of the contemporary moment revealed a conception of modernity dominated by the progress of science, technology and industry, and by positivism, mechanization, urbanization, mass culture and nationalism. 10

Modernism also includes the emphasis on self-consciousness, and consequently, the development of a “new” musical language. According to Paz, this is “historic awareness” – a self-awareness that creates, in his words, “differentness,” to progress towards a future. 11 According to postmodernist scholar Robin Hartwell, modernism involves “the conjunction of two forces”: one is the rise of “historical consciousness,” and the other is concerned with “grammar (i.e., musical language), that is invented by the artist.” 12 She relates this historical self-consciousness to the notion of Zeitgeist where “there is a mode of expression appropriate to, and rooted in, a specific historical and social situation.” 13 In Hartwell’s terms, the idea of self-consciousness brings about a connection between art and its age, as Botstein has also claimed, which allows the creation of a single musical language.

Two other aspects of modernism – high versus low and utopian ideals – have been central to some debates over modernist music and ideology. Schoenberg expressed a
belief in the necessary division of high and low art. Although he did write “...if it is art, it is not for all, and if it is for all, it is not art,” he also recognized the purpose of “low music”:

Most deplorable is the acting of some artists who arrogantly wish to make believe that they descend from their heights in order to give some of their riches to the masses. This is hypocrisy. But there are a few composers, like Offenbach, Johann Strauss and Gershwin, whose feelings actually coincide with those of the “average man in the street” to them it is no masquerade to express popular feeling in popular terms.13

In terms of ideology, the division of high and low resulted from a critique of the past and a resulting break from it. As Botstein argues,

A critique of contemporary cultural standards and the social uses of music as exemplified by the turn-of-the-century urban concert audience and public for music in the home was, from the start, a driving force behind early twentieth-century compositional innovations. 15

Some modernists viewed the democratization of mass culture as a hindrance to the goals of modernism. In his book, The Five Faces of Modernity, Matei Calinescu states that anti-bourgeois modernism “…was disgusted with the middle-class scale of values and expressed its disgust through the most diverse means, ranging from rebellion, anarchy and apocalypticism to aristocratic self-exile.”16 As with some musical modernists, Schoenberg most certainly welcomed negative criticism of his particular musical ideology.17 This modernist attitude, however, in part created a societal division between high and low. Botstein continues, stating that

17 Schoenberg, “New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea.”
Modernists and their defenders would never entirely escape the charge of intolerance, snobbery and élitism and a distaste for the democratization of culture made possible, ironically, by the technological advances of modernity, from printing to electronic reproduction and transmission.  

This division of society and musical tastes between high and low pervaded the twentieth century and contributed to notions of a better world through modernization, which ironically, as Botstein argues, created the bourgeois culture so disdained by modernists. The quest for an improved world with greater musical possibilities and control over the medium, or musical progress, hints at a kind of utopianism. At the very end of his “A Tradition Against Itself,” Paz argues that

Our perfection is not that which is, but that which will be. The ancients feared the future and invented formulas to exorcise it; we would give our lives to know its shining face – a face that we will never see.  

According to Paz, modernists always progress towards a future that they cannot attain – a kind of utopia. Calinescu echoes this idea, arguing that the emergence of the “utopian imagination” is “one more proof of the modern devaluation of the past and the growing importance of the future.” The notion of progress, which in music and film also involves the embrace of technological means, resonates with Russian approaches to modernism and the eventual path to socialist realism.  

In the Soviet sphere, by contrast, the division between high and low was intended to be eradicated. Composers, like Shostakovich, sought to merge both the “mass” tastes with those of high art. In the end, the creation of the Soviet utopia through the concept of

---

20 Utopia, as defined in the Webster Dictionary, is, “1) an imaginary and indefinitely remote place, 2) a place of ideal perfection especially in laws, government, and social conditions, or 3) an impractical scheme for social improvement.”
socialist realism combined carefully chosen aspects of high and low art. Modernist
culture of the twenties therefore embraced the “mass” or Soviet politics into its ever-
changing trend, creating an aesthetic that shares traits of modernism and early forms of
socialist realism.

**Russian/Soviet Culture of the 1920s**

**Music**

Several different trends in Russia in the twenties and early thirties could be
subsumed under the aesthetic of modernism, relating to the features outlined above. Yet,
cultural differences and socio-political trends specific to Russia during this time allows
for a different variety of modernism.\(^{22}\) For my purposes here, I focus on only a few
issues and trends relevant to my discussion of Shostakovich and ultimately, his film
music. I do not intend to examine every kind of modernism in Russia or argue that my
discussion of characteristics of Russian modernism in the twenties and early thirties is
complete or comprehensive. Instead, I provide a general discussion of the culture in

\(^{22}\) The potential diversity of the concept is seen in the kinds of scholarship that has framed Russian/Soviet
culture of the twenties and early thirties, focusing on experimentation and novelty as well as the growth of
Literature, 1998); James von Geldern and Richard Stites, eds., *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia: Tales,
Poems, Songs, Movies, Plays, and Folklore, 1917-1953* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995);
David Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists, Studies in Composition and Musical Thought, 1917-1932* (Peter
Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); S. Frederick Starr, *Red and
Hot: the Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917-1991* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1994); Esto
Incongruities* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); and Larry Sitsky, *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde,
1900-1929* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994) for a multiplicity of ways of perceiving various forms of
cultural activity in the twenties.
which Shostakovich lived and of recent scholarly work that has found connection between the composer and the “multifarious levels of artistic and cultural life of the time.”

Already by 1920, Civil War was underway and the Revolution remained strong in current, collective memory. Resources were scarce and Russia was experiencing an economic crisis. In March 1921, Lenin established the NEP, or the New Economic Policy, which allowed limited capitalism in the hopes of reviving the economy and creating a country that could compete in the global industry. This economic policy allowed all sectors of public life to flourish, including the arts. In previous years, music’s role in cultural life had been limited either to revolutionary songs or to reviving the nineteenth-century classics in order to educate the new proletarian audience. By 1921, there was a continuing effort to bureaucratize parts of culture, increasing the power of the State over all facets of life. At the same time the State was slowly tightening its grip, doors were opened to the West and cultural pluralism abounded. In 1923, the ASM (Association of Contemporary Music) was established in Moscow and the LASM in Leningrad (Leningrad Association for Contemporary Music) as member organizations of the International Society for Contemporary Music. These organizations both supported the performance of current music produced by composers residing in Western Europe,

---

25 These organizations had numerous internal difficulties and only existed from 1923 to 1928. ASM began in 1923, while LASM began in 1926.
including Alban Berg, Paul Hindemith, Darius Milhaud, Sergey Prokofiev, and Igor Stravinsky as well as new music composed by the next generation of Russian/Soviet composers, including Shostakovich. Supporters of modernism, among them Boris Asaf’yev, also organized concerts and other performances of Western European music. For a brief period (1923-1929/30) younger composers were exposed to the musical innovations that Western Europe had to offer.26

Proletarian organizations such as RAPM (Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians), which generally enforced a proletarian approach to culture, began to gain power through the late twenties.27 RAPM was an extremely conservative group that demanded that music be an ideological reflection of proletarian culture and opposed itself to “individualistic” modernist composers.28 At the end of the twenties, the divide between the modernists and proletarians became ever-apparent, even though this “divide” in some sense had already been a cultural presence since the Revolution. Nonetheless, with the influence of the West and the building enthusiasm for post-revolutionary propagandistic approaches to the arts, there was a continued “sovietization of culture,” even through the NEP (New Economic Policy) era.29

26 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 35-36.
27 For more information on RAPM and musical culture of the time see Neil Edmunds, The Soviet Proletarian Music Movement (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2000). Edmunds presents a nuanced view of the relationships among proletarian music groups in the twenties and early thirties.
29 Maes, History of Russian Music, 243. The NEP was begun by Lenin in order to economically rehabilitate the country after the Civil War. Maes claims that the NEP era was a “pause in the sovietization of culture,” that had begun after the revolution. This is likely referring in part to arguments made by Katerina Clark, “The ‘Quiet Revolution’ in Soviet Intellectual Life,” in Russia in the Era of the NEP: Exploration in Soviet Society and Culture, ed. Fitzpatrick, Rabinowitch, and Stites, 211. Clark insists that the NEP be regarded with more nuance, as a period of “normalcy” in comparison with the Civil War period and the Cultural Revolution.
Musical modernism, in the manner in which it was known prior to the Revolution, still continued into the twenties, as seen in the experimental music of figures such as Nicolay Roslavets, Aleksandr Mosolov, Ivan Vishnegradsky, and Georgy Rimsky-Korsakov. Writing in 1930, Leonid Sabaneyev identified two trends starting in 1919-1920 that he named the “democratic” (simplistic music that appealed to the masses) and the “demagogic.” The latter referred to composers that combined Marxism and modern trends in music. As Sabaneyev stated, “the first proletarian music was designed in accordance with the views of the extreme left and the innovators.” These “innovators” included the above modernists, who incorporated factory sounds, electronic instruments (the theremin), and “ultrachromaticism” into their compositions, all of which Sabaneyev seemed to disapprove. Modernist music began to take on a revolutionary bent around 1923 when composers like Roslavets were including Marxist philosophy as part of their work. This revolutionary angle on music continued into the mid-twenties, where themes that allude to a mechanistic age, communal work and life, and the building of a socialist society become part of musical compositions. It also sometimes resulted in a kind of “factory music” to which Sabaneyev alluded, which use factory sounds or emulate such sounds using an orchestra, such as Mosolov’s Zavod (Factory, 1926-1927) and Vladimir Deshevov’s Relsy (Rails, 1926) At the same time, composers like

---

30 For information on these figures and modernist music prior to the Revolution see Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, enl. ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983); Larry Sitsky, Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1900-1929 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994); and Maes, History of Russian Music.
32 Ibid., 472.
34 For a brief description of these pieces, see Maes, History of Russian Music, 248-250 and Sitsky, Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 61 and 173. This approach to aurally designing a factory is continued
Roslavets and later Shostakovich wrote in traditional forms with titles that would allude to the theme of the “factory,” and/or the idea of the revolution, as seen in Shostakovich’s Symphony No.2 (October) and Roslavets’s October Cantata (1927).  

From the mid-twenties forward, two forms of modernism therefore emerged. One form continued the aesthetic experimentation of the past, “music for its own sake,” while another form sought a merging of modernist musical exploration with proletarian ideology. The latter, which were “moderate” modernists, sometimes referred to as “fellow-travelers;” or those that may tolerate the party’s ideology but not actively participate in it, in some ways signaled the shift from modernism to the future aesthetic. Sabaneyev called it a “moderate school of thought” that appeared in 1925-1926 and included composers like Shostakovich and Roslavets who “complied with the ‘socialist commands.’” A Russian musicologist, Levon Akopian, finds Shostakovich a “moderate modernist.” In his words, “the ‘avant-garde’ period of Shostakovich was marked not only by extravagant experimentation in the field of musical language, but also by a pronounced enthusiasm for the Communist mythology.” According to Akopian, the new “mythology” that interested Shostakovich was exactly that – new, fresh and innovative; and not conformist. This stance reinforces Mikhail Druskin’s idea that

---

37 Known as *poputchiki* in the Russian language.
38 Sabaneyev, “Musical Tendencies in Contemporary Russia,” 476-377. He also includes Mikhail Gnesin, Nikolay Myaskovsky, Reinhold Glière and one of the Kreins (although it is unclear which one – Aleksandr or Grigory) in this list.
Shostakovich was exposed to, but carefully chose aspects of opposing trends throughout the twenties to suit his own compositional needs.\textsuperscript{40}

\* * *

In the midst of the varying degree of modernistic trends of the twenties, several different musical factions developed in Leningrad. In his text, \textit{Leningrad’s Modernists: Studies in Composition and Musical Thought, 1917-1932}, David Haas argues that a Leningrad modernist school was established in the twenties and nurtured by its main proponents, musicologist/composer Boris Asaf’yev and composer Vladimir Shcherbachyov. Haas supports his argument in favor of a Leningrad school of modernism by relying upon several essays by Orest Tsekhnovitser and Boris Asaf’yev from the twenties.\textsuperscript{41} In reference to Tsekhnovitser’s essay “New Music and the Proletariat” (1926-1927), for example, Haas states that the author includes Shostakovich among the composers responsible for a new Leningrad modernist style that was “revolutionary in form and content” and unlike the Moscow-based modernists, less derivative of the “pre-revolutionary academic traditions, or Skryabin, or Impressionism, or exoticism, or ‘bourgeois anarchism.’”\textsuperscript{42} This essay appears to lament the quality of musical life at the time, focusing on the idea that a “new musical style” emerged since the Revolution in Leningrad and further suggesting that this musical style was more indigenous to the Soviet Union than the music of the Moscow-based modernists. Further, Haas explains that Tsekhnovitser’s hint at a Leningrad modernist school was well corroborated in Asaf’yev’s article “Ten Years of Russian Symphonic Music” (1926-

\textsuperscript{40} See Introduction.
\textsuperscript{41} Haas states that Tsekhnovitser was probably a pseudonym for Igor Glebov and/or Semyon Ginzberg.
\textsuperscript{42} Haas, \textit{Leningrad’s Modernists}, 40.
1927), which indicated Shcherbachyov as the leader, “flanked” by Popov and Pyotr Ryazanov, and included Shostakovich as one of several members.\(^{43}\)

A shift in musical aesthetics at the Conservatory, involving a break with the past and the appearance of novel musical characteristics, warranted a designation of a new school of thought. According to Haas, the notion of a Leningrad modernist school was fueled in part by the writings and ideas, specifically certain musical characteristics, developed by Asaf’yev and appropriated by faculty and students at the Conservatory.\(^{44}\)

With many caveats as to the applicability of Asaf’yev to this “school,” Haas explains that the connections between Asaf’yev and contemporary composition are speculative, yet he finds many parallels between Asaf’yev’s criticism and theory, and contemporary trends at the Conservatory, which potentially shaped Shostakovich’s early compositional style.

**Asaf’yev and Modernism**

From Asaf’yev’s criticism came the ideas of *intonatsiya*, musical form-as-process, linearism, and symphonism, which became central to the Leningrad modernists. *Intonatsiya* is a difficult idea to describe, in part because of the constant evolution of Asaf’yev’s ideas and the degree of complexity and vivid language that he used to describe them.\(^{45}\) Emphasizing that *intonatsiya* was never intended to be described as a

\(^{43}\) Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 40. In Asaf’yev’s essay, there is a focus on linearism, which Haas considers to be neglectful of other musical considerations (meter, harmony and so forth), but later discusses in more depth.

\(^{44}\) Haas bases his discussion on Asaf’yev’s writings from 1916-1931, including the first volume of *Musical Form as Process*. Book I of this text was written from 1925 to 1930 and Book II written from 1941-1947. See James Tull, “B. V. Asaf’ev’s Musical Form as a Process, Translation and Commentary” (Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1976), 35-36 and 104-105 about dates of writing. See also Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 53-54, 59-60, and 236 for more information about the texts used in his discussion.

musical motive, Haas states, “Asaf’yev’s incorporation of the intonatsiya into a system of sound relationships allows for some degree of interdependence and interaction between intonatsii, which would be sacrificed should any one of them be taken out of its context and frozen into a series of pitches.”46 Instead, intonatsiya can be any musical sound (an interval, a motive, or a rhythm) that is fixed in its historical moment, yet reflective of the past and the ever-changing present.47 It is a musical idea that need not necessarily be limited to one work. It can be something like an interval, melodic contour, or possibly a melody. Haas also suggests that it has to be perceived by the listener, since its “intonational” qualities are not inherent in the form before it is sounded; a concept that he claims shows the influence of Henri Bergson’s notions of time and perception on Asaf’yev.48 Malcolm Brown supports this interpretation of perception, stating that “…intonazia is defined in its primal sense as any phonic manifestation of life or reality, perceived and understood (directly or metaphorically) as a carrier of meaning.”49 And James Tull states,

Asaf’yev conceived of musical intonation as the organization of acoustical media, by the human consciousness, into meaningfully expressive sound correlations. It is suggested that this definition covers all of Asaf’yev’s uses of the term. Breaking the definition down into its component parts, it is, first of all, concerned specifically with music, it incorporates the essential elements of

---

46 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 61.
47 This idea of constant change and temporary stability is linked to Marxist views of dialectical materialism. For a good discussion of this concept and its relationship to Asaf’yev, see Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 107ff.
48 Henri Bergson (1859-1941) was a philosopher who wrote on cognition, memory, and science in general and whose writings were translated into Russian in the early twentieth century. Asaf’yev admitted that Bergson was a significant influence on his ideas about music. See Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 55-60 for a summary of Bergson and Asaf’yev.
49 Malcolm Brown, “The Soviet Russian Concepts of ‘Intonazia’ and ‘Musical Imagery’” The Musical Quarterly, 60(4) (October 1974): 559. Brown also discusses intonatsiya as having associative properties and at times becoming nearly programmatic. The idea that intontasiya carries such strong cultural contextualization contributes to Asaf’yev’s idea that music is a constantly changing process.
conscious human organization and meaningful human communication; it stresses the factor of
mutual relationships; and above all, it has to do directly with sound. All of the separate features
of the concept must be regarded as interdependent.  

In Asaf’yev’s discussion, therefore, intonatsiya reflects the connection between musical
development/compositional process and its connection to contemporary musical life. It
seems that Asaf’yev is interested in performative aspects of the music and perception, in
its aurality, not simply the music as “text.” For Asaf’yev, there was always a balance
between the listener’s perception and the musical work. Intonatsiya is therefore a broad
and contextual embodiment of a sound idea rooted in historical time.

Asaf’yev also weaved in the idea of an “intonational reserve” or “intonational
vocabulary” into his discussions of intonatsiya. This “vocabulary” is developed over
the course of time, an “accumulation of musical ideas, often no more than fragments,
which is crystallized in the collective consciousness of people within a given epoch and
environment, and which represents the totality of all previous musical experience of that
epoch.” Asaf’yev coined this as an “intonational reserve.” Over time, this
“intonational reserve” changes, with new intonatsii added, while older ones ossify and
die out. The shelf-life of an intonatsiya therefore is dependent upon the listener’s

---

51 Tull discusses this in detail in “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 144 ff, and Asaf’yev
discusses it throughout Book I. Here, I am reminded of Richard Bauman’s ideas of performance and
speech. See Richard Bauman, Verbal Art as Performance, with Supplementary Essays by Barbara A.
Babcock, et. al. (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 1984). DeCarlo also discusses this point, Socialist
Realism and Music, 48-53.
52 See Tull for a discussion of the multiple translations and usage of this idea in Asaf’yev’s writings. Tull,
53 Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 160. DeCarlo also discusses Asaf’yev’s notion of
intonatsiya as having been shaped by “extra-musical motivating factors.” See states that Asaf’yev thought
that “living intonations” which resonated with one’s own epoch, could be compiled in a dictionary forming,
“a guidebook to the favorite, most interesting sound combinations of a given epoch,” and that such a
“dictionary” in the consciousness of the composer forms the basis for the production of new compositions.
See DeCarlo, Socialist Realism and Music, 60-63. This “dictionary” of intonations, is what Asaf’yev calls
his “intonational reserve” and seems similar to the idea of “polistilistika” in its emphasis on multiplicity.
context, constantly being reevaluated in light of the trends and tastes of its time. In some ways, Asaf’yev’s description of intonatsiya resembles that of discussions of topoi in Baroque and Classical music or “codes” in the case of film music. In later chapters of this dissertation, the discussions of cinematic and musical “codes” become an important factor for understanding the immediate context and reception of the films and their scores.

“Musical form as process” was another complex concept Asaf’yev discussed in connection with the notion of intonatsiya. In Book I of his Musical Form as Process, Asaf’yev described his main concept as a “dual concept of form as process and, simultaneously, as a crystallized scheme.” Based in part on a listener’s perception of form within his/her own context, Asaf’yev wanted a merging of “schema,” or traditional forms such as sonata form, and “process,” or the continual, organic growth of a set of musical ideas throughout a work. More specifically, Asaf’yev’s idea of form-as-process required an avoidance of the trappings of architectonic forms that would disallow creative musical growth. In regard to sonata form, he stated that “sonata form itself led to a mechanization of creativity.” The recapitulation, for example, should not be a

---

55 See Asaf’yev in Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 559 for a succinct discussion of this idea.
56 See Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 164 for more discussion of this idea. Haas also sees Asaf’yev’s main thesis for his book, Musical Form as Process and definition of musical form-as-process as “the form of a musical work is both an intuited process of unbroken development and an intellectualized schema.”
57 Asaf’yev stated, “Only musical “architects” perceive music with their eyes – they measure the visual projections of musical procreation, but are not interested in the music that shapes these projections.” Asaf’yev in Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 546 and Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 59.
repetition of previous material, but a synthesis of it. Hearing musical ideas as stimuli for integrative, developmental processes is the essence of Asaf’yev’s idea.

The development of an intonatsiya as a motivic idea in a work is part of the concept of intonatsiya.\textsuperscript{59} Haas divides form-as-process into two categories “1) forms based on variation and development of one set of intonational material; and 2) forms based on the development and interaction of two or more sets.”\textsuperscript{60} Intonatsiya therefore appears to act as either an “idea” or an actor in a given work in Haas’s discussion. Building upon the approaches of Soviet scholars, Brown also addresses intonatsiya in this way, analyzing the first movement of Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony in terms of interacting intonatsii and their connection to musical imagery.\textsuperscript{61} Intonatsii can therefore be motivic ideas that refer to the listener’s context as well as participate in the development within a musical work.

Linearism was a central idea for many recent analysts of Russian/Soviet music of the twenties, including Detlef Gojowy, and also serves as a focal characteristic for Haas’s own conception of Leningrad modernism.\textsuperscript{62} Important for the types of form-as-process

---

\textsuperscript{59} “intonational arches” are also part of the concept. Tull explains intonational arches as follows, “One is reminded of a musical concept which Asaf’yev designates as “intonational arches” or “sound arches,” by which (particularly in larger forms) musical ideas are introduced in incomplete form in the earlier stages of a musical composition, temporarily abandoned, picked up again and ultimately completed (or resolved) at a later point.” See Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev’s Musical Form as a Process,” 101-102.

\textsuperscript{60} Haas, \textit{Leningrad’s Modernists}, 79.

\textsuperscript{61} Brown, “The Soviet Russian Concepts,” 561-567. There many Soviet writings on Asaf’yev’s ideas such as intonatsiya, some of which Brown cites. See for example Innokenty Popov, \textit{Nekotorye cherty sotsialisticheskogo realizma v sovetskoy muzike}, [Some Features of Socialist Realism in Soviet Music] (Moscow: Muzika, 1971) and Yuli Anatol’evich Kremlev, “intonatsiya i obraz v muzike” [intonatsiya an Image in Music], \textit{intonatsiya i muzikal'nyi obraz} [intonatsiya and Musical Image], ed. Boris Mikhailovich Yarustovsky (Moscow, 1965), 35-52. One might also suggest that a leitmotif could be a kind of intonatsiya.

\textsuperscript{62} Outside of Asaf’yev’s definition, Haas argues that linearism takes on different meanings through different usages throughout the century and should not be confused with Asaf’yev’s definition. See Detlef Gojowy, \textit{Neue sowjetische Musik der 20er Jahre} (Regensburg: Laaber-Verlag, 1980) for a discussion of linearism as well.
listed above, Haas claims, “is the exploitation of linear tensions inherent in the intonatsiya,” supporting another crucial aspect of Leningrad modernism – linearism.63 Throughout Book I, Asaf’yev pays close attention to the development of melodic line, although not necessarily at the expense of harmonic considerations.64 Haas emphasizes how linearism is bound up with Asaf’yev’s discussion of melody and melos, which he considers analogous to the distinction between schema and process. Melos is more concerned with process, that is, with development that is not restricted to traditional concepts of melody, such as periodicity.65 According to Haas, linearism draws “attention to the properties of melos sounding in time, not reduced to its representation as noteheads fixed on a page,” emphasizing the freedom to create melodic lines that breathe and develop, akin to the “process” aspect of form-as-process.66 Gordon McQuere also describes Asaf’yev’s melos as the “linear dimension of music.”67 Asaf’yev does engage melos in this way, emphasizing its developmental role in the entire musical fabric of the work, including its harmonic, or “vertical” aspects, and not simply as a closed “horizontal” idea.68

It is important to note that linearism does not necessarily exclude vertical considerations of harmony. Haas discusses how the musical lines may combine to create harmony, i.e., initially conceiving of music melodically, instead of harmonically, as does

63 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 79.
65 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 70.
66 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 75.
68 See Asaf’yev in Tull, Book I, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” especially page 561. Here, Asaf’yev did cite the leitmotif as a kind of melody that has melos, which may be relevant to Shostakovich’s approach to development in his film scores.
Asaf’yev. Haas demonstrates linearism and its polyphonic implications in his discussion of P. B. Ryazanov’s syllabus for the new reformed program at the conservatory. This syllabus bears significant traces of the influence of Asaf’yev and Ernst Kurth, including the concept of intonatsiya. As seen in the syllabus, polyphony and harmonic vocabulary was still a part of the musical education. Ultimately, however, the syllabus focuses on the importance of melodic line and of intonatsii as the driving forces of the music, whereas harmony is a product of the properties inherent in horizontal musical ideas.

Symphonism, linked to the idea of the symphony, though discussed by Asaf’yev more as a quality, not a genre, emphasizes the same developmental qualities as musical form-as-process. It denoted “a quality of dramatic musical development which is particularly characteristic of the symphonic sonata-allegro, but…may be applied to other genres.” Asaf’yev considered tension and release to be part of this symphonic design. He “emphasized more the succession of conflicts and resolutions arising from juxtapositions of contrasting musical material, and, alternately, the series of disruptions to an initial state of equilibrium leading in stages to an ultimate restoration of stability.” Asaf’yev thus explained that symphonism includes aspects of form-as-process, including the continual growth of ideas without repetition, and also implies a sense of conflict between perceived sections within a movement. At times, there is the implication of dialectical conflict, yet as Asaf’yev stated, more than two “contradictions” can arise

---

70 See Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 260-267 for “Program for a Course in Melodics.”
71 For a discussion of Kurth’s influence on Asaf’yev and his concept of melos, see Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 166-171.
73 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 79. See also Tull, “B. V. Asaf’yev's Musical Form as a Process,” 144.
within in a movement. Symphonism therefore emphasizes the process of conflict and resolve in any musical work that is “based throughout on the interaction and simultaneous development of contrasting ideas juxtaposed so as to produce a sensation of conflict.”

Asaf’yev’s theories, as they were applied in the Conservatory, may qualify as modernist in regard to the reconceptualization of form, a simultaneous break with and expansion of Rimsky-Korsakovian pedagogical concepts, and their contributions to the development of a “new musical language.” Unlike modernists such as Schoenberg, who were more often concerned with pitch and harmonic vocabulary, the Leningrad school’s “new musical language” focused more on texture, overall form, and new conceptions of line and melody, thanks in part to the introduction of intonatsiya and form-as-process. Also unlike some Western composers, the Leningrad modernists, particularly Shcherbachyov, did not believe in a division between high and low, or a kind of elitism towards the public or the past. Instead, Shcherbachyov embraced musical diversity, whether of the art music past or the proletarian music present. Along with usual studies of styles from the eighteenth-century forward, contemporary mass songs and theater music were included as part of the stylistic diversity that Shcherbachyov encouraged in the classroom. His approach, what Haas calls polistilistika (polystylistics), encouraged

---

74 This dialectic approach to form is implicitly and explicitly present throughout Book I, revealing an underlying Marxist-Hegelian sense of dialectical materialism. See Asaf’yev in Tull, Book I, “B. V. Asaf’yev’s Musical Form as a Process,” 184-598.
75 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 78.
76 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 81-85.
A comparative study of styles and general principles instead of a focus on the language of an individual composer or era.\textsuperscript{78} As Valerian Bogdan-Berezovskiy states,

A hybridization of elements drawn from widely divergent styles can produce the most unexpected results, provided it is prompted by a sharp intellect and a sharp ear, provided it emerges from a deep comprehension of the logic of musical thought.\textsuperscript{79}

One condition of this approach was that a student must subsume the learned styles under his or her own compositional voice, maintaining his or her own identity, yet borrowing from the past. From this form of training, which Shostakovich may have participated in and of which he certainly would have been aware, the younger generation of composers would have a new language built not upon new approaches to form, texture, and line, but the assimilation of past musical styles. As Haas states,

Clearly the students were not being encouraged to become eclectics. The goal was rather a highly individualized and flexible “metastyle,” in which stylistically marked passages could be juxtaposed, contrasted and like any simpler or stylistically ambiguous material, be submitted to a developmental process.\textsuperscript{80}

This “developmental process” is a crucial aspect of form-as-process and the development of intonatsii in a given work. Hence, polistilistika can be viewed as an integral component of form-as-process. What Haas’s conception of the Leningrad school has to offer, therefore, is the connection between Asaf’yev’s ideas of intonatsiya, form-as-process, linearism, and the endorsement and exploration of stylistic heterogeneity that resulted from Shcherbachyov’s pedagogical approach of polistilistika.


\textsuperscript{80} Haas, \textit{Leningrad’s Modernists}, 103.
Other Arts

Outside the sphere of musical culture, though certainly deeply intertwined with it, modernist endeavors continued in the visual arts, including painting, film, and theater. The visual arts of the early twenties were emerging from the cubist, futurist, and suprematist trends, having moved already towards the aesthetic of constructivism. Different approaches to coping with the new government and its construction of a socialist society emerged as well, with the spiritualists (Vasily Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich), who argued for art as a spiritual activity whose practical application would be considered a by-product; and artists such as Vladimir Tatlin and Aleksandr Rodchenko who supported the notion of the artist as engineer whose work benefited from the “tools of modern production” and was designed to serve the proletariat. Stressing functionality and usefulness, the constructivist style, emerging from the experiments of Tatlin and Rodchenko, dominated most of the twenties. It sought a merging of the experimental with the proletarian ideas of the new government to create life engineered through art that pointed towards the future Soviet utopia. From objects for daily use, such as teapots and tables, to poster art and theatrical design, the constructivist style was the modernist approach of the twenties that foreshadowed aspects of the socialist realist aesthetic of the thirties.

The constructivist style was also applied to theater and film with prominent directors such as Vsevolod Meyerhold, Sergey Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov developing

---

82 Examples of the teapots and cups that Malevich produced were “practical” by accident. See Gray, Russian Experiment in Art, 246-247.
83 Gray, Russian Experiment in Art, 246-247.
the new aesthetic to serve their own experimental needs. Meyerhold’s “biomechanics,” which has been described as the application of constructivism to theater, changed the manner in which actors moved.\textsuperscript{84} Based in part on Taylorist approaches to body movement and reflexology, Meyerhold emphasized a consciously constructed movement, involving acrobatic stunts and extreme gestures all fueled by the inner emotions of the character.\textsuperscript{85} He also employed the constructivist aesthetic in his set designs, hiring “artist-engineers,” such as Lyubov Popova, known for their cubo-futurist/constructivist approaches and “left” political leanings.

Known as the most experimental and innovative theater director of his time, Meyerhold held great influence over his students, including Eisenstein. Eisenstein began working with Meyerhold in 1921, producing stage works similar to his teacher’s own style. From his collaborations with Meyerhold, Eisenstein began to develop his ideas about montage and its use in theater and later film. This included his well-known concept of the “montage of attractions,” which was a blend of circus acrobatics, shock stunts, and propagandistic content that led to the promotion of Soviet agitational propaganda.\textsuperscript{86} From 1925 and forward, Eisenstein worked in the medium of film to further develop his notions of montage and experiment in a modernist idiom that suited the proletarian propaganda of its time. Later in the thirties, this idiom would be labeled “formalist,” leading to several attacks on his work and subsequently his own reevaluation

\textsuperscript{84} Gray, \textit{Russian Experiment in Art}, 257-258 and 309.
\textsuperscript{86} See Richard Taylor, ed., \textit{The Eisenstein Reader}, trans. Richard Taylor and William Powell (London: British Film Institute, 1998) for a selection of his writings, including those for the twenties. For a more comprehensive set of his writings from that time, see Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, eds., \textit{S. M. Eisenstein, Selected Works, Volume 1} (London: British Film Institute, 1991). The other volumes (2 and 3) provide writings from later in his life (thirties and forties).
of his output. Since Eisenstein’s modernism and his involvement in film culture is an issue to be more deeply explored in the following chapter, it is sufficient to state here that he had a significant modernist influence upon Russian and international film of the twentieth century that surely impacted the development of film music of the twenties and beyond.  

87

Literary culture also had a significant, though somewhat understudied effect on the musical culture of the time. Esti Sheinberg in her book, *Irony, Satire, Parody and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich* makes key arguments in favor of drawing connections between the Russian Formalists, general literary culture, and Shostakovich. In her introduction she states,

> The influence of literature and literary ideas on Shostakovich is remarkable. All his biographers agree that besides being a tireless student of music, he was also a fervent reader. This is apparent in his musical works, too. In spite of being generally regarded a symphonist, Shostakovich seems to be rather a ‘literary’ composer.

88

Sheinberg’s goal, particularly the section on parody, is to demonstrate how the ideas of the Formalists played out in Shostakovich’s music:

89

> …Shostakovich’s literary bias is not only expressed in the relatively superficial ‘literary tendencies’ of his music, but that the literary theories of the time affected the very structure and basis of his compositional techniques, and influenced his development as a composer.

90

She outlines historical relationships between Shostakovich and significant Formalist figures such as Yuri Tynianov, Mikhail Bakhtin, Victor Shklovsky, and Boris

---

87 This is not to imply that influential directors such as Lev Kuleshov, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and Dziga Vertov did impact film in the twentieth century. It is the montage experiments of all of these figures that set the style of avant-garde filmmaking in the twenties.


89 Ibid., 157.

90 Ibid.
Eikhenbaum. Sheinberg admits that there is a lack of evidence to show a direct relationship between Shostakovich and Bakhtin, a writer involved in Formalist circles, but she presents plenty of evidence to demonstrate Shostakovich’s connection to certain Formalists (Tînyanov) and the literary circle as a whole through his multi-talented friend, Ivan Sollertinsky.

The crux of Sheinberg’s argument is the notion of Shostakovich’s ambiguity. As part of her discussion she recognizes that Nicolay Gogol and Fyodor Dostoevsky were Shostakovich’s favorite writers in part due to his preference for ambiguity. The “consciously ambiguous artistic language,” that these writers used was therefore attractive for Shostakovich, leading to settings of some of Gogol’s satires. Sheinberg suggests another reason for Shostakovich’s appreciation of these great writers – his exposure to the writings and ideas of the Russian Formalists and the Serapion Brothers. Sheinberg suggests that the interest of these groups in the grotesque and parodic and their “combination of tradition and innovation” (i.e., interest in pre- and post-revolutionary trends) possibly influenced Shostakovich and paralleled his interests as well. The connections that Sheinberg draws between Shostakovich and the Formalists, also supported by other scholars, demonstrates how deeply involved the composer was in the culture of the twenties.

---

91 Ibid., 3-4.
92 Ibid., 4.
93 Most famous and relevant to the twenties is The Nose. He later attempted a setting of The Gamblers.
Defining and providing examples of parody, irony, and the grotesque in Shostakovich’s music, Sheinberg addresses several potential points of cross-fertilization between the Formalists’ ideas and Shostakovich’s early music, such as The Nose, The Preludes and briefly discusses the early symphonies. Central among the several ideas that she relates to Shostakovich relevant to this discussion of modernism are Shklovsky’s concepts of defamiliarization and Bakhtin’s complex of ideas that surround the notion of utterance.

In his watershed article, “Art as Technique,” Shklovsky stated,

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects ‘unfamiliar,’ to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. *Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important.*

This brief statement reflects the concept “defamiliarization” common to any discussion of Russian Formalism. Shifts in perception are integral to understanding this concept and to defamiliarizing an object. Initially, Sheinberg interprets Shklovsky’s defamiliarization as follows:

The basic formalist aesthetic principle was *ostraneniye*: estrangement. This term meant, in formalist aesthetics, the separation and ‘alienation’ of semantic units from their conventional context in which they became so assimilated as to pass unnoticed and their relocation in a new (and alien) context; the resulting alienation between the re-located unit and its new context is supposed to create the required awareness and distancing that are needed for aesthetic consumption.

---


Later, she further refines this definition, interpreting Shklovsky’s ideas as requiring the necessary component of perception. It is through the process of perception that one can defamiliarize an object or draw attention to its artistic nature and away from its everyday nature “laying bare the device.” This defamiliarization can be achieved, according to Sheinberg, using the device of parody. Sheinberg frames the device of parody through the work of Tynyanov, particularly his article, “Dostoyevsky and Gogol: Towards a Theory of Parody.” Tynyanov described parody as a learning tool, where the artist plays with the style of a former artist, through which emerges a “struggle,” enabling the composer’s style to be created. Since Shostakovich is known for his multiple quotations and stylistic allusions, it appears simple to apply her theories of parody to much of his work. She does so with The Nose, where her discussion centers on the opera’s references to Alban Berg’s Wozzeck. In a later discussion of other techniques of parody, Sheinberg analyzes the Fifteenth Symphony, demonstrating Shostakovich’s use of quotations and allusions in a parodic manner. Referencing Richard Wagner, Gioachino Rossini and himself, Sheinberg claims that Shostakovich assigns general meaning to these quotations and motifs of euphoria and dysphoria. With her analyses of The Nose, the Preludes and the Fifteenth Symphony, Sheinberg makes few conclusions,

98 See the “Historical Background” section for her chapter on parody and Shostakovich. Sheinberg, Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque, 153-186.
100 Sheinberg, Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque, 164-167.
101 Ibid., 198-204.
but does demonstrate that parody, as defined through the burgeoning ideas of the Russian Formalists in the twenties, can be found in a few examples of Shostakovich’s early and later music.

One particularly striking aspect of Sheinberg’s discussion is the set of historical parallels that she draws between Shostakovich, Sollertinsky, and the Formalists. Sheinberg suggested that Shostakovich could have potentially been exposed to the Formalists’ ideas of defamiliarization, parody, and plurivocality either through direct (friendship with Tïnyanov) or indirect exposure (knowledge of Bakhtin via Sollertinsky). She goes further to suggest that Shostakovich’s later works, works she deems more complex, could easily be analyzed in light of Bakhtin’s ideas. Discussing Shostakovich’s “double-voicedness,” she states,

In his later works, Shostakovich uses a kind of “musical plurivocality,” which might be the result of an attempt to apply Bakhtin’s ideas about literary plurivocality to music. His late works often include double voiced musical parodies about double-voiced musical utterances; far from mere parody, they become musical versions of the Bakhtinian unfinalizable dialogue.

Although there is no evidence of a direct relationship between Bakhtin and Shostakovich, it is tempting to draw yet another connection between Shostakovich’s musical culture and the Formalists’ literary culture. Referring back to Haas’s discussion of Shcherbachyov and his ideas of polistilistika and the overall emphasis on a “metastyle” that embraced heterogeneity, one may find a parallel between this approach to pedagogy and Bakhtin’s and Tïnyanov’s ideas of plurivocality, dialogism, and parody. These are simply parallel trends, since there is no evidence to show that Shcherbachyov appropriated and used the

102 There is little documented evidence to suggest that he had direct connections with some Formalists, including Bakhtin. Sheinberg describes these potential connections in *Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque*, 168-172.
Formalists’ ideas to form his new pedagogy. It is interesting to note, however, that in regard to his aforementioned essay “Dostoyevsky and Gogol: Towards a Theory of Parody,” Sheinberg summarizes Tnyanov’s parody of historical styles as almost a “learning tool.”

The function of parody is stressed almost as a learning tool, by which an artist, a writer, or composer ‘plays’ with the style of a former artist; it is by the continuous manipulation, or ‘stilization’ of the older style, that a ‘struggle’ emerges in the form of ‘parody,’ which enables the new personal style of the younger artist to take shape.

As Haas summarizes,

[There] was an aesthetic for a consciously heterogeneous style, which could only arise from a methodical comparative study of styles, no less rigorous than the study of the compositional procedures of form and melody presented in the syllabus…Once the students had come to understand the significance of these general principles…they would be better situated to borrow piecemeal from one or more strongly characterized styles with little risk of becoming an epigone. Thus each encounter with a style resulted not in a set of rules and conventions to assimilate but a set of possibilities, which the young composer would be free to discard or out to use in the formation of his or her unique personal voice.

The parody technique of the literary Formalists and the polistilistika of Shcherbachyov appear to be two complementary approaches to which Shostakovich was exposed. These approaches encouraged composers like Shostakovich to draw from the past through quotation and stylistic allusion and develop a “multi-voiced” style, which contributed to the formation of his compositional style in his current and future work. Further, this

---

105 Ibid.
106 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 90-91. Haas bases this summary in part on a description of the technique from Bogdanov-Berezovsky. Haas quotes his stance on the use of accompanimental figures as follows: “Don’t use prepared recipes! Everything must flow from a concept of the whole, as determined by the specifics of the melodic shape. The realization of the concept in bold relief allows for the broadest and sometimes the most unexpected associations and parallels. Seek them out in Brahms and Reger! Look at Mahler and Stravinsky, or Mozart and Scarlatti! A hybridization of elements drawn from widely divergent styles can produce the most unexpected results, provided it is prompted by a sharp intellect and a sharp ear, provided it emerges from a deep comprehension of the logic of musical thought.” See Bogdanov-Berezovsky Dorogi iskusstva, 45.
multiplicitous style and potentially his “multiple identity” could be related to film trends of the time as well, where Eisensteinian and Vertovian montage, often involving the juxtaposition of two opposing forces to create a third meaning, also encourages a culling of the historical, visual, and musical past. The collision of disparate “ideas” represented as quotation or stylistic allusions to the musical, literary, and cinematic past is an issue to be further explored in the following chapters.

In a recent essay, “Shostakovich and the Russian Literary Tradition,” Caryl Emerson builds upon Sheinberg’s discussions of parody and irony offering a point of view based in literary studies. Where Sheinberg points to examples of musical parody in The Nose, borrowing in part from Berg’s Wozzeck, Emerson looks to the literary aspects of the opera. To begin, she generalizes Sheinberg’s approach to parody:

Parody is not obliged to laugh predecessors down or discredit them as cultural values. Quite the contrary; parody serves to keep earlier forms alive by constant rejuxtaposition and recontextualization.  

Emerson has Shostakovich’s essay “Why The Nose” in mind while summarizing Sheinberg’s definition and application of parody. In this essay, Shostakovich described his approach as something close to Gogol, where his music “does not make things comical. I consider that appropriate, since Gogol lays out all these comic events in a serious tone. In this lies the strength and dignity of Gogolian humor.” For Emerson, parody is a kind of tribute to the past. Providing a discussion of the libretto, Emerson

---

shows how Shostakovich had a consolidated approach to parody and pieced together parts of *The Nose*, other writings by Gogol, including *Taras Bulba*, *The Marriage* and *Dead Souls* and Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* and to some degree *The Double*. This literary montage, not at all related to the cinematic montage of Eisenstein as she argues, was a way of voicing two figures of the nineteenth century and contributed to the “parodic grotesque” quality of the opera. The stylistic quotation and allusion to these writers parallels Shostakovich’s approach to musical borrowings, a technique he may have learned from Shcherbachyov’s *polistilistika*, as previously illustrated in the above quotes of Sheinberg and Haas. It seems that the act and product of montage, either literary or musical, may have been a factor in Shostakovich’s early compositional style. Montage and *polistilistika* are two issues to which I return in later discussions of Shostakovich’s early film scores.

**Modernism and Socialist Realism**

By the late twenties, when RAPM had gained more power over musical life and the attack on “light” music began, “moderate modernism” became the marginalized aesthetic. From 1930 to 1932, RAPM had tyrannical control over musical production as evidenced through the crackdown on “formalism,” while some music writers were rallying for reconciliation between modernist and “new” aesthetics in music.110 With the dissolution of RAPM and other organizations such as RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) in 23 April 1932, new Unions were developed that were temporarily

---

less restrictive and led by those who were intolerant of RAPM’s platform. The term “socialist realism” is said to have been coined in that same year by Ivan Gronsky in connection with the development of the All-Union Organizing Committee for the formation of the new Union of Writers. The term was also used at an October 1932 meeting in Gorky’s apartment, where Stalin was reported to have said, “An artist must above all portray life truthfully. And if he shows our life truthfully, on its way to socialism, that will be socialist realism.” The literary historian, C. Vaughan James claims that

Socialist Realism was a tendency in the arts associated with the rise of the proletariat and beginning, in Russia, in the middle of the 1890s. Only after formation and promulgation at the 1934 Congress of Writers did it become the officially sponsored method, first in literature and subsequently in the arts in general. (emphasis of the author)

By the 1934 meeting of the Union of Writers, mentioned above, where socialist realism was codified and named as a formal aesthetic, the shift was complete: the second wave of modernism, or “moderate” modernism, was not only the aesthetic that slowly eased the

---

112 C. Vaughan James, Soviet Socialist Realism, Origins and Theory (London: Macmillan Press, 1973), 83. It is also noted that Gronsky was the inventor of this term in N. G. Shakhnazarova, Paradoksi sovetskoy muzikal'noy kul'tury 30-e gody [Paradoxes of Soviet Musical Culture in the 1930s] (Moscow: Indrik, 2001), 25.
114 James, Soviet Socialist Realism, 87.
115 This was at the First Congress of Soviet Writers. See A. Zhdanov, Maxim Gorky, N. Bukharin, K. Radek, and A. Stetsky, Problems of Soviet Literature, Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers’ Congress (New York: International Publishers, 1934), for the translation of speeches by Zhdanov and Gorky.
transition, but, as I later argue, some of its traits became subsumed and renamed as socialist realism.

The narrative that I propose is one of many of the recent past that has challenged the notion that socialist realism is an outright rejection of modernist leanings. The narrative of modernism and its polarized opposite, socialist realism, was one encouraged by historians who illustrated a split throughout the twenties between the modernists and proletarian factions, with the proletarian factions “winning” in the end. Even Boris Schwarz encourages such a simplistic narrative. He describes a split between the two factions early on, leading to the eventual dissolution of modernist practices.\textsuperscript{116} Writings on Shostakovich also support this interpretation, where Shostakovich was a “disillusioned modernist” or “defeated” by the new aesthetic.\textsuperscript{117} Aspects of Shostakovich’s modernism, however, worked well within the burgeoning socialist realist aesthetic.

**Shostakovich and Modernism**

Shostakovich was the kind of modernist who could adapt to the socialist realist aesthetic. This construction of Shostakovich challenges the idea that the composer was a defeated modernist or victim of the regime prior to 1936.

Even during his lifetime, writers on music were making a legend out of Shostakovich. Included in these writings, particularly of the past thirty years, has been the creation of image and character of Shostakovich as either a fully supportive Communist or radical dissident. This has been especially true since the appearance of Solomon Volkov’s book *Testimony* (1979), where Shostakovich is depicted as an


enraged, secret dissident. Other books and articles that have followed and supported Shostakovich’s alleged autobiography, including writers such as Ian Macdonald, Allen Ho, and Dmitry Feofanov, further bolster the idea that Shostakovich was a closet dissident throughout his life, reading many of his works in a detailed, narrative manner that reveals their own political agenda instead of any nuanced understanding of the composer and his work. Since the publication of Volkov’s book, a controversy has emerged, where two simplified perspectives dominate: Shostakovich as Communist or Shostakovich as dissident. The “gray” area between is where Shostakovich actually worked and lived.118 This recent reception has implicitly supported the idea that Shostakovich, in his early years, was an ardent modernist who was forced by the government to change into a proper socialist realist and who then encoded anti-government messages in music.119 Other texts, such as biographies Shostakovich: A Life Remembered by Laurel Fay and Shostakovich: A Life by Elizabeth Wilson have provided more nuanced readings of the complexity of Shostakovich’s life. Levon Akopian, in his survey of musical life in Russia, also denounces the Volkov perspective, stating that people who lived in the time of Shostakovich cannot be so simply drawn.120 As I discuss below, Frolova-Walker demonstrates that composers who were modernist in the twenties willingly turned to socialist realism by the early thirties, overturning the previous idea that composers had fallen prey to the aesthetic and that all music composed in the thirties was of poor quality. Certainly Shostakovich can be considered as another case under

Frolova-Walker’s theory – a composer who adapted well to the new aesthetic because of his varied genres and styles and his attention to political trends.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1906, Shostakovich enrolled in the conservatory at the age of 13. He studied under Maximilian Steinberg, himself a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, while he was also exposed to the quickly changing environment of the conservatory. As Haas has stated, Shostakovich attended a “second university,” which consisted of the modern culture of NEP Petrograd/Leningrad, ranging from art to popular entertainment. Shostakovich also played as a pianist-illyustrator for the Bright Reel, Splendid Palace, and Picadilly cinema houses beginning in 1924. This undoubtedly gave Shostakovich not only a needed income, but experience in the joining of music and image to illustrate a narrative.

In addition to his studies, formal and informal, Shostakovich also affiliated himself with well-known and progressive modernists of his time. As previously discussed, he was a member in the LASM from 1926 until its dissolution and associated with the Russian literary Formalists, particularly Žižiaev. His musical interests included the innovations of the West as well as a penchant for the grotesque, parodic, and ironic as Sheinberg has discussed. Shostakovich also worked with experimental theater directors such as Meyerhold on productions like The Bed Bug, and later the film directors Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg from the FEKS group. It was through these directors that Shostakovich gained insight into the theater and film cultures that would

---

121 Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 25.
123 As noted in footnote 35, the LASM was started in 1926, as was the Circle of New Music. Later, the two were joined together in 1927. See Haas, Leningrad’s Modernists, 17.
124 FEKS is an acronym for the “Factory of the Eccentric Actor.”
later benefit his film music composition. It was also around the middle of the twenties that Shostakovich began to use revolutionary themes in his works. Some have argued that starting with his Second Symphony (1927) his compositions were “geared to the defense of the Revolution.”¹²⁵ His first opera (The Nose), his ballets (The Golden Age, The Bolt), his next symphony (Third Symphony), and various works for TRAM (The Theater for Working-Class Youth) and for the cinema show that he was producing music that reflected the post-revolutionary ideology common to the time.¹²⁶

These works also included modernist traits specific to the twenties. The Nose, as Emerson and Sheinberg argue, exhibits traits associated with the Russian Literary Formalists. Emerson provides a persuasive discussion of literary montage in The Nose, showing how Shostakovich pieced together bits from Gogol’s other works and Dostoevsky’s writings. There are also musical moments of stylistic eclecticism in the opera, particularly in the Posting-Inn scene (Act Two, Scene Seven), where nineteenth-century opera arias, Russian village music, street calls, and various dance forms (waltz, galop) are referenced and/or parodied. This scene, even more so than other scenes, has a “montagist” manner, reminiscent of cinematographic editing mainly due to the significant shifts in musical texture and content. It is also worth noting that this scene was primarily invented by Shostakovich and not directly based on Gogol’s story.¹²⁷ This stylistic

¹²⁵ Maes, History of Russian Music, 265.
¹²⁶ Shostakovich was heavily involved with TRAM, particularly by the end of the twenties, when TRAM had become a professional organization. See Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 57-59. For information on Shostakovich’s involvement with proletarian music groups, see Edmunds, The Soviet Proletarian Music Movement.
diversity is reminiscent of the polistilistika discussed in relation to Shcherbachyov and his new pedagogical techniques at the Leningrad conservatory.

Shostakovich’s first three symphonies show the variety of his music and how he was situated “between” modernism and socialist realism from 1925 through 1929. His First Symphony (1925) reveals his first inclinations towards Leningrad modernism, his “classicist” Steinbergian training, and his potential for transitioning into the socialist realist aesthetic. The work overall resembles classical symphonic form, divided into four movements. The first movement references the “mirror” sonata forms of the late classical period, particularly as seen in the late work of W.A. Mozart. An analyst can easily see a three-part structure with an introduction and two themes. Instead of having the two themes return in the usual order in the Recapitulation, theme 2 appears before theme 1 and the movement closes with the introduction material, therefore outwardly resembling a “mirror” of the Exposition. Within these sections, however, the development of the material challenges the general structure, as I discuss shortly.

The second movement, the only other movement that at all resembles the idealized form of a late classical or early romantic symphony, is structured according to the logic of a scherzo and trio, while the third movement almost resembles a kind of rondo form based upon themes that are thematically closely related. The finale, a movement that some critics find most difficult to understand in the context of the

---

128 Haas analyses this symphony in penetrating detail in his chapter “Shostakovich’s First Symphony: Process and a Symphonic Schema,” which I also rely upon here in my discussion of this work.
symphony as a whole, is the one movement that diverges most from traditional classical form. It essentially has the outward structure of sonata form, but thematically does not follow the usual sonata schema. In addition to the development of two main themes, Shostakovich also quotes readily from the third movement in the middle of the Recapitulation (Appendix A, Figure 1, measure 241ff.). For the remainder of the finale, he develops the two themes, the introductory material of the finale, and the third movement quotation.

As Haas suggests in his detailed analysis of the First Symphony, a purely schematic approach to the symphony does not describe the inner workings and reveal Shostakovich’s compositional approach. Haas argues at least two main points that guide his analysis and inform my brief discussion. First, he works with an idea from Marina Sabinina, where she claimed that the whole symphony and its themes “pour forth from one intonational source – the introduction of the first movement.” The second point focuses on how Shostakovich created unity out of stylistically disparate material, ultimately revealing Shostakovich’s ability to apply the pedagogical notion of *polistilistika* to his composition style.

In a detailed discussion, Haas traces the thematic transformation of the introductory material of the symphony through each movement, demonstrating how Shostakovich retains the contour of the specific intervals of the introductory theme, yet transforms that theme through chromatic fills and slight variation of the intervals by a whole step (from a sixth to seventh, for example). Haas points to antecedents in Franz

---


Liszt, Richard Wagner, Aleksandr Skryabin, and Aleksandr Glazunov for Shostakovich’s approach to thematic transformation. Shostakovich composed themes that alluded to both Liszt and Skryabin, which share affinities with their originals not necessarily in terms of the succession of exact pitches, but in intervallic usage and contour, use of key, tempo marking, and instrumentation. Shostakovich rarely quoted other composers, but instead used similar musical gestures, as he did in the First Symphony. These gestures were still perceptible, since contemporaneous critics claimed to have heard the influence of or allusion to other composers, such as Prokofiev and Stravinsky.\(^\text{134}\) Haas successfully reveals the nuances of Shostakovich’s ability to absorb the style of other composers, not just in terms of pitch or harmony, but in contour, instrumentation, and other factors that contribute a “sound-alike” of other composers without directly quoting from them.

Another example of Shostakovich’s approach to thematic transformation, which affects unity and form, concerns the function of the finale’s coda. This coda, deemed to be lacking in closure by some critics, continues to develop previous themes in the recapitulation (Appendix A, Figures 2 and 3, measures 224ff.), including a quotation from the third movement (fanfare motive),\(^\text{135}\) a fragment of the introductory theme of the third movement (measures 1-2), and the finale’s theme 2 (measures 109-117).\(^\text{136}\)

Another point of thematic transformation occurs near the end of the finale. By measure 275, the fanfare motive and theme 2 have become elided into one another, making it difficult to discern one from the other (Appendix A, Figure 4). This “elision” of thematic ideas into a theme that becomes a seamless hybrid appears to be a common trait in


\(^{136}\) The critics that I refer to are Calvocoressi and Asaf’yev. See Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 165.
Shostakovich’s music and is another way in which Shostakovich transformed ideas. Within the work it is clear that Shostakovich explored a transformation of themes, or in Asafy’evan language, of “intonatsii.”

Lastly, Shostakovich’s use of polistilistika plays an important role in this symphony. Shostakovich’s introductory theme in the first movement served as a kind of “Ur” theme that had potential to “elide” into allusions from other composers or be transformed under different genres. With each transformation of the theme, Haas argues, a new member is added to the work’s family of themes, which by work’s end includes two marches, a waltz, a folksong, recitatives, and thematic allusions to Scriabin, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Glazunov, Wagner, Stravinsky, and probably others.

Shostakovich’s ability to allude but not quote – using aspects such as instrumentation, overall melodic contour, or key – is something that he uses for rest of his career, including his film music career. In this symphony, Shostakovich demonstrated that he had the ability to successfully maneuver between the “classical” in terms of outward form, and the modernist, by way of the use of Shcherbachyov’s polistilistika and his approach to thematic transformation. This same ability is what allowed him to adopt the socialist realist aesthetic. His next two symphonies, where he merges the proletarian and with modern, shows that he could continue the logic of merging disparate styles to appease both the modernists and the proletarians. In the chapters that follow, I suggest that his amalgamation of styles becomes a critical point for early developments of the socialist realist aesthetic in the early thirties. Overall, the concepts of polistilistika and of form-as-process act as antecedents to and parlay well into traits of socialist realism and
its goal to create unity out of diversity through a culling of the past. These two concepts also fit nicely into the framework of socialist realism in the early thirties.

**Socialist Realism and its Narratives**

The continued re-evaluation and re-conceptualization of socialist realism is an ongoing process, deepening the understanding of the arts under Stalinism. Some discussions of socialist realism as a cultural phenomenon have addressed the many complex and multi-faceted points of the aesthetic. In Irina Gutkin’s *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic, 1890-1934*, she finds that the “heritage of Russian radical intelligentsia culture was shared by both the artistic avant-garde and “progressive” political activists throughout a long revolutionary period that stretched from the 1890s through the mid-1930s.” She identifies the shifts in meaning of three tropic concepts – searches for the new everyday, for a new man, and for a new love – which were shared by both the political and artistic avant-garde. Gutkin’s discussion therefore traces the tendencies that James identified as leading to the socialist realist method in 1934.

In the case of music, Russian and Western texts have attempted to conceptualize socialist realism. The somewhat recent anthology of papers from the Brno

---


139 See above quote by James, footnote 115.

International Music Festival in 2001 directly addresses the idea of socialist realism in music in the Former Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{141} This is of course, an on-going discussion, since what constituted the detailed application of the concept of socialist realism in the arts constantly shifted under Stalin and beyond.

Although it is not possible here to provide a tidy and complete definition of socialist realism in music, there are some features that should be noted as a general part of the aesthetic. Some common phrases that one associates with the aesthetic part of the socialist realist doctrine include: “engineers of human souls,” “national in form, socialist in content,” and the relationship of “idei’nost’” (ideology), “parti’nost’” (party spirit or the party line), and “narod’nost’” (generally the folk).\textsuperscript{142} All of these phrases contributed to the same idea that socialist realism in its application to the arts was a method for emphasizing unity of the people under the idea of socialism, portraying the “better” reality of the future, and transforming life through art.\textsuperscript{143}

The application of socialist realism as doctrine to music occurred much later than that of literature and film, yet still emphasized some of the same requirements for “truthfulness” and “reality,” as evidenced in a 1958 message from the Central Committee:

\textsuperscript{141} Bek, Chew, Macek, \textit{Socialist Realism and Music}.
\textsuperscript{142} See Gutkin, \textit{Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic}, 51, Groys, \textit{Total Art of Stalinism}, 24, and James, \textit{Soviet Socialist Realism}, 89ff for discussions of these concepts. Narod’nost is the most difficult to translate, since it could mean “of the folk,” “by the folk,” among other things, depending upon the word’s context. See Billington, \textit{Icon and the Axe}, for a more detailed description of the Soviet era and these ideas.
Soviet musicians are called upon to reflect reality in moving, beautiful, poetic images, permeated with optimism and lofty humaneness, the pathos of construction and the spirit of the world.\textsuperscript{144}

Stereotypically speaking, socialist realism in music has also been described as an avoidance of “formalism,” “art for art’s sake,” and Western avant-garde or jazz music, and the “primitiveness” of village and urban folk music as well as an embrace of the “popular” or the “folk” in music.\textsuperscript{145} However, socialist realism in music in the early thirties also incorporated contemporary trends, as I discuss later, redefining itself through various shifts.\textsuperscript{146}

The following discussions of writings from art history, literature, and musicology challenge this simplistic approach to the modernist/socialist realist narrative, elaborating further on the concept of socialist realism in the arts and showing the re-evaluation of the concept of socialist realism as a simplistic rejection of or continuation of the social, artistic, musical, and cinematic experiments of the twenties. Instead, as Gutkin argues, avant-garde tendencies of the twenties can be seen to have evolved and/or mutated into the socialist realist aesthetic. Using a nexus of several essays by Groys, Frolova-Walker, and Epstein, I consider how these texts challenge traditional notions of socialist realism.

**Boris Groys’s *Total Art of Stalinism***

Undoubtedly an influential text, Groys’s *Total Art of Stalinism* is the first book to challenge the long-held notion that socialist realist art was unworthy of study because of its displacement of modernism. Beginning with the question of whether is it “morally

\textsuperscript{144} James, *Soviet Socialist Realism*, 88, quoting the Central Committee’s message to the Second All-Union Congress of Composers, 1958.


\textsuperscript{146} See also Edmunds, “The Ambiguous Origins of Socialist Realism,” 117 for a brief discussion of this as well.
defensible” to study art produced by totalitarian societies, like that of Soviet Russia or Nazi Germany, Groys defends a study of socialist realist art not only because it fills a lacuna in art historical study, but also because he wants to challenge the “rosy” view of all art necessarily having to be produced under circumstances where artists are allowed total freedom and individuality to create. Groys’s main point, supported by his justification of the study of socialist realist art, is that socialist realism as an aesthetic in art did not replace and reject modernism, but instead continued its political and social goals. Acknowledging that there are certain aesthetic differences between modernist and socialist realist art, he outlines how modernism’s failures become socialist realism’s victories in terms of social and artistic politics.

A point that Groys makes early in his text is a counter to the heavily publicized idea that socialist realist art was made by the masses. Instead, he argues, socialist realist art was created for them by a higher governing force, independent of market forces and designed to lead the masses towards the ideals and beliefs of that force deemed to be communal or socialist. As Groys states,

Socialist realism was not created by the masses but was formulated in their name by well-educated and experienced elites who had assimilated the experience of the avant-garde and been brought to socialist realism by the internal logic of the avant-garde method itself, which had nothing to do with the actual tastes and demands of the masses.

This art therefore served in the spirit of the role of agitational-propaganda (“agit-prop”).

In the twenties, agit-prop served to rally support for the post-revolutionary government

---

147 Groys, *Total Art of Stalinism*, 7.
148 Some consider this point extremist and have responded to Groys’s claim. See Gutkin, *Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic*, 4 for more information. Gutkin disagrees with Groys’ ideas in part. As noted earlier, she found that the avant-garde and progressive activists shared the same culture, instead of being in separate factions.
through media, including theater, art and music. Artists sought to express their political leanings through their work, since it was their only venue for political activity. Groys claims that it was during the early twenties, when the NEP era began, not the early thirties that the avant-garde began to decline and eventually “lose all its influence” by the end of the decade. As with music, “fellow-travelers” in art combined the modernist approach with more traditional approaches encouraged in a post-revolutionary environment, suggesting this decline. A constructivist and later a productionist aesthetic emerged from this union of politics and modernism. The twenties then served as a transition from modernism to socialist realism, where the previous aesthetic was absorbed in the political project of the latter.

In the thirties, the modernist constructivist aesthetic was replaced with socialist realist one, while the project of modernism was borrowed and redefined. Socialist realism sought to embrace the past, or “learn from the classics,” to produce art that was “national in form, socialist in content.” Socialist realist art, inherently ahistorical in its variety, borrowed from nineteenth-century realism, antiquity, and the Italian Renaissance in terms of aesthetics, but its project was to transform reality, to prepare for a better future or utopia, and overall use art to communicate a communal message that supported the State and most importantly, Stalin. By the early thirties, the socialist realist project consisted of an adoption of the agit-prop spirit, combined with modernist artistic notions of the transformative power of art and the ability to transcend the immediate present. The

150 Ibid., 23.
151 See footnote 37 for a description of fellow-travelers.
152 Groys, Total Art of Stalinism, 24. The phrase “nationalist in form and socialist in content” is attributed to Stalin and often associated with advent of socialist realism.
153 Ibid., 46. The idea of transcendence of the present towards a better future was originally a modernist notion that underwent change during the course of the decade, from transcendence to a higher state to transcendence to a better world.
socialist realist project, building upon the idea of transcendence, therefore looked to “construct” a better future or utopia through the medium of art. In its ahistorical “realist” aesthetic, socialist realist art therefore depicted scenes of building the future, evoking images of what life will be if all goals are met in the present. As Groys states,

…the Stalin era satisfied the fundamental avant-garde demand that art cease representing life and begin transforming it by means of a total aesthetico-political project. Thus if Stalin is viewed as the artist-tyrant who succeeded the philosopher-tyrant typical of the age of contemplative, mimetic thought, Stalinist poetics is the immediate heir to constructivist poetics.  

The modernist project therefore was adopted by socialist realists. Art was designed to transcend the present experience and work towards an assumed common goal, orchestrated not by the masses, but for them.  

Groys also discusses the creation and role of the Soviet ideal citizen. As with many Soviet films of the thirties, Soviet art, according to Groys, portrayed an ideal “superman” that was the polar opposite of the “wrecker” (the avant-gardist). The “wrecker” sought to break with the past to pave way for the new future, while the “superman” sought to embrace the past to contribute to the future, much in the way socialist realist art borrowed from the past. These positive and negative ideals were the center of all media and rendered in the visual arts as protagonist forces. These protagonists then were depicted in a struggle that would determine the destiny of world. Groys emphasizes that although these characters could be real (Stalin and Trotsky, for example), the art is not realistic. He elaborates,

---

154 Ibid., 36.
155 Ibid., 9.
156 Ibid., 61.
[There is] a constant concern of socialism realist aesthetics with verisimilitude. Its heroes…must thoroughly resemble people if people are not to be frightened by their true aspect and this is why the writers and artists of socialist realism constantly bustle about inventing biographies, habits, clothing, physiognomies and so on. They almost seem to be in the employ of some sort of extraterrestrial bureau planning a trip to Earth – they want to make their envoys as anthropomorphic as possible, but they cannot keep the otherworldly void from gaping through all the cracks in the mask.\(^\text{157}\)

The creation of the socialist hero therefore served the propagandistic facet of socialist realist art. It is in this way that socialist realist rejects modernism – through a construction of the identity of modernism as “evil” in its desire to break away from the past, even though its goal to create a better future was borrowed by socialist realism.

Another point of intersection between modernist and socialist realist aesthetics is Groys’s claim that “socialist realism has already bridged the gap between elitism and kitsch by making visual kitsch the vehicle of elitist ideas, a combination that many in the West even today regard as the ideal union of ‘seriousness’ and ‘accessibility.’”\(^\text{158}\)

Although this mostly serves his argument about artistic production in the decades of the sixties and seventies, Groys shows that socialist realism, through its reconciliation of the modernist project with a socialist aesthetic, was almost a kind of pre-postmodernism in its unconcerned approach to quarrying the past.\(^\text{159}\) As I discuss shortly, with the understanding of postmodernism as a reaction and somewhat a rejection of modernism, socialist realism can be read as having similar traits to those of a postmodern style.

\(^{157}\) Ib., 63.

\(^{158}\) Groys, *Total Art of Stalinism*, 11.

\(^{159}\) This idea finds an alternate perspective in the work of Mikhail Epstein.
In a recent essay, “From Modernism to Socialist Realism in Four Years: Myaskovsky and Asafyev,” Marina Frolova-Walker challenges typical, cold war narratives of the transition from modernism of the 1910s and 1920s to the socialist realism of the 1930s. With the intent of describing why seemingly modernist figures turned to socialist realism in the thirties and to criticize the moralistic judgments of these figures, she states,

In the 1930s, the change had been described as a rite of passage from the erring ways of decadent modernism to a new socialist consciousness. Today, the period is usually viewed through a Fall narrative, and individual composers are regarded as hypocritical opportunists or tragic victims.160

Relying upon personal writings and stylistic discussions of musical compositions of two major modernist figures of the twenties, Boris Asaf’yev and Nikolay Myaskovsky, Frolova-Walker charts how these modernists voluntarily made the transition from the modernism to socialist realism. In her discussion of Asaf’yev’s dealing with the socialist realist aesthetic, Frolova-Walker noted that he began to compose music, a task he was unable to do well in the modernist vein. Taking two of his ballets, The Flames of Paris (1931) and The Fountain of Bakhchisarai (1932) she claimed that Asaf’yev composed works that were held as models for the new aesthetic. The Flames of Paris, revolutionary in content, fit well into the Soviet leanings coming out of the late twenties. The musical language was a pastiche of French music, from revolutionary songs such as the Marseillaise to Jean-Baptiste Lully and Etienne-Nicolas Méhul. Using Asaf’yev’s

---

writings, Frolova-Walker argues that this pastiche, which Asaf’ev claimed did not resemble Stravinsky’s brand of neoclassicism, was revolutionary in that it took songs that either represented the people or music that was not affiliated with nineteenth-century “bourgeois” styles. Quoting Asaf’ev, she states that he tried to embody the past “in clear images, full of the ideological and emotional influence of our reality.”¹⁶¹ Frolova-Walker therefore suggests that Asaf’ev composed a work that was revolutionary both in form and content.

It can be argued, however, that this approach was typical of the “moderate” modernists of the time. In the late twenties and early thirties, many composers were writing music that was revolutionary in content and modernist in musical form and language. Frolova-Walker states that Asaf’ev’s pastiche approach seems to echo his modernist writings on intonatsiya – a point that unfortunately she does not explore further. Asaf’ev’s pastiche approach resembles Shcherbachyov’s ideas about polistilistika. By the late twenties, composers such as Shostakovich, likely familiar with Shcherbachyov’s pedagogy, were composing “pastiche”-like music, as I later discuss in regard to Shostakovich’s Second and Third Symphonies, the Piano Concerto No.1, and The New Babylon. Asaf’ev was coming full circle, using a “recycled” version of his modernist ideas – cycled through Shcherbachyov, his students, and back to Asaf’ev.

In her discussion of Myaskovsky, Frolova-Walker shows his gradual move towards the new aesthetic. Using his letters to Asaf’ev, Frolova-Walker shows that Myaskovsky was unafraid of RAPM in 1929, a time when the First Five Year Plan was in effect and RAPM control was becoming ever-stronger. By 1931, however,

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 203.
Myaskovsky’s letters had already changed in tone, revealing that he had accepted the birth of a new musical aesthetic and he had started to work on his Twelfth Symphony about collectivization. 162 His symphony went on to great success, though Myaskovsky complained that “for me, the Twelfth Symphony is a compromise, and in private I’m ashamed of it.” 163 From this symphony forward Frolova-Walker argues that for some time in the early thirties, Myaskovsky begrudgingly accepted the socialist realist aesthetic as his own. He began to believe that music did not need to be modernist to be “good,” and began to search for new aesthetic concerns, while refusing to produce khaltura, or hackwork. 164 She concludes that Myaskovsky and other ASMovites made this eventual move towards socialist realism, despite their support of the modernist point of view. 165

Calling for the end of cold war narratives, Frolova-Walker rejects two points of view:

On the one hand, there is the popular romanticised account which tells us that a tragedy unfolded, a tragedy of courageous, pioneering artists who were broken on the wheel of Stalinism, to face a lifetime of humiliation in the composition of music beneath their dignity. On the other hand, there is the now much less popular account of those who retain some degree of sympathy for Stalinism, according to which our composers were saved from the decadence of bourgeois modernism and learnt to see the true dignity of socialist realist art, through the wise counsel of Stalin. 166

Although Frolova-Walker does successfully and convincingly challenge the “fall” narrative of composers like Asaf’yev and Myaskovsky turning to the new aesthetic, she

---

162 Collectivization was part of the Five-Year plan to transform privately owned farms into collective farms. It was a forced, not voluntary initiative and resulted in the deaths of many farmers through 1933. For a brief discussion of collectivization, see the Library of Congress’ exhibit at http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/coll.html.
164 Khaltura can also be translated as “trash” or “garbage.”
165 The idea that socialist realist art is not necessarily khaltura has been suggested by others, including Groys. I suggest that approaching music in terms of function and success may be another way to understand its place under this rather unpopular aesthetic.
still seems to see socialist realism as a truly opposing style to that of modernism. With Groys’s idea of socialist realists adopting the modernist project, it is possible to view Asaf’yev’s move towards the socialist realist aesthetic not just as an opportunity to compose music that was implicitly “simple” or less challenging than modernism and thus gain fame as composer, but also as a kind of moderate modernist that embraced new trends. Similarly, Frolova-Walker admits that Myaskovsky was not an “ultra-modernist,” and that his move to the new aesthetic can be understood easily. She concludes, however, that although a good number, if not all, of the members of ASM may have openly criticized proletarian music, they still adopted the new aesthetic. Included in her listing of members is Shostakovich, a composer who, I assert, had the experience with and foreknowledge of the change beginning in the mid-twenties, thanks to his Second and Third Symphonies and his early film music.

“Stalin and the Art of Boredom”

Continuing from where she left off with the previous article, Frolova-Walker’s “Stalin and the Art of Boredom” addresses how the socialist realist aesthetic functioned as a “boring” ritual necessary to carry out the demands of the government from the thirties and forward. She claims that Westerners have viewed the dominance of the socialism realist aesthetic as a tragic defeat of modernism that was inherently of poor quality in comparison with the relative freedom and experimentation of the previous decade and its dominant aesthetic. Instead of using high art criteria to judge socialist realism, Frolova-Walker takes what she calls an anthropological stance, viewing socialist
realism as an “atheist religion.” Socialist realism as ritual required many components for its success – the establishment and maintenance of “boredom” and uniformity and communal authorship over individual works. According to Frolova-Walker, boredom was required in order to obtain the obedience of the public. While the twenties had agit-prop, designed to whip the public into frenzied dedication to the Party and its government, boredom required repetition, orderliness, and enforced uniformity to fill the minds of the public, including its artists, musicians and writers. The authorities desired a communal voice in the productions of its artists after the official establishment of socialist realism in 1934. The thirties were spent trying to make the arts fit into the mold of socialist realism, which was decidedly against the perceived modernist aesthetic of stylistic diversity and complicated, atonal language of purely instrumental music. Frolova-Walker thus perceives the socialist realist ritual as requiring boredom and asserts that the aesthetic that took root in the Soviet Union in the thirties and forward should be judged according to a set of criteria apart from modernism.

I argue, however, that modernism’s project was continued in music as well as the visual arts, where socialist realism succeeded more or less in devising and temporarily maintaining uniformity – at least on the surface. By taking an ahistorical approach to defining its aesthetic, socialist realism went beyond the historical teleology with which the modernists tried so desperately to break. This is already seen in the early film scores of Shostakovich, as I discuss in Chapters Three through Six, where various allusions to or borrowings of well-known “folk” songs are interwoven score to create a “realistic” approach to music in film. Borrowing from revolutionary *topoi* from the eighteenth

---

century forward and preferably not from the bourgeois nineteenth century, what was formerly a montage of various styles became a smooth, single socialist realist style by the late thirties. It seems that socialist realism achieved modernism’s task of creating the new, breaking from the past, and working beyond the public and its market. Read this way, socialist realism could be the new modernism or, as some have argued, proto-postmodernism.

**Mikhail Epstein’s *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture***

Coming from the literary studies angle, Mikhail Epstein’s book, *After the Future*, seeks to problematize the ideas of postmodernism in Russian culture of the twentieth century. In so doing, he also challenges the usual narrative of the path from modernism to socialist realism by redefining characteristics of socialist realism as a predecessor or an early form of postmodernism. The attribution of postmodern characteristics to periods that generally would not be considered “postmodern” finds a parallel in musicological scholarship. Jonathan Kramer also suggests that traits of postmodernism can be found in music earlier in the twentieth century.¹⁶⁸ He suggests that postmodernism is an “attitude,” with a set of characteristics that can be applied to any era, provided that it has specific traits such as eclecticism, quotations, a challenging of the “high” and “low” culture barrier, to name a few.¹⁶⁹ Kramer is aware of his position as an analyst, stating

that works themselves are not necessarily sources of postmodernism, but can be perceived by a modern listener in a postmodern manner. Epstein similarly suggested a novel interpretation of socialist realism and postmodernism.

Specifically in his chapter, “The Origins and Meanings of Russian Postmodernism,” he illustrates a relationship between socialist realism and the postmodernism of the 1960s and 1970s. Although he does not necessarily argue that socialist realism is postmodernism, he does discuss how socialist realism bridges the gap between the modernism of the 1910s and 1920s and the postmodernism of the second half of the century. He further argues that these two movements contained components of a “single ideological paradigm deeply rooted in the Russian cultural tradition.” This ideological paradigm can be identified as what he calls “simulacra,” borrowing Jean Baudrillard’s idea. Russian culture, he argues, has always been a culture of simulation, borrowing the realities of other cultures to replace their own. He begins with the examples of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Friedrich Nietzsche, claiming that their theories came to replace reality in the twentieth century, since they were preoccupied with capturing reality by demystifying “all illusory products of culture and ideology.”

Though this simulative reality was new for Western society, Epstein argues that Russian society had always been “simulated.” Epstein cites Prince Vladimir and his adoption of

---

170 Epstein, *After the Future*, 189. It is also interesting to note that Epstein uses the terms modernism and avant-gardism in specific ways in regard to Western culture. For him, modernism is an alienation from the “reality of mass society” (as with Schoenberg) and avant-gardism is the “aspiration to transform it to revolutionary ends.” I have found that film directors, such as Grigory Kozintsev seem to use such terms in this manner, often referring to themselves, upon reflection, as an avant-gardist. This term “avant-garde” may have only appeared in the 1960s and 1970s, however, to describe modernists who were at the absolute vanguard. See Gutkin, *Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic*, 11 and Epstein, *After the Future*, 190.


Christianity in Russia, Peter the Great and his building of St. Petersburg, and a few
nineteenth-century travel writings of perceptions of Russia as illustrative examples of
how Russia was a “country of facades.” Quoting the Marquis de Custine and his
impressions of nineteenth-century Russia:

…Russia is an Empire of catalogues; if one runs through the titles, everything seems beautiful.
But…open the book and you discover that there is nothing in it…How many cities and roads exist
only as projects. Well, the entire nation, in essence, is nothing but a placard stuck over Europe.

Offering a Russian perspective, Epstein further demonstrates this perception of Russia as
an “as if” culture, where nothing exists “in reality.” Surely, the idea of Russia being
“backwards,” or a second-rate imitation of Europe has been discussed in scholarly texts
that address issues of nationalism and identity and have long been a part of the
discussions of what makes something “Russian.” What Epstein argues, however, is
that despite the point of view of the culture being insufficiently Russian (Aksakov) or
insufficiently European (de Custine), he states,

the result is the same: the ostentatious, fraudulent nature of the civilization begets external,
superficial forms, devoid of both genuine European and intrinsic Russian contents and it remains a
tsardom of names and outward appearances.

The most simulative example of Russian society, he claims, is St. Petersburg. Always the
center of arguments of how this city is or is not Russian, the creation of St. Petersburg

\[\text{\textsuperscript{173} Epstein, } \textit{After the Future}, 191, \text{ quoting Marquis de Custine.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., 191.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{175} K. Shalkovsky, ed., } \textit{Materialy dlya fiziologii russkogo obsheshchestva. Malen’kaya khrestoamatyia dlya
vzroslykh. Mneniya russkich a samikh sebe} [Materials for the Philosophy of Russian Society. A Small
Reader for Adults. Opinions of Russians about Themselves] (St. Petersburg: A.S. Surovin’s Press, 1904):
106. Epstein, \textit{After the Future}, 192.\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{176} Simon Franklin and Emma Widdis, } \textit{National Identity in Russian Culture: An Introduction} (Cambridge:
Opera Journal} 9(1) (March 1997): 21-45.\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{177} Epstein, } \textit{After the Future}, 192.\]
was a preface to another “specter” that occupied Russia: Communism. Russia therefore was primed to receive the culture of Communism and thus naturally open to the postmodernism that Epstein later conceptualizes.

Conceptualism, another idea linked to “simulacra,” was a notion described by Epstein that “assumed that concepts are self-sufficient mental entities, which must be distinguished from external reality.” Conceptualists, early Soviet writers whose work was “deliberately schematic, using the most simplistic and ordinary language,” were the first Russian postmodernists who favored ideas over reality. According to Epstein, this was true of Soviet culture from the beginning of socialist realism forward. And, this is where the parallels to postmodernism begin. Conceptualist writers and early Soviet culture, both of which favored ideas over reality, fit into the culture of socialist realism, a culture that favored quotations of the past in place of the voice of the individual; communal authorship, or the idea that the true authority is a textbook or encyclopedia, anonymously authored and completely accepted as truth; and the “cessation of time” that resulted from quarrying the past of its “exemplary” material. Soviet Marxism, he argues, was a great example of this pastiche of the past that developed into a metanarrative of “an eclectic mixture of all possible interpretations and outlooks.” This Marxism penetrated all of society, he states, making it the “ultimate postmodern achievement.”

Assuming that the 1910s and 1920s were clearly modernist, Epstein states that by 1934 socialist realism was the new movement and contained the criteria that he designates as postmodern. He defines socialist realism as “the unity of a method attained

178 Ibid., 194.
179 Ibid., 201.
180 Epstein, After the Future, 205.
181 Ibid., 205.
through a diversity of styles,” that was intended to be an anti-modernism. He considers the word “anti-modernism” a more Western than Russian idea to describe the 1930s through the 1950s in Russia, claiming that this anti-modernism (socialist realism) “was in fact postmodernism in relation to the native pre- and post-revolutionary modernist culture,” thus restating his initial point. One main criterion of anti-modern/postmodern/socialist realism, the pastiche of the past, dominates his list of seven postmodern features of socialist realism with which he concludes. In this list, he enumerates the following criteria: 1) a creation of “hyperreality” that consist of ideas that become reality for everyone; 2) struggle against modernism and its individualism; 3) the erasure of Marxism, replaced with a pastiche of ideologies; 4) the erasure of one style, replaced by a “metadiscursive” level of socialist realism combining past models; 5) the transition to a culture of figurative “quotation marks,” as a mode of hyperauthorship; 6) the erasure of the opposition between elitist and mass culture; and 7) the construction of a “posthistorical space” where discourses of the past find their ultimate resolution.182

Some of these traits, specifically numbers two and six, were already present in the latter part of the 1920s. Implicitly, Epstein is challenging the usual notion of socialist realism as a conservative rejection of modernism by showing that it builds upon the modernist past as much as any other past. The major point that distinguishes socialist realism from modernism in terms of aesthetics is the idea of communal authorship, uniformity, and the creation of a “posthistorical” space that absorbs only those exemplary aspects of the past that contributes to the political cause. In this way, socialist realism as postmodernism is a continuation of the modernist project as Groys has argued.

182 Ibid., 206-207.
Modernism sought to distance itself from the past, to create a space that existed outside of a teleological continuum and outside of market forces, as Groys has suggested. The socialist realism that Epstein describes as a kind of proto-postmodernism (if relating this trend to the future 1960s and 1970s) is at once a rejection of aspects of modernism’s aesthetics, primarily stylistic eclecticism, and a continuation of the social project of a creation of a mass culture not by the masses, but in their name. Epstein’s argument therefore suggests that socialist realism shares traits with the future’s postmodernism and the past’s modernism, occupying an awkward ahistorical space somewhere in between.

**Shostakovich between Modernism and Socialist Realism**

Using brief analytic summaries of a selection of Shostakovich’s works from this period, I turn now to the project of situating him amidst this complex of ideas about modernism and socialist realism. I have already discussed how Shostakovich’s First Symphony could be analyzed stylistically as modernist, while showing the composer’s ability to negotiate between different styles. His Second Symphony and Third Symphony also reveal how he maneuvered “between” traits of the modernist and socialist realist aesthetics from 1927 through 1929.

Shostakovich’s Second Symphony (1927), shows a shift in his approach to the genre of the symphony. Unlike his first, his Second Symphony bears a revolutionary-inspired title, *To October, A Symphonic Dedication*, which had been the formal name for the symphony before it was named the Symphony No.2 in the thirties.\(^\text{183}\) It also reveals a change in musical aesthetics, due to the programmatic implications and new found

linearism, as Haas has argued. Several scholars, including Marina Sabinina and Haas, have also likened the symphony to a form of post-revolutionary theater-spectacle. These spectacles were popular immediately after the 1917 Revolution and consisted of a pastiche of various forms of theater, dance, gymnastics, song, and art. They also used stock characters that represented various factions (workers, fighters for the tsar, the capitalist and so forth). Posters, banners, and other visual art used in these spectacles also borrowed heavily from cubo-futurist and constructivist art of time. These spectacles were often in three or more parts, designated in a progression from oppression to freedom (“oppression – struggle – chaos”).

This likening of the symphony to a theatrical spectacle is a contemporaneously relevant idea. Shostakovich took a nineteenth-century genre, the symphonic poem, and updated for the Soviet era. Haas argues that instead of viewing this symphony as a one-movement symphonic poem or a four movement structure with continuity between movements, it can be divided into six sections, each potentially attributed to a section of a hypothetical revolutionary theater-spectacle, which are marked primarily based upon tempo changes, shifts in texture, and melodic line. This exemplifies another way in which Shostakovich combined past forms with new political contexts.

Another modernist aspect of this symphony is its affinity for linearism and polytonality. The harmonic language is generally polytonal, which eventually moves to

---

186 Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 184-186. For further information about these spectacles, see Tolstoy, Bibikova, and Cooke, *Street Art of the Revolution*.
187 Tolstoy, Bibikova, and Cooke, *Street Art of the Revolution*.
189 For his outline of the form, see Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 187.
clear tonal language with a secure tonic by the end of the work. One particular section, the thirteen-voice polyphonic section, draws attention to Shostakovich’s linear approach. Haas asserts that this section is similar to Shcherbachyov’s Second Symphony, where the use of a pedal tone (E), a chromatic, germinal theme that is “non-quadratic” (his First Symphony’s themes were “classically” symmetrical) and the use of only three instruments parallel the opening of Shcherbachyov’s work (Appendix A, Figure 5).\textsuperscript{190}

The thirteen-voice polyphony, Haas also argues, in an exercise in Shcherbachyovian linearism, an improvisatory exercise in writing for thirteen voices with little regard for harmonic considerations. Nicolas Slonimsky also wrote that the Second Symphony was “‘formalistic’ in the Soviet meaning of the word – that is, abundant in formal devices, such as polytonality and polyrhythm.” He cites this thirteen-voice passage as an example of that formalism.\textsuperscript{191} This particular section of the symphony therefore appeared “modernist” to many because of its linearism.

Although Shostakovich’s first two symphonies have modernist moments, the question remains as to whether or not these works are modernist, particularly in light of Haas’s designation of the Leningrad modernist school. These two symphonies were situated between the differing aesthetics of the time (the Rimsky-Korsakovian school, the modernists, and the proletarians), yet Haas seems hesitant to designate Shostakovich an outright modernist in either of his first two symphonies. This may be because writers on Shostakovich’s music were concerned with designating his works as wholly modernist or


\textsuperscript{191} Slonimsky, “Dmitry Dmitrievitch Shostakovich,” 424.
wholly socialist realist, thus unconcerned with the overlapping of traits from both trends that contributed to his eventual musical approach to the socialist realist aesthetic.

I suggest that Shostakovich’s Second Symphony was not only an indicator of modernist change, but of an impending change in politics. Gerald Abraham deemed the Second Symphony an “ACM orchestral piece with a RAPM finale.” Haas’s declaration that this symphony was likely not intended as an “opportunist conciliation” between the two aesthetics. Rather, the political climate was changing and the year 1927 saw many works of art, film, and music dedicated to the anniversary of the Revolution. Although Shostakovich’s Second and Third Symphonies engage revolutionary themes, he does not concede his musical language by writing RAPM-approved homophonic, tonal music. Shostakovich developed his compositional style amidst a variety of conflicting aesthetics, as both Haas and Druskin have noted. Both of Shostakovich’s first two symphonies reveal a young composer experimenting with novel modernist ideas, relying upon his “classical” training, and recognizing the proletarian political agenda.

---


193 For example, Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 2 and Roslavets’ October Cantata.


195 Fay relates that Shostakovich played the Second Symphony for “four workers and one peasant” who found the “ultra-polyphony” section difficult, but the chorus perfectly understandable. See Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 44.
Shostakovich’s Third Symphony (1929), a piece rarely analyzed in detail, can be seen as a representation of the composer’s first mature symphonic work. Several scholars and Shostakovich himself considered his Third Symphony to be the most successful, accessible, and best received of the first three symphonies. I suggest that this symphony was well-received and considered “accessible” because of its narrativistic and cinematic nature, its incorporation of a certain kind of modernist language unified under a homophonic style, and its use of a revolutionary theme.

The Third Symphony, like the Second, is a one-movement work with a choral ending. Unlike its predecessor, however, its form is episodic: I hear it in terms of film rather than revolutionary theater. The Third Symphony was the first symphonic work composed after Shostakovich’s first film score, *The New Babylon*, and after his first opera, *The Nose*. At this point, he would have had experience writing for two types of narrative genres and a clearer understanding on how to relate music to image. It is possible to briefly discuss this symphony as a work that bears this experience in film and the operatic stage, as well as musical influence from the modernists.

There are several aspects of the work that can be analyzed as modernist, classical, or proletarian. One significant consideration is the way that Shostakovich works with his thematic material. Based on thematic material, texture, instrumentation, and harmonic modulation, one can find at least seventeen shifts that create different “episodes” within

---


197 Shostakovich considered it to be his best of the first three symphonies, and Fay describes it as an “accessible” work. See Dmitry Shostakovich, “Declaratsiya obyazannostey kompozitora” [ Declarations of a Composer’s Duties], *Rabochiy i teatr*, 31 (1931) and Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*, 53. Also reproduced in *Dmitry Shostakovich v pis’mach i dokumentakh* [Dmitry Shostakovich in Letters and Documents] (Moscow: Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture, 2000).
this movement.\textsuperscript{198} As with the previous symphony, he used thematic transformation that could be analyzed as a use of \textit{intonatsiya} and form-as-process, as defined by Haas. Certainly, the opening theme of the work (measures 1-14) is the source for other musical ideas throughout the work (Appendix B, Figure 6). Similar to the motivic development of Ludwig van Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Shostakovich took aspects of the first theme, fragments it, and either expands it through chromatic fills or presents it in diminution when it returns throughout the work. At some points, he also almost exactly repeated a fragment of the opening theme or of the second theme (Appendix B, Figure 7a and 7b). There appear to be two different ways in which Shostakovich developed thematic material – 1) either through a fragmentation and development of a theme to a point where it is familiar and immediately recognizable as a previous theme, as seen in theme two (Appendix B, Figure 7a and 7b); 2) or a nearly wholesale repetition of a fragment of a theme that is a clear reference to a previous theme. Both of these approaches could be described in terms of “form-as-process” and “\textit{intonatsiya},” where Shostakovich took a larger idea that serves as a foundation for the rest of the work. While the first approach produces material that is, at times, barely recognizable as a previous theme and perhaps seemingly more “organic,” or closer to Asaf’yev’s notion of organic growth of ideas, the second does not seem to apply to either of Asaf’yev’s notions. Asaf’yev emphasized that repetition is not part of “symphonism,” or the natural growth from the \textit{intonatsiya}. Shostakovich clearly repeated material, as if he were referencing an outside source, just as film music would reference an image. The episodes


75
in which Shostakovich brought back previous musical ideas seem to function more like the leitmotivic references that one finds in *The New Babylon*, than like Asaf’yev’s *intonatsiya*. A more thorough discussion of *The New Babylon* may be found in Chapter Three; it suffices to say here that the Third Symphony in part resembles the form of this early film and its score. In this sense, Shostakovich’s cinematic, “episodic” approach to form reveals an approach to symphonic form that stems from modernist cinematic practices.

Another aspect of the symphony that alludes to modernism is the use of *polistilistika* in the work. At certain points near the beginning of the work (measures 80 ff., measures 127 ff., measures 291-300), grotesquerie reminiscent of *The Nose* and Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* appear. These moments are made grotesque through “wrong-note” technique, which extends the interval a whole step beyond the expected pitch (measure 178) and through glissandi and grace notes (Appendix B, Figure 8, measures 291-300). Shostakovich also alludes to genres with his march-like sections (measures 39-49). The subtly with which Shostakovich alluded to other styles, which in these examples involves references to instrumentation, rhythm, timbre, and surface ornamentation, makes it difficult to prove that these musical moments are exact quotes of specific melodies or harmonic patterns. It is possible that these fleeting allusions indicate another, perhaps more sophisticated way in which Shostakovich borrowed, which is a result of his *polistilistika* training. The masked and illusory quality of these potential references to other composers and genres could therefore be an indicator of how this symphony is the first example of Shostakovich’s ability to subsume various styles seamlessly under his own metalanguage.
In addition to allusions, two other thumbprints of what will be Shostakovich’s style in the thirties and forties are also prominent throughout the work. A variation of his well-known “long – long – short” motif, which was derived from theme two, plays a prominent role throughout the work, primarily in the trumpet (Appendix B, Figure 7a for theme two).\textsuperscript{199} Additionally, in an episode early in the work (measures 127-259) Shostakovich presents a musical idea that is an outgrowth of theme 2, and a stage of development for this fragment that continues until the end of the episode (Appendix B, Figure 9, measures 190-196). This brief development, which is a motive in itself, is an idea that Shostakovich reused in the finale of the Piano Concerto No.1. Reusing material from a previous work becomes a common aspect of Shostakovich’s style, showing that this symphony is at least a point of reference for his future work.

An aspect of the Third Symphony that appears less modernist than the preceding symphony is its eschewing of dissonant linearism and its embrace of a tonal syntax. The musical language in this symphony is clearly tonal throughout and occasionally monophonic. The unison climax in the orchestra approximately two-thirds into the work is one example of his tonal clarity (Appendix B, Figure 10, measure 655). This strong emphasis on homophonic tonality over linearism may be part of why Fay considers this work “accessible.”\textsuperscript{200} The choral ending, similar to the Second Symphony, has a clear tonal center and simple musical language throughout. Within the context of the whole work, the Third Symphony’s choral ending fits well. Building on the poetry of Semyon

\textsuperscript{199} Shostakovich often used variations “short-short-long” or “long-long-short” motifs in his works, which I have also noted in my analysis of the Piano Concerto No.1. Joan Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich: Film, Popular Culture, and the Finale of the Piano Concerto No.1} (master’s thesis, The Ohio State University, 2002).

\textsuperscript{200} Fay, \textit{Shostakovich: A Life}, 53. Occasionally, there are moments where the music appears to be linear. Quickly, however, Shostakovich shifts into a textural crescendo.
Kirsanov, Shostakovich created an appropriately triumphant ending for a symphony about the “First of May.”

In all, the Third Symphony is “accessible” in terms of musical language. Furthermore, this symphony reflects a certain facet of Shostakovich’s compositional style in the 1930s and 1940s. He demonstrated in this symphony that he is able to synthesize modernist, classicist, and proletarian aspects to create a unique compositional voice. The “episodic” form created by shifts in harmony, meter, and instrumentation in combination with musical allusions also create a sense of fragmentation and almost cinematic editing that is modernist and reveals his film music experience, presaging his future film scores, especially *Odna* (Alone, 1931).

Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No.1 is another work that exhibits modernist, socialist realist, and cinematic traits. This concerto was written one year after *The Counterplan*, from March to July 1933. In addition to the first three symphonies, this work is another example of the merging of what could be perceived as different styles, in this particular case, under the rubric of socialist realism. The work as a whole appears to utilize typical concerto form in three movements, with a brief interlude to make a transition from the tempo of the second movement to the tempo of the finale. The first and second movements have the typical tempo orientation of fast-slow, with several allusions and quotations in each.\(^{201}\) The finale, as with many finales in concerti, is more bombastic and manic than the previous movements. As I have previously discussed, the

\(^{201}\) In his editor’s note to the score, Manashir Yakubov claims that there are references to Beethoven and Haydn. The opening theme of the second movement seems to resemble Ludwig van Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata in F minor, Op.57* (Appassionata). See Manashir Yakubov, *Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 12*, “Kontsert No. 1 and Kontsert No. 2, diya fortepiano s orkestrom,” [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, Volume 12, “Concerto No. 1 and Concerto No.2 for Piano and Orchestra”] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987).
work uses an interesting blend of concerto and cinematic form that contains allusions and quotations from the classical past and popular music present.\textsuperscript{202}

On the surface, the form of the concerto finale strongly resembles that of a typical concerto finale form, where a constant dialogue is kept between the piano and trumpet soloists and the orchestra. On a more detailed level, however, the form seems cinematic, with several “fades” between instruments, rapid cutting and shifts between disparate sections of music, and extreme changes in texture.\textsuperscript{203} The tempo, radical changes in meter, multiple stylistic allusions, and quotations in addition to the usual soloist/orchestral dialogue are responsible for the sense of shift and change between “moments” in the movement and contribute to the “shock” effect reminiscent of twenties-style montage editing.\textsuperscript{204} The majority of the allusions and quotations consist of remnants quarried from the musical past, including Franz Joseph Haydn, Gioacchino Rossini, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and J.S. Bach.\textsuperscript{205} They also include quotations of his own work, including his music-hall revue \textit{Declared Dead} and an allusion to American ragtime-style piano playing.\textsuperscript{206} There are at least two potential levels of “imperceptible” musical material in this movement.\textsuperscript{207} Some of these quotations and allusions are less

\textsuperscript{202} Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich}.

\textsuperscript{203} In my thesis, I outline these “cinematic” qualities in further detail. See Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich}, Chapter Three.

\textsuperscript{204} Ibid., Chapter Three.

\textsuperscript{205} Ibid., 111-117. I do not discuss the quotation of Haydn’s E-flat Piano Sonata in my thesis. Refer to measures 65-67 for the quote of Rossini’s \textit{Barber of Seville}, to measures 74-75 for the quote of Tchaikovsky’s \textit{Romeo and Juliet}, to measures 225-228 for the quote of Bach’s \textit{Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D Major}. See Yakubov, \textit{Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes}, Volume 12, for the score to which these measures refer.

\textsuperscript{206} Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich}, 111-113, referring to measures 239-280 for the \textit{Declared Dead} quotation and measures 461-469 for the ragtime allusion.

\textsuperscript{207} Esti Sheinberg considered the Piano Concerto No.1 to be an example of “musical plurivocality,” but chooses to analyze the piano preludes of the same time because they are more interesting for her project. See Esti Sheinberg, \textit{Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque in the Music of Shostakovich: a Theory of Musical Incongruities} (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 196.
“perceptible” than others. The quotes of Haydn, the ragtime excerpt, and the *Declared Dead* excerpt are clearly foregrounded as significant themes throughout the movement.\(^{208}\) The allusions to the other composers, however, are far more subtle, possibly perceived only by those familiar with these works. They qualify more as (nearly) “imperceptible allusions,” since they are transposed from their original context, buried in the orchestral texture, (depending upon certain performances), and rapidly enter and exit the orchestral fabric. As discussed in later chapters, the move from non-diegetic to diegetic sound emphasized what was heard by the characters and therefore had greater potential to draw in the attention of the viewer/listener.\(^{209}\) The same can be found in the Piano Concerto, where allusions buried in the orchestral texture almost act as a kind of underscoring, while most prominent quotations, like diegetic music, demand more of the listener’s attention.

Despite how audible these quotations and allusions may be they do reflect a transformation of modernist eclecticism to a burgeoning socialist realist aesthetic. Quarrying the classical past and the popular present, united under a single style (a possible kind of *polistilistika*), yet referencing cinematic techniques in the movement’s formal design allows this finale to be perceived at once as modernist, postmodernist, and socialist realist, i.e., modernist in form, socialist realist in content. The function of this work, as perceived by the composer himself, however, served the purpose and rhetoric of what supposed to be appropriately socialist in 1933. Shostakovich stated,

> What is the basic artistic theme of this concerto? I do not consider it necessary to follow the example of many composers, who try to explain the content of their works by means of

\(^{209}\) See especially Chapters Five and Six.
extraneous definitions borrowed from related fields of art. I cannot describe the content of my concerto by any other means that those I used to write the concerto…

I am a Soviet composer. Our age, as I perceive it, is heroic, spirited, and joyful. This is what I wanted to convey in my concerto. It is for the audience, and possibly the music critics, to judge whether or not I succeeded.²¹⁰

Shostakovich wanted this concerto to be entertaining, conveying the ‘spirit of the Soviet age.’ As potentially ambiguous as his music, the above statement can support multiple perceptions of this work’s style. The function may have been intended to be appropriately socialist, as he stated in the above quotation, harvesting an approved classical past and current popular music present, while disregarding the division between high and low styles, all contained under what could be perceived as one “polystilistic” voice.²¹¹ Shostakovich’s multiplicity and ambiguity in musical style and language and the Piano Concerto’s cultural and political context allows this work to embody remnants of musical and cinematic modernism that could also be perceived as characteristics of socialist realism.²¹²

This brief overview of some of his works of the late twenties and early thirties shows that Shostakovich negotiated between both the post-revolutionary (later socialist realist) and modernist trends. Although his compositions and some of his writings reveal an alliance with the revolutionary-styled music of the late twenties and early thirties, he never fully accepted the tenets of RAPM. Neither was he an “ultra-modernist” interested

²¹¹To some degree, Asafyev’s Fountains of Bakhchisarai and Flames of Paris were perceived as a quarrying of Western musical styles, yet considered to be socialist realist works. See Frlova-Walker, “From Modernism to Socialist Realism,” 202-204.
²¹²See Sheinberg, Irony, Satire, Parody, and the Grotesque, 3-4, for a discussion of Shostakovich’s musical ambiguity.
in rebellion, nor did he approve of the conservatism of the Conservatory. Druskin has noted that in the twenties, a time of great energy and innovation, “Shostakovich had many diverse and significant sides to him, comparable to the multifarious levels of artistic and cultural life of the time.” It is possible that Shostakovich chose to adopt the post-revolutionary aesthetic starting in 1927 because it was the fashionable trend that also appealed to his compositional sensibilities. He also may have begun to ally himself with TRAM in 1929 for political reasons as well as “progressive” ones. RAPM was at the height of its control in the late twenties and early thirties before it was dissolved in 1932 and one way of resisting RAPM may have been to work with a group such as TRAM. Shostakovich also wrote an article in 1931, “Declaratsya obyazannostey kompozitora,” [Declarations of a Composer’s Duties] where he denounced much of his previous work in the theater and film as well as his ballets. It appears that with his new adoption of revolutionary themes in the Second Symphony, his work for TRAM, and his 1931 “Declaratsya,” Shostakovich was experimenting with the new trend and maintaining a moderate relationship with the politics of the time. As Druskin has noted, “He searched for a more dynamic, complete expression of the national tradition within

216 Ibid., 45.
217 Dmitry Shostakovich, “Declaratsya obyazannostey kompozitora.”
the context of the modern-day actuality, resonant as it was with the dramatic events of a turbulent history and a threatening sense of catastrophe.”

For whatever reason, Shostakovich was clearly making a transition towards the new aesthetic entirely by his own volition. He was an ardent supporter of the revolutionary ideal embodied in many works of the twenties, but he chose to experiment with the modernist trends as well. Shostakovich was always interested in the “new,” which was embodied in the agit-prop twenties from 1927 forward. The artists and composers of agit-prop of the late twenties, beginning with the anniversary of the revolution, sought to merge the previous modernist aesthetic with the revolutionary one, either to maintain their place (as with Myaskovsky and Asaf’yev) or because the new aesthetic was perceived as the next modernist step. By 1929, Shostakovich had successfully merged the modernist, proletarian, and classical aesthetics into one symphonic work, emerging with a unique “Shostakovichian” voice. The ability to merge apparently disparate trends and take from them aspects that served his compositional voice was a strength he would further rely upon in later film works, starting with *Alone.* His first film, *The New Babylon,* which predates the Third Symphony by only a few months, was a starting point for the unification of the image and musical sound as well as an experiment in a post-revolutionary modernist approach to agit-prop for which the FEKS groups was well-known. Shostakovich’s ability to allude to and employ the diverse techniques and ideas of the trends of the twenties and early thirties, or his “multiplicity,” combined with his experience as both a modernist and Soviet composer,

---


219 *The New Babylon* was finished in March 1929 and the *Third Symphony* was finished by end of summer 1929. See Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life,* 49-52.
provided him with a foundation to become a diversely talented film composer who could adapt to the rapidly changing musico-political aesthetic shifts throughout the time of the so-called Cultural Revolution.
CHAPTER 2

SHOSTAKOVICH, FILM CULTURE, AND FILM MUSIC STUDIES

Introduction

The 1920s, often considered the “golden era” of Russian film, has been a well-documented and well-studied period among scholars over the course of the twentieth century. From Sergey Eisenstein’s famous experiments with the “montage of attractions,” to Dziga Vertov’s futurist-influenced approach to image in *Man with a Movie Camera*, the twenties and early thirties were saturated with innovative approaches to cinematic image and sound. The “Statement on Sound” (1928), among other writings by the members of the FEKS group, Eisenstein, and Vertov, demonstrated to Russia and the world film community their apprehension, excitement, and methods for dealing with the onset of another factor in film: sound. Within this context, the role of the Russian film composer emerged and “art” music composers such as Shostakovich were hired to write music specifically for films.

This chapter describes the idea of “sound-on-film” that emerged in the late twenties and early thirties, the emerging involvement of traditionally “art” music composers, particularly Shostakovich, in film, and the resulting relationships between composers and film directors that led to the creation of the film composer and standards
for Russian film music in the early Soviet era. As context for this discussion, I provide a brief history of Russian film culture, which outlines a selection of the most important issues and figures in filmmaking and their parallels in the other arts and in politics of the post-revolutionary era. This contextualization is essential to understanding some of the key figures, techniques, and filmmaking processes to which Shostakovich was exposed when he began his film music career in 1928 and is relevant to the following chapters.

The politics of film music and sound complicated the notion of “film” for many directors and drove many composers, including Shostakovich, to actively seek a greater understanding of the relationship between film and sound. Shostakovich recognized that film by its very nature implied the intersection of many of the arts. This echoes a similar concern in film music studies today, where scholars are constantly challenged with the task of bridging the gap between multiple disciplines and sub-disciplines, including those of film studies and musicology.

Another task of this chapter, therefore, is to address analytical issues and concerns important to the fields of film music and film studies. These issues include how music operates in film; what degree of prominence it has in film; and how to integrate psychoanalytical approaches from film studies with music theoretical approaches from musicology and music theory. This provides a context for an analytical paradigm for the following case studies of Shostakovich’s early film scores, which weaves together recent American analytical approaches with contemporaneous Russian industrial, technological, artistic, and political contexts. I build upon the combined approaches of film historians

---

1 The phrase “sound-on-film” has been used to describe the first synchronization of sound to film, where sound is physically recorded onto the photographic film. See among other sources, Rick Altman, “The Silence of the Silents,” The Musical Quarterly, 80(4) (Winter 1996): 648-718.
and musicologists such as Anahid Kassabian, Michel Chion, Kathryn Kalinak, and Claudia Gorbman, which address music as part of the film text and how this music is perceived and potentially understood by its viewers/listeners. My analytical paradigm continues the multidisciplinary approach in film music studies as exemplified by these figures. As part of my discussion of music as text and music as context, I focus on the relationship between image and sound, locating a specific interest in the idea of a musical “code.” A musical “code” can be any aspect or combination of musical aspects such as melodies, instrumentation, and rhythm that evoke an imagistic connotation. Musical “codes” in film music can cue the listener, and both create and add to the multivalency of the codes themselves, as well as the music in the film as a whole. Borrowing from cognition and psychology and the work of Kassabian, I discuss the idea of “identification processes,” which locates the meaning of film and its music in the relationship between the viewer/listener and the film. How viewers/listeners may have constructed and reconstructed meaning through themes, motives, and musical ideas (or “codes”) in film music, as related to images on the screen, as well as to the history of the “code” itself can be as important to a discussion of Russian narrative film music of the late twenties and early thirties as it is to Hollywood film. The continual re-creation of meaning of these “codes,” particularly in connection with modernist film techniques of the twenties, was familiar to Shostakovich, who had already demonstrated a talent for irony, parody and the grotesque in *The Nose* (1927-1928). As I finish with an outline of the methodology for the following case studies, I suggest that Shostakovich’s multiplicity of identity – his ability to move between film and musical culture – allowed him to effectively manipulate the listeners and their cinematic/musical expectations.
A Brief History of Early Russian Film (1896 – 1930)

The official birthdate of Russian cinema often has been cited as 4 May 1896 with the showing of Lumière Brothers pictures in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Nizhnî Novgorod.² It was at Nizhnî Novgorod that Maxim Gorky viewed film for first time and commented upon it in his well-known article, “The Kingdom of Shadows.”³ From that point forward, Russia was inundated with films from the West, particularly from the studios of Lumière, Gaumont, Pathè, and Edison. Both Lumière and Gaumont set up studios in Moscow, dominating the industry for the next decade.⁴ Russian cinema houses began to appear in 1903 in all major cities eventually spreading to smaller towns by the teens.⁵ Some of the first footage shot in Russia in 1896 was of Tsar Nicholas II’s coronation. Although the Tsar denounced films publicly, he did enjoy their use in recording the activities of his family and himself, which in part bolstered the cinema’s

---


³ See Taylor and Christie, Film Factory, 25-26 for a translation of this essay. See also Taylor, Film Propaganda and Tsivian, Early Cinema for a discussion of Gorky’s “kingdom of shadows.”

⁴ Leyda, Kino, 47-52.

⁵ See Tsivian, Early Cinema and Taylor, Film Propaganda, 35-36.
early success. Other factors, including the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-1905 and the 1905 Revolution, also contributed to interest in documentary film. By 1907, the first native Russian film studio was opened by Aleksandr Drankov, a former photographer for the royal family. His studio competed with the foreign studios Pathè and Gaumont, and with his first major film, *Stenka Razin* (1908), Drankov had established a Russian studio that successfully competed within the Russian market.

By 1910, there were fifteen film studios in Russia, including those of foreign competitors. By 1913, circulation of film periodicals widened and there emerged a sudden futurist interest and debate over the cinema. In the years of 1914-1916, the film industry still maintained a strong hold despite World War I and shortages in film supplies. In this period two major directors emerged: Yevgeny Bauer and Yakov Protazanov. Bauer had a direct influence on Russian film of the twenties, in his work with his student at the Khanzhonkov studios, Lev Kuleshov. Protazanov made an impact with *Father Sergius*, one of the most recognized films made before the revolution. During the year of the revolution, the film industry began to unionize and the League of Women’s Rights began organizing demonstrations using the medium of film to protest unfair treatment and demand voting rights. That same year also saw a flurry of anti-Romanov films, protesting the tsarist regime and adding to the already revolutionary environment, which became increasingly uncomfortable for some film actors and directors. Starting in 1917, a significant number of people in the film industry

---

8 These were studios run by Aleksandr Khanzhonkov.  
10 Ibid., 96.
emigrated from the major cities to Odessa. This included the well-known actor Ivan Mozzhukin, who worked there for a few years before permanently moving to Paris.

1919 brought the official nationalization of the industry.11 This move created the State School of Cinema and put all of the privately owned studios under the control of the State. It took several years for the industry to become officially nationalized, however, since many studios were reluctant to lose control over their productions and access to film suppliers in Europe. Many studios, particularly those on the outskirts of major cities, maintained their private control and began to hoard their supplies. This supply shortage led the innovative director Kuleshov to work and re-work the same film stock.

At the same time, 1919 saw the beginnings of agitki, short films that were designed to educate the public, including the Red Army soldiers, and “agitate” its viewers in favor of a revolutionary political agenda.12 Young filmmakers such as Vertov helped to make and promote these films by joining agitki trains that functioned as mobile studios, equipped with the means to shoot and edit film as well as create written documents (pamphlets) to distribute to the army and people in the countryside. With their focus on political propaganda, the agitki marked the beginning of the emphasis on documentary and propaganda film in Russia.

The early twenties saw the rise of significant political and social change through increasing State control. By 1923, government decrees enforced a full centralization of the film industry into the central film authority, Goskino, and managed to completely liquidate remaining private studios.

12 Agitka (agitki, pl.) is a general term for an agitational propaganda film.
The increasing State control over the cinema and emergence of more “realist” genres in film reveals how film and national identity were intertwined by the early twenties. From 1917 on, the film genres released began to shift from dramatic, fantastic, or comedic foreign films to homegrown films about Russian history, literature, and most significantly, politics and contemporary events, as seen in the rise of anti-Romanov films and agitki. Modernist artistic movements such as futurism and constructivism, both allied with anti-establishment, pro-machinist ideals and whose spirit reflected the intentions of a new socialist State, were deeply connected to the cinema as well.\textsuperscript{13} Vladimir Mayakovsky’s early criticisms and writings reflect upon the nature of cinema and its potential in the formation of socialism.\textsuperscript{14} Experimental theater, with Vsevolod Meyerhold as its main representative, was also closely linked to the emergence of film art.\textsuperscript{15} Lastly, Vladimir Lenin’s oft-quoted phrase, “You must remember well that, of all the arts, for us the cinema is most important,” alongside his “proportion” idea, or the State-designated proportion of entertainment and propaganda films, gave cinema a new and specifically national purpose.\textsuperscript{16} The propagandistic historical films of the twenties

\textsuperscript{13} See Gray, 115 and 268 for connections between futurism, constructivism, and film. See also Tsivian, \textit{Early Cinema}, 12 and 61 for discussions of futurism and film, and 10 and 120 for discussions of constructivism and film.

\textsuperscript{14} Tsivian, \textit{Early Cinema}, 61.

\textsuperscript{15} Meyerhold was somewhat skeptical of the cinema, yet participated in it. See for example his article, “V. E. Meierkhol’d o kinomatografie,” [V.E. Meyerhold on Cinema] in \textit{Teatral’naya gazeta}, (Moscow) 22 (31 May 1915): 7. Translated in Taylor and Christie, \textit{Film Factory}, 39.

\textsuperscript{16} This quote was related by Anatoli Lunacharsky in “Conversation with Lenin,” in \textit{Lenin i kino} [Lenin and Cinema] ed. G. M. Boltyanskiy (Moscow/Leningrad: 1925), 16-19. It can also be found in \textit{Film Factory}, 56-57. The “Leninist proportion” was partly the result of Lenin’s Directive of Cinema Affairs made on 17 January 1922. This proportion referred to the proper proportion of entertainment and propaganda films, which was eventually codified as 75% fiction and 25% documentary films. For more information, see Taylor and Christie, \textit{Film Factory}, 53 and 56.
that fed into socialist realism of the thirties therefore had their roots in development of a “national” cinema in the teens and early twenties.\textsuperscript{17}

By the mid-twenties, shifts in the industry, which included a rise in the production of Soviet films, paved the way for greater control over filmmaking that culminated in various Party Congresses beginning in 1928. That year was a pivotal point in Soviet art policies and marked the beginning of greater Party involvement and many discussions about “realism,” “proletarianism,” and “formalism” that would pervade criticism and reception through the thirties. There was significant confusion over what would constitute a “socialist” film, while at the same time, directors and their crews were still experimenting with techniques and ideas built upon the modernism of the twenties.\textsuperscript{18}

Since its inception, film had always been exploited by the State and used as a way to distribute propaganda and educate the masses in the most recent political ideology. In 1928, however, State control over film tightened and film was nominated as the main medium for State propaganda.\textsuperscript{19} This shift of focus on film as the main carrier of State ideology was expressed in Party Conferences and statements, the most significant being the Party Conference on Cinema of March 1928.\textsuperscript{20} This conference had three central debates that would become the foci for most discussions of films into the thirties: 1) how

\textsuperscript{17} Propagandistic films were not the only kinds of films available at that time. There were also movies for the mass audience, which often consisted of foreign films, particularly from the United States. See Denise Youngblood, \textit{Movies for the Masses, Popular Cinema and Soviet Society in the 1920s} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

\textsuperscript{18} For information about commercial filmmaking in the twenties and thirties and the popularity of mass versus avant-garde films see Youngblood, \textit{Movies for the Masses}.

\textsuperscript{19} In addition to propaganda films, other films, especially foreign ones, dominated the screens for the majority of the twenties. It was only after the Party Congress in March 1928 that Sovkino was forced to cater only to “Soviet” films and completely eradicate the showing of any foreign films. By May 1928, the purging of foreign films began, resulting in the exclusive showing of Soviet-produced films by the early thirties. See Youngblood, \textit{Movies for the Masses}.

\textsuperscript{20} A useful summary of the Party Conference and its proceedings, upon which mine is based, can be found in Taylor and Christie, \textit{Film Factory}, 208-215.
“Soviet” is Soviet cinema; 2) How can Soviet film be both (politically) ideological and entertaining; and 3) How can cinema become more secure, both ideologically and commercially, in preparation for the first five year plan? Directors such as Eisenstein expressed interest in further guidance for political effectiveness in filmmaking. Others expressed a desire to be less like Hollywood, that is, less focused on box office success. This attitude led to criticism of Sovkino, the State institution for film, which was accused and criticized for only showing imported films that made money. Other critics and directors argued against the mutual exclusivity of politics and commerce and sought a way to combine the two presumably opposed interests. Even Anatoly Lunacharsky, who later began making his own films, believed that Soviet film could be entertaining and political. In a famous phrase from his speech to Film Workers in January 1928 he claimed, “boring agitation is counter-agitation.” In addition to this plea to make films both commercially successful and properly political, directors were also concerned with keeping the audiences happy and producing films that were “intelligible to the millions,” a commonly used phrase that became the watchword for the mid to late twenties. Intelligibility and fulfilling the task of “transforming the masses” was important to the discussions. According to the report,

---

21 These debates stemmed from what Youngblood deems the “entertainment versus enlightenment” debate that dominated the twenties. Many companies, including Sovkino, sought to make films that were entertaining and thus made money – one idea of many that eventually came to be perceived as “anti-Soviet.” See Youngblood, *Movies for the Masses*, 35-39.

22 The State organization for film changed its name several times over the course of the twenties and thirties. It was first known as Goskino (1922), Sovkino (1924), Soyuzkino (1930), then Rosfilm (1932).

23 See Anatoly Lunacharsky, “Speech to Film Workers,” in *Film Factory*, 195.

The Soviet cinema must not follow in the wake of the audience, but must move ahead of it; it must lead the audience, support the beginnings in it of the new man, instill into it new views, tastes, habits which correspond to the task of the socialist reconstruction of the whole society.\textsuperscript{25}

Overall, as noted by scholars, there was a move towards the “general line,” or a unification of style in the arts and a consolidation of State power. The year 1928 signaled the beginning of the end of the cultural pluralism of film and arts that typified the twenties.\textsuperscript{26} As I discuss in later chapters, the years between 1928 and 1932 saw significant shifts in approaches to filmmaking and scoring that encompassed elements of modernistic trends of the twenties as they pointed to realistic trends in the early thirties.

**Film Figures, Issues, and Techniques of the 1920s and 1930s**

**Lev Kuleshov and Early Montage**

Kuleshov, who began working film in the teens as a décor designer began the unusual practice of experimenting with pre-existing film stock, focusing on the editing of certain images to create meaning that did not depend upon the actors and their talents. Most films at this time were “theatrical,” sometimes called “Khanzhonkovism” to describe the theatrical bent of the studio for which he worked, because they resembled theatrical productions of the time. This label resulted from the infrequent editing and a focus on still camera shooting and dramatic acting. Kuleshov’s first film, *The Project of Engineer Prite* (1917) exemplified his newly discovered approach of “montage.” Shortly thereafter he published an article that explained his motivation for emphasizing editing.

\textsuperscript{25} See Taylor and Christie, *Film Factory*, 207.

\textsuperscript{26} See Taylor and Christie, *Film Factory* and Youngblood, *Movies for the Masses*. Youngblood also noted that there was a change in the tone of film reviews. She found that they were more angry and negative than before, which is similar to the tone of the reviews of *The New Babylon*. 94
over shooting. During the revolution, Kuleshov maintained his interest in montage experimentation and developed what was later dubbed the “Kuleshov effect.” This “effect” resulted in the editing of disparate images into a whole that then directs the viewer towards a particular set of emotions or narrative. The most famous example of this “effect,” is the montage of images of Mozhukin’s face with a bowl of soup. Although the images of Mozhukin’s face were originally intended to depict “sadness,” when juxtaposed with an image of soup, the actor then appeared “hungry.” Another example is the construction of an imaginary, cinematic woman, where he edited together images of pieces of different women to create a whole person. Kuleshov claimed in his description of montage technique that “The cinema consists of fragments and the assembly of those fragments, of the assembly of elements which in reality are distinct.” Kuleshov therefore used editing, one technique unique to film, to create a whole reality out of fragmentation.

Kuleshov’s montage theory was, as he admitted, heavily dependent upon American film techniques and to some degree, Russian literature. Scholars have argued that Kuleshov was a modernist of his time, affiliated with constructivism and futurism. In his article “Mr. Kuleshov in the Land of the Modernists,” Vance Keply, Jr. argues that Kuleshov could easily be both a Russian modernist and a director influenced by

27 Kuleshov discusses this article from 1917 (and does not provide the title) in Schnitzer and Martin, *Cinema in Revolution*, 68.
28 See Kuleshov’s discussion of this “effect” in Schnitzer and Martin, *Cinema in Revolution*, 70. See also Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Film Technique* (London: George Newnes, Ltd., 1933), 140-141, for more detail of the above interpretation of these shots.
30 Ibid. In this published interview, Kuleshov talks about “reading” Pushkin, Tolstoy, and other Russian nineteenth-century writers as montage. Although it is difficult to determine from this 1971 interview if Russian literature was truly a montage inspiration for Kuleshov in the teens, it certainly does show that Kuleshov credits Russian literature as having inherent characteristics that would lead to twentieth-century Russian modernist notions of “montage.”
Hollywood “classical” films. Although the ideas of things “classical” and “modernist” are not often relegated to the same category, Kepley aptly demonstrates that Kuleshov borrowed editing techniques from Hollywood cinema, which he was able to articulate in a distinctly modernist, specifically constructivist, manner. Kepley first argues that Kuleshov worked according to a “constructivist ethos” that highlights the merging of art and machine. Naturally, film exemplifies a merging of art and machine, particularly since in the teens and twenties cinema in Russia was becoming increasingly viewed as art, rather than novelty or sheer spectacle. Further, Kepley argues that Kuleshov’s concern with politically educating the viewer, exemplified in Kuleshov’s phrase “good film educated the viewer,” was part of the modernist agenda and could be performed through both ideology, or the film’s content, and form. Taking cues from the “classical” editing style of Hollywood films, Kuleshov attempted to emulate the kind of energy and spectator arousal that he observed in Russian audiences. Features of Hollywood’s “classical” editing style sought to maintain linear narrative through techniques such as match-on-action, eyeline matches, and the 180-degree rule. Although the fragmentation of images of reality would seem unnatural, this approach to editing maintained a sense of narrative continuity, for which Hollywood is internationally

31 Vance Kepley, Jr., “Mr. Kuleshov in the Land of the Modernists,” in The Red Screen: Politics, Society, Art in the Soviet Cinema, ed. Anna Lawton (London: Routledge, 1992). 32 Kepley briefly discusses cinema’s “affinity with modernity.” See Kepley, “Mr. Kuleshov,” 135. 33 Kepley, “Mr. Kuleshov,” 136, citing L. Kuleshov, Kuleshov on Film, ed. and trans. Ronald Levaco (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 131. 34 Match-on-action is an editing technique when a cut is made during the action of character to another shot of another action. Eyeline matching is also an editing technique, where a cut from a character’s gaze occurs to another shot of the thing being viewed by that character. The 180-degree rule involves the positioning of cameras and later editing to create continuity between two speakers that are conversing. See David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema, Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), for further information on these techniques.
famous. Maintaining narrative continuity through fast paced editing, i.e., “continuity editing” was, as Keply argues, a modernist alternative to “Khanzhonkovism.” Kuleshov’s montage technique and his argument for creating a whole out of disparate fragments of reality therefore finds root in Hollywood editing techniques – at the same time it resonates with the constructivist ethos of assembling, via machine, fragments of reality to make a whole.\(^{35}\)

Using *On the Red Front* (1920) and *Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1923), Keply shows that Kuleshov took newsreel fragments and assembled them in a “Hollywood style” to create films that correlated to the constructivist movement.\(^{36}\) His conclusion, which resonates well with Kuleshov’s own writings and philosophies, is that Kuleshov appropriated Hollywood editing techniques which he articulated through his modernist perspective to create films that served a mass educational purpose. In this way, Keply shows that Kuleshov was one of the first Russian modernist directors to successfully appropriate a so-called “classical” technique that resonated with contemporary artistic movements and political agendas. This kind of “propagandistic” filmmaking helped to establish the propaganda/historical film of the twenties, leading to its eventual development into socialist realist film in the early thirties.

**Vsevolod Pudovkin and “Poetic” Montage**

A student of Kuleshov, Pudovkin began his film career studying first at the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography in Moscow (VGíK) and later working in Kuleshov’s studio, assisting the director on films such as *Mr. West* and *The Death Ray*

\(^{35}\) Keply, “Mr. Kuleshov,” 137.  
\(^{36}\) Ibid., 140-141.
Pudovkin began making his first films in 1925 with *Chess Fever*, followed his more successful *Mother* (1926) and *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927). His approach to filmmaking, specifically editing and acting, differed from those of Kuleshov and his colleague Eisenstein.\(^37\) His approach to montage, a technique he developed through his training with Kuleshov, expanded upon Kuleshov’s “brick by brick” approach influenced by the continuity editing of Hollywood film, which preferred “linkage” (continuity) over the “collision” (juxtaposition) approach of Eisenstein.\(^38\) This resulted in his films being described by contemporary critic Viktor Shklovsky as more “poetic” or “lyrical” than those of Eisenstein.\(^39\) Pudovkin tended towards symbolism in his work, often juxtaposing images that symbolized overall narrative themes of the film. In *Mother*, for example, he juxtaposed images of the protagonist, the mother, crying alongside her husband’s dead body with water dripping from a faucet. This scene can be read to show the mother in mourning, through the shots of the character herself. References to other objects, such as a dripping faucet, that call attention to her silence in mourning can also be read as “crying” on her behalf. In later part of the film, Pudovkin intercuts images of running streams coming together and the fervor of a nascent revolution. The “running” and gradual unity within these two images complement one another, with the streams

\(^{37}\) Although I do not discuss it here, Pudovkin’s approach to acting differed greatly from Kuleshov’s approach. Kuleshov preferred Meyerhold’s biomechanics, which controlled every bodily movement, while Pudovkin favored the Stanislavskian approach, tending towards the dramatic stage acting, often seen as an antithesis to Meyerhold’s bold experiments. See Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Film Acting and Film Technique*, trans. Igor Montagu (New York: Grove Press, 1960) and Fell, *A History of Films*, 194, for a brief mention of Pudovkin’s use of theater actors.

\(^{38}\) “In front of me lies a crumpled yellowed sheet of paper. On it is a mysterious note: “Linkage – P” and “Collision – E”. This is a substantial trace of a heated bout on the subject if montage between P (Pudovkin) and E (myself).” This quote is from an article by Eisenstein, where he compares his approach to montage to that of Pudovkin. See Sergey Eisenstein, “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram,” in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, ed. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1949), 37-38. See also Leyda, *Kino*, 234 for his quotation and description of this idea.

\(^{39}\) Viktor Shklovsky, “Poetry and Prose in Cinema” in *Film Factory*, 176-178. This article was originally published in B. M. Eikhenbaum, ed., *Poetika Kino* [The Poetics of Cinema] (Moscow, 1927).
(symbolizing unification) supporting the politics of the characters, particularly the mother. This symbol-object relationship is the reason Shklovsky considered Pudovkin’s montage approach “poetic.” Whatever the label, Pudovkin’s own statements also mirror his critics’ responses to his differences from his teacher and colleague:

In that picture [Mother] I first of all tried to keep as far away as I could from Eisenstein and from much that Kuleshov had taught me. I did not see how it was possible for me to limit myself, with my organic need for inner emotions, to the dry form which Kuleshov preached...I had a strong instinctive inclination for living people whom I wanted to photograph and whose soul I wanted to fathom, just as Eisenstein had fathomed the soul of his Battleship Potemkin.  

Pudovkin’s style of montage, although modern in use of montage technique and cinematic content, differed significantly from that of his contemporaries.  

**Sergey Eisenstein**

One of the most discussed figures in film history and theory, Eisenstein was a prominent figure from the twenties until his death in 1948. Known as a polymath and prolific essayist whose interests spanned the arts, language, and culture, Eisenstein began his career in the avant-garde art, theater, and emerging film scene with his work at the Proletkult Theater in 1920 after having studied Japanese at the Moscow’s General Arts Academy. At the Proletkult Theater he was introduced to the techniques of the commedia dell’arte through Nikolay Foregger and the principles of constructivism through Boris Arvatov.  

In 1921, Eisenstein enrolled in Meyerhold’s State Higher...
Directing Workshop, studying performance, production methods, and scenic design.\textsuperscript{44} After a year, Meyerhold dismissed Eisenstein as a student, claiming he had outgrown the director, and hired Eisenstein as an assistant director. His work with Meyerhold and future film directors such as Grigory Aleksandrov and Sergey Yutkevich (of the Moscow-based FEKS group\textsuperscript{45}), shaped his later cinematic style to include interests in Asian theater, controlled bodily movement (such as biomechanics), the circus and the grotesque, popular American films, and the idea of “Eccentrism.”\textsuperscript{46} In 1922-1923, Eisenstein worked in Kuleshov’s workshop, where he was introduced to montage theory. By 1923, he developed a theory, the “montage of attractions,” that incorporated some of the above influences. Written for the theatrical production of \textit{The Wiseman} (1923), Eisenstein’s article on his new theory of montage showed the influence of the circus, the music hall, Meyerhold’s biomechanics, and Kuleshov’s montage.\textsuperscript{47} Like Kuleshov, Eisenstein recognized the value of quick-paced editing and its physiological impact on audiences as well as its combination with the “ideological” purpose of educating the audience of the current political agenda. Combined with circus-like attractions which were designed to “shock” the audience, Eisenstein’s “montage of attractions” was born.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{44} Bordwell, \textit{Cinema of Eisenstein}, 3 and Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich}, 35.
\textsuperscript{45} FEKS (The Factory of the Eccentric Actor) was a group of young artists and filmmakers in the twenties who espoused the theory of “eccentrism.”
\textsuperscript{46} See Bordwell, \textit{Cinema of Eisenstein}, 4 and Titus, \textit{Montage Shostakovich}, 35. I will define “eccentrism” in more detail later in my discussion of the FEKS group. For now, suffice to say, “eccentrism” was a modernist approach to theater and film that emphasized the grotesque, technology, Americanism, the circus combined with proletarian ideals of the time.
\textsuperscript{47} Meyerhold’s influence on film, among other arts, was significant, although generally understudied. However, one extensively researched and useful text on Meyerhold, Eisenstein and biomechanics has been published in English. See Alna Law and Mel Gordon, \textit{Meyerhold, Eisenstein and Biomechanics, Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia} (Jefferson: McFarland and Co., Inc., 1996).
\textsuperscript{48} According to Yutkevich, this term has its roots in the idea named “scenic attractions,” which both Yutkevich and Eisenstein invented after Yutkevich had excitedly come home after time spent at the fairgrounds on the “attractions.” See Sergey Yutkevich, “Teenage Artist of the Revolution,” in \textit{Cinema in Revolution} (see footnote 2), 32, for this anecdote.
To create the “montage” aspect, Eisenstein would calculate and control every aspect of the performance in a nearly mechanistic manner. He described the “montage of attractions” in his article in the following way:

An attraction (in our diagnosis of theatre) is any aggressive movement in theatre, i.e., any element of it that subjects the audience to emotional or psychological influence, verified by experience and mathematically calculated to produce specific emotional shocks in the spectator in their proper order within the whole. These shocks provide the only opportunity of perceiving the ideological aspect of what is being shown, the final ideological conclusion.⁴⁹

This approach transferred to his film work, with his Strike (1924), The Battleship Potemkin (1925) and October (1927) which are considered to be significant examples of his montage theories in practice.

In “The Montage of Film Attractions,” another of several articles to follow on montage theory, Eisenstein detailed how his theatrical theory applies to film.⁵⁰ The article details a variety of factors important to filmmaking, including mise-en-scène, acting and bodily movement, the influence of American cinema, and montage. He emphasized that his application of montage to the cinema is associational and dependent upon rhythm that will agitate or excite the audience. As he explained,

Whereas in theatre an effect is achieved primarily through the physiological perception of an actually occurring fact, the cinema is made up of the juxtaposition and accumulation, in the audience’s psyche, of associations that the film’s purpose requires, associations that are aroused by the separate elements of the stated (in practical terms, in ‘montage fragments’) fact, associations that produce, albeit tangentially, a similar (and often stronger) effect only when taken as a whole.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Sergey Eisenstein, “The Montage of Attractions,” in Film Factory (see footnote 2), 87-88.
In this statement and throughout the article, Eisenstein attempted to evoke the differences between theater and film montage in terms of “association” and “physiological perception.” He emphasized that in film, montage serves to create a chain of associations that contribute to “whole” or theme of the film itself. In terms of perception, he was unfortunately vague, but did consider theater to be more of a “physiological” experience than film. He understood that film can evoke excitement in the spectator, particularly in scenes that have quick-paced editing designed to affect the viewer, but does not elaborate on this issue. What he did later add to his discussion of association is the idea of emotion. Using the finale of his film *The Strike* as an example, he outlined in greater detail how he creates an “associational comparison” between a mass shooting and a slaughterhouse. This “associational comparison” was intended to have a “powerful emotional effect,” illustrating elements of contrast and association between subjects.

The intention was to produce associations that lead the viewer to feelings of disgust, shock, and revulsion from the collision of disparate fragments that “taken as a whole” serve the political theme of the film.

Eisenstein’s montage experiments continued into the late twenties, thirties, and forties, after his approximate two year stay in the United States and Mexico. He developed his notion of montage to include minute elements of the mise-en-scène and musical illustration. His articles “Beyond the Shot,” (1929) “Dramaturgy of Film Form,”

---

52 See Eisenstein, “The Montage of Film Attractions,” 42 where Eisenstein briefly admits that film may produce a “physical” response of the spectator.
53 Eisenstein, “The Montage of Film Attractions,” 43.
54 Ibid. Eisenstein has a tendency to define the montage of film attractions in pieces throughout the article. At one point he states, “The montage of attractions is closer to the simple contrasting comparisons that often produce a definitely powerful emotional effect.”
55 Eisenstein left in 1926 for Europe and worked in the U.S. from 1930 to 1932. His last project was in Mexico, where he filmed *Qué viva Mexico!*, financed by Upton Sinclair. For more information, see Bordwell, *Cinema of Eisenstein*, 15-22.
In his articles from the late twenties, he argued for a specific film language, treating film as an art rather than novelty. He also narrowed his definition of montage, using words like “juxtaposition” to evoke a collision of ideas designed to provoke associations – an overall development of the vaguely outlined notions of montage in his earlier articles. His articles of the thirties explored the relationship of sound and image, using musical terms such as “polyphonic” to describe the types of montage that incorporated aspects of a given image in combination with sound. Suffice to say that his films *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible* both explored his montage ideas of the late thirties and early forties, where sound and the musical score were intended to align with the content of the images. 

Although his experiments with image and sound postdate sound experiments by directors such as Kozintsev and Trauberg, Eisenstein’s innovations nonetheless continued to utilize sound and musical score as integral components of filmmaking and the film product.

---


57 See Beyond the Shot” and the “Dramaturgy of Film Form” in Taylor and Glenny, *Eisenstein, Selected Works, Volume 1: Writings, 1922-34*.

FEKS (The Factory of the Eccentric Actor)

Contemporary with Eisenstein and Pudovkin were Sergey Yutkevich, Grigory Kozintsev, and Leonid Trauberg, members of a group later known as the Factory of the Eccentric Actor (FEKS). Yutkevich especially was well acquainted with Eisenstein, with whom he frequented movie theaters and popular shows. It was in fact Yutkevich who introduced Eisenstein to the other members of FEKS, which began a long-held respect, and to some degree imitation of, Eisenstein’s film style.

The FEKS group was founded in 1921, initiated by the well-known Eccentric Manifesto and the “Dispute in the Eccentric Theater” in the Petrograd Free Comedy Theater. In 1922, the group officially opened their “factory” and produced various stage productions and, later films. Their intention was to reinvent the socialist theater with the use of principles derived from the circus and vaudeville. In 1928, Vladimir Nedobrovo, a writer on the group, claimed that although FEKS borrowed from the music-hall, vaudeville, and the circus, they were distinguished from the “eccentrism of the music-hall” because they operated within the concept of “alienation.” As Nedobrovo states,

The FEKS concept of alienation consists of presenting an object separated from the things that surround it. The object is removed from its normal context and placed in another milieu.

This concept of alienation and Nedobrovo’s continued description of the FEKS’s philosophies strongly resembles Shklovsky’s notion of “defamiliarization.”\textsuperscript{63} FEKS was involved in the avant-garde culture of its time and connected to the Formalists.\textsuperscript{64} The members of FEKS, like Kuleshov, were also deeply affected by the “Americanization” trend (a passion for technology), the past trend of futurism, and the financial restraints of the NEP era.\textsuperscript{65} Each of its members had been involved in the theater or in the visual arts before creating this group and many of their experiences within modernist art and theater circles in both Moscow and St. Petersburg were represented in their later films. The group had close ties with the popular culture of the twenties and formed many friendships with other prominent directors as well as composers.

FEKS’s brand of eccentricism was expressed in their \textit{Eccentric Manifesto}, which presented a series of statements in the form of advertising posters representative of the time, defining the “eccentric” in opposition to “high” art and culture.\textsuperscript{66} It praised several aspects of American culture, including detective novels, dance fads (the foxtrot), jazz, the advertising poster, and popular film. They bluntly denounced the aesthetic value of the major art trends of the time such as expressionism and cubism.\textsuperscript{67} They claimed, in a poster-like fashion:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{63} See Chapter One for a brief discussion of defamiliarization.
\textsuperscript{64} Yuri Tînyanov wrote the scenario for the FEKS’ \textit{The Cloak} (1926).
\textsuperscript{65} See Barthelemy Amengual, “Conversation with Trauberg,” in \textit{Futurism/Formalism/FEKS}, 28-29, where Trauberg discusses (and denies) the various influences on the development of FEKS. Also see “Introduction,” in \textit{Futurism/Formalism/FEKS}, 7, of the same text for a discussion of the influences on FEKS.
\textsuperscript{67} In an interview, Trauberg admitted that the FEKS group was influenced partly by Expressionism, though reluctant to admit it. See Amengual, “Conversation with Trauberg,” 29.
\end{quote}
Life requires art that is hyperbolically crude, dumbfounding, nerve-wracking, openly utilitarian, mechanically exact, momentary, rapid, otherwise no-one will hear, see or stop. Everything adds up to this: the art of the 20th century, the art of 1922, the art of this very moment is Eccentrism. 68

They expressed the value of youth over age, embodying a modernist rebellion against past traditions and their representatives. 69 They also emphasized the superiority of aspects of American culture, specifically citing America as the technological innovator and the producer of modern art. In one section of the manifesto, they list the “new” and youthful versions of the “art of today”:

In literature – the chansonnière, the cry of the auctioneer, street language.  
In painting – the circus poster, the jacket of a cheap novel  
In music – the jazz band (the commotion of a negro orchestra), circus marches.  
In ballet – American song and dance routines.  
In theatre – the music-hall, cinema, circus, café-chantant, boxing. 70

FEKS declared war on the past traditions of art and welcomed the “hyperbolically crude” as the new culture. This obsession with American culture surfaced in FEKS’s earlier films and in Eisenstein’s definition of the “montage of attractions” from 1925, which was created with the assistance of Yutkevich.

Yutkevich and Eisenstein both shared similar interests in the trends in which FEKS participated and sought to find an essentially modernist form of expression. In his essay, “Teenage Artists of the Revolution,” Yutkevich stated,

68 Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, Kryzhitsky, 58-59.  
69 Citing Mark Twain, they claim, “Better to be young pup than an old bird of paradise.” Kozintsev, Trauberg, Yutkevich, Kryzhitsky, 58.  
So our infatuation for the circus, music-hall and cinema was not a chance thing. But led us to overturn all aesthetic concepts and create a new aesthetic of the revolutionary spectacle. From this resulted on the one hand the mass spectacles and popular show, and on the other the introduction of minor genres into classical form. Quite definitely the reactionaries at that time were those whom we now call abstract artists.71

In 1922, Yutkevich and Kozintsev participated in the “Left Stream Exhibition,” exhibiting paintings that resembled popular circus posters of the time. The previous year, Yutkevich had enrolled in Meyerhold’s Workshop along with Eisenstein, where he learned biomechanics and mise en scène directly from Meyerhold. Eventually the FEKS group decided to “divide their spheres of influence.”72 Yutkevich and Eisenstein remained in Moscow, while Kozintsev and Trauberg went to Leningrad. Both FEKS groups continued to work in theater until opportunities for excursions into film presented themselves.

Before working in film, Eisenstein and Yutkevich remained very close, producing their own shows in Moscow.73 In 1922-1923, Yutkevich left the theater to become a film director. After working with Abram Room as an assistant director and scene designer, Yutkevich gained reputation and fame with his own subsequent films, including Lace (1928). Throughout the rest of the twenties and early thirties, Yutkevich continued to be part of FEKS, producing the sound film The Golden Mountains (1931) and The Counterplan (1932) with co-director Fridrikh Ermler.

The Petrograd/Leningrad FEKS consisted of Kozintsev and Trauberg, who remained directorial partners until their spilt in 1947. Kozintsev’s description of the

72 This decision, for Kozintsev and Trauberg to “conquer” Leningrad, and Yutkevich and Eisenstein to stay in Moscow, was made in 1922. See Yutkevich, “Teenage Artist of the Revolution,” 30-31.
73 According to Yutkevich, it around this time that he and Eisenstein invented the concept of the “montage of attractions.” See footnote 48 and Yutkevich, Cinema in Revolution, 32.
eccentrism of the other half of FEKS resembled Nedobrovo’s claims, yet Kozintsev and Trauberg emphasized the rhythm of epoch, its machinist ideals, and its roots in Soviet trends of the twenties.  

Like the other members of FEKS, Kozintsev worked in the theater until he produced his first film, *The Adventures of Oktyabrina* in 1924. Kozintsev described this film as practically a “propaganda film-poster,” based on the same principles of eccentrism that FEKS practiced in theater. The following film, *The Devil’s Wheel* (1926) was a slow departure from eccentrism, demonstrating experimentation with other influences. In this film, references to German expressionism were used to show the “bottom of the city barrel,” to depict the ugly and the corrupt. Eccentricity was still present, but was seen in the lesser characters. Similar to Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin*, which had premiered a year prior to *The Devil’s Wheel*, Kozintsev also used cinematic “typage,” or “the representation of character through external traits of class or role,” to illustrate the characters in this film. 

Kozintsev and the rest of FEKS closely studied the films of Eisenstein and Griffith, especially *Strike* and *Intolerance* (1916). FEKS’ films, including *The Adventures of Oktyabrina* and *The Devil’s Wheel*, used the principles of montage in combination with the eccentric and German expressionism. Three other FEKS films followed, mainly produced and directed by Kozintsev and his Leningrad partner Trauberg, each exploring a somewhat new approach: *The Overcoat* (1926), based on

---

75 Zorkaya, *Illustrated History*, 106.  
76 See Theodore van Houten, *Leonid Trauberg and His Films, Always the Unexpected* (‘s-Hertogenbosch: Art and Research, 1989) for a discussion of these films and the various trends with which the directors experimented.  
77 Zorkaya, *Illustrated History*, 106.  
Gogol’s work, *SVD* (*Soyuz Velikogo Dela* or the *The Club of the Big Deed*, 1927), which romanticizes materialism and *The New Babylon* (1927), which included a score by Shostakovich. *The New Babylon* was the last silent film of the Leningrad FEKS group.

Kozintsev and Trauberg experimented with their first sound film in 1931. Their film, *Alone* was one of the first “talkies” in the Soviet Union, though planned and executed as a silent film. That same year, Yutkevich produced *Golden Mountains* (1931), whose soundtrack, written again by Shostakovich, was an attempt at the audio-visual counterpoint. Ushering in the era of socialist realism, Kozintsev and Trauberg produced their *Maxim Trilogy*, consisting of *The Youth of Maxim* (1934), *The Return of Maxim* (1937) and *The Vyborg Side* (1938). Kozintsev and Trauberg continued to work together until their separation in the late forties. All three of the original FEKS members, Kozintsev, Trauberg, and Yutkevich, went on to teach and head film studios, ushering in the new generation of film students.

Like their contemporaries, the FEKS group was exposed to, studied, and implemented montage in their films. When sound film emerged in the Soviet Union in the thirties, audio-visual counterpoint became as much an issue for FEKS as it had been for Eisenstein. Shostakovich was an ideal choice as film composer, given his experience with *The Nose* and silent cinema accompaniment. The development of the relationship between Shostakovich and FEKS as well as the composer’s adaptation to and growth as a film composer is the subject of later chapters.

---

79 See Chapter Four for a discussion of this film and its score.
Music in the “Silent” Era (1896-1930s)

It seems almost obligatory to note in any discussion of music and sound in the silent era that “silent cinema was never silent.” Sound and music were both an integral part of the cinema-scape of the first three decades of the twentieth century, not only in America but in Russia as well. From its beginnings in the late nineteenth century, film was accompanied by some form of sound. The Lumière Brothers’ first film presentation in December 1895 had musicians to accompany the film, as did other companies that revealed their new technology to the public. Whether it were small ensembles, machines of various sorts, such as the orchestrion, pianist-illustrators, orchestras, lecturers, or audience participation, sound was always present.

As many scholars have argued, audiences of early cinema needed to hear something to fill the aural void of the projected images. Theodor Adorno and Hans Eisler have argued that music can ward off fear in the silent cinema theater, e.g., fear of the dark, fear of the medium itself, while others have argued that sound had mediated the silence of the images, providing enough distraction for the ear to allow the images to appear more “real.” In other words, sound and music helped the viewer to accept the “illusions” they were watching as “natural.” If they were accompanied by silence, the

81 Rick Altman, “The Silence of the Silents,” 658. Vitasecope also had musical accompaniment at their first presentation in 1896. Of course, there is also Thomas Edison’s well-known kinetophone that accompanied early pictures, among other machines. For additional information on sound in the silent era see Abel and Altman, Sounds of Early Cinema for a thorough discussion.
82 The orchestrion was a kind of organ that was played by perforated rolls or cards and was eventually replaced by player pianos. See Barbara Owen, Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume: “Orchestrian,” Grove Music Online ed. L. Macy (Accessed 21 March 2006), http://www.grovesmusic.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu. For an overview of various kinds of visual and sound technology in the early years of the twentieth-century, see Altman, “The Silence of the Silents.”
83 For further discussion, see Tsivian, Early Cinema, 83, and Hanns Eisler, Composing for the Films (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).
viewer would lose the ability to suspend disbelief, become aware of his/her surroundings, such as the darkness of the theater, and become alert to the silence of the film’s “diegetic sounds.”

Recent and past scholars and critics tend to discuss several categories of music/sound accompaniment: musical accompaniment, sound effects, live performance and the sounds of the projector or other machines. Within the category of musical accompaniment, they have recognized three types in the early period: improvisation, compilations, and composition. Throughout the teens and twenties, improvisation and compilation scores (also known as “ready-made” music) were the primary forms of musical accompaniment. Improvisation, the art of spontaneously creating music on the spot, is for early film scholar Yuri Tsivian the “middle way” between ready made and compilation music. Mostly performed by pianists in the teens and early twenties, improvisation was regarded as an art form often played in salons. Certain pianists were immensely popular for their improvisatory skills during the era of silent film. Two well-known pianists, I. Khudyakov and Aleksandr Anoshchenko, garnered significant fame in their time, being regarded as “artists” instead of merely pianist-illustrators. Despite their acceptance by some, the improvisation method was criticized by others because it

---

84 Anything that occurs in the story world of the film is diegetic and anything outside of that space is referred to as non-diegetic. Often these terms are used in regard to sound film. See David Bordwell and Kristen Thompson, Film Art, An Introduction (New York: McGraw Hill, 1997), 92 and 303-335.
85 These categories are borrowed in part from Tsivian, Early Cinema, 87 and other Russian texts (see below), but hold true for discussions of American music as well. See, for example, Abel and Altman, Sounds of Early Cinema. Also, although my focus is mostly on musical accompaniment, I may include occasional descriptions of other categories of sound as needed both in this and the following chapters.
87 Tsivian, Early Cinema, 87.
88 Ibid., 88.
was reserved only for individuals (orchestras could not collectively improvise as successfully) and because it led to a “tumpety-tumpety” effect, or a descent into pure, unimaginative illustration. It is unclear where the boundary lies between improvisation as art and improvisation as hackwork, yet Tsivian emphasizes that some music critics found the idea of silent film improvisation distasteful, as demonstrated in a negative review from Leonid Sabaneyev, who described it as “tasteless vamping to film, slick (and not so slick) plagiarism, and the art of distorting great works of art.” Sabaneyev’s distaste for unsuitable accompaniment stemmed from his desire to have music match the action in a strict and mechanical fashion. Predating the emergence of synchronized sound film, he wanted music to be “mechanically combined” with the help of a pianola and “strictly timed to coincide with specific moments in the drama.” He also stressed that music should be written. Although his emphasis was on the mechanical reproduction of sound matched with image, this indicated that Sabaneyev may have been striving for music that resembled art more than hackwork, which leaves accompaniment in the hands of “a single individual with accidental moods.”

One aspect of twenties-era musical accompaniment is the creation of a film around commonly-known songs. Directors often took urban romances and created a film around them, referencing a song by having a close-up on sheet music in the diegesis or

---

90 L. Sabaneyev, “Kino-muzika” [Film music], as quoted in part from Tsivian, Early Cinema, 88. The full citation for Sabaneyev’s article was not provided in Tsivian’s text.
91 Sabaneyev, quoted in Tsivian, Early Cinema, 89.
92 Ibid.
presenting the first few words of the song text in the intertitles. Further, Tsivian notes that musicians such as Anoshchenko had considered making films inspired by past musical works such as Ludwig van Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony or Hector Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique. An almost Skryabinesque approach to accompanying sound, these musicians were looking for a visual accompaniment that places music in a central position. This is contrary to the position of some analysts today, who often insist that music almost always plays a secondary role.

“Ready-made” music, music compiled from multiple sources to illustrate various moods, emotions, and ideas, was also common in silent film accompaniment. Performed either by pianist-illustrators or entire orchestras, “ready-made” music reflected the relationship between musical “codes” and silent film. Usually, musicians, trained in the art music tradition and well aware of their current popular music, would rattle off a collage of quotations and allusions as the images changed in mood or action. By 1912, similar to Erno Rapee’s and Giuseppe Becce’s encyclopedias in the West, Anatoly Goldobin and Boris Azancheyev published a musical “guide” for pianist-illustrators. This guide contains detailed instructions on linking music to action, providing lists of emotions, moods, or other “cinematographic themes” with musical recommendations.

---

93 Tsivian, Early Cinema, 92. See footnote 86 for a definition of diegetic and non-diegetic.
94 I am thinking of Claudia Gorbman and other analysts of sound film in particular, who have discussed film music as a kind of Muzak.
96 A book of current musical “codes,” pianist-illustrators referenced such a text. It is unclear, however, how many pianist-illustrators chose to consult such manuals.
Other manuals, both of Western and native origin, circulated in the Soviet Union as well, some of them compiled by the Association of Revolutionary Cinema Workers in the twenties.\(^{97}\) In a “brochure” written in the twenties as a history/training guide for musicians in the cinema, Sergey Bugoslavsky and D. Blok outline in precise detail the “principles, methods, and practical work in music on the screen.”\(^{98}\) These authors provide detailed contemporaneous reporting on performance practice in the cinema of the twenties and earlier and reinforce the commonly held notion that art music of the past was often culled for various musical accompaniment. They even include several “how-to” chapters on methods, such as how to have smooth cadences between disparate sections, how to create sequences, and so forth. They also had chapters detailing the instrumental makeup of an orchestra dependent upon the theater’s size and a list of art music composers whose music was harvested for the cinema, categorized by genre.\(^{99}\) They also include a chapter on how to create what they call “musical scenarios,” what is later called a *montazhiy list* or “editing list.”\(^{100}\) These lists are designed to show a musician how to create his/her own lists, complete with a section for correlating musical ideas alongside dramaturgic events in specific films. It also provides past examples of editing lists with musical accompaniment as well as a list of suitable musical pieces for


\(^{100}\) Many “editing lists” from the late twenties and early thirties include not only music, but events in the film as well.
use in film organized by composer, genre, or country of origin. The balanced discussion of methods and inclusion of lists of genres, styles, and composers appropriate for improvisation and compilation scores for cinema, acts both as a manual to accompanists and compilers of the twenties and a glimpse into the film accompaniment performance practices that operated in Russian/Soviet cinemas from pre-revolutionary Russia through the twenties.

Aspects of rhythm and timing were an important issue for silent film accompaniment in addition to discussions about appropriate content for specific cinematic images, involving discussions about genre, style, and composer. Much of early musical accompaniment required accompanists to constantly illustrate the shifting moods and events in the film, leading to the potential for abrupt changes in the music. Bugoslavsky’s and Blok’s chapter on “Training for the Cinema-Pianist” provides basic music theory and history to assist the illustrator with ultimately understanding how to fuse disparate fragments of past music together to not only illustrate the film, but further solidify certain “codes” or topoi and their cinematic associations. Rhythm and timing are therefore as considerably important as understanding these “codes,” as demonstrated in Bugoslavsky’s and Blok’s chapter on creating “musical scenarios” for silent film. In his discussion of rhythm in cinema accompaniment, Tsivian also notes that accompanists and score compilers could not follow traditional musical forms, but needed to adjust to the rhythm of the medium itself:

101 See Blok and Bugoslavsky, Muzïkal’noe soprovozhdeniye, 79-93, where there are editing lists for films such as Dom na Trubnoy (House on Trubnaya Street) and Bely Orel (The White Eagle). The result is a “musical scenario” as Blok and Bugoslavsky have noted on page 14.
102 Blok and Bugoslavsky, Muzïkal’noe soprovozhdeniye, chapter four, 79-93.
One way or another, music in the cinema had to come to terms with the confused reality of the screen and the changing moods of the auditorium. The internal pulse of cinematic movement—as well as the neurotic tempo of changing shots, intertitles, and subjects—was observed to have infected the accompaniment. Something like a musical counterpart (or ‘musical image’) of the cinematic text was born.\textsuperscript{103}

In some form, the rhythm and musical choices of the cinema orchestra or pianist was eclectic in its redefinition and recycling of music’s past and present. Pavel Muratov, a contemporaneous commentator on cinema of the twenties, stated,

Listen carefully to a skillful cinema accompanist. Not in the least bit embarrassed, he weaves his improbable mosaic from Chopin, from Verdi’s or Tchaikovsky’s operas, from music-hall ballads and café dances, picking them up, breaking off in mid-passage, switching from one to another—but always at the right moment, not in the sense of emotional correspondence to the action, but in a deeper and more important rhythmic sense. And sometimes even a musically fastidious viewer will overlook this grotesque confusion, since he is carried along by the rhythm of the entire spectacle without actually hearing the details or noticing the separate musical ‘pieces’ of the mosaic, and is responding only to the rhythm of its overall sonic pattern.\textsuperscript{104}

The rhythmically consistent “mosaic” of which Muratov spoke and the balance between coherence and fragmentation addresses the same issues and discussions that would continue in the late twenties and beyond, when specially composed scores would dominate the film music industry. As I discuss in later chapters, the balance between fragmentation and “symphonic-ness” would become a key issue for early film composers such as Shostakovich as well.

**Composed Scores and the Beginnings of Sound**

Starting in 1908, Russian composers began to write music especially for films.

For Drankov’s *Stenka Razin*, Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov composed a score that utilized a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{103} Tsivian, *Early Cinema*, 99.
\end{flushright}
folk song associated with the topic of the film. Since the song was a popular tune of the time, audiences easily recognized the folk song and sang along with it during the film.\textsuperscript{105} Not only is it fascinating that a folk song was used in the first Russian film score to intertextually illustrate the drama, but the phenomenon of this “sing-along” also supports the notion that cinema audiences were never “silent,” just as American researchers have found in their work on American silent film.\textsuperscript{106}

In the mid-twenties, more specially composed scores were surfacing both abroad and in the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{107} Eisenstein, one of many directors, sought to hire Sergey Prokofiev as early as 1925 to create “film symphonies” for his films.\textsuperscript{108} By 1926, a text by Bugoslavsky and Messman outlined the role of music in the cinema and the burgeoning importance of the composer.\textsuperscript{109} In their book from 1929, Bugoslavsky and Blok also mentioned that only forty-seven “cinema-musical compositions” were specially written for films to date, including the well-known score for \textit{The Battleship Potemkin} by Edmund Meisel.\textsuperscript{110}

The desire for the “film composer” became stronger by the end of the twenties. In the Party Conference Resolution of 1928, the first meeting that signaled the State’s direct

---

\textsuperscript{105} Leyda, \textit{Kino}, 35, mentions the popularity of the film’s song. It is also discussed in Tsivian, \textit{Early Cinema}, 91.

\textsuperscript{106} It was common for audiences to engage in various activities while watching film. See Abel and Altman, \textit{Sounds of Early Cinema} and Altman, “The Silence of the Silents.”

\textsuperscript{107} See Blok and Bugoslavsky, \textit{Muzikal’noe soprovodzheniye}, 8, for a discussion of the “cinema-musical compositions” of the twenties to date.

\textsuperscript{108} Egorova, \textit{Soviet Film Music}, 6.

\textsuperscript{109} Bugoslavsky and Messman, \textit{Music and the Cinema}.

\textsuperscript{110} Blok and Bugoslavsky, \textit{Muzikal’noe soprovodzheniye}, 8. The film score, considered too experimental, was said to have caused a scandal throughout Europe forcing the film to be played without the score. See Kurt London, \textit{Film Music: A Summary of the Characteristic Features of its History, Aesthetics, Technique and Possible Developments} (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1936), 93.
involvement with the creation of Soviet film, the need for film composers was considered as necessary as any other aspect of current filmmaking. The Resolution stated,

Musical illustration, which is an integral part of a work of cinema, must serve the task of cinema: the improvement of the cultural level of the masses. We must publish musical scores composed by highly qualified musicians.\textsuperscript{111}

Even more so than in the past, there was a desire for film music that was written especially for films. Certainly, the issue of organized sound was prominent in 1928 – it was the same year that the well-known “Statement on Sound” was written. At the same time that sound film was becoming more of a possibility and potential threat, directors Eisenstein, Aleksandrov, and Pudovkin released their “Statement on Sound Film.” This statement reveals the directors’ thoughts on how to integrate sound into film and their fears of the introduction of sound technology to the Soviet Union and its potential to “destroy the culture of montage.”\textsuperscript{112} They began by admitting that the Soviet Union was then unable to accommodate sound, unlike America, but suggested ways of coping with the new technology without destroying the specific qualities of the cinema that had come to internationally represent the country, specifically Soviet-style montage. Maintaining montage as the central component of cinema therefore became their primary concern. Russian Formalist Boris Eikhenbaum considered film to have its own “inner speech,” which would potentially be threatened by the “outer speech” of sound.\textsuperscript{113} This echoes the

\textsuperscript{111} “Party Cinema Conference Resolution: The Results of Cinema Construction in the USSR and the Tasks of Soviet Cinema,” in \textit{Film Factory}, 212.


\textsuperscript{113} Ian Christie argued that Eikhenbaum considered sound a significant threat. Eikhenbaum, however, in his article “The Problems of Cinema Stylistics,” does seem to be less threatened than Christie implies. In fact, when discussing the possibility of musical sound in film, Eikhenbaum seems to be rather supportive of the idea that music, if kept in the “background,” is necessary for understanding the visual speech of the
filmmakers’ concern that the possibility sound film would encourage a kind of realism (slowing down of the editing through longshots, “realistic” speech, and so forth) that would eliminate the avant-garde use of montage and signal a return to “theatrical” film. Filmmakers and theorists were afraid sound would smooth over the dialectical and disjunctive syntax of montage and replace it with a linear, narrative syntax.\footnote{Ian Christie makes this point in “Making Sense of Early Soviet Sound,” in \textit{Inside the Film Factory}, 180.}

The alternative, they stated, is the “contrapuntal” use of sound, or an “orchestral counterpoint” of images and sound.\footnote{Sergey Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin and Grigory Alexandrov, “Statement on Sound,” in \textit{Film Factory}, 235-236.} What “contrapuntal” meant in the context of this essay, however, is unclear, since the authors never concretely defined their use of the term and its difference from musical meaning. In a critique of the “Statement,” film music critic Vladimir Messman argued three points that critique and more deeply analyzed the concepts raised in the “Statement.” Firstly, Messman astutely argued that the “counterpoint” of sound and image in the most general, non-musical sense of the term, will naturally occur when sound film becomes the standard in Soviet filmmaking. Secondly, Messman evaluated the usage of the term “counterpoint,” pointing out that the term itself, although meant with best intentions, is misunderstood and misused. Again, he pointed out that counterpoint in the strictest musical sense would simply not happen in the way the directors imply. The counterpoint they intended would involve a “synthesis” of image and sound that will arise from the nature of a sound film. Messman lastly argued that a “montage score” is necessary in order to ensure that music and sound are

\footnote{Sergey Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin and Grigory Alexandrov, “Statement on Sound,” in \textit{Film Factory}, 235-236.}
integrated into the film in an organized manner that would lead to an “organic composition of visual and sound image.”

He concluded,

As far as sound film is concerned the film director is helpless without the film composer. The composer, for whom cinema has long been waiting, must occupy a responsible and leading place in cinema because, as the American F. Keisler has rightly said, “We see better when we hear and we hear better when we see.”

The authors of the Conference statement, the “Statement on Sound,” and Messman, all came to the conclusion that an experienced composer is needed for films. This revealed a desire on the part of the industry and its workers for a higher quality of music production and tailoring of music to specific films, concurrent with the desire to make cinema a high quality form of media that can act as the primary carrier of the State’s ideology. A new debate on the role and the emergence of sound in film thus began in 1928, even before “sound-on-film” was a technical possibility in Russia.

From 1928 forward, there was slow adaptation to sound film in the Soviet Union. The film industry lacked financial support in the development of sound systems that would match the quick growth of sound film in the United States. By the early thirties, different approaches to sound film emerged. Film scholar Ian Christie identifies three types of Soviet sound film as “demonstration pieces,” “post-synchronization,” and “full sound” films. Demonstration pieces were generally short documentaries, while post-sync was the practice of dubbing a soundtrack onto an already existing film. Full sound films recorded sound together with the image track. From 1930 to 1932, post-synchronization and partial post-sync production were being practiced, as full sound

---

116 Vladimir Messman, “Sound Film,” in Film Factory, 237.
117 Messman, “Sound Film,” 237.
films became more commonplace. In the early years of post-sync and full sound, many directors, including those of the “Statement,” approached sound as a novelty, producing experiments in sound that reflected some of the modernist trends of the twenties. Vertov’s Enthusiasm (Symphony of the Donbass, 1931) relied on factory and everyday noise and music as part of its “symphony.” It also included a symphony written especially for the film and fragments of Shostakovich’s Symphony No.3. Pudovkin’s Deserter used translation and multiple languages to emphasize the initial alienation of the main character and his eventual conversion to Soviet culture. Christie, in his discussion of the potential loss of “inner speech,” or more importantly, the loss of the specificity of montage film of the twenties to possible “realistic” sound film, discusses Boris Barnet’s Outskirts (1933) and its metaphoric use of sound, or “miscueing.” Barnet uses gunfire, for example, over images of a baby’s rattle that acts as an extra-narrative commentary on violence and revolution. This kind of experimentation was also found in other films, including Alone, which also had experimentation with overdubbing found sound over images that required different sounds in reality.

By 1932, filmmakers and the studios that funded them became more concerned with greater audibility, issues of timing, and mass-oriented music that eventually led to greater naturalism or “realism” in Soviet film. Film directors and composers, such as Kozintsev, Trauberg, and Shostakovich, also began experimenting with sound and music, adapting to the later polarized issues of “experimentation” and “realism.” As I discuss in

119 For information on the development of the technical equipment that enabled the emergence of sound film see L.I. Monosson, The Soviet Cinematography (New York: Amkino Corp., 1930), 523-526. This was a read paper that was later published.
120 Christie discussed this point in “Making Sense of Early Soviet Sound,” 189-190.
121 Films, such as The Counterplan, sought to create “realism” in sound, recording natural speech and sound effects, alongside “artificially created ones. See Chapter Six for further discussion.
later chapters, examining the work of modernist directors and their collaboration with composers may further illuminate the shift in the aesthetics, politics, and industry of sound film as well the compositional practices of the first generation of sound film composers.\(^{122}\) After 1932, the Soviet comedy emerged, alongside the new song-score dramas initiated by films such as *The Counterplan* (1932) and *Chapayev* (1934).\(^ {123}\) The use of songs as central musical ideas in a film continued into the thirties, particularly in films such as *The Maxim Trilogy* and the collaboration of Eisenstein and Prokofiev in *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) and later, *Ivan the Terrible* (1944-1946).\(^ {124}\) By the late thirties, art-music composers had a history of writing music for films, and the issues of “realism” and “experimentation” in sound film fell under the aesthetic rubric of socialist realism.

**Shostakovich and Film Culture**

Presumably because of a need for income, Shostakovich worked as a pianist-illustrator in the Bright Reel, the Splendid Palace, and the Picadilly Cinemas from 1924 until March 1926.\(^ {125}\) Shostakovich wrote that in order to become a silent film accompanist, he needed to “obtain a qualification as a silent-film accompanist in the Art

\(^{122}\) In her book, *Soviet Film Music*, Egorova explains, though very generally, that working in film affected the compositional style of both Shostakovich and Prokofiev, in terms of expressiveness, or experimentation with timbre and intonation, and in the adaptation of film techniques to non-film music. She states, “The fruitfulness of contact with the cinema was apparent in the musical adaptation of particularly cinematic devices such as ‘superimposition’ and ‘rapid’ cross-cutting, which later came to be also used in opera and symphonic genres.” Egorova, *Soviet Film Music*, 20.

\(^{123}\) Scores for many comedy films were composed by Isaak Dunayevsky, whom Shostakovich recognized as a significant composer of his time. See Dmitry Shostakovich, “Bol’shoy Talent, Bol’shoy Master,” [A Great Talent, a Great Master] *Iskusstvo kino* 1 (1956): 46-62, for more information.


Workers’ Union.” Shostakovich also related that thanks to his piano training in 1919 with G. Bruni, he was able to pass these necessary exams:

The test was very similar to my first visit to Bruni. First I was asked to play a Blue Waltz and then ‘something oriental.’ At Bruni’s I had not been able to play in an eastern style, but by 1923 I already knew Rimsky-Korsakov’s Sheherazade and Cui’s Orientale.

Some scholars have written that Shostakovich disliked working as a pianist-illustrator, since it took up too much of his time and, in his words, “paralysed my musical pursuits.” Undoubtedly, working as a pianist-illustrator occupied much of his time and gauging by his own account, it appears that he worked for particularly difficult managers. Despite his strong dislike for cinema accompaniment, however, it did offer him continued experience in improvisation and forced him to pay attention to the matching of image and sound. Such time invested in the constant creation of “new” music may be why he said that, “It was only once I left the cinemas for good that I could start composing again.” Although this phrase has often been used to emphasize his discontent with his cinema jobs, it does reveal that accompaniment may have involved more creativity and energy than what may be assumed from his descriptions. In an anecdote related by Nathan Perelman, Shostakovich is described as an active and perhaps overly stimulating accompanist. Perelman stated, “I believe that Dmitri Dmitriyevich used to improvise

128 Ibid. See also Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 29 and Sofia Moshevich, Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist (McGill: Queen’s University Press, 2004), 38.
129 Kozintsev speaks of this in his book, Glubokiy ekran [The Deep Screen], where he talks about meeting Shostakovich (and not knowing it) in 1926, two years before they officially met to work on The New Babylon. Kozintsev describes seeing a young pianist accompanying his friend Eisenstein’s film, The Battleship Potemkin at the Bright Reel Cinema. See Grigory Kozintsev, Sobranie sochinenyi v piati tomakh, [Collected Works in Five Volumes] (Leningrad: Iskusstvo: 1983), 1: 94.
while playing for the films in much the same style as he wrote music in the 1920s – very ‘progressively’. The audiences now and then protested.”

Perelman continues, relating that when Shostakovich was dismissed from the Picadilly he was reinstated after audiences defended his talent for improvisation. At other times at the Picadilly, Shostakovich was known to have “exasperated” the cinema-goers with his improvisation. Defending Shostakovich to the cinema manager after the audience complained of the “drunk pianist,” the cinema conductor Mikhail Vladimirov said, “The illustration is first-rate and your public doesn’t understand a thing.”

It appears that these two accounts by Perelman and Vladimirov show that the composer may have had difficulty with the management and at times, the public, but that his improvisation was a skill in which he did invest his effort. It is not a great leap to infer that Shostakovich likely learned much from his time as a pianist-illustrator that may have proved useful when he began composing scores for his first silent film, The New Babylon, in 1928.

In the late twenties and early thirties, he also worked in other narrativistic genres, including theater, opera, and ballet. His work on the Bed Bug with Meyerhold in 1929 was followed by his interest in and compositions for the Leningrad Theater of Working-Class Youth (TRAM). As discussed in Chapter One, his desire to write for this kind of proletarian theater coincides with his Second and Third Symphonies and overall interest

---

132 Ibid., 60.
133 Ibid., 61. Another statement to Shostakovich’s accompaniment practices came from his wife, Nina Shostakovich, where she states, “Dmitry’s direct spontaneous nature caused his downfall. An American comedy was being shown with huge success three times daily. Every time certain scenes flashed on the screen, the piano was silent and the audience heard the piano player burst into laughter, enjoying the antics of the comedian. For this unseemly behavior, the administration decided to part company with the youthful pianist.” See the Information Bulletin, USSR Embassy in Washington, 86 (18 July 1942): 3 as quoted in Leyda, Kino, 190.
in things revolutionary. His first opera, *The Nose*, further demonstrated his penchant for modernism and affection for Gogol’s writings to which he would return later in his career. His attraction to proletarian and modernist cultures would reveal itself in his early film scores as well. The year of *The Nose* was one of these first moments, which Kozintsev has referred to when he described his first impression of Shostakovich’s talent for musical storytelling. His description of *The Nose* revealed how he was impressed with Shostakovich’s realization of Gogol’s “phantasmagoria” and the “assault on conventionality” is his “incredible orchestral combinations…unhabitual rhythms…the incorporating of the apparently anti-poetic, anti-musical, vulgar, but what was in reality the intonation and parody of real life.”136 Certainly the modernism and grotesquerie of the production appealed to Kozintsev and prompted him to hire Shostakovich for *The New Babylon*.137

With *The Nose*, Shostakovich defended the notion that music could not be separated from its intended function, in this particular case, as support to the action. According to Laurel Fay, he protested a concert suite performance of the opera, because the “musical standpoint is derived exclusively from the action,” going further to say that “the presentation of *The Nose* in concert performance will be its death.”138 This opera was the beginning of Shostakovich’s understanding of the relationship between image and sound that would inform his later films, theatrical work, and opera.

135 He wrote an unfinished opera to *The Gamblers* in 1941-1942.
137 In 1928, Kozintsev and Trauberg, encouraged by their viewing of *The Nose*, sought to hire Shostakovich as their composer for their silent film, *The New Babylon*. Following *The New Babylon*, Shostakovich worked with other directors, including Fridrikh Ermiler, Leo Arnshtam and Sergey Yutkevich to create scores for historical and propagandistic films.
As implied above, Shostakovich’s involvement in film accompaniment and film score composition has often been discussed dismissively, as merely “for the money” or as aesthetically unworthy. Fay has quoted Shostakovich’s statement that he disliked working for films and that he did it only to support his family. Fay and Elizabeth Wilson, among other biographers, have also related Shostakovich’s unhappiness with his pianist-illustrator positions at length. Although piano accompaniment and writing scores for film was certainly useful for financial support, this cannot be equated with the notion that film music is inherently of poor quality. Just as music composed under the socialist regime is not automatically khatla, or hackwork, neither is music for silent or sound film. Tsivian has discussed at length the history of well-received and successful pianist-illustrators such as Khudyakov and Anoshchenko, who fulfilled a function important to silent cinema. Kozintsev also has defended film music as functional art as well. Sergey Yutkevich also spoke of Shostakovich’s enjoyment of film composition:

It seemed to me that he loved the cinema and did not consider it [to be an] ‘outhouse trade.’ And after all, the snobbism towards cinema in old Petrograd, in intellectual circles, which “makes a difference,” was great. The “cinema person” and art were not considered. I remember how one famous artist told me and Kozintsev: “here you are sinking to ‘kinoshki’.” Shostakovich worked with us not only for a salary, but also with pleasure.

And, as related above, many accounts of Shostakovich as a pianist-illustrator defend him as a talented accompanist.

The question therefore remains: what did Shostakovich gain from his film music composition aesthetically, musically, and politically? Although he complained of the

---

139 Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 171, cites both Glikman’s letters and Shostakovich’s daughter, Galina as two sources that confirm Shostakovich’s unhappiness in writing for film under Stalin.
140 See Moshevich, Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist.
tedium of the work, he did seem to value it later in his life. In an interview with Flora Litvinova, Wilson relates his retrospective view of film music:

...think how much music I had written for the cinema. It’s not bad, either. And it gave me and my family a chance for a reasonable living. But it used up so much of my energy and time...I wrote music to more than thirty films, some of it perfectly decent music. That was possible with directors like Kozintsev and Arnstam, who understood that the function of music in films is not just accompaniment, but the means of revealing the essence and idea of the film.  

This mixed perspective of his film music composition shows that despite his sacrifice of energy and time, he regarded his film music, if lukewarmly, as a positive achievement.

Certainly, Shostakovich’s involvement in film music and the potential impact it had upon his musical style should not be underestimated. Aside from various biographical details and occasional comments, his writings on film reveal his serious interest in the relationship between sound and image.  

Later articles that discussed his overall approach to film music composition include, “Music for Film” (1939), “The Cinema as the Composer’s School” (1950), and “Once More about Film Music” (1954). Although these were written under Stalin and contain intense propaganda about film music and the notion of collective work, they do reveal Shostakovich’s thoughts about film music, particularly since he continued writing about the same kinds of issues that initially concerned him as early as 1929.

Shostakovich dwelled upon a few major points in many of his articles about film music. In “Music for Film,” “Once More about Film Music,” and the “Cinema as the

---

142 Interview with Flora Litvinova, Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, 436.
143 His first articles for film concerned The New Babylon.
Composer’s School,” he stressed at least four points that resurface in various writings throughout his life. Probably the most important point that he discussed is the significance of film music composition for art music composers. He emphasized that every composer should have experience with film music, often complaining that there is no such training available at the conservatory for composers. He felt film music teaches something to composers that they would not receive elsewhere – specifically, how to deal with “time.” Working with a chronometer early in his film music career, Shostakovich talked about how difficult it is to write for specific time frames. To achieve “maximum expression in minimal length” was a challenge for him early on, which he believed he only overcame with the Maxim Trilogy. Being concise and expressing the content in required fragments of time is an issue that he dwelled upon throughout the “Cinema as the Composer’s School.” He also emphasized the idea of time in “Music to Film,” where he compared theatrical time with cinematic time. Unlike a theater production, whose images, in his words, are “broken” and “inevitably dispersed,” Shostakovich stated that a composer should “detect the rhythm of the dynamic stream of the film frames and create music, which acts as an equal in the film and at times, is in charge of it.” Learning how to deal with time, he implied, can help the composer overall in his approach to expressing “maximum” content in a short amount of time.

Shostakovich also stressed how music should be perceived as an equal to the image. He often stated that music should be an organic part of the cinematic action. At

145 Shostakovich’s “Yeshchyo raz o kinomuzike” mostly engages the idea that critics should pay more attention to the music in a film and educate the viewer in understanding its purpose. To that end, Shostakovich also requests that composers be trained well in all things cinematic.
146 “Kino kak shkola kompozitora,” 3.
147 “Muzika v kino,” 1.
times, he also implied that music should be dominant over the image or may be easily separated from it and still be successful. He emphasized two potential functions of film music that I will later return to: the idea of a song from a film becoming so popular that takes on a life of its own; and that film and its music, being popular and effective propagandistic media, can reach millions of viewers, thus supporting the importance of film music composition. That music can be “in charge” of a film’s rhythm or that theme songs from a film such as *The Counterplan* can have a second life outside of the film itself underscores his argument that every composer should write for film, especially if s/he is writing “for the masses.”

Another argument that he used to support and advocate film music is that film music has the potential to be incorporated into future work, regardless of genre. Citing Popov’s film score to *Oni strazhalas’ za rodimu* [They Fought for the Country] and its transformation into the composer’s Second Symphony, Shostakovich wrote that he would also feel free to use previous film music as material for an opera or a symphony. In “Music to Film,” he focused a great deal of attention on the idea of writing a “film-opera.” He suggested that such a genre would allow him greater possibilities, particularly in the redefinition of time and space. Both of these articles show that Shostakovich was willing to cross genre boundaries. His genre transgression, as described in his description of a film-opera and film music’s potential for being reused in the genres like the symphony (certainly not an unfamiliar exercise for Shostakovich) demonstrates that a

---

148 “Kino kak shkola kompozitora,” 2.
149 Ibid., 3.
150 One of the many examples of this occurs in Shostakovich score to *King Lear*, where he wrote a segment that later became a movement of the *String Quartet No. 9* according to a recent paper given at the Rutgers
collection of genres such as the symphony, theater, film, and opera are all dramatic. Most importantly, they have the potential to evoke image or action, if not already tied to an external plot.

Although he had performed as a pianist-illustrator and later written music for film under duress and often for financial security, Shostakovich’s writings and comments from family, friends, and co-workers demonstrate that he saw his film music as an accomplishment and regarded his work with the same professional attention as he did other musical genres. Film was and still is a medium that can perform a propagandistic role, especially under Stalinism, when all artists had to fulfill their civic duty through their work. Granted, the majority of Shostakovich’s discussion on film music – particularly in his “Cinema as the Composer’s School,” is guided by the necessity of speaking to film music as assisting propagandistic needs. Despite its function or intended effect, his film music was created with serious artistic intent and clearly has potential to influence his other musical work. In the context of film music studies, analyses of Shostakovich’s film scores can help in gaining insight to the composer’s compositional processes and the impact of his film composition on his non-film work.

**Film Music Studies: A Brief Overview**

For almost two decades, there has been a gradual merging of at least two separate disciplines into the area of film music studies: film studies and musicology. Since Claudia Gorbman’s *Unheard Melodies* (1987), film music has become what can be loosely defined as a discipline of its own. Despite its potential status as a “discipline” or
perhaps “sub-discipline,” film music studies is not as coherent or as unified as the term may imply. Film music studies was firstly created by film historians such as Gorbman. Since Gorbman’s landmark text, the increased interest in film music study has led to musicological involvement and collaborative work between film historians and theoreticians and musicologists and music theorists.¹⁵¹

One the main questions that remains in the minds of musicologists and film historians alike is whether or not there is a film music studies.¹⁵² Martin Marks in his influential and well-regarded book, Music and the Silent Film, addresses this issue in his first chapter, asking “is there a [film music] literature?”¹⁵³ He argues, as have other scholars, that press and journal essays, cue sheets, silent music manuals, and other printed materials have been available since the beginning of film.¹⁵⁴ In the thirties, historical texts and composer handbooks such as Kurt London’s Film Music and Leonid Sabaneyev’s Music for the Film: A Handbook for Composers and Conductors appeared, offering interesting insights into contemporaneous filmmaking.¹⁵⁵ Critical tracts on American film in the forties, most notably, Composing for the Films (1947) by Hanns Eisler and Theodor Adorno, offered a Marxist perspective on the role of film music in

---


Hollywood and the need for musical change. Scholarly literature on the subject seemed to increase in the late seventies and eighties, with texts such as Roy Prendergast’s *Film Music: A Neglected Art* (1977), a title that led Marks to question how neglected in print film music actually had been. Other texts that often addressed the composer and technicalities of film composition, such as Irwin Bazelon’s *Knowing the Score* (1975) and provide interviews and biographies such as Tony Thomas’s *Music for the Movies* (1997). Texts that engage structuralist theory and analysis appeared in the 1980s, with one of the major texts being Gorbman’s *Unheard Melodies*. The main focus of American scholars interested in film music has historically been narrative, non-diegetic music of Hollywood “golden era” (thirties and forties) and the development and application of sound and music in early American cinema (from 1895-1920s). More recently, other eras and types of music have been addressed, including song films and Hollywood films of last twenty years. When “non-American” films are discussed, scholars tend to focus their attention on the European and

---

sometimes Russian avant-garde. Generally, Western scholars avoid discussions of film music outside of the American tradition, especially if the music accompanied films that were not immediately canonized as modernist or avant-garde. Even a brief scan of the available scholarly literature in the U.S. shows how few scholars have addressed Soviet and/or Russian film music of the twenties, thirties, and forties outside of the Eisenstein/Prokofiev collaboration. Regardless of the lack of attention to foreign film music, film music scholars in the U.S. are gradually developing a significant body of scholarly work that address issues surrounding American silent and early sound film.

The approaches and methodologies of these scholars tend to be interdisciplinary, given the nature of the subject, drawing from disciplines such as musicology/theory, film studies, psychology, cognition, linguistics, cultural studies, and women’s studies. Film historians such as Gorbman, Kathryn Kalinak, and Royal Brown were the first to write on the subject of film music with some musical specificity from the perspective of film theory. While previous film music texts were considered more practical, focusing more on the technology or process of writing for films, these authors attempted to approach music as an integral and necessary aspect of the film instead of a cursory post-production “add-on.” Some musicologists and music theorists who have analyzed film music in recent years, such as David Neumeyer, take strict music theoretical approaches that inevitably separate the score from the film itself or its extra-cinematic context. Although this kind of musicological/theoretical formalism does call needed attention to the film

---

162 See Fell, A History of Films and Ellis, A History of Film. Both of these texts do address the usual canonized avant-garde, but generally tend to be overviews.
163 OCLC or RILM, for example, lists only a handful of film music articles written on films by directors such as Eisenstein and Vertov.
score, it also extricates the music from its contexts – a method that is only partially useful when analyzing a medium such as film.\footnote{Whether or not analysis should focus more on the music has been an issue in film music studies, particularly since so many past writings have neglected to discuss music as a part of the narrative, which seems to have encouraged recent authors to compensate by overstating the music’s role in a film. Stilwell makes a case for continuing to link music to narrative, while understanding that music has an important role. See Stilwell, “Music in Films.” See also a summary of Marks’s declaration of what is needed for film studies in Stilwell, “Music in Films,” 45.} The most recent “generation” of film music scholars, such as Martin Marks, Jeff Smith, Anahid Kassabian, and Robyn Stilwell among others, have sought to rectify this situation by combining methodologies from musicology or film studies, or insisting on a more contextualized or cognitive approach to film music analysis, at times derived from current approaches in cultural studies and music cognition. Of these, Kassabian and Stilwell are advocates of integrating “cultural studies” with musicology. In her recent article in the newly created journal \emph{Film Music}, Stilwell suggests that film music studies should continue to merge the methodologies of applicable disciplines, try “case study” approaches to film music to replace the tired tripartite “theory/aesthetics/analysis” approach, and attempt to create more meaningful analyses, avoiding “sterile” and empty technical interpretation.\footnote{Stilwell, “Music in Films,” 47-48. Kassabian also criticizes film music scholars for avoiding discussion of issues such as gender identity, nationalism and the like in analyses of film scores. In addition to her book, see Buhler, Flinn, and Neumeyer, “Introduction,” in \emph{Music and Cinema}, 22.} Although broadly defined, Stilwell does demonstrate that the “film music studies” discipline needs further development and focus, while maintaining an interdisciplinary status.

My methodological approach for the case studies of the films central to my discussion – \emph{The New Babylon, Alone, The Golden Mountains}, and \emph{The Counterplan} – includes many of the previously discussed approaches, such as semiotic analysis, musicological analysis, cultural studies, and reception. These areas certainly overlap, leading from subjective interpretation into broader cultural contexts that speak to socio-
cultural issues such as modernism and socialist realism. Within my chapters, the areas of “analysis/interpretation” and “contextualization” overlap as well. The discussions of the following texts are crucial to the formation of my analytical paradigm and provide ideas that I use and develop throughout the dissertation in greater detail as they apply to case studies of the aforementioned films in the following chapters.

**Semiotic-Structuralist and Musicological Approaches**

Claudia Gorbman’s *Unheard Melodies* (1987)

Film scholars such as Gorbman, Kalinak, and Brown have been known to base their own analytical discussions on classic paradigms in film theory. Often building upon the work of Siegfried Krakauer, Christian Metz, Andre Bazin, Roland Barthes, and Sigmund Freud, these scholars use semiotic-structuralist approaches (or post-structuralist approaches in the case of Kalinak). In her book, *Unheard Melodies*, Gorbman firstly provides a theory/case-study structure that has become a model for many texts, including Marks’ *Music and the Silent Film*. Gorbman’s topical focus is narrative film of the “golden era” of Hollywood and she calls her approach “semiotic-structuralist.”

The main question that informs her study is why an artifice such as film music functions at all in films that are designed to be “realist.” Her beliefs about film music’s function in the specific case of the Hollywood film as well as film music’s role in the creation of cinematic meaning are driven by the notion that, although integral, film music is ultimately secondary to image. It functions as part of the overall “textual system” of

---

167 All of the subcategories that I list here represent a variety of approaches, many of which clearly overlap. My positioning of these issues/approaches is designed only to suit my purposes, not necessarily survey every text in the area of film studies.

168 For a selection of writings by these authors, see Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
the film and not as a separate entity. This fits well into her notion of “unheard” music, relegating film music to somewhat secondary status. According to Gorbman, this artifice of film music only works because 1) there is a “continuity of conventions,” i.e., music and drama have always been connected; 2) film music is “easy listening,” something akin to “Muzak,” bathing the viewer in a “gel of affect”; and 3) film music is part of the Hollywood continuity editing system, where cinematic “seams” remain unseen, suturing disparate images in a “realistic” narrative, effectively convincing the viewer to suspend disbelief.  

Given that film music therefore belongs to the “invisible” structure of a Hollywood film, Gorbman specifies how music functions, building upon Krakauer, Metz, Michel Chion and Barthes throughout her text. She uses Barthes’ idea of “ancrage,” or “anchorage,” for example, to discuss how music can further refine the meaning of a given image. Borrowing Chion’s “anempathetic” idea, she also discusses how music can play against the meaning of image, creating irony. Music is therefore involved in the creation of meaning, the mediation between levels of narration and narrating agencies, the viewer and “psychological time,” and points in diegetic space and time. Music can also carry certain connotative value with its own cultural codes, such as a fugue or a ricecare, which can help to create mood.

With these notions as her theoretical base, she further explores more detailed applications of music to film. Elaborating upon her idea of “bathing the viewer in a gel of affect,” Gorbman argues that music can help the viewer bond with the film, accepting

---

169 Gorbman, Unheard Melodies, 5 and 56-59.
171 Gorbman, Unheard Melodies, 159-161.
its world as reality. Music encourages this bond, engulfing the viewer/listener in sound, as the film does in image. This point of view emphasizes the hypnotic effect of film and her Freudian references to the cinema as regressive and “womb-like.” Again, still secondary, music reiterates the bonding, the identification with the film and its diegetic world, successfully drawing the spectator/listener into that world. Gorbman concludes, “music greases the wheels of the cinematic pleasure machine by easing the spectator’s passage into subjectivity.”

Gorbman’s seven main points in her text, introduced mid-way through her discussion, act as the main focus of the analyses of the case studies that follow. These points outline music’s function in the cinematic system and continue to emphasize music’s supportive role. They can also be applied to early Soviet films that were also concerned with realism and defining the role of music. These points include: 1) Invisibility - the idea that non-diegetic music should not be audible; 2) Inaudibility - the notion that music is heard unconsciously and is subordinate to the primary vehicle of the narrative (the visuals); 3) Signifier of emotion - music has its own signifiers, as well as those created in the film itself; 4) Narrative cueing – music gives cues that indicate point of view, formal demarcation, and it establishes the setting and characters and interprets and illustrates events; 5) Continuity – music provides formal and rhythmic continuity, particularly between scenes, in gaps, etc.; 6) Unity – created through repetition and variation of material; 7) The ability to break all of the above rules. Points one, two, and five reinforce her first statements that music plays a supportive role to the image, while the third begins to delve into the kinds of meaning created by a potential viewer.

173 Ibid., 69.
174 Ibid., 70-98.
Gorbman here speaks of an ideal viewer, likely using herself as the example, since her text is not interested in film reception or the simultaneous impact of sound and image on the viewer/listener. Her fourth point, narrative cueing, connects to the signification of emotion, not only formally demarcating moments in the diegesis, but leading the viewer to specific conclusions. The sixth point, unity, hinges mostly on the idea of the leitmotif, using Wagner and the precedent of nineteenth-century romanticism in the works of “model” composers like Max Steiner as central to her discussion. Her last point serves more as a catch-all that allows for variation in the above stated functions for Hollywood narrative film music.

Among the many points argued in her text, point six is as relevant to early Soviet films, as to Hollywood films. In her discussion, Gorbman found the idea of the “leitmotif” in film contradictory to Richard Wagner’s original definition of the term. Somewhat underdeveloped, Gorbman’s argues in favor of calling a recurring melodic idea with various cumulative associations a “theme,” in opposition to a “leitmotif.” According to her discussion, Wagner intended a leitmotif to have verbal (text) denotations that rapidly change, becoming diffused. Gorbman’s discussion implicitly targeted the overuse of the word “leitmotif” by non-musicians in film studies and sought to create a “musicological” replacement. It is not my intention to argue the subtleties of the term “leitmotif.” For my purposes in the following, however, I use the designation “leitmotif,” defined loosely as any idea that recurs throughout the film and has the potential to musically transform or alter the meaning of the image. I also use the term “motif” for themes that are limited to specific episodes or may not connect to the larger

175 Ibid., 26-30.
themes in the film. The placement and use of motifs has a significant connection to
issues of form, unity, and meaning in the film score, as I discuss in Chapters Three
through Six.\textsuperscript{176}

Gorbman’s ideas about “invisibility,” “inaudibility,” and film music as Muzak are
relevant to analyses of early Soviet film scores. Certainly, all film music, including the
music to Shostakovich’s first four film scores, is audible. There is some difference
however, between attention and arousal (or as I later suggest “perceptible” and
“imperceptible”).\textsuperscript{177} For the most part, I associate the idea of attention with
“perceptible” music and arousal with “imperceptible” music. Attention is when a listener consciously
hears a sound, while arousal is simply a response of the brain to a sound – the listener
does not necessarily consciously “hear” it. Gorbman’s analogy of film music to Muzak
therefore is somewhat apt. Muzak requires that a listener be aroused by a sound, but not
necessarily attend to it. The difficulty lies in being able to discern, without
experimentation, what music and what musical characteristics will force a listener to
attend to a sound versus simply being “aroused” by it. How do we know at which points
all listeners, when viewing/listening to a film, are attending or being aroused by the
music? Can there be a distinction at all or is all film music just Muzak in the sense that it
eases the spectator into accepting the cinematic world as reality and therefore should
never be “heard”? There may be a distinction between music that should be attended to
and music that simply arouses the brain. This distinction has already been made, though
implicitly, by film music scholars like Gorbman and other scholars that have followed.

\textsuperscript{176} For a brief but succinct discussion of the leitmotif, see Arnold Whittall: ‘Leitmotif’, \textit{Grove Music Online}
\textsuperscript{177} See Chapters Three though Six.
David Neumeyer, James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and K.J. Donnelly

Looking over texts by scholars writing on film music, one can see that “film music” acts as an umbrella term for any music in film. In an editorial essay from the premiere issue of the *Journal of Film Music* (2002), William Rosar debates the terminology of film music and argues that the term “film music” has definitions that are incommensurable.¹⁷⁸ Not one scholar can seem to agree, he argues, on what is “film music.” There are various ways of describing “music in film” (a term that he seems to prefer to “film music”) – as underscoring, song film, source music, and so forth. Rosar’s debate over what these terms have meant and what they may mean today demonstrates that there is no single term for describing music in film and there are many ways that music can function in film. I have understood “underscoring,” for example, as music “underneath” an image or “background,” while “source scoring” was music that was suggested by or originating from the diegetic space of the film.¹⁷⁹ Even such a distinction as this, which has been supported by definitions by other film scholars, shows that underscoring may imply a sound that may simply “arouse” the listener, as opposed to “source scoring” which may force the listener to “attend.” More detailed descriptions as to which kind of music in film should be more or less audible are specific to a film and its context.

This concern of what is film music and how to analyze it has been an issue in texts seeking to bridge the gap between film studies and musicology. The most recent text to fuse the disciplines of musicology and film studies is *Music and Cinema* (2000),

¹⁷⁹ Rosar explains in his essay that in cue sheets would often indicated how music was used in film – as either “instrumental,” “vocal,” or “background,” each implying the level attention paid.
an anthology that encompasses a broad range of methodologies and issues from both “parent” disciplines. After establishing that film music studies is a relatively small field with growing interest, but also with disciplinary barriers because of its interdisciplinarity, that is, the difficulty in bridging the “musical specificity” gap, the three authors provide a description of a “canon” or sets of trends they see as relevant to the burgeoning field. These trends and ideas can also prove useful for studying early Soviet film.

Following in the attitude and approaches outlined by previous analysts of narrative film, the authors establish that there is a need for film music, as seen historically with silent film and in aesthetic arguments (the “womb” theory). Film music indeed fills a void, or what would otherwise be silence. The task of film studies is to describe how music fills that void, as opposed to whether it should exist at all. They also emphasize that music can operate on a primary semantic level, implying that music should not be relegated to purely secondary status that may ignore the potential meaning generated in the relationship between image and sound. Recognizing music’s potential primacy, they recast the methodology of narratology, showing that there has been a musicological engagement of narratology (Lawrence Kramer, Carolyn Abbate, Jean-Jacques Nattiez). Although relatively new to musicology, narratology is familiar to film studies, which indicates how the two fields can complement each other in

---

181 Ibid.
182 Ibid., 13. An example of music acting in a primary role would be hearing music attached to an idea without the image of that idea on the screen. The music therefore would be leading the image. Many scholars and composers comment on this technique, including Shostakovich.
methodological ways. New to both fields is the application of issues in cultural studies (gender studies and identity, for example), which some scholars, including Anahid Kassabian, have sought to change.\textsuperscript{184} Aside from the survey of the anthology’s contributions and brief discussion of a newly created film music canon, the introduction to *Music and Cinema* points in the direction of the merging of a variety of approaches. What can be taken from this introduction is a model that is built from the merging of certain issues and ideas found in these disciplines in order to initiate a discussion of canon building. Including a musicological perspective of narratology is a significant contribution to the usual film theory base espoused by film historians.\textsuperscript{185}

Further contributing to the merging of film studies and musicology is the anthology, *Film Music: Critical Approaches* (2001). In her introduction, K.J. Donnelly outlines similar gaps between and problems within the parent disciplines, stating that the anthology brings more historical depth to discussions of the industry and of culture, as well as amplifying more traditional approaches such as semiotics.\textsuperscript{186} The anthology also includes two chapters by David Neumeyer and James Buhler, which outline approaches to the analysis of film music from the perspective of music theory and musicology, uniquely emphasizing a combination of theoretical approaches popular in each discipline: semiotics and music analysis.

Acknowledging that music’s role is important yet still subordinate to the image, the first essay, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (I): Analysing the

\textsuperscript{184} Buhler, Flinn, and Neumeyer, *Music and Cinema*, 17.
\textsuperscript{185} In addition to musicologists as the ones cited above, Nicolas Cook has sought to construct a model for analyzing multimedia, including film, which attempts to bridge the gap between musicology/music theory and film studies. See Nicolas Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). His model unfortunately does not work well for my purposes here.
\textsuperscript{186} K.J. Donnelly, ed., *Film Music: Critical Approaches* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 5.
Music” by Neumeyer and Buhler outlines how concert music practices have been transferred to cinema. Concentrating on pitch organization, style topics (a.k.a. Gorbman’s “cultural music codes”187), tonal design, leitmotif, timbre, and aspects of form, the authors provide detailed musicological approaches to how these concepts have been adapted from the concert hall to the cinema. In their discussion of pitch, consonance, and dissonance, and tonality/atonality they put to rest any fear of musical specificity and challenge some of Royal Brown’s generalized perceptions of musical language.188 Their more nuanced discussion of how musical language goes beyond the simple binaries of consonance/dissonance, major/minor, and tonal/atonal = happy/sad, illustrates how in certain moments of a film score, “consonance” does not always equal “major.”189 Most notably, their discussion of tonal design and form shows how music is often symbolic rather than functional (in the art music sense), and how it can be deeply involved in the narrative structure of the film, yet still adhere to tonal expectations or lack thereof found in nineteenth- and twentieth-century music.

In the second essay in this anthology, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (II): Analysing Interactions of Music and Film,” James Buhler moves beyond judging film music as “pure” music,190 and suggests that a film score be approached as its own entity as it relates to image, as opposed to denying the existence of a soundtrack or

187 See page 136.
188 Royal S. Brown, Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
189 See David Neumeyer and James Buhler, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (I): Analysing the Music,” in Film Music: Critical Approaches (New York: Continuum, 2001), 22.
190 Buhler in reference to Gorbman, in “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (II): Analysing Interactions of Music and Film,” in Film Music: Critical Approaches, 39.
asserting that music is wholly dependent on the imagetrack. A film’s “sound design” has its own agency and coherence that can be analyzed both separately and in connection with the image. He concludes,

If music is a structuring of sound in time…then conceptually the *mise-en-bande,* with its complex interplay of music, dialogue, ambient sound, effects, silences and so forth, can be understood – indeed is perhaps best understood – as a kind of ‘musical composition.’ At this point, aural analysis…along with a specifically musical sensibility, can be brought to bear on the soundtrack as a whole, its relation to the image and its contribution not just to the narrative, but to the act of narration itself. Interpreting a film in this way is perhaps the most ‘musical’ way of reading it, more so than treating the score as a relatively independent component of the film, an analytical strategy that necessarily takes as its object music for film rather than music in film.

Buhler’s approach reclaims the music side of film music studies. He finds a balance between the “music as object” and analytical approaches that subordinate music to image. Looking at a complete film score as a potentially unified design with its own internal logic that works in tandem with the logic of the image, emphasizes the “wholeness” of the film as a total product, while recognizing the symbiotic relationship between its constituent parts. Similar to other authors such as Kassabian, Buhler’s argument contributes to the recent shift in film music study that seeks to form a bridge between theoretical approaches in film studies and musicology. This approach is useful for studying early Soviet film music, and specifically Shostakovich’s film scores, since it seeks an understanding of music as an integral element of film.

---


192 A notion developed by Rick Altman to find a way to include music as an integral part of the aspects of a film, such as lighting, mise-en-scène, and so forth. Buhler, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches,” 55. See also Rick Altman, McGraw Jones, and Sonia Tatroe, “Inventing the Cinema Soundtrack: Hollywood’s Multiplane Sound System,” in *Music and Cinema,* 339-359.

193 Buhler, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches,” 58.
Post-Structuralist, Psychoanalytic, and Cognitive Approaches

Anahid Kassabian’s *Hearing Film (2001)*

In her recent book, *Hearing Film*, Kassabian considers the viewer's/listener's socio-historical context as part of her analysis of recent Hollywood films. Her approach, which can be considered post-structuralist, looks at films as “texts,” and locates meaning between the viewer/listener and various components of a film. She refers to this interaction between the audience and film as “identification processes.” This is an idea that has been discussed in film studies and not in film music studies, “yet, music is one of the major tools Hollywood films use to track identifications.”

There are two forms of identifications that Kassabian acknowledges: *assimilating* identifications, which she connects with composed scores that “draw[s] perceivers into socially and historically unfamiliar positions,” and *affiliating* identifications, which she connects with compiled scores that depend on histories outside the film, opening the “psychic field” of musical identifications. Kassabian’s primary concern is to focus not on the film text, as with semiotic-structuralist analyses, but on the film’s use, the production of meaning and the processes of identification. She asserts that film music’s meaning system (in Hollywood film) is fairly stable, as shown in cognitive studies, in Kalinak’s work, and as supported by categories in music catalogues of the early twentieth century. Presupposing this stability in the meaning-making system of Hollywood

---

194 Kassabian, *Hearing Film*. Kassabian makes a point to address recent film because of the interesting problems posed not only as a result of past topics of film music (classical Hollywood, silent film), but because of the recent interest in cultural theory and its lack of application to film music studies.
195 Ibid., 13.
196 Ibid.
197 Ibid., 2-3.
language with which to discuss film music that remains outside of musicological and traditional film theoretical approaches. Although she does not clearly suggest a method for finding such a language, she does seem to insist that cognitive studies, primarily experiments that deal with identifications, would be more useful and conclusive than musicological or film theory approaches.  

Jeff Smith, a film scholar, argues a similar point in his essay, “Movie Music as Moving Music: Emotion, Cognition and the Film Score.” He criticizes film scholars for using a “folk model” approach to analysis, based more in humanities-oriented psychoanalysis rather than cognitive experiments. This “folk model” usually assumes that the viewer understands a given set of codes in a film without providing ample empirical support that shows how they understand. Similar to Smith, Kassabian finds that analysts such as Kalinak are correct in their assumptions and interpretations because the film musical system of codes is relatively stable, as it remains general. Details as to how and why listeners hear certain codes and whether their own socio-cultural backgrounds affect how they hear are what Kassabian seeks to interrogate more closely with the results from cognitive experiments and cultural

---

198 Ibid., 23.
200 Smith, “Movie Music,” 149.
contextualization. Smith calls for similar goals, asking that scholars interested in pursuing a psychoanalytical approach should be well versed in music cognitive experiments.²⁰²

In light of using cognitive research to support listener identification, Kassabian discusses a study by Philip Tagg and Robert Clarida that shows how listeners identify film music with generalized notions.²⁰³ Emphasizing that music is a form of communication, she explains how music shapes meaning in film music, particularly in relation to gender identity. Listeners, she explains, associated certain musical ideas or features with gender, such as the notion that the feminine is often associated with pastoral music.²⁰⁴ This approach considers the listener’s own cultural codes (which she assumes are generally “American”). Although her consideration of cultural codes can lead to generalizations, it does challenge the object-oriented approach of scholars such as Gorbman.

Musical association or coding can also prove useful for analysis of early Soviet film scores, particularly Kassabian’s discussion of the musical theme or idea. She considers the role of allusion, quotation, and leitmotif and their potential for referentiality within and outside of the cinematic text. She also outlines the “purpose” of film music in a similar fashion, stating that it serves to create identification, establish mood, and provide commentary. Identifying music, she asserts, can convey or evoke a place or character within or outside of the film, where mood and commentary refer to music that unconsciously affects the viewer and consciously comments upon the film’s diegesis.

²⁰³ Kassabian, Appendix A, Hearing Film.
²⁰⁴ See Kassabian, chapter one in Hearing Film for her application of Tagg and Clarida’s work to her discussion of associations.
This part of Kassabian’s approach is especially useful for Shostakovich’s scores, since there is significant intertextual intent in many of songs and familiar musical codes that Shostakovich used in his music, as I discuss in Chapters Three through Six. Altogether, Kassabian's book reflects recent film theory that embraces cultural theory and retains some of the structuralist/semiotic approaches exemplified by scholars such as Gorbman and Kalinak. Most importantly, it demands an integration of cognitive experiments into a common film music “competence” that may bridge cultural studies, film theory, and musicology.

Kathryn Kalinak’s *Settling the Score (1992)*

In some ways following Gorbman’s approach, Kalinak’s book *Settling the Score* adopts a post-structuralist, psychoanalytic methodology. The format of the book follows the theory/case study structure and her topic focuses on “classical” Hollywood film. Concerned with clarity and the desire to bridge the gap between music and film theory, Kalinak does go beyond previous texts by successfully incorporating history, theory, and musical language. She emphasizes, even more than her predecessors, the primacy of music, acknowledging that although image and sound are interdependent, analyses of film should not be at the expense of sound.\(^{205}\) She dedicates a chapter to describing the basic terminology of music, such as tonality, melody, meter, and tempo.\(^{206}\) Although she is not a musicologist, she establishes a common and useful language that she employs successfully throughout the text.

---

\(^{205}\) Michel Chion also emphasizes this point in his book *Audio-Vision*, where sound has as much of a role in determining meaning as image. See Chion, *Audio-Vision*.

\(^{206}\) See Kalinak, *Settling the Score*, chapter one, “The Language of Music.”
Challenging Krakauer’s notions of parallelism and counterpoint (music working with the image and music working against it), for example, she suggests creating a film theory that harkens back to many points made by Gorbman. 207 She firstly emphasizes the idea of the unconscious and music’s ability to function on a variety of levels of consciousness. She cites Gorbman’s use of the “womb” metaphor, where the spectator is enveloped by an integrated combination of sights and sounds, which ease the viewer into a place of comfort. Muzak, summarizing Gorbman, acts as “easy listening,” creating “cognitive arousal without attention,” as described by scholars in music cognition. 208 For Kalinak this point is crucial, since she suggests that music may not only support an image, or play against it, but also create “textual subversion,” or “rupture” a text. 209 Music also has its own set of “conventions,” or codes that act as referents to specific cultures, traditions, or histories (the habanera has its own “code,” for example). 210 These “conventions” therefore create mood as Gorbman has suggested, but also impart a multitude of meanings within and without. Suggesting that music has a stronger role than the “subordination” to which Gorbman adheres, Kalinak poses these and other questions to further validate the potential of a psychoanalytical approach already somewhat developed in past work. 211

207 For his theories on parallelism and counterpoint, see Siegfried Krakauer, Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).
208 David Huron, An Ear for Music, (Cop-Ez Course Notes, 2002), D23.
209 Kalinak, Settling the Score, 34.
211 See Kalinak, Settling the Score, chapter two, 20-39.
Other Cognitive Approaches

The history and theory of film have always engaged the idea of the perception of image and sound. Film directors, including Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and the FEKS directors always discussed the role of perception and expectation in the twenties, as well as the impact of music and sound in their early sound films. Eisenstein’s famous experiments with Prokofiev, Pudovkin’s borrowings of sonata form for his silent films and other musical concepts for his early sound films (Mother, Deserter), Vertov’s quasi-musique concrete experiments in his early sound films, and the sound experiments of FEKS directors demonstrate how these directors, even during the silent period, engaged the concepts of music and sound.212 Gradually, film studies has been embracing cognitive research as a mode of inquiry and some scholars/composers are beginning to discuss film music from cognitive perspectives sometimes bringing together theories from psychoanalysis, perception, and studies on emotion and perception.213

One well-known scholar/composer/filmmaker, Michel Chion, has been consistently working towards developing a vocabulary of sound film. His “audio-vision” theory and other accompanying ideas primarily constitute a personal vocabulary that reflects his experience in film.214 Audio-vision is the process of perception by which sound modifies and influences what is seen, implying that sound and vision cannot be separated but instead enhance one another.215 His idea of “added value,” resulting from

212 See earlier discussion of sound in this chapter and Egorova, Soviet Film Music and Leyda, Kino for discussion of these directors and their relationship to music.
213 See especially analysts such as Nicolas Cook, William Rosar, and Jeff Smith.
215 Chion here tends to prefer vision over sound when discussing film, just as he prefers sound over vision when discussing a concert (which he refers to as “visu-audition”). This preference does not seem to create
audio-vision, is what he calls a “Kuleshov effect” between sound and image.\textsuperscript{216} Sound absolutely influences, and sometimes changes, what is seen. Music cognitive specialists such as Annabel Cohen have described something similar in terms of “associationism,” specifically in regard to film music, providing analyses of experiments that have shown music affecting the perception of simple images.\textsuperscript{217} In this experiment, subjects were asked to watch a bouncing ball on a computer screen that varied in two dimensions (speed and height) while listening to simplistic melodies that also varied in those same two dimensions. The experiment confirmed that higher, faster melodies encouraged the viewer/listener to feel that the ball was “happy,” while slower, lower ranged melodies produced the opposite effect. Cohen concluded that there was “added value,” in Chion’s sense of the term – that tempo and range, and to some degree patterning, has an additive effect on even the most innocuous visual pattern.

Another one of Chion’s ideas, “synresis,” (a forging of the words synchronism and synthesis) also plays into the concept of associationism. Chion defines it broadly as a spontaneous and reflex psycho-physiological phenomenon that depends on our nervous and muscular connections. It consists in perceiving as one and the same phenomenon – which manipulates itself both on the visual and sound levels- the ‘concomitance’ of a precise sound event with a precise visual event on the sole and only condition that they happen simultaneously.\textsuperscript{218}

For Chion, synresis leads the viewer/listener to automatically link images and sounds that would normally be unrelated in reality. Any sound effect could be used for footsteps, for example, as long as it was simultaneous with the image, therefore allowing

\textsuperscript{218} Chion, “Audio-Vision and Sound,” 205.
for the creative aural expression of images. The result is what Chion calls an “audio-image” that does not exist in reality, but instead is a “projected shadow” that exists beyond the independent meaning of the sound or image alone. He likens it to the space of the mise-en-scène created from cutting and editing in film – a “mental image,” which resembles the notion of simulacra, shadows of reality. Both music and film render reality, often represented in unrealistic ways. Chion’s syncretic therefore strikes at the heart of the notion of realist film itself – the rendering of reality through an artificial, mechanical means. I would argue that cognitive processes, including the role of expectation and emotion, are major factors for understanding whether or not any given moment of syncretic achieved is imaginative or creative. David Huron’s research on expectation and music suggests that familiarity plays a significant role in expectation. The role of expectation and film sound, as well as the notion of syncretic can be used in discussing modernist or realist approaches to film sound that would invariably play on the expectation of the viewer/listener, just as early modernist music of composers like Schoenberg certainly toyed with the tonal expectations of contemporary listeners.

The general notion of syncretic aligns with other considerations of rhythm, timing, and structure in sound films. Scholars of music cognition have discussed the possible parallels between the structure and form of a film and its sound. Cohen, in her analysis of The Red Violin, finds several parallels between cinematic and musical form, supporting her suggestion that the cognitive processes involved in receiving and

---

219 Ibid.
perceiving music and film are similar.\textsuperscript{221} She thus analyzes the film according to a set of musical schemas, showing how musical and cinematic structures are potentially related. Certainly, there is a history of Russian/Soviet directors who consistently used musical form as inspiration, if not as a template, for their films.\textsuperscript{222} Taking note of how films and their sound are structured might provide insight into how directors and composers create film music to play on the expectations of their viewer/listeners, particularly at the dawn of early Soviet realist film.

**Reception Studies**

Reception studies in film music has flourished primarily in the area of silent film studies.\textsuperscript{223} With recent texts such as *The Sounds of Early Cinema* as well as classic essays such as Rick Altman’s “The Silence of the Silents,” scholars have emphasized the unity of sight and sound since the very beginnings of film worldwide.\textsuperscript{224} Much of this research has focused on sound production, sound exhibition, and the role of the spectator, challenging the previously held notion that silent cinema was “silent.” Most of these scholars use contemporaneous documents consisting of daily press and cinema journals. Other texts, such as Martin Marks’s book, *Music and the Silent Film*, adapted from his dissertation, address silent film in the United States, taking a history/theory/case study format used in Gorbman’s book.\textsuperscript{225} The level of depth in his contextualization, theoretical analysis, and detail throughout his book sets an example of the merging of

\textsuperscript{222} See above discussions of Pudovkin and Eisenstein.
\textsuperscript{223} In some ways, Kassabian may be an exception, since she seeks to attend to the viewer’s cultural reception/interpretation of a sound film.
\textsuperscript{225} Marks, *Music and the Silent Film*.
context, reception, and musicological analysis. In Russian silent film studies Yuri Tsivian has performed extensive work on Russian silent film through the twenties.\textsuperscript{226} In his text, \textit{Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception}, already discussed in some detail above, he specifically deals with the role of the spectator, the role of musicians, architecture, politics, and socio-economic conditions that would create a whole view of the cultural phenomenon of silent film in various cities throughout Russia. What is particularly useful in these texts is the attention to contemporaneous texts and archive materials that provide an alternate perspective to that of the various analytical approaches to date. The combined analytical/contextual approaches of Marks and Tsivian in particular could prove useful for those seeking a model for in-depth cultural studies of film history merged with musicological approaches.

\textbf{Approach for Shostakovich Case Studies}

For my analyses of Shostakovich’s scores, I borrow from a variety of approaches to interpret the image/sound relationship and musical processes in aspects of cinematic creation. My approach seeks an understanding of how music functions in film. In the following chapters, I analyze music as a “text” and in context. This involves a study of the role of music in film, i.e., the creation and development of meaning, and a discussion of the compositional processes of the composer and the directors which have led to the formation of these film scores.

For image/sound analysis of primarily non-diegetic music (or music that was created by Shostakovich), I combine the semiotic approaches of Gorbman and Kalinak

with the musical specificity espoused by Buhler and Neumeyer. Chion’s “audio-vision” and Cohen’s experiments and analyses of associationism and musical-cinematic form also factor into this approach. Certainly, the rhythm of the editing, pacing of the story, the timing, and how closely the music imitates or interprets cinematic action are deeply interrelated, so they are dealt with differently as the overall design of each film dictates.

Combining Kassabian’s interest in cultural reception and music cognition with the film theoretical and musicological approaches of Buhler, Gorbman, and Kalinak, I also engage the musical and cultural “coding” of melodic and harmonic conventions, instrumentation, texture, and references to “exotic” and gendered music throughout these studies. This simultaneously involves notions of unity, musical design, and cinematic form – the perception of the film as a complete example of twentieth-century Gesamtkunstwerk. It also raises questions of function, aside from the usual “entertainment” of film, leading to questions of the mind/body response expected from audiences of the time. These questions begin to point in the direction of interpretation of how the viewer/listener identifies with a given film within his/her context. How an analyst tracks these identifications and their relationship to ethnicity, nationalism, gender as well as the overall diegesis can show the reciprocity of cinematic creation and reception, particularly in the early thirties where film often served a propagandistic role.

Other considerations often discussed in the work of Gorbman and Kalinak are emotion, mood, and affect. Although they are slippery and difficult topics to address concretely, I discuss these aspects in regard to reception history, which includes directorial and State approval of “appropriate” stories and narrative methods. Daily press, committee reports from the State film agencies such as Sovkino, personal letters,
notes, and essays by the directors also inform the creative process and the official reception of each film. With analysis and contextualization, I conclude with a discussion of how each film represents, acknowledges, or breaks from what was a perceived as modernism, socialist realism, and national identity using the contextualized conceptualizations from Chapter One.

The following analyses lead to a discussion of how Shostakovich’s own musical identity – as an art music composer, as a film composer, or as a modernist experimentating with traits of a new aesthetic – betrays multiple and disparate facets, which can factor into a more “whole” understanding of the composer. Overall, my case studies seek to move from a detailed look at the “film as text” into a deep yet broad contextualization of Shostakovich’s role in the creation of late silent and early Russian sound film. This approach to analysis of Shostakovich’s early film scores therefore weaves together recent American analytical approaches with contemporaneous Russian industrial, technological, artistic, and political contexts.
Although Novyi Vavilon (The New Babylon, 1929) is one of the most discussed film scores in Shostakovich’s output, a formal study of this film has not been done in the West. Of particular interest are the intersecting issues of modernism and socialist realism exemplified in certain moments throughout this film and its score.

The New Babylon was sometimes considered to be Grigory Kozintsev’s and Leonid Trauberg’s last FEKS film (Factory for the Eccentric Actor), a group that the directors had formed in parallel with avant-garde visual arts trends.\(^1\) As in their past films, their “eccentric” aesthetic in this film involved a combination of propaganda and these modernist trends. The music followed this aesthetic echoing the techniques and form of the film as well as the narrative of the images.

The role of Shostakovich’s music in the filmmaking process and the collaborative relationship between the composer, the directors, and the consultant, Mikhail Vladimirovich Vladimirov were significant issues for Shostakovich’s first film score. Existing manuscripts for this film, the recently published version of the score, and personal essays, interviews, and other documents penned by the directors and film

---

\(^1\) Whether or not The New Babylon was FEKS’ last film is debatable, since many reviewers and the directors themselves have considered the Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s next film, Alone, to the last FEKS film. I discuss the idea of The New Babylon being FEKS’ last film over the course of the next two chapters.
workers at the studio provide interesting insight into the complexity of these issues, showing how Shostakovich theorized the growing importance of the role of music in film and implemented his theories to make music an integral part of the film.

The music’s role in the film and its interaction with the image, including the matching of the musical form with film editing and the role of leitmotifs, were among the many significant issues for Shostakovich and the directors. These approaches, born from film music accompaniment styles with which Shostakovich was very familiar, and contemporary, modernist musical styles is relevant for The New Babylon. Additionally, the agit-prop content of the film, that is, its socialist bent, added a different layer of meaning to the film overall, somewhat foreshadowing future socialist realist films.

The contemporaneous reception and interpretations of the film and its music in private studio screenings and after the public premiere of the film revealed the perceptions of the film’s modernist and potentially socialist underpinnings. This reception was further complicated by the fact that The New Babylon was a silent film and the music was altered to accommodate the film venue, which varied in size and access to musical instruments, ranging from chamber orchestras to stand-alone pianos. The initial reception of the film in its private screenings, which was represented by audience surveys, limitations of the venue, and other original studio documents that recorded the response to the film before it was premiered to the public therefore had a significant impact on the composition, organization, and performance of the music.

The discussions of the varied reception, analyses of the film and its score, and the composer’s role in the creation of film music reveal that The New Babylon musically and
cinematically represents FEKS’s last “eccentric” film while pointing to future socialist realist trends in both filmmaking and film music.

History of the Production

Kozintsev and Trauberg began work on The New Babylon, as it eventually came to be named, in February 1928. After the scenario was approved, shooting began in May of 1928 and continued until January 1929. The New Babylon relates the story of the Paris Commune of 1871. According to both directors, Kozintsev and Trauberg, the idea for the film came from Pavel Blyakhin, a film worker at Sovkino. The idea of the Paris Commune had strong currency in Soviet culture, acting as a symbol for the ever-developing socialist culture and a model for the proletarian spirit of the times. According to both the directors, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and the works of French writers such as Émile Zola and Prosper-Olivier Lissagaray, acted as a foundation for the creation of the scenario. A historian on the era, A. Molok, also acted as a consultant for the film. The initial scenario, as discussed by Marek Pytel, was comprised of seven acts, or reels, and its structure was retained until the end of 1928, when the majority of the

4 Pytel, New Babylon, 12 and Grigory Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran [The Deep Screen] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1971), 105. Blyakhin was extremely active in the early formation years of Soviet cinema, later becoming the deputy chairman for the Main Repertory Committee (Glavrepetkom). See Chapter Five for more discussion of this figure.
5 The directors discuss this in detail in their writings. See Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran and Trauberg, “Comment est né ‘La Nouvelle Babylone,’” as only two examples. The press also reflects on this theme. Kozintsev cites Marx and Zola as main inspirations. Trauberg cites Engels and Zola. Pytel argues for other writers, like Lissagaray. See Pytel, New Babylon, 52. According to a letter in Gosfil’mofond, dated 11 December 1927 from Molok the scenario of The New Babylon being a good idea, confirming that Molok had been involved from the beginning in finding an idea for a scenario. “Novyi Vavilon,” [The New Babylon] Sectia No.1, Fond No.2, Opis’ No.1, ed. khr. No.597, Gosfil’mofond [State Film Archive], Belye Stolbye, Russia.
shooting had been completed. Trauberg has also stated that the scenario was revised before shooting (spring 1928) and several parts were removed to simplify the plot.

There were eight reels of the film at some point before its premiere (between January and March), suggesting that the film was cut and likely recut to accommodate eight reels, as opposed to the seven that Kozintsev and Trauberg mention in their article on the film in *Sovetskiy ekran*. In the end, there were eight reels to the film that were reedited either weeks or days before the premiere.

Documents from Gosfil’mofond confirm that the film was recut to the 2200 meters that Pytel describes in his text, weeks, not days, before the premiere. In an application to the Main Repertory Committee for permission to show the film, found at Gosfil’mofond, the film is described as being in eight parts at 2200 meters. On this application, there are three dates: the date at the bottom of the page, next to the signature (23 February 1929), and two stamps near the top of the page one on the left and the other on the right that are covered in signatures and the dates 14 March 1929 and 15 March 1929. I therefore conclude that the application was completed in late February.

---

11 These documents found in “Novyi Vavilon,” Gosfil’mofond.
12 The application is in “Novyi Vavilon,” Document No. 58, Gosfil’mofond.
and approved right before the premiere in March. The fact that the parts and length of the film are noted on the application shows that, if Pytel is correct in his assertion that the film was edited from 2900 meters down to 2200, this editing took place sometime before 23 February.

Pytel provides only a small part of the original shooting script to confirm that 700 meters were cut from the film three days before the premiere.\footnote{Pytel, \textit{New Babylon}, 55 and 58.} This excerpt, from the very end of the film, is supposed to be from a translation of Yuri Tînyanov’s \textit{Lieutenant Kizhe}.\footnote{Yuri Tînyanov, \textit{Lieutenant Kizhe and The Young Vitushishnikov}, trans. by Mirra Ginsburg (London: Quartet Books, 1992), vii.} There is no indication of a date on this script excerpt. Pytel claims, however, that it is from December 1928. I compared this excerpt with a corresponding part of a montage list from Gosfil’mofond, dated 15 March 1929, which shows the scenes from the end of the film in chronological order.\footnote{“Novyi Vavilon,” Document Nos. 60 and 61, Gosfil’mofond.} I found that Pytel’s shooting script excerpt differs significantly from the script that I have seen. Gosfil’mofond’s script, however, almost exactly resembles the shorter version of the film that I have consulted. There is only a difference of a few shots, which could have been cut out of the film before it was exported to the West. It is therefore more likely that the film underwent changes between December 1928 and 23 February 1929. By 14 March 1929 the film was in its final form for screening in the Soviet Union.

Another document from the Main Repertory Committee (14 March 1929), which I also found at Gosfil’mofond, describes the film in eight parts at 2200 meters.\footnote{“Novyi Vavilon,” Document No. 59, Gosfil’mofond.} This suggests that five days before the premiere, the film was the same length as it was on 23

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\footnotesize
\bibitem[13]{Pytel} Pytel, \textit{New Babylon}, 55 and 58.
\bibitem[15]{Nos. 60 and 61} “Novyi Vavilon,” Document Nos. 60 and 61, Gosfil’mofond.
\bibitem[16]{No. 59} “Novyi Vavilon,” Document No. 59, Gosfil’mofond.
\end{thebibliography}
February, supporting the possibility that the film may have been altered sometime between 14 and 19 March from the existing 2200 meters. At least, it is clear from these documents that between 23 February and 14 March 1929 the film stood at 2200 meters, whether or not it was further edited at a later date. According to Trauberg, the directors finished their editing in February and the resulting length of the final version of the film was 2200 meters.\(^{17}\)

As indicated by Sovkino’s letters, Gosfil’mofond’s documents, and Fay’s research it is possible that re-editing would have taken place before 23 February and/or after 14 March 1929. Pytel’s belief that the film was re-edited three days before the premiere results from information he states that he personally received from Trauberg in 1983.\(^{18}\) Unfortunately, this is not documented or supported in Trauberg’s own writings. In fact, in a statement from 1983 Trauberg also states that the editing was finished in February.\(^{19}\) It is therefore likely that the film was edited months, not days before the premiere.

The premiere of *The New Babylon* took place on 19 March 1929, a day later than the initially scheduled date.\(^{20}\) It opened in at least two theaters in Leningrad, the Picadilly and the Gigant Cinemas, and in one theater in Moscow. The context for the Leningrad premieres was an exhibition of the work of FEKS. On a poster for the premiere, there is a listing of a series of lectures and screenings of past FEKS films, including *SVD (Soyuz Velikogo Dela or the Club of the Great Deed), The Adventures of*

---

\(^{17}\) Trauberg in Van Houten, ‘*Eisenstein was a Great Eater*,’ 108 and in Pytel, *New Babylon*, 84.


\(^{19}\) This is from Trauberg’s “Ghent” statement. See Trauberg in Van Houten, ‘*Eisenstein was a Great Eater*,’ 108.

\(^{20}\) The film was intended to open in theaters on 18 March 1929, the day of the anniversary of the Commune.
Oktyabrina, The Devil’s Wheel, Little Brother, and The Cloak. Pytel has argued that these screenings and lectures were opportunities for the directors to atone for their formalist mistakes, considering the political environment and increasing State control over film. It is also possible that such an exhibition was not just a formal critique of their work, but perhaps a kind of retrospective of a soon-to-be bygone era. At the time, however, talk of the film’s “formalism” had not yet begun.

It is possible that over the course of the time of shooting, the directors may have realized that the political environment was changing and that The New Babylon could be received as formalist. Denise Youngblood notes that by July 1928, Sovkino significantly changed its policy from predominantly showing entertainment films to accommodating the new Party line (the “enlightenment of the masses”) in response to the Party Conference on Cinema. In an article from 1929 Trauberg noted that the intelligibility to the millions that the Party Conference demanded was unclear to him, showing his apparent disdain for the idea of the “re-education” of the people. It is therefore possible that having the opportunity to talk about their past works in a time that was shifting from modernism to socialist realism in the arts, may have indicated to Kozintsev and Trauberg that they needed to alter their style accordingly. In December

---

21 This poster was posted in March, just before the premiere. A copy of this poster can be found in Leonid Trauberg, Svyezhest’ bytiya [The Freshness of Life] (Moscow: Kinozentr, 1988) and Pytel, New Babylon, 27.
22 See Pytel, New Babylon, 28.
23 As Denise Youngblood has noted, avant-garde films of the late twenties were regarded as “losses” by the studios. In regard to The New Babylon specifically, one theater manager noted that attendance dropped 50%. See Denise Youngblood, Movies for the Masses, Popular Cinema and Soviet Society in the 1920s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 18.
24 Youngblood, Movies for the Masses, 30.
1928, the directors did remark that they were asked to describe the “modernity” of The New Babylon. They refused to acknowledge the idea and dismissed it as purely a label. Ultimately, it is unclear whether or not the context for the premiere of The New Babylon was simply an opportunity for the directors to correct their perceived “formalist mistakes,” or a direct response to Sovkino’s changes in policy.

It is likely that Pytel might have interpreted these presentations as apologetic because of the legendarily disastrous premiere of the film. Both Trauberg and two actors in the film, Sergey Gerasimov and Elena Kuz’mina, saw the premiere and remarked that it was unsuccessful. Many aspects of the film have been blamed, including the editing, or montage; the music, primarily because of the lack of preparation of the orchestra; and the overall construction of the story. Although I will discuss the reception in more detail later, suffice to say that the music was not solely responsible for the premiere’s presumed failure.

Film Resources

A discussion of a film, especially of one as old as The New Babylon, is a dependent upon the versions available. To date, I am aware of several versions of The New Babylon. The one that I have consulted is an English version, 71 minutes long, which I received from Facets Multimedia. I have contacted Facets and they have said that they were unable to find the origin of this version of the film. There is no indication on the tape of the film’s origin, but the English intertitles suggest that it was a version of

---

26 They indicate in their article published in December 1928 that their film was regarded as having “modernity,” in what seems to be a derogatory sense of the word. See Kozintsev and Trauberg, “Novyi Vavilon.”

the film exported to the English-speaking West. The beginning of the film also seems to have a faint imprint of the letters “bfi” before the title of the film appears, which was only apparent on the LCD screen of my laptop computer. This might indicate that The British Film Institute was responsible for the editing and translation of this film. This version also has the concerti and various salon piano works of Mozart and Chopin as accompaniment, much in the style of silent film accompaniment of the twenties.

A final version of *The New Babylon*, as it was cut by the directors, does exist and has been approved by Trauberg in his “Ghent” statement from 1984. In this statement, he claimed that The British Film Institute and Gosfil’mofond had the authoritative copies of this final version. It is unclear whether the English version that I have seen is this final directorial cut.

Other versions of this film exist from various parts of Europe. In his statement, Trauberg stated that he viewed a version in Hamburg that had added scenes that he “personally cut.” He also stated that this version was not authorized by himself or Kozintsev. Another version has been made by Pytel, where he added in extra frames from the film that had been cut by the directors and synchronized Shostakovich’s music. I have also viewed this film, but have not relied upon it for the analysis. Much of the music had been re-fitted to the film, which alters the rhythm that Shostakovich would have intended.

28 See Trauberg in Van Houten, ‘*Eisenstein was a Great Eater,*’ 109.
29 Ibid.
Plot Summary

Based on Marx’s *The Civil War in France*, the directors created a story about the Parisian Commune in 1871 that would act as a model for the proletarian struggle of the late 1920s. Their primary aim was to provide a positive portrayal of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” by comparing them with the bourgeoisie, i.e., through typage of certain characters. The film opens with series of crosscut images moving among four disparate cinematic spaces. These spaces consist of consumers at a department store named “The New Babylon”; Louise, a saleswoman and the main protagonist played by Kuz’mina; people gathering at a railroad station to cheer on the soldiers; a cabaret; and images of workers creating the materials sold at the department store. The department store consumers and characters at the cabaret, in particular the “boss” played by the music-hall actor David Gutman, represent a greedy and corrupt bourgeoisie. The people at the railroad station are also of the bourgeoisie and the scene represents their support of the war against Prussia. Louise and the anonymous workers represent the proletariat who will eventually form the Paris Commune. Throughout this first of the eight episodes of the film, the *fabula*, or plot, shows the foundation and reasons for the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Its narration cues the viewer to make judgments of the relationship between these factions.

---

31 My synopsis of the plot is based on an English version of the film that I watched both in complete silence and with its “soundtrack,” which consisted of various pieces of art music spliced together much in the style of the “pianist-illustrator.” I have also watched other versions of the film, where the music was spliced together with the film. This includes Pytel’s version.


34 Here I rely heavily on Bordwell’s approach to narration, discerning a difference between *fabula* (the plot), *syuzhet* (the technical means to present the plot) and style (aesthetic means that add to the *syuzhet*). See Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 48-54.
The second episode focuses on the cabaret. Throughout this episode, the content of the show and frequent toasts by the drunk bourgeois patrons relate to larger concepts about the bourgeoisie and specifically the first conversation between Louise and the boss. A singer on stage, played by Sophie Magarill, sings a song “We all have need of love,” while images of the audience show couples, an old rake with a young woman, an older woman with a young man, prostitutes, and a man hungrily kissing a woman who is hungrily consuming her dinner. The cabaret also provides the backdrop for a conversation between Louise and the boss. Having been called from her work to meet with the boss, presumably against her will, Louise is obliged to hear his wishes. Having finished his meal, and by implication from the previous shots, looking for dessert, the boss expresses to Louise how he also needs love. Meanwhile, throughout the scene, happy patrons are toasting to Paris “the gay,” and Paris, “the carefree,” intercut with images of cancan dancers and party-goers. The episode ends with an interruption from a journalist, played by Gerasimov, who announces that the Parisians have been defeated by the Prussians.36

The third episode begins by showing Paris under siege. Cuts between the workers and incoming Prussians set the scene for the introduction of the second protagonist, the French peasant-soldier Jean, played by Pyotr Sobolevsky. Upon entering the home of Louise and her family, Jean, a starving soldier for the National Guard, is tentatively offered food and repair of his boots. While enjoying their hospitality, Jean is interrogated

---

35 This is specifically from the intertitle of the English version of the film that I have used that was, until recently, sold by Facets Multimedia. The New Babylon, VHS, directed by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, (1929; Facets Multimedia).

36 Sergey Gerasimov was an actor at this time, who later became a film director. He worked with Shostakovich on The Young Guard (1947-1948).
by the workers who attempt to sway him towards their cause. He tries to leave, but begins an argument with Louise, stating how he wants to return to his farmland instead of fight in the war.

The fourth and fifth episodes show the eventual siege of Paris by the Communards and the flight of the bourgeoisie to Versailles. In the fourth episode, the workers confront the National Guard and try to persuade the soldiers to come fight with them. Instead, the Guard confiscates their artillery. Although they eventually fail, the workers managed to create their own temporary Commune. The fifth episode opens with the happy workers of the Parisian Commune, temporarily enjoying their freedom from long work days and overall oppression. As with the first episode, there is crosscutting between the different locales of the bourgeoisie and the workers. At Versailles, the singer from the cabaret joins Jean at a bar, sparking a reminiscence of Louise. After their conversation, which seems to leave Jean in further doubt of his allegiance to the Guard, the singer leads the men in a rendition of the *Marseillaise*, which becomes a theme throughout the rest of the film.

The sixth and seventh episodes focus on the war between the Communards and the National Guard and on the failure of the Commune. Episode six shows the battle between the Guard and the Communards in detail with intercuts of the bourgeoisie who casually watch the affair from afar with binoculars. After the death of many Communards, the remainder of the fighters are taken as prisoners and marched past the café where the bourgeoisie celebrate their victory. Upon recognizing Louise among the prisoners, the boss attacks her, initiating a riot. Meanwhile, Jean wanders around a
cabaret asking for the whereabouts of the Communard prisoners. Instead of finding answers, Jean is overwhelmed with celebratory support from the bourgeoisie, congratulating him on his work.

The final episode, entitled “The Judgment” (“Sud”) focuses on only one locale, where the prisoners are sentenced to die while the soldiers dig their graves. It also serves as the moment when Jean and Louise have their final meeting, emphasizing the love story component of the film. Given an opportunity to save herself (a lewd proposition from the commanding officer), Louise expresses her refusal by punching the officer and is sentenced to death, while Jean looks on, doing nothing. As he digs her grave, intercut with images of a statue of the Virgin Mary, Louise exclaims that the Commune will return. The film concludes with gunshots and images of the phrase “Vive la Commune” written on a wall.

Analysis of the Film

In his *Narration in the Fiction Film*, David Bordwell outlines a narratological approach to analyzing a fiction film. He defines narration as “…the process whereby the film’s *syuzhet* and style interact in the course of cueing and channeling the spectator’s construction of the *fabula*.38 Taking a cue from the Russian Formalists, Bordwell pays special attention to the divisions between *fabula*, *syuzhet*, and style. He defines *fabula* as

---

37 This translated intertitle was apparently in the version that Bordwell had viewed. The version I had seen however, does not seem to have the exact same intertitles. For this scene, the version I have viewed has the English translation “The court martial.” In Yakubov’s published score it appears as “Sud,” which is translated there as “The Trial.” Yakubov, *Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 122, “Novyi Vavilon,”* 506.

“the pattern which perceivers of narratives create through assumptions and inferences”; syuzhet as the system that arranges the events of the fabula and style as the systematic use of the film’s devices, such as editing or lighting. Bordwell insists on a distinction between syuzhet and style, where syuzhet is the dramaturgical process, e.g., the plot twists and turning points in a film, and style is the technical means through which the film is created, e.g., lighting, sound, or movement. To make such a fine distinction is often unnecessary, as Bordwell admits, but in the case of Soviet historical-materialist film, it proves useful. Bordwell’s approach to analyzing narration in The New Babylon and some of his insights to Russian historical film provide a useful base for an analytical discussion of the film.

In his discussion of narrational traits of Soviet historical films of the twenties and early thirties, Bordwell emphasizes several interrelated aspects specific to Soviet film, one of which being the “predictable fabula with unpredictable narration.” In Soviet society after 1917, the story of the failed Parisian Commune was commonly known by most citizens and sometimes referred to as the “official mythology.” Since the storyline and ending were predictable, the directors of The New Babylon would need to be innovative with the narration. Unlike some Hollywood fiction films, where the fabula

---

39 Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film, 49.
40 Ibid., 50.
41 Ibid.
42 “Soviet historical-materialist” film is Bordwell’s designation, in reference to mode of filmmaking that he identifies in the early Soviet era, 1925-1933. The phrase also reflects Marxist thought. See Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film, 155 and 234 ff.
43 Bordwell is comparing Soviet cinematic techniques with standard Hollywood classical narration when analyzing Soviet film of this era. See Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film, 235ff.
44 Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film, 250.
takes precedent, Soviet films therefore make the style and the *syuzhet* the “dominants.”

In Soviet films, including *The New Babylon*, the *syuzhet* will commonly have gaps in the overall schema that would be filled in by the spectator’s previous knowledge of the story, i.e., often showing details instead of larger ideas that would cue the viewer into the story. This is opposed to Hollywood film, where showing details instead of a background initially forces the viewer to adopt a “wait-and-see” attitude with the assumption that the details will lead to a larger, overarching idea.

There are also violations of natural time and space, often expressed in cutting between images of characters in different locales. This leads to a significant aspect of *syuzhet* construction for which Soviet film is known – montage. Often in Soviet montage, specifically of directors such as Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Kuleshov, shots are edited together not only to provide a unique manner of *fabula* presentation, but also to reveal a conclusion that results of the combination of the shots. These shots can consist of diegetic material, propelling the *fabula*, or of non-diegetic material that acts as an abstract commentary on a character within the film. Additionally, the fast-paced editing typical of Soviet montage, as Bordwell explains, also controls the pace of hypothesis formation, which forces the viewer to make immediate choices about story construction. Bordwell argues that this pacing does not allow the details of the shots to register singularly, but as a whole, a comment reminiscent of Eisenstein’s own descriptions of how his montage is “dialectical.” Viewers therefore make overall

---


46 Eisenstein was known for the “non-diegetic insert, a term borrowed from Christian Metz, where he would insert images from outside the film to illustrate a character. Pudovkin tended towards diegetic montage, intercutting images from within the space of the film.
decisions about the story, while registering the “force” of the style. Bordwell seems to imply that fast pacing manipulates the viewer into agreeing with the film’s judgment and commentary on the action, perhaps justifying the oft-used phrase, “agit-prop” filmmaking. These techniques lead Bordwell to define Soviet filmmaking overall as “overt narration” that is “overcommunicative” and “self-conscious.”

The New Babylon exemplifies “overt narration,” as described by Bordwell, particularly in the use of montage or more specifically, crosscutting across locales. The first episode opens with crosscutting among four locales: a railroad, a cabaret, the New Babylon department store, and the workers. The crosscutting here establishes the characters and what they represent for the remainder of the film. The boss and the other images of the bourgeoisie are presented unfavorably. The boss is smug and his importance is emphasized by the intercutting of images of a drumroll every time he appears. The shoppers at the department store are depicted as a crazy mob, falling over one another to grab various items, particularly parasols, which become an iconic motif that symbolically represents the bourgeoisie throughout the rest of the film. Additionally, the pacing of the cutting is faster than that of other episodes, which simultaneously reinforces the chaos of the department store, the activity at the cabaret, and the fast working pace of the workers. Overall, the crosscutting itself creates comparisons that reveal the bourgeoisie as greedy, gluttonous, smug, and in support of the war, while the workers simply slave away to produce goods for the consumers. This class difference is the crux of the film and the proletarian message is made clear through the technique of

47 Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 240.
48 For my analysis of the film, I have viewed the versions discussed above and consulted Yakubov, *Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 122*, “Novyi Vavilon.”
crosscutting. There are other instances of montage in the film that also function as narrational commentary and as simple associations or motifs. In episode five, at the moment when the bourgeoisie are watching the defeat of the Commune from Versailles and the boss stands and begins to applaud, there is a cut to Jean in Paris, who angrily turns to the viewer.\textsuperscript{49} The cutting between Jean staring straight at the camera and the boss applauding, contrasting two entirely different locales, is only understandable in the film itself. Naturally, Jean would never hear the applauding of the bourgeoisie; but the cutting leads us to believe that he does hear clapping. Knowing Jean’s state of mind and his ambivalence towards the defeat of the Commune, the viewer is led to believe that Jean disapproves of the applause. Thus, this crosscutting between locales serves as a commentary on the class struggle and further demonizes the bourgeoisie.

Other montage moments in episode five serve the \textit{fabula} differently. In the bar scene, where Jean is moodily drinking, he is joined by the singer from the cabaret. She asks him whether he is thinking of someone, which triggers a montage of images of Louise’s head, shot from different angles. Instead of perpetuating the class war theme, this montage reveals the character’s state of mind and propels the love story component of the film. In this way, this form of montage resembles the Hollywood flashback, which can be used to depict the inner state of a character’s mind.\textsuperscript{50} Within the same scene, shortly after the meeting between Jean and the singer, the singer leaps up and leads a crowd, consisting mostly of the soldiers and the bourgeoisie, in a rendition of the \textit{Marseillaise}. Because this is a silent film, there is more emphasis on a visual depiction

\textsuperscript{49} Kozintsev describes this scene in \textit{Glubokiy ekran}. He also discusses how the “montage leads the action,” creating associations. See Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 115.

\textsuperscript{50} This is similar to a technique used in Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s next film \textit{Alone}, where Kuz’mina thinks of her home while hearing the music of the shaman and hurdy-gurdy.
of the *Marseillaise*. This rendition of the tune involves intercutting between the singer, the bourgeoisie, soldiers, certain lines of text from the *Marseillaise* in intertitles, and images of trumpets and cannons. These images work together to symbolize war, nationalism, and music, specifically instruments associated with wartime. Kozintsev also relates that the images were cut to play against the melancholic attitude of the soldier and show the brutality of the bourgeoisie.

The only non-diegetic images within this montage are the image of the trumpets. Within the flow of the montage, however, it comes across as a natural extension of the idea, even though it would qualify as a “non-diegetic insert” – a technique commonly used by Eisenstein. After several moments, the montage sequence begins to incorporate other diegetic images, including images of “old” Paris, the cabaret theater, and its cancan dancers from previous episodes. The inclusion of these images, which consist of shots from previous episodes, reveals the director’s commentary on the bourgeoisie’s false sincerity of national consciousness. Overall, this montage serves the purpose of visually depicting music common to silent film of the time, while commenting upon the lack of true national consciousness of the bourgeoisie.

Aside from montage, the style and *syuzhet* are also defined by certain techniques that are more common to films that emphasize a continuous and linear approach to narrative. These techniques include eyeline matches and frontality, which are used to match shots so that they may seem more continuous and less disjunct. Bordwell notes

---

51 Kozintsev discusses this in *Globokiy ekran*, 115-116.
54 Eyeline match in this case is often between a character and a second space off-screen or between characters in a SRS (shot-reverse-shot) pattern. See David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson,
the use of eyeline matches and frontality throughout the film. The use of eyeline
matching and frontality is more important in this film than in Hollywood films, for
example, because there are almost no establishing shots throughout the film. In the first
episode, for example, all of the shots are medium or close up shots, with no larger,
overall long shot to frame the action. In fact, as Bordwell notes, there is no long shot at
all until the very end of the first episode.\textsuperscript{55} It is therefore necessary to have some way to
make the shots seem as if they belong to the same diegetic space, particularly since it was
the intention of the directors to create a more continuous sense of narration.\textsuperscript{56}

Motif is another important aspect of style that the directors use throughout the
film.\textsuperscript{57} Throughout the film and sometimes only within scenes, motifs are used as
commentary on specific characters or to represent larger notions. Parasols and
spectacles, for example, are prevalent throughout the film and consistently paired with
bourgeoisie spectators or consumers (as in the case of the shoppers at the “New Babylon”
in the opening episode). The spectacles begin as a symbol of the bourgeoisie in general,
but by the time of the fifth episode, spectacles are replaced by binoculars, which are used
by the bourgeoisie in Versailles to view the battle in Paris. In this sense, the
spectacles/binoculars emphasize the Marxist idea that the bourgeoisie are “feckless
spectators.”\textsuperscript{58}

\textit{The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960} (New York: Columbia
University Press, 1985), 207-208. Frontality is when a character faces the camera. See Bordwell, Staiger
\textsuperscript{55} Bordwell, \textit{Narration in the Fiction Film}, 234ff.
\textsuperscript{56} See Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 110.
\textsuperscript{57} Kozintsev talks about motifs and metaphors in \textit{The New Babylon}. See \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 116ff.
\textsuperscript{58} Bordwell discusses this conclusion in regard to the entire scene of the bourgeoisie in Versailles. He
states that their placement and glee at watching the battle reinforces the film’s Marxist message. See
Bordwell, \textit{Narration in the Fiction Film}, 256.
As Kozintsev points out, another motif that appears in more than one episode is the image of Louise with the mannequin.\(^{59}\) The viewer first sees this pair in the first episode, where the mannequin stands behind Louise as she sells lace at her sales counter. The next instance where we see the pair together is when Louise reenters the “New Babylon” to obtain materials for the battle in Paris and next to her when she fires upon the soldiers attempting to breach the Commune’s barrier. This “dummy” double seems to act as Louise’s alter ego, an inactive pawn of the bourgeoisie. Like the people of the Commune, the mannequin perishes during the battle as the “old” Paris burns to the ground. Kozintsev seems to suggest that the mannequin represents the store itself burning to the ground along with Louise’s former life as a saleswoman.\(^{60}\) More than a visual parallel, the dummy can be read to symbolize the downfall of the Commune at the hands of the ruling classes.

The historical referentiality of the film may also be another motif that is associated with Louise and limited primarily to the last episode. In this episode, as Louise is interrogated and Jean begins to dig her grave, images of the Virgin Mary are intercut with images of Louise. In the history of the Commune, one anarchist, Louise Michel, was an active communard, sometimes called the “Red Virgin.”\(^{61}\) It is possible that Kozintsev and Trauberg had learned of this person through their reading on the Commune and used her as the basis of the character of Louise. Regardless of the potential association with Louise Michel, the images of the Virgin Mary intercut with

\(^{59}\) Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekrann*, 116-117.
\(^{60}\) Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekrann*, 116. Kozintsev suggests a connection between the mannequin and Louise by drawing a parallel between them, but does not directly state what they represent.
images of Louise may have signified the saintliness of Louise, as well as a reference to the afterlife implied by the diegetic space – the Parisian cemetery Père Lachaise where many communards were executed.

Finally, another motif type that appears throughout the film is the idea of music. In silent film, as noted in Chapter Two, it was common to have visual references to a song in the intertitles or the image of a score in the diegetic space of the film. *The New Babylon* bespeaks its nature as a silent film by continuing this approach. There are several references to music that the listener cannot hear, including the cancan introduced in the first episode, the singing of the *Marseillaise* in the fifth episode, and an on-screen performance of a pianist, playing a song entitled, “Oh how I love the time of cherries.”

Each of these musical/visual moments is a part of the narrational commentary. The leading of the *Marseillaise*, as previously discussed, ties into the judgment of bourgeoisie and commentary on the struggle of the two classes. The cancan of the first episode is integrated into the diegetic space as part of the celebratory excitement of the cabaret, but is also a symbol of the gluttony of the bourgeoisie. The last musical “quotation,” of the pianist playing in the Commune, seems to place the pianist as a musical narrator on the defeat of the communards. It can be assumed that, in the tradition of musical accompaniment for silent film, Shostakovich’s music probably cued into these visual representations of sound either literally representing the visually cued music with suitable aural examples or providing music that acted as an ironic statement. Unfortunately, because the film was essentially “silent” and subsequently recut since its premiere, an exact reproduction of the synchronization of the sound and image as it appeared in 1929

62 Van Houten, *Leonid Trauberg and His Films: Always the Unexpected*, 64. Cited as “Chansons des cerises.”
is likely impossible. Nonetheless, I will discuss how the music is organized to reflect the narrational devices of the film, hypothesizing on the potential relationships between sound and image.

The Music to the Film

Music Production History

Shostakovich was hired as the film composer for *The New Babylon* in December 1928, after Sovkino, as revealed through internal letters, decided to hire specialized film composers for their films. With considerable pride, Sovkino anxiously anticipated having music specially fitted to their upcoming films, including *The New Babylon*. In late August, Sovkino stated that they would hire composers for three films, including *The New Babylon*. In December 1928, they specified and defended Shostakovich as their choice for the film, citing him as a young and talented composer of such successes as *The Nose*. Shostakovich signed a contract with Sovkino on 28 December 1928 to write a score for piano and small ensemble (suitable for a film theater). Ultimately

---

63 Pytel has attempted to piece together the film as close to the original as possible and to add Shostakovich’s score, creating a sound film from *The New Babylon*. Many orchestras have subsequently reorganized Shostakovich’s music for the film for live showings.  
64 “Sovkino” a shortened word for “Soviet Kino,” was the State Organization for Film, a consolidation of local film institution under one government controlled organization. See Nina Gornitskaya, ed., *Iz istorii Lenfil’ma, Stati, vospominaniya, dokumenty,1920-e gody. [From the History of Lenfil’m Studio: Articles, Reminiscences and Documents of the 1920s]* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1968-), 252-253, for Sovkino’s discussion of their decision to have highly trained composers to write for their films.  
65 Ibid., 254 from a letter dated 28 August 1928 with the heading “ Pis’mo pravleniya “Sovkino” direktoru leningradskoy kinofabriki “Sovkino” [A Letter from the Management of Sovkino to the Director of the Leningrad Film Studio Sovkino]. Yakubov states that the heads of the Leningrad Studio asked Sovkino start using composers for film “music scripts.” He further states that it was on the 29 August that the Sovkino board of directors gave permission for a “composition script” for *The New Babylon*. He based these conclusions on documents from TSGALI in St. Petersburg (The State Central Archive for Literature and Art), likely catalogued under the Lenfil’m fond.  
66 Ibid., 254-255.  
67 Ibid., 254-255. Letter dated from 8 April 1929 with the heading “Pis’mo zam. direktora Leningradskoy kinofabriki ‘Sovkino’ tov. Bykova v pravleniye ‘Sovkino’” [A Letter from the Deputy Director of the Leningrad Film Studio Sovkino to comrade Bykov in the Management of Sovkino]. Sovkino also wanted a
Shostakovich was required to deliver this score in piano format by 1 February 1929 and a version for fourteen-piece orchestra by 1 March 1929. According to Sovkino, he finished the piano version and a rough draft of the orchestral score by 31 January 1929. Around this time, without much apparent justification, Sovkino hired a consultant, Mikhail Vladimirovich Vladimirov for the film score. Sovkino stressed that Vladimirov was asked to consult and conduct the orchestra so as to ensure a “competent showing” with a “good orchestra.” Other than this and a program for the film with Vladimirov’s name listed as the musical consultant, there is little indication of the degree of his involvement.

Sovkino later stated that despite Shostakovich’s talent, they felt that it was impossible to pay too much attention to the music for the film. It appears that Sovkino was very concerned with this experiment’s success and seemed to feel that Shostakovich was not experienced enough to handle the score alone. Since their later statement came from a letter written on 8 April 1929, it is also possible that they were trying to

---

69 Orchestral score as used here is translated from the Russian word “partitura.”
70 Yakubov says that Vladimirov was hired on 29 January 1929. See Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 544, quoting minutes from a plenary session of a Music Assembly held on 29 January 1929.
71 Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon,’” 544, quoting minutes from a plenary session of a Music Assembly held on 29 January 1929. Notably, Vladimirov was not mentioned in Sovkino’s published letters.
72 Vladimirov’s name does not appear on the programs to film (under the film credits), which were probably handed out at theaters and worker’s clubs. This program served to educate the viewer in the issues and objectives of the film. A copy of this program is available in “Novyi Vavilon,” Gosfil’mofond.
73 Gornitskaya, *Iz istorii Lenfil’ma*, 255.
emphasize their past attempt at ensuring success for a film that ultimately failed when it was premiered.\textsuperscript{74}

With a piano version of the score completed, Shostakovich and the directors met to screen the film with its music for the artistic panel of Sovkino on 20 February, which passed.\textsuperscript{75} According to Sovkino, the directors returned from Moscow on 27 February and then continued to work with Shostakovich to complete the editing of his music with the film. It was around this date that Sovkino states that Shostakovich had to re-edit his music, probably due to a re-editing of the film.\textsuperscript{76} At the same time, Shostakovich fell ill with influenza and remained ill until the premiere. Sovkino and subsequently other writers have used this to justify the mistakes that were presumed to be in the copied versions of the score that led to the inability of the orchestra to perform well and the eventual failure of the premiere.\textsuperscript{77}

With Sovkino’s timeline and further description of the completion of the re-editing, the studio shows that the alteration of Shostakovich’s music happened approximately three weeks before the premiere, although Pytel claims that the music was

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid. Interestingly, Sovkino’s attitude as revealed in this letter has continued as part of The New Babylon legend of Shostakovich’s difficulties as a young composer for film.

\textsuperscript{75} Gornitskaya, Iz istorii Lenfil’ma, 255 and Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 50. This is the event that Kozintsev describes in Glubokiy ekran, oft-quoted by scholars interested in the film (see for example, Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 74-76). Yakubov argues that the screening for Sovkino was done in Petersburg, and that Kozintsev and Trauberg left later that same day without Shostakovich to submit the film to the Central Rehearsal Committee in Moscow, in order to have it arranged for the Moscow orchestras. Archival documents, as Yakubov claims, show that Shostakovich could not have gone to Moscow, since he was ill, even though Kozintsev’s famous recollection of the screening seems to place the composer in Moscow. See Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 544 and above sources for comparison.

\textsuperscript{76} Yakubov confirms this in his essay, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 544-545.

\textsuperscript{77} According to Trauberg the film only ran for two or three days and was a complete failure upon its premiere. See Leonid Trauberg, Izbrannye proizvedeniya v 2-kh tomakh [Selected Works in Two Volumes] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1988), 1: 298-299.
changed only three days before the premiere. This change was forced, according to Laurel Fay, by the censors’ requirement to re-edit the film. Sovkino made no mention of the censors, however, but instead focused on Shostakovich’s timeline for the completion of the orchestral parts and his illness. Sovkino reiterated Shostakovich’s illness several times, seemingly to justify the mistakes in the orchestral parts. They identified these mistakes as a lack of tempo markings and mismatched timings between the piano part and the film. They also noted the hostile attitude of the conductors towards Shostakovich’s music. It appears that Sovkino blamed Shostakovich squarely for the lack of success of the film because of the mistakes in copying and the resulting lack of rehearsal of the orchestra.

The Sovkino letters also mentioned, however, that the conductors, specifically Vladimirov at the Picadilly and Tressler at the Gigant Cinemas, were hostile towards Shostakovich’s music because of the copying errors. These letters also stressed that the negative attitude resulting from the lack of preparation of the orchestra “spread” to the public, causing a harsh reaction to the film. Emphasizing Shostakovich’s errors that led to the lack of preparation and hostile attitudes, Sovkino stated (clearly disavowing total responsibility) that the studio was confused as to why the music failed, since the same

---

78 Fay, using Sovkino’s information, also stated that it was three weeks. See Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*, 50 and Gornitskaya, *Iz istorii Lenfil’m*, 255-256. Pytels states that he bases his information on a personal discussion with Leonid Trauberg. Riley does not clarify this issue either, simply stating that it was either three days or three weeks before the premiere that Shostakovich needed to re-edit the music.
79 Fay does not specify what changes were made to the film. What changes were made remains generally unclear. For in-country use, the film was probably re-edited for length or for continuity of rhythm, as Trauberg describes in his “Ghent” statement. See Trauberg in Van Houten, *Eisenstein was a Great Eater*, 108. For export, the film may have been edited to accommodate other censors. This would result in the cutting of “lewd” material, e.g., images of scantily clad women. Pytels asserts that the film was re-edited partly because of political reasons. He claims that the original ending, where the soldiers celebrate the death of the Communards, changes the meaning of the film’s message, i.e., the Commune will return. See Pytels, *New Babylon*, 60-64.
80 Gornitskaya, *Iz istorii Lenfil’m*, 255-256.
81 Ibid.
conductors at the same theaters had performed the music without incident weeks before the premiere. Also, as noted earlier, there was no documented animosity between Vladimirov and Shostakovich when the young pianist worked at the theater in previous years. Although I have found no other indication of a disagreement between the two musicians, it is curious that Shostakovich’s music would have been treated so badly by the conductor/consultant for the film music unless there was an undocumented problem between them. In fact, Yuli Vaynkop reported that Vladimirov treated Shostakovich’s score with more care than other theater conductors.

Sovkino was under tremendous pressure to produce films that would be both successful (i.e., profitable) and satisfying to the Party Conference demands. In the end, the film was not received terribly well. It would therefore make sense to blame the person who appeared to be responsible for the film’s failure – the composer – when in fact, the entire filmmaking team was to blame, if blame was due at all. Sovkino’s intention to create entertaining socialist films therefore failed and they needed a convenient scapegoat easily found in the figure of the young composer. It appears, therefore, that Sovkino’s description of the hostility of the conductors and their final question as to why the music failed may reveal Sovkino’s anxiety over the project as a whole rather than any possible individual failures on Shostakovich’s part.

The time frame for the re-editing of the film clearly has an impact on figuring out the time frame for Shostakovich’s writings and editing of the film score. As discussed

---

82 Ibid, 256.
84 See the “Reception” section of this chapter.
earlier, documents from Gosfil’mofond and Sovkino show that the film was likely re-edited in the first few months of 1929.\(^85\) It was during and after this re-editing that the music was composed.

Sovkino’s letter indicated that Shostakovich had to make changes to his music and kept contact with the directors several weeks before the premiere.\(^86\) Regardless of these changes, Shostakovich was still able to produce orchestral parts by 14 March for Moscow theaters and 15 March for Leningrad theaters. Sovkino’s letters make no mention of any other changes to the music after 15 March, but they did emphasize, as stated earlier, that he made mistakes in the orchestral parts in the versions received on these dates.\(^87\)

The documents from Gosfil’mofond show that re-editing of film did not happen in the way that Pytel explains. The current evidence suggests that if there were extensive re-editing of the film, it would have happened before 23 February, after Kozintsev and Trauberg returned from Moscow with their meeting with the Central Rehearsal Committee. It is possible that a second re-editing of the film may have occurred several days before the premiere (from the existing 2200 meters, not 2900 as Pytel suggests), but there is no evidence to suggest such changes. Further, Sovkino’s letters and archive documents state that Shostakovich was working in cooperation with the directors with changes to the film score weeks before the premiere, starting on 27 February.\(^88\)

Shostakovich had finished the copying in due time and sets were made for theaters

---

\(^85\) See the “History of the Production” section of this chapter.

\(^86\) Sovkino seems to imply that it happened sometime after 27 February 1929. Gornitskaya, \textit{Iz istorii Lenfil’ma}, 256.

\(^87\) Letter from 8 April 1929 in Gornitskaya, \textit{Iz istorii Lenfil’ma}, 255-256.

throughout Moscow and Leningrad a few days before the premiere. It is unlikely that the directors would have changed the film at all after copies of the score were made so close to the premiere. It is clear from the manuscripts that Shostakovich had to alter his music to fit the re-editing of the film, but as shown by Manashir Yakubov, these changes were made prior to the final copied sets. It therefore appears that the film was not extensively re-edited days before the premiere, as Pytel suggests, and that Shostakovich’s reworking of his music was to accommodate the film as it was altered several weeks before the premiere. Trauberg also commented that Shostakovich wrote for the “short version” of the film, i.e., the final version. If there were changes to the film and consequently changes to the music several days before the premiere after the final copies were made, documentation still needs to be found, if it exists at all.

**Shostakovich’s Musical Process**

As we know, Shostakovich was hired in December 1928, after the shooting and initial editing for the film had been completed. According to Yakubov, Shostakovich and the directors met for the first time on 9 December 1928. This was several weeks before Sovkino offered Shostakovich the contract for the composition of the score and approximately a day after they had made an announcement that they were interested in hiring Shostakovich to compose special music for their film, *The New Babylon*, for which he would write three versions of the score for an orchestra of 14-20 musicians. Based

---

89 Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 542-547. Yakubov also confirms that the final copying and distribution of the film’s score occurred only days before the premiere, leaving no time for rehearsals.
90 See ‘Eisenstein was a Great Eater,’ 108.
on Shostakovich’s statement of having met the directors on 9 December, Yakubov presumes that it was at this meeting where Shostakovich initially viewed the unedited version of the film. Kozintsev’s description of their first meeting and viewing of the film where Shostakovich agreed to write the score\(^2\) complements several statements made by Trauberg:

...let’s return to the very end of 1928. [In] the office, we sat – the two directors and him – the composer D. D. Shostakovich. [He was] young, but [there was] already a need [for him] to talk about himself. “Do you want to write music for our new film, Dmitry Dmitriyevich?”

His answer followed: “I consider [it to be] a great pleasure.” After this, he watched the film, silently, attentively, and then stood up and very calmly and very seriously repeated: “Yes, I consider [it to be] a great pleasure.”\(^3\)

According to Trauberg, Shostakovich carefully viewed the film twice and timed each scene probably some time after this meeting.\(^4\) Another person close to the music-making process, Nadezhda Kosheverova, wife of the cameraman Andrey Moskvin, related that Shostakovich watched the film in pieces and many times over. According to her, he worked constantly on the project.\(^5\) Trauberg also related that Shostakovich

---

\(^1\) Trauberg, Izbrannya proizvedeniya, 1:297.
\(^2\) Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran, 120.
\(^3\) Trauberg, Izbrannya proizvedeniya, 1:297.
\(^4\) Ibid., 1:298. Trauberg never specified where Shostakovich viewed the film.
requested chronometer timings and studied the editing sheets (*montazhniy listi*) as well, eventually finishing the score in two weeks.\(^\text{96}\) In an interview Trauberg states,

> All he [Shostakovich] needed was a list with the length of the scenes: barricade 80 metres, shop 50 metres, street 50 metres. He insisted to know the exact length of every scene.\(^\text{97}\)

As indicated by Sovkino’s letters, Shostakovich had finished a piano score and some of the parts by 31 January 1929 corresponding to Trauberg’s assertion that he finished a score (likely the piano score) in two weeks. I have found that Shostakovich’s manuscript of the *partitura* from the Glinka Museum Archive also shows that he was working both in 1928 and 1929 according to dates he wrote on the first and fifth pages.\(^\text{98}\)

Trauberg’s statements about providing timings are also corroborated by markings on the original manuscripts of *The New Babylon* score.\(^\text{99}\) Instead of marking in meters, Shostakovich marked timings and character entrances. Other notes about the film’s events on the manuscript indicated for whom and for what he was writing during the course of the film.\(^\text{100}\)

Despite the directors’ claim of the film being in “seven reels,” it is clear from manuscript sources that Shostakovich wrote for eight reels of the film.\(^\text{101}\) Yakubov confirms this in his essay on and edition of the score, stating that Shostakovich wrote at

---


\(^\text{97}\) Interview with Trauberg from 10 July 1984 in Van Houten, *Leonid Trauberg and His Films*, 151.


\(^\text{99}\) These can be found in the Shostakovich fond, Fond 32, No. 108, in the Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture and the Moscow Shostakovich Apartment Archive.

\(^\text{100}\) Partitura to “*Novyi Vavilon,*” Glinka Museum Archive. For details on the available manuscripts and copied sets see Yakubov, “*Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofilmu ’Novyi Vavilon,’*” 547. Shostakovich’s timings ranged from “sek” (seconds) to “min” (minutes).

\(^\text{101}\) See page 160 for the discussion of the “seven” parts. See the Partitura to “*Novyi Vavilon,*” Glinka Museum Archive for Shostakovich’s notation of the score in eight parts.
least an hour and a half of music for 94 minutes of the final re-edited version of the film. 102 I have examined the sketches for the score and they indicate that Shostakovich wrote for eight parts of the film from the outset, beginning with the piano version. 103 Since Shostakovich was contracted to provide a piano score before orchestral parts, it is likely that this piano version reveals the early stages of the composition of the score, which was initially and finally in eight reels.

As discussed above, it is unclear what Shostakovich had to change and exactly when he changed the music to the film. Assuming that Shostakovich altered his music after the film was re-edited in February, Yakubov has shown that the composer cut and altered his music in every reel. The music to the last reel, which Pytel argues had several pages cut near the end, was significantly cut. 104 Yakubov supports this claim in his discussion of “fragment three” in his edition. He states that the fragment consists of music that continued after the 157th measure of Reel Eight and was crossed out in an unknown hand. This “fragment three” abruptly ends after 126 measures, suggesting that any remaining music to this reel may be lost. Yakubov also notes the possibility that this “fragment three” music proved unnecessary to the film, especially after Shostakovich had consulted with the directors. I also agree that this “fragment three” from Reel Eight may be from an earlier version of the film, as Yakubov also suggests, since the phrase “We will meet again, Jean,” that Louise screams at the soldier in Reel Eight and added in later versions of the film was written in a different color of ink, as seen in the Glinka Museum

103 In the film music manuscripts that I have seen, Shostakovich began with a piano score before orchestrating his music into a larger format. He also, as we know, was contracted to write a piano score before providing parts. I have therefore interpreted his piano sketches, which is within Fond 32, No. 108 of the Glinka Museum Archive, as at least one of the initial sketches for the score.
104 Pytel, New Babylon, 36. Pytel states that in 1975, film historians found that some pages were crossed out at the end of the eighth reel. The manuscripts confirm that some pages were crossed out.
manuscript. Yakubov also notes that there were no number references in “fragment three” to suggest that Shostakovich worked any further on that fragment, as he did with the rest of Reel Eight. Since existing forms of the film usually end shortly after Louise makes this statement and the showing of the phrase “Vive la commune!”, it is possible that the cut of “fragment three” was made earlier in the process, assuming that the written-in phrases in a different ink were in Shostakovich’s hand. The cut therefore may have been made before the re-editing process that began in late February, as Yakubov suggests. Generally, however, alterations throughout this and every reel show that Shostakovich was likely editing his music in the time frame that Sovkino’s letters and Yakubov suggest – several weeks before the premiere.

Despite this being Shostakovich’s first film score, there was a musically collaborative effort between the directors and the composer early in the film scoring process. In his usual descriptive style, Kozintsev stated,

> Our thoughts were the same: not to illustrate the frames, but give them a new quality and range. The music should be composed to go against the action of the film, revealing the inner meaning of the occurrences. That was not the only thing we thought up! The Marseillaise should shift into La Belle Helene, great tragic themes contrast with bawdy cancans and gallops.

In an interview from 1984, Trauberg boasted,

---

105 Shostakovitch fond, Fond 32, No. 108, Glinka Museum Archive and the Moscow Shostakovitch Apartment Archive.
107 The English version of the film that I have viewed has this ending.
108 My translation. From Gluboiy ekran, 120. See also Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, 75-76 for her translation and interpretation of this passage. Wilson adds in more text and elaboration than I do here. For comparison of her translation, see also Grigory Kozintsev, Sobrantiye sochineniy v pyati tomakh, 1 [Collected Works in Five Volumes, volume 1] (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1982), 1:156.
He [Shostakovich] knew where the cancan and the funeral march should be. We became friends in the first days after we met...I thought of mixing the cancan with the Marseillaise and Shostakovich just wrote it down like that...all he needed was a list with the length of the scenes...109

The three seemed to agree to create music that specifically complemented the film, as prescribed in the “Statement on Sound,” avoiding the usual silent film-style accompaniment common at the time.110

Kozintsev’s emphasis on portraying the “inner meaning” of the image and creating ironic contrasts between the image and the music is reflected in Shostakovich’s own words and music.111 In his well-known article dated 12 March 1929 from Sovetskiy ekran, Shostakovich protested against musical hackwork in the cinema, where pieces of music are cobbled together to illustrate the film.112 He stated,

Lack of space does not allow me to write further about so-called film music manuals (musical bits for tears, uprising, corrupt bourgeoisie, love, and so forth). I will say one thing: that this is such hackwork [khaltura], if not worse.113

Instead of khaltura, he suggested that music should reflect and be guided by the individual film, striving for the portrayal of the “inner meaning.” Shostakovich went on to say,

---

109 Interview with Trauberg 10 July 1984 in Van Houten, Leonid Trauberg and His Films, 150-151.
110 See Chapter Two for a discussion of the “Statement on Sound.”
112 Kozintsev also complained of the “hodgepodge” approach to musical compilation in the cinema. See Kozintsev Glibokiy Ekran, 119-120 and for a brief translation Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 542.
The only correct path was to write special music, as it has been done, if I am not mistaken, in one of the first instances with *The New Babylon*. When composing music to “Babylon,” I was guided least of all by the principle of mandatory illustration of every shot. Mainly, I began from the principal shot in each sequence of shots. [Take] for example, the end of the second part. The primary moment is the attack of the German cavalry on Paris. The part ends with a deserted restaurant. Total silence. But the music, despite the fact that the German cavalry is not shown on the screen, comes from the cavalry all the same, reminding the viewer of the impending menacing force.

Shostakovich continued, providing details as to how he followed a “principle of contrast,” i.e., writing music that would be in contrast to the images in order to create different meanings. He also used various dances, quotations from Offenbach operettas, and revolutionary songs in “unexpected arrangements” to create certain effects. Overall, his intent was to make the music “continuous and symphonic.” It was important to him that the music, though drawing from borrowed material, be continuous and unified. The music was “to be in the [same] tempo and the rhythm of the film and intensify its impression.” Since the film is based partly on contrasts, it is fitting that Shostakovich also thought of his music in terms of contrast. These contrasts, however, suggest a deeper relationship between the image and the music. The scores and recordings available show that these guiding principles, agreed upon by the directors and the composer, were reflected in the music.

**Analysis of the Music**

Analyzing this film score as an integral part of the film is a challenge, since it is a silent film and as a result, both the film and the score exist in different versions. I have already mentioned the variety of versions of the film that have been produced. As for the

---

114 I translate this as “part,” but it can also be translated as “reel.”
116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
score, there are a few editions released by several publishing houses. There was a suite of the score published by Gennady Rozhdestvenskiy in 1976 that is based on the Glinka Museum manuscript and a version of the score from the Russian State Library in Moscow.\(^{118}\) This version was originally published by Sovetskiy kompozitor, but has also been published by Sikorski and Boosey and Hawkes. Sikorski and Boosey and Hawkes continue to offer this version of the suite. In an interview from 2002, however, conductor Mark FitzGerald stated that the version of the Boosey and Hawkes score, which are said to be based on Shostakovich’s “own manuscript and the first performance material,” differed significantly from the Sikorski version.\(^{119}\) It could be that at that time either company may have offered another version of the score that was not based on Rozhdestvenskiy’s suite. The most recent and complete edition of *The New Babylon* has been published by DSCH publishing house in Moscow, by its editor Manashir Yakubov. This version is informed by manuscripts, sketches, and lithographic orchestral parts from libraries and archives from St. Petersburg and Moscow.\(^{120}\)

My analysis of the score is therefore informed by a variety of sources, including the Facets Multimedia version of the film, manuscript sources of the score from the Glinka Museum Archive and the Shostakovich Apartment Archive, published editions of the score including Yakubov’s recent publication of Shostakovich’s final manuscript, recordings of the score including James Judd’s performance of the Sikorski edition of the


\(^{120}\) See Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 547 for a full list of the archives and libraries consulted by Yakubov.
film score, and writings about the music, primarily by the composer himself.\footnote{121}

Although the manuscripts play an important role in my discussion, it is not my primary goal to perform sketch studies in this chapter, but instead to relate observations of the manuscripts that reveal Shostakovich’s compositional process.

As I have noted in Chapter Two, to analyze a film score without its cinematic context or as “music to film” (instead of “music in film”) prohibits a complete understanding of the total film product.\footnote{122} With this in mind, I analyze the score to The New Babylon as both a musical work in itself and as part of a synthesized film product. I focus on certain musical aspects, issues and devices particular to this film, such as form, musical and cinematic unity, continuity, “perceptibility” versus “imperceptibility,” narrative cueing and agency, and cinematic/musical coding and identifications.

**Form, Unity, and Continuity**

**Form**

Kozintsev used musical concepts to describe the overall form of The New Babylon as a “visual symphony.” He stated,

> The episodes were formed in a bundle of feelings and thoughts as parts of a visual symphony. Each of these first and foremost has distinguished emotional [and] rhythmic character. The sinister scherzo [for] the collapse of the Second Empire; slow and sorrowful andante (siege of Paris); the gleeful theme of liberation (of the Commune); the stormy melody of the struggle; the requiem of the end. So gradually appears the real contour of the conception.\footnote{123}


\footnotetext[122]{See Chapter Two for a discussion of their essays.}

\footnotetext[123]{Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 109.}
Kozintsev’s musical conceptualization of the film as symphony has some resonance with Shostakovich’s notion, if only on a superficial level. Responding to the “hackwork” of silent film accompaniment of the time, Shostakovich set out to compose music that was “symphonic in tone,” but in keeping with the “rhythms and tempi” of the film. What results is a continuous, yet sometimes fragmented building-block approach to the music’s form that directly mirrors the action, character development, and emotional content in every reel of the film. Specifically, the music mirrors the pacing and editing of the reel and the content of the shots and scenes. Some reels, as Bordwell and I have noted in the analysis of the film’s syuzhet, are faster-paced than others. This requires the music to be more fragmented and quickly edited, resulting in its own montagist manner. Part One, or the first reel, is the most fragmented and contains the fastest editing of all of the reels, which results from the use of crosscutting between different locales (the train station, the department store, the cabaret, and the workers) to establish the diegetic space of the film and introduce the individual main characters and their representative groups. There also is crosscutting in other Parts, such as Part Five, but to a lesser extent. Reels without excessive crosscutting and slower paced editing tend to have music that is also less fragmented.

The music of Part One follows the form and pacing of the fast-paced crosscutting, changing with the content of the images. The overall effect is music that sounds sectionalized, or “block-like,” because it changes with the content marked by shifts in theme, texture, timbre, tempo (most common to delineate a new section), cadence

125 As noted in Chapter Two, Eisensteinian montage was an influence on Kozintsev and Trauberg and is used extensively throughout this film.
(specifically homophonic passages that use harmonic progressions to move towards climactic points), and rhythm/meter (usually the entrance or exit of a dance genre will require a rhythmic/metric change, especially for a waltz, galop, or cancan). As seen in Appendix C, in the 528 bars of music to Part One the shifts in the music cue different locales and characters in “blocks,” as they correspond to written cues in the score\textsuperscript{126}:

\begin{verbatim}
Train station → New Babylon Department Store and its customers → Manager (Boss) → New Babylon Department Store and its customers → Saleswoman (Louise) → (Invitation to the Ball) → The New Babylon Store and its customers → Train Station
\end{verbatim}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1: Part One in “blocks”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music to the “Train Station” has its own repetitive and symmetrical periodic-form melody in a fast galop rhythm with full orchestra.\textsuperscript{127} This music corresponds to and is synchronized with scattered written cues such as “Beat them in Berlin!” and “Death to the Prussians!” in Shostakovich’s manuscript that represent the intertitles of the film.\textsuperscript{128} The next section, “The New Babylon Department Store” has a highly repetitive homophonic texture that differs from the previous section in its syncopated and repetitive melody and is accompanied by written cues in the manuscript of the same name. The most noticeable break is with the music for the boss, where there is shift from a busy galop to an operetta-style waltz. A significant meter and tempo change, shifting from a fast duple meter galop to a slow triple meter waltz accompanied by a change in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{126}This interpretation is informed by the film itself and cues written in Shostakovich’s original manuscript and Yakubov’s published edition. The measure and rehearsal numbers listed above and from here forward refer to this edition.


instrumentation to violin solo with muted string accompaniment and the introduction of
the flexatone and of course, the written cue that corresponds to the intertitles “Manager
(or boss),” add to perception of a new “block.”¹²⁹ Music that accompanied the New
Babylon Department Store quickly follows the Manager’s music, mirroring the editing of
the film, where there is cutting between the busy shoppers of the department store and the
cabaret. After a full statement of this music in the exact same key and phrase repetition
as before, though somewhat shortened, a slow triplet theme in solo clarinet accompanied
by low strings and winds appears and leads into a triple meter section. Marked as
“Saleswoman” in Shostakovich’s manuscript, this section indicates the first long take of
Louise behind the sales counter.¹³⁰ This whole section seems to correspond with the
introduction of Louise’s character and the ticket that she receives to the ball (an invitation
from the boss, his presumed “dessert”) that she first mistakes as a dismissal slip.¹³¹
Returning to the diegetic space of the New Babylon store, the music shifts back to the
syncopated duple meter that has come to represent the busied environment of the store,
finishing the reel with music (and same written cues) from the “Train Station.” Overall,
the music to this reel has a high frequency of rapidly paced, exact repetitions of particular
musical sections, specifically the music to “The New Babylon Department Store” and the

¹²⁹ An instrument used in variety shows and throughout the twenties and thirties. James Blades and James
¹³⁰ From Partitura to “Noyvi Vavilon,” in the Glinka Museum Archive and Yakubov, Dmitri Shostakovich: Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 122, 57.
¹³¹ She attends the ball (cabaret) in Part Two. At the time she receives this invitation, there are cuts to the
diegetic space of the cabaret.
“Train Station,” which contribute most to the sense of “block-like” fragmentation in this reel.\(^{132}\)

Similar to Part One, Parts Five and especially Six also use repetition and a block-like structure that mirrors the editing, often crosscutting between different locales. Unlike the first reel, however, these reels do not have completely exact repetition of blocks, but appear to be through-composed and delineated by melodic idea and instrumentation, creating musical components that come to represent certain characters and moods. In Part Five, for example, there is no need for exact repetition of blocks of music, since there is no repetition of images. The \textit{fabula} here is served by editing that reveals parallel actions between the groups. The music follows the shifts in diegetic space (from the workers’ space to the bourgeoisie), and most of the intercutting is limited to the diegetic space of one character or set of characters (for example, Jean’s reminiscence of Louise).

The music tends to be less fragmented, however, within sections. Subtle developments of most of the revolutionary tunes, the Cancan, and galops tend to be in delineated sections. In Part Six, there is significantly more crosscutting between locales, as opposed to the “localized” montages within blocks. This episode cuts between the bourgeois onlookers and the participants in the war to show reactions and the statements made by the directors on the failure of the Commune. The music seems to be block-like as well, but resembles the through-composed nature of Part Five, rather than the repetitive nature of Part One. Since the \textit{fabula} needs to be pushed forward, there are no repetitions of images or music. Instead, commentary is made through the development,

\(^{132}\) It is also important to note that the repeating sections also return in the same keys as well, reinforcing the sense of “block-ness.”
distortion, and association of certain musical ideas with certain characters. Overall, Parts Five and Six are block-like, but only to propel the *fabula*. The fragmented editing is more often emulated in the music through subtle variation and development of musical ideas associated with specific characters as opposed to block repetition of exact sections of music.

Parts Two, Three, Four, Seven, and Eight, have contrasting sections within them that appear when there is a shift in the action, commentary on a character or idea, or shift in mood of the scene. Generally however, these reels follow an evocation of certain ideas as opposed to establishing or depicting shifts to varying diegetic spaces. As a result, the editing is slower, with some exceptions. The music is through-composed and linked directly to the image, much less “block-like” than Parts One, Five, and Six. In Parts Seven and Eight, the overall tone is more continuous than the previous sections, in their lack of extreme contrasts of melody and changes in timbre and texture. Certainly, sections are delineated as needed to follow the action, but there are few recognizable musical quotes (as of the revolutionary tunes in earlier sections). There is also a consistent tone and very few dramatic tempo, meter, or key changes. This lends the two final reels a monochromatic mood, as compared with the earlier reels.\(^{133}\)

**Unity and Continuity**

Within each reel, it appears that Shostakovich kept to his idea that the score was symphonic and continuous in tone, but followed the rhythms and variations of the film to create sense of unity and continuity. He also maintained a sense of continuity between

\(^{133}\) Harmonically, it seems that the majority of the revolutionary song quotes or allusions are in major keys (G, C, D-flat, B-flat, E-flat) while much of the music for love scenes or scenes between individuals tends towards harmonic instability.
reels through the use of “attacca.” This kept a consistent pace for the film, which would have been expected despite the “episodic” nature of the film as a whole. More importantly, he used recurring melodies, instrumentation, texture, timbre, and varying approaches to musical development to comment on a scene and bind the music to the image.

**Leitmotifs**

*The New Babylon* is unified by themes and dance genres that act like leitmotifs. These leitmotifs undergo transformation throughout the film and are associated with and characterize groups and individual characters. The *Marseillaise*, for example, represents the bourgeois occupation of Versailles during the siege of Paris and, as Shostakovich claimed, appears in the “most unexpected contexts.” A distorted version of the *Marseillaise* first appears in Part Three, when the workers are asked to surrender their weapons to the army (See Appendix D, Figure 13 for the excerpt from this part). It reappears momentarily in Part Four, when the soldiers are dragging cannons to the hilltop before meeting the Communards (Appendix D, Figure 14). The next statements of the *Marseillaise* appear in various forms throughout Part Five. The use of the *Marseillaise* in this part is less distorted (in a major key), but not presented in its full orchestral form until the actress gets on the chair in the bar and leads the crowd in a rendition of the *Marseillaise* (Appendix D, Figure 15). Marked as “Marseillaise” clearly in the manuscript, this is the first traditional presentation of the theme. From this point forward,

---

134 For a discussion of leitmotif, see Chapter Two.
136 Notably, Part Three seems to be rhythmically based entirely on the opening dotted rhythms of the *Marseillaise*. 

198
the *Marseillaise* appears only in fragments and becomes increasingly more varied (Appendix D, Figures 16 through 19). The tune therefore acts initially as a kind of foreshadowing of the Commune and the bourgeois occupation of Versailles, culminating in the moment that the war has been declared on the Commune.

Other revolutionary tunes cited by Shostakovich, such as *Ça Ira* and the *Carmagnole*, represent the groups as well, especially in the later parts (See Appendix E for listings of the appearances of *Ça Ira* and the *Carmagnole*). They serve a similar function to the *Marseillaise* in that they are associated with the war on the Commune and their eventual defeat.

Shostakovich borrowed from Offenbach and dance genres such as the waltz to typify the “rotten” bourgeoisie. Waltzes, galops, and Offenbach’s Cancan (from *Orphée aux enfers*) appeared in every reel except Three, Seven, and Eight. Usually these musical ideas indicate the directors’ pro-socialist position of the defeat and condemnation of the Communards by the bourgeoisie throughout the film.

The workers have far more subtle musical associations, usually tied to specific moments in the film. Louise’s introductory “lyrical” theme from Part One does not reappear in the film and therefore cannot be considered a leitmotif. Neither does the quotation of Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s “Old French Song” in Part Six reappear later to symbolize the fall of the Commune. The clarinet solo over the image of the Communards standing in the rain in Part Seven is also confined to its reel, yet has enough repetition and prominence within Part Seven to be considered a theme, though not a leitmotif. The only moment at which we hear leitmotifs, specifically the *Carmagnole*, in association

---

137 Riley claims that Shostakovich would have heard *Carmagnole* and *Ça Ira* from Myaskovsky’s Sixth Symphony. Riley, “Myth, Parisity, and Found Music in *New Babylon*,” 30.
with the workers is in Part Five, where they comment on their happiness in being free from the bourgeois oppression. At that moment, it seems that the Carmagnole acts as foreshadowing of the war, rather than reflection of the happy state of the workers. Overall, the music for the workers is often limited to a section and is singularly serious, without any indication of parody or irony.

Shostakovich’s use of instrumentation is another unifying musical factor in the film. Although Shostakovich’s comments on musical association in his article are generally limited to quoted themes, dance genres, or revolutionary tunes, certain instruments and sets of instruments are consistently associated with specific groups throughout the film.\textsuperscript{138} Brass instruments, for example, are often used for the revolutionary songs at prominent moments in the \textit{fabula}, such as the first major statement of the \textit{Marseillaise} in Part Five (the actress leading the tune at the bar). Up to this point in the film, strings and winds had the fragments of the \textit{Marseillaise} tune. The use of brass for this tune becomes more prominent as the film draws closer to the actress singing the full statement of the \textit{Marseillaise}. A brass quartet statement of the second half of the second phrase of the \textit{Marseillaise} complements the visual presentation of instruments of war (trumpets, cannons, and the actress).\textsuperscript{139} The use of brass instruments therefore represents war in this film, as throughout Western history, and is closely associated with revolution throughout the film.

\textsuperscript{138} I should also note that in the earliest piano sketches, Shostakovich does occasionally indicate certain instruments for certain sections. See Fond 32, Inv.108, No.6419, Glinka Museum Archive.
\textsuperscript{139} Kozintsev talks about his conscious use of instruments in the montage sequence in \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 115-116, describing how this sequence emphasizes Jean’s depression in contrast to the enthusiastic rendition of the \textit{Marseillaise}.
Strings, on the other hand, are often used for the waltzes, “love” scenes, and often sympathetically typify the communards in non-leitmotivic melodies more than the bourgeoisie. The moment when the Communards give the soldiers milk to drink in Part Four, the scene where Louise asks Jean not to leave for Versailles in Part Four, the waltz that triumphantly ends Part Six when the bourgeoisie destroy the Commune, and the last scene where Louise becomes hysterical before being shot, all use heavy string instrumentation and little other instrumental accompaniment.

Less traditional instrumentation also appears at key moments throughout the film. The flexatone, an instrument usually used for variety shows of the time, appears in only two places: when the boss speaks of “needing love” and the moment when Louise and Jean kiss on the road to Versailles. Each time, this instrument appears when love, sincere or insincere, is made apparent. Percussion also plays a formal role in film, often delineating reels or acting as a transition between them. Riley has noted that drum rolls were added by Shostakovich to act as potential filler if the music needed to realign with the film. I believe that drum rolls had a different meaning in the film (images of a drum roll were often intercut with images of the boss), but it is possible that percussion was also used as a potential stalling device as a way linking sections or as “filler,” as with the tympani rolls at the end of Parts Two and Five.

Key relationships also act as a unifying aspect of the work. Generally, the quotations of the revolutionary songs tend to be in major keys, while many of the “love” scenes and sometimes battle scenes tend to be relatively unstable. For the Marseillaise, for example the quotations/allusions are in either C major, G major, D-flat major, B-flat

---

140 Riley, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film, 10.
major, and E-flat major, depending upon its immediate context (Appendix D). The other revolutionary songs, Ça Ira and the Carmagnole, also appear only in major keys (C major, E major, B-flat major, E-flat major, A-flat major) (Appendix E). Other than mode, there is no other indication that Shostakovich carried a specific key with a specific theme across the score as a whole. Within sections, however, he sometimes used local key associations. In Part One, for example, many sections are exactly repeated, therefore using the same key that was previously quoted, usually consisting of either C, E, or G major. This exactness of key, of theme, of tempo, and of meter, clearly adds to the “block-ness” of the section. Other parts, such as Part Seven, for example, tend to use key centers rather than strongly referencing tonality (such as C, G, D, F). Overall, key is expressed locally, within parts, and is heavily dependent on the immediate image, concept, or action in the film.

Generally, it seems that devices such as leitmotifs, borrowed themes and genres, and instrumentation play a role in symbolizing groups and individual characters and therefore unifying the overall rather fragmented and episodic form of the film. These devices, themes, genres, and instrumentation also narrate and cue as well as determine whether or not they are “perceived.”

Perceptibility and Imperceptibility

To what degree a section of music is designed to be “perceived,” is an issue, at least implicitly and at times directly, discussed by film music scholars. Gorbman’s well-known analogy of film music to Muzak immediately springs to mind in a discussion of
film music as “perceptible” or “imperceptible.”\textsuperscript{141} Thinking of film music as Muzak, however, in some ways seems to separate music from the imagetrack. For analysis, a separation of the imagetrack from the soundtrack seems appropriate. In film, however, as discussed in Chapter Two, the two tracks are synthesized in the mind of the viewer/listener.\textsuperscript{142} With The New Babylon, this can be more difficult to piece together, given its “silent” nature and the variety of film and musical sources that are extant.

To make a distinction between underscoring and vocal songs in The New Babylon is unnecessary, but there should be a distinction between music that acts as background and “source” music. In this film, I identify three major moments when music is more perceptible than not: 1) when music is diegetically foregrounded in a film, i.e., represented visually; 2) when the music is familiar; and 3) sudden changes/contrasts in specific musical elements (rhythm, volume, and so forth). The music is foregrounded in the rehearsal of the operetta in Parts One and Four, the cancan dancers in Parts One and Five, and the singing of the Marseillaise in Part Five. In each scene, the music matches or acts in parallel with the action binding the image through sound and implying a diegetic sound source.\textsuperscript{143} The Marseillaise example most clearly demonstrates this matching, where, as discussed above, both the images and the music strongly signify a full orchestral statement of the song. At each of these points, the music is also made visual by displaying an analogous image making the music more perceptible than the usual underscoring.

\textsuperscript{141} For a discussion of Gorbman’s terminology, see Chapter Two.
\textsuperscript{142} This idea belongs to Michel Chion. See Chapter Two for further discussion.
\textsuperscript{143} The sound is not diegetic. In other words, it does not come from the screen, but acts similarly to diegetic sound in a sound film.
The familiarity of revolutionary songs and of quoted material, especially the *Marseillaise*, potentially adds to the degree of perceptibility. The degree of familiarity would impact how much a viewer/listener may hear the music and is rooted in his/her cultural context. The *Marseillaise* is well-known revolutionary tune, published and performed since the eighteenth century in Russia as it was in Europe. In his book on revolutionary songs, Mikhail Druskin stated that versions of the *Marseillaise* were known and sung around the time of the October Revolution.144 In the handbook for musical accompaniment by Blok and Bugoslavsky, their categorized listing of composers, genres, and pieces indicated what kinds of music were commonly for various situations in the twenties in Russia, just as many accompaniment manuals of the time. A listener in the twenties would recognize a melody or musical moment, such as the *Marseillaise* or the repeated sections of Part One, if it was repeated enough and closely resembled the initial idea. It would therefore become memorable and familiar.

The organization of musical elements and their relationship to the image also contributes to grasping the “attention” of the viewer/listener. Any abrupt changes in volume, rhythm/meter, instrumentation, or texture convey a shift that forces the viewer to attend. In the case of the *Marseillaise* of Part Five (Appendix D, Figure 15), a buildup climaxes in a full orchestral statement of the tune, one of the few moments of the film that utilizes every instrument of the orchestra. Additionally, visual images of horns and

---

trumpets act as cues to the viewer/listener to attend specifically to the brass ensemble in the midst of the musical statement.  

Throughout the film, a shift in meter or rhythm or a shift to a dance genre such as the waltz commonly forces attention. The combination of a new melody with change in meter, key, and instrumentation constitute a shift that contributes to “blocks” in the block-like structure discussed earlier, which engages the viewer/listener in the rhythm of the film, forcing attention. A more continuous “symphonic” tone, as with Part Seven and Eight, might require less attention. These particular sections also lack numerous variations of quoted material found in earlier sections and most of the music is through-composed and new. Visual representation of musical events or instruments, familiarity and recognition either from well-known music or consistently repeated material, and shifts in the form initiated by changes in meter, rhythm, or genre therefore contribute to a score that attracts attention, rather than imperceptibly “arousing” the listener.

Imperceptible music, therefore, may be music that lacks any repetition, may be considered unfamiliar to an audience, and uses consistent tone and texture created through the maintenance of rhythm/meter/tempo, key, and instrumentation. There are many moments that exemplify “imperceptible” music, especially in the second half of the film. In the “Battle” scene of Part Six, for example, the music maintains a steady tempo and repeats material that has more rhythmic drive than melodic content. The consistent instrumentation and the relatively stable key area also contribute to the

145 Appendix D, Figure 15 shows the beginning of the full statement of the Marseillaise. The brass instruments enter several bars after the full statement of the Marseillaise. See Yakubov, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 122, “Novyi Vavilon,” 343-349.
146 This scene is marked as “Battle” in the published score. See Yakubov, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 122, “Novyi Vavilon,” 401.
section’s “imperceptibility.”147 The overall tone of this section changes very little, serving the purpose of maintaining a rhythmic momentum during the battle scene. Here, the music seems to be underscoring in the purest sense, since the music does not provide much commentary on the action, but instead rhythmically accompanies it.

Narrative Cueing, Agency, Coding, and Identifications

Varying degrees of perceptibility certainly involve intentions on the part of the filmmaker and composer to cue aspects of the narrative. This cueing can allow music more apparent agency. Cueing can also work in tandem with a set of existing musical conventions or codes that communicate to the viewer causing him/her to identify in some way with the film.148 In his article on *The New Babylon*, Shostakovich indicated two major ways that he approached the composition of the score. One way he described this process is through “the principle of the shot/scene.”149 The example Shostakovich provided of his “principle” is the attack of the German cavalry on Paris at the end of the Part Two, quoted in full above.150 He used the music for the German cavalry as the guiding music throughout this scene, having this music reappear at the very end without the image of the cavalry. Having been already introduced to the listener, this music conjures the image of the cavalry.151 This is a clear example of music having its own agency (not subordinate to the image) and driving the meaning of the scene, potentially rendering the image unnecessary. Shostakovich therefore meant this music to be entirely

---

147 Starting at rehearsal 31 until rehearsal 55.
148 See Chapter Two for a discussion of listener identification and coding.
150 Ibid. See footnote 116.
151 This is almost what Chion calls “acousmatic,” where music to something is heard before its referent is seen. Since the viewer already knows that the music belongs to the cavalry, it is not necessarily “acousmatic,” yet the music does drive the meaning here.
“perceptible,” the main agent of the meaning. This music was intended to aurally cue the audience to an image, demonstrating that music is not simply an accompanimental soundtrack, but an integral part of the meaning-making process of the film product.

Another example of the “principle” provided by Shostakovich is from Part Seven, where Jean is searching for Louise. Here, Shostakovich said that the music “takes on the somber sentiments of the soldier,” in opposition to the gaiety of the party of the bourgeoisie. The music immediately contrasts with the characterization of the bourgeoisie, but aptly evokes Jean’s mental state after he fails to find his beloved. The music also indicates to the viewer that the identification should be with Jean, who the viewer/listener has learned is the anti-hero of the film.\textsuperscript{152}

Shostakovich’s “principle” resonates well with the idea of parallelism, where the music binds the meaning of the image with a familiar musical code. Barthes has described this as “anchorage,” where the image is anchored more firmly by description, or in the case of film music, by the sound.\textsuperscript{153} There are many moments in the film where the music acts as an “anchor” for the image, including the battle music of Part Six and the milk scene of Part Four. In Part Six, the music parallels the mood of the scene by providing an intense “imperceptible” rhythmic drive. The milk scene of Part Four, however, uses key to parallel, or “anchor” the image. The major key presentation of Ça Ira appears almost from nowhere, in a contrasting key and mode (C major) that is only briefly harmonically prepared (See Appendix E, Figure 21). The appearance of the revolutionary tune is also lined up with the notation in the score “What great guys, what

\textsuperscript{152} This musical cue to depict the inner emotions of the characters has its equivalent in a similar scene earlier in Part Five, where Jean thinks of Louise and a montage of various head shots of her appear.

handsome guys,” which appears seventeen bars after the last notation, where the communards and the soldiers meet face to face. (“The soldiers are given milk to drink”). The sudden appearance of Ça Ira coincides with a temporary truce and momentary peace between the two opposing factions and shows the hope of the Communards in winning over their new friends. The bright, tonal nature displayed by Ça Ira ends immediately, however, when the Communards realize that the soldiers refuse to help and does not reappear for the remainder of the score.

In another moment of “anchorage,” the final scene of the film, Shostakovich uses a fragmented statement of the Carmagnole over the images of Louise’s final words to Jean and the phrase “Vive la Commune!” spoken aloud by another worker (Appendix D, Figure 19). According to the published score and the Glinka Museum Archive manuscript, this statement of the Carmagnole is the last music heard as the film ends.¹⁵⁴ As with other statements of the Carmagnole, this reiterates and builds upon the notions of war in the previous appearances of the Carmagnole throughout the score. It appears in a stable key area (E-flat Major followed by A-flat Major) in contrast to the slow-moving, tonally unstable music of Part Eight that appears earlier to parallel the mood of the darkly lit images and defeat of the Commune. The quotation and repetition of the Carmagnole acts an aural commentary on the revolutionary spirit of both Louise and the Commune. In a “parallel” moment between music and image, this fragment does serve the purpose of cueing the listener to identify with the cause of the Commune and celebrate the idea of revolution.

There are also instances in the film where the visuals cue musical moments. The previously discussed *Marseillaise* of Part Five is a clear example of parallelism between the music and the image, cued first by images of instruments of war. In Part Six, towards the end of the battle between the Versaillais and the Communards, a man sits at a piano and begins to play Tchaikovsky’s “Old French Song.” The intertitles show us a quotation, “Oh, How I Love the Time of Cherries,” which refers to a French popular song often entitled, “Le Temps des Cerises.” As discussed in Chapter Two, it was a silent film tradition to cite a song in the intertitles to cue the piano accompanist, which Shostakovich obliged here with an “Old French Song.” This song quotation appears as an extreme contrast, directly after the music to the battle. Also, in early Soviet silent film the piano was often used as an anti-revolutionary icon that symbolized tsarist Russia and in the case of *The New Babylon*, the bourgeoisie. Shostakovich may have chosen music from pre-revolutionary Russia instead of inserting a version of “Le Temps des Cerises” because he sought to musically match the anti-revolutionary iconicity of the piano. The result is the musical “anchorage” of the image of a Communard playing a piano in a burning Commune to the sounds of a pre-revolutionary composer and the resulting resignation and defeat of the Commune depicted on the screen. Also, using a Russian composer, who signifies the bourgeoisie in this film, instead of a French folk tune ties the idea of the French Commune directly to Soviet post-revolutionary sentiment. Shostakovich’s clever propagandistic twist therefore acts as support for post-revolutionary politics. It also acts as an ironic commentary (a Communard playing Tchaikovsky during an impending defeat) that reinforces the victory and power of the bourgeoisie.\(^{155}\)

\(^{155}\)Egorova suggests that the Tchaikovsky quotation characterizes the “cold and haughty Versailles, hostile
The second “principle” outlined by Shostakovich in his article on *The New Babylon* concerned the idea of contrasts. This idea is echoed in Kozintsev’s writings, often emphasizing how contradiction underscores the themes of the film:

The frames not only engage semantic synthesis, but many elements of the plastic arts (distinctive visual “alliteration”): lace on the counter and soap suds in the washtub of the laundresses; the dancing galop and the rotation of the day in the store; the fog of the garden and the steam of the laundry. Similarity in some elements are presented in contradiction with contrasts of others: an abundance of “sales” and of emptiness, of poverty, of shops.¹⁵⁶

Shostakovich also operated by what he called the “principle of contrast,” and he discussed two specific scenes that serve as his examples. In Part Six, when Jean meets Louise on the barricades and confronts the bourgeoisie as they applaud him from Versailles, the soldier is “filled with despair,” while the music builds into a “frantic” and “obscene” waltz.¹⁵⁷ The exaggerated use of a genre such as the waltz, hinted at by Shostakovich, can add to the perception of irony and the grotesque, more specifically what Esti Sheinberg calls the “satirical grotesque.”¹⁵⁸ The satirical grotesque expresses contempt as well as horror and disgust. In many of Shostakovich’s works, Sheinberg notes that the composer distorts dance genres to become relentless, clumsy, and heavy, creating a violently grotesque presentation of a musical idea.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, the sarcastically triumphant waltz of Part Six that Shostakovich described in terms of contrast is overly celebratory, as indicated by the intense volume and full texture of the orchestra.

In combination with these aspects, the exaggerated relentlessness of the tune seems to

¹⁵⁶ Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 114.
make this section satirically grotesque rather than simple statement that the bourgeoisie have won the battle. This satirically grotesque contrast brings forth two meanings: the victory of the bourgeoisie and Jean’s own internal state. Shostakovich’s method of capturing the internal state of a character and commenting on the overall message of the film not only propels the viewer/listener to identify with the Communards, but also takes this score beyond the usual “illustration” of compilation scores.\(^{160}\)

The other example mentioned by the composer is considerably more vague:

An interesting process is used in the Fourth Part. There is a rehearsal of the operetta. The music plays a variation of a well-known galop, which takes on different nuances in relation to the action. Sometimes it has a gay mood, sometimes boring, sometimes terrifying.\(^{161}\)

What Shostakovich discussed here most closely resembles a musical version of the montage technique of the twenties, exemplified by directors, such as Kuleshov, Eisenstein, and Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s earlier films. Here, Shostakovich discussed his music as having contrasts, meaning that his music follows the nuances of the action (revealed in the editing), not only the overall tone or action of a scene. His discussion of this scene as being at the operetta is within the context of a reel of the film, where there is a juxtaposition of scenes of the soldiers in the countryside (who eventually meet the Communards) with the operetta rehearsals, thus creating a montage between two different groups of people in two different locales, both of which eventually decide to move to Versailles.\(^{162}\) This montage is reminiscent of D.W. Griffith’s crosscutting and the

\(^{160}\) The exercise in expressing the internal state of characters is continued in the next film collectively made by Shostakovich, Kozintsev, and Trauberg, Alone.

\(^{161}\) Shostakovich, “O muzike k ‘Novomu Vavilonu’,” 5.

\(^{162}\) This juxtaposition is indicated by notes in the manuscript and viewings of the film: from rehearsals 1 – 9 as follows: “Preparations were made to retrieve the operetta” – “Getting ready” – “The actress sings” –
“Kuleshov Effect,” techniques that influenced the editing processes of many filmmakers of the twenties, as well as the crosscutting that Kozintsev used to create the “alliterative” comparisons between the shop and the workers, described above.\textsuperscript{163} Although Shostakovich’s description concerns a brief moment in the scene (from measures 44-54), the nuances in the music indicate that he is emulating the editing of the scene.\textsuperscript{164} Shostakovich’s first “principle of the shot” therefore describes continuous music over potentially rapid editing, which embodies the overall meaning of the shot or scene. Shostakovich’s “principle of contrasts,” however, seems to imply that he follows the rhythm of the film (its editing style) instead of the scene’s tone or mood. This is first instance of a description by Shostakovich that indicates a direct influence of the cinematic montage techniques of the period on his music.\textsuperscript{165}

Aside from the examples that Shostakovich used to illustrate his own “principles,” musical and cinematic codes can be analyzed in other ways that show how the composer chose to represent ideas or groups in \textit{The New Babylon}. Shostakovich wrote that the themes and genres used in the score date from the time of the Commune, implying that he was trying to maintain a certain historical specificity that Kozintsev continually acknowledged in his own writings.\textsuperscript{166} Shostakovich’s choice of codes acts as a cue to the viewer/listener, often to identify the bourgeoisie as “evil” and the commune as “good.” With the satirically grotesque waltz of Part Six, Shostakovich encouraged the viewer to

\textsuperscript{163} This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. See also footnote 168.
\textsuperscript{165} Shostakovich’s acknowledgement of this idea of contrasts and its resemblance to cinematic form could open a path to new methods of analyzing non-film instrumental music that listeners may perceive as “narrative.”
\textsuperscript{166} Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}. 212
identify with Jean’s internal state. The transformation and variation of the *Marseillaise* also shows how Shostakovich took a “code” and developed it to represent the variations of the story, using techniques of irony, the grotesque, and parody that he had exercised in *The Nose*, which includes the way that he varies material – through extreme instrumental ranges and “wrong-noted-ness.” The appearance of the *Marseillaise* in the very beginning and the very end is out-of-tune and sour compared to its full statement in Part Five (Appendix D, Figures 13, 15, and 19). In both instances, the rising major second and the perfect fourth leap are flattened in the opening phrase, resulting in the creation of a minor second and tritone, to create a “wrong-note” impression (Appendix D, Figure 13, measures 160-161 and Appendix D, Figure 19, measures 151-152). At these musical moments there are indications in the score such as “Surrender,” which correspond to the Guard’s demand of the Communards; and a section where the bourgeoisie brutally beat the Communards after their defeat and before their execution. It seems, therefore, that since tonal instability is generally associated with war and corruption throughout the score, such dissonance may point towards the eventual unhappy ending of the Communards.

The “wrong-noted” distortion of the *Marseillaise* may also be grotesque, in Sheinberg’s sense of the term, in its incongruity in comparison with its primary appearance. Its distortion not only comments upon the brutality shown to the Communards, but also creates an ignoble version of a tune that in its original context positively symbolizes heroic patriotism. It is grotesque because an originally positive and beautiful tune is exaggerated to become negative and ugly in one musical work.

---

167 See Sheinberg, *Irony, Satire, Parody*, 64 and 207 ff. for her definitions and criteria for irony and the grotesque, both of which she interprets as related to one another.
Overall, the multiple and varied leitmotivic appearances of the *Marseillaise* and genres such as the waltz build layers of meaning that lead the viewer to strongly identify with the Communards as the film progresses.

Shostakovich also uses layering of quotations to represent or comment upon one or another group. One remarkable instance appears after the full tonal statement of the *Marseillaise* in Part Five. After the full orchestral statement is made, the horns (associated with battle and war throughout the score) begin a second statement of the tune in C major layered over a string rendition of Offenbach’s Cancan in B-flat major, both of which dissolve into a variation based on both quotations (Appendix D, Figure 16, measure 294ff). Shostakovich used instrumentation (brass versus strings) and key (bitonality) to differentiate between the tunes, calling attention to their differences and their meanings, while creating musical transition from the statement of the *Marseillaise*. The music of the Cancan enters as images of Paris “the gay” and “the carefree” intertwined with images of the legs of cancan dancers cut from earlier reels of the film. At this point in the film, the *Marseillaise* and the Cancan are both firmly associated with the defeat of the Commune and the corruption of the bourgeoisie. Shostakovich was extremely sensitive to the crosscutting of the images by presenting the tunes as a musical equivalent of the visual segue from the specific space of the bar scene to the general idea of the bourgeoisie. The layering of the *Marseillaise* and the Cancan tunes therefore serves several functions: it cyclically refers to the party scenes from the earlier reels of

---

168 Trauberg claims that he came up with this idea of layering the two songs, 151.
the film, “anchoring” the images on the screen, while foreshadowing the eventual victory of the cold and disinterested bourgeoisie.\(^{169}\)

Another instance of Shostakovich’s linearism occurs in Part Six, where the *Marseillaise* and *Carmagnole* are briefly layered atop each other in the horns and trumpets (Appendix D, Figure 18). At this point, the bourgeoisie are in Versailles and the battle begins between the two opposing factions. The quotation of both songs lasts only three bars and ends three bars before the score indication “Battle.”\(^{170}\) After the “Battle” indication, parts of the *Marseillaise* and *Carmagnole* are fragmented and developed, as are the rhythms implied by the tune as well.\(^{171}\) The triplet rhythms used in the variation of the *Carmagnole* in measure 216 (Appendix D, Figure 18) and the dotted eighth-note anacrusis of the *Marseillaise* used throughout the score (Appendix D, Figure 16, measure 286) become the musical fodder that Shostakovich used to create the rhythmic dynamism that propels that battle scene. Only occasionally are recognizable fragments of the melodies used; the focus instead is on the rhythmic drive of this scene. Since the *Marseillaise* and *Carmagnole* are strongly associated with the bourgeoisie, the fragments of these two songs and their instrumentation therefore generally depict the battle between the Communards and foreshadow the victory of the bourgeoisie.

Although Shostakovich clearly outlined a few moments in the film where music functioned to express the emotions of and/or identify with particular groups or

---

\(^{169}\) Riley suggests that Shostakovich came up with the idea of layering the Cancan and *Marseillaise* from a passage from Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Devils*, where the *Marseillaise* is mentioned in connection with the Franco-Prussian War. It seems like a rather tenuous connection, since the Franco-Prussian War is more of a side-story than focal point for *The New Babylon*. Nonetheless, it is a possible source of inspiration, since Shostakovich was particularly fond of Dostoevsky. See Riley, *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film*, 10 for further discussion.


\(^{171}\) For this section of the musical score in full, see Yakubov, *Novoye Sobraniye Sochenienyi, Tom 122*, “Novyi Vavilon,” 401-428 (measures 221-380).
individuals, it did not guarantee that the audience would affiliate or assimilate their own identities and beliefs with the film’s overall cause. Some have claimed that the premiere of *The New Babylon* was a failure because of the music. Were Shostakovich’s “principles” and the complexity of score written especially for the film foreign to its audiences and reviewers? Reception of the film and its score in audience surveys and local press provides some insight into this question and has the potential to reveal how effective this new music was on the viewer/listener.

**Reception of the Film**

In recent and contemporaneous writings about Shostakovich’s score to *The New Babylon*, the film has been generally regarded as a failure because of the music. In his book, Riley says that the film failed because it was politically questionable and that both the film and its music were re-edited too quickly. In her biography of Shostakovich, Laurel Fay provides a more a balanced account using archival resources to support her claim that the failure could be attributed to a combination of events, such as errors in the parts (from last minute re-editing), lack of rehearsal, potential sabotage of cinema conductors who disliked Shostakovich’s music, and poor ensemble coordination. In her documentary biography, Elizabeth Wilson claims that the complexities of the score itself made the film and its music ultimately fail, resulting in the few showings of the film. In her book on Soviet film, Tatiana Egorova comments that it was the lack of talent of the theater orchestras and faulty performances that led to the film’s failure. Overall,

---

172 I use these terms as Kassabian has used them in her text, *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
the common story has been that the music contributed significantly to the film’s eventual failure because it was: 1) too complex; 2) lacked adequate rehearsal; and 3) had multiple copying errors. Although these factors were perceived by reviewers and co-workers as probable reasons for the music’s lack of total success, it was certainly not the main reason for the film’s failure. The press and other writings suggest a mixed reception of the style and content of the film and its music. An unidentified newspaper clipping quoted by Kozintsev in *The Deep Screen*, for example, stated, “You may be against it, but you need to see the film!” suggesting that the film created a positive scandal and people were encouraged to see the film whether or not they agreed with it.\textsuperscript{175} Although it was only shown for a few days in major theaters, it was also seen in worker’s clubs and other places outside of the major theaters.

The main themes that dominated the press reception of *The New Babylon* and its music reflected the general arguments of the role of contemporaneous film. These arguments, as outlined earlier, mainly concerned intelligibility and its various and vaguely outlined implications.\textsuperscript{176} As Kozintsev related in his *The Deep Screen*, there were multiple points of view on the usefulness, intelligibility, and success of the film. The variety of opinions about the content and the style of the film revealed that film workers and the public were still unclear as to whom the cinema served and what was “intelligible” and permissible in “Soviet” cinema. The main interrelated themes of the press, therefore, were 1) intelligibility versus unintelligibility; 2) formalism versus realism; 3) historical verisimilitude; 4) artistic concerns; and 5) music.

\textsuperscript{175} Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 101-102.

\textsuperscript{176} See “History of the Production” for a discussion of intelligibility. Along with Eisenstein’s film *October*, *The New Babylon* was targeted as controversial.
When discussing *The New Babylon'*s intelligibility/unintelligibility in the press, those who considered it “unintelligible” usually attacked the lack of historicity of the film or its style, using words such as “formalism,” “aestheticism,” or “art for art’s sake” to describe the film’s flaws. One of the more oft-quoted and powerful statements of the press of the time was written by an author who signed with the letters “DEBE.” Entitling his article “Cancan in the Fog – or How Sovkino Debased the Parisian Commune,” DEBE scathingly criticized the film for its lack of authenticity and misrepresentation of the Commune.\(^\text{177}\) His call to pull the film from the screen was echoed and supported by a group of workers who found the film “useless” and only interesting for experts.\(^\text{178}\) The Communist Youth International also supported DEBE, claiming that the film did not portray the Commune at all, but used “typage” (meant negatively), neglecting a complete view of the proletariat.\(^\text{179}\) Another supporter of DEBE’s argument also found the film unintelligible, ending with a statement that FEKS was dangerously “drifting into formalist aestheticism,” despite their talents.\(^\text{180}\) Another powerful reviewer published on the same page as DEBE also negatively reviewed the film, comparing the FEKS film to “dead, cold fine arts,” stating that “The basic method of FEKS was stylization, forgery of the old,” emulating “World of Art” group followers such as Dobuzhinsky and Benois.\(^\text{181}\)


Alpers called this “emphatic aesthetics,” or aestheticism, as other reviewers tended to label the film’s style, particularly referencing the film’s shooting and lighting, as DEBE implied in his title “Cancan in Fog.” Another reviewer, Feldman, also claimed that the FEKS group aestheticized the bourgeoisie and the Commune, resulting in a poor representation of the workers. He stated that although the film conveyed the period well, it was too “expressionistic” in film style, preventing the directors from “convey[ing] the emotional mood of the Commune.” All of these characterizations, especially the reference to the “World of Art” group, specifically acknowledge modernist trends in the visual arts of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries. Turns of phrase such as “dead, cold fine arts,” and “formalist aestheticism” foreshadow the language of the thirties and forties, where the influence of high art, particularly that of the West, was seen as “formalism.”

Lastly, a well-known article by Pavel Petrov-Bytov attacks both Eisenstein’s October and The New Babylon as formalist and aestheticist “art for art’s sake.” He called for film that is understandable to workers: in his view, directors such as Kozintsev, Trauberg, and Eisenstein should spend their talents educating the masses in their “Babylonian” film language slowly, not all at once. Here, Petrov-Bytov attacks the film’s style, particularly editing, considering it too complicated for the “average” viewer. This is echoed by Timofeev, who also claimed that the film was a “high-art film,” that

was “difficult for perception as a result of the fast tempo and editing.”

Boris Shumyatsky also complained that the failure and “unintelligibility” of The New Babylon resulted from the primacy of montage editing. Overall, all of these reviewers considered the topic of the film to be inauthentic, unintelligible, and lacking in historical truth. These condemnations were made because the film’s style referenced old artistic styles and was therefore aestheticized or considered to be art for art’s sake. The reviewers also considered the film to be too formalist, as seen in the modernist editing techniques such as montage, or accused of portraying the Commune in “typage,” without as much development as the bourgeois characters. Since formalism, specifically film editing in the style of these directors, was declared a “sin” by nearly everyone by 1928, The New Babylon was seen as a failure in the experiment of Soviet film.

Interestingly, surveys of the “masses” at clubs and theaters conducted by Sovkino, which I found at the Gosfil’mofond archive, revealed that generally more than half of the audience understood the film, especially when aspects of the film were explained to them before the screening. The audiences, however, did seem to demand greater intelligibility and to some degree, realism. Some also commented that they would like to see fewer revolutionary-themed films, supporting the notion that “entertaining” films

---

187 Sovkino report from “Novyi Vavilon,” 50-54, Gosfil’mofond. The report includes a section where comparisons were made between the intelligibility of the film with and without introductory remarks about the film. Naturally, the percentages show that every category of the film was understood more clearly with introductory remarks than without.

---
were still preferred over “enlightened” ones. Surveyors also noted the reactions of the audience during the film. In Part Two of the film, the audience apparently laughed in places that were generally inappropriate, leading the surveyors to believe that they were expecting a formulaic situation similar to that of an American comedy film. In the end, the audience was disappointed, claiming that they failed to understand the events, probably because the cinematic events occurred unexpectedly for them. Also according to the surveyors, the audience found the two heroes, Jean and Louise, to be “abnormal,” which encouraged the audience to exclaim things like “I don’t want to see this idiot,” and “what a fool,” and so forth. In their summary of the surveys, the surveyors concluded that the film had merit, especially for the “cultured viewer,” but needed to be clearer for the “masses.”

In addition to attacking the film, DEBE also attacked another reviewer whose favorable and detailed discussion of the film made him a target for its opponents.

Semiradsky provided a contextual discussion of the film that attempted to understand the overall theme of the work. Stating that the directors never wanted to make a perfectly historically correct film, Semiradsky wrote:

The criteria of historical realism are not completely applicable here. These directors, Trauberg and Kozintsev, did not set out to do these tasks. The New Babylon is a tragic epic about the struggle of classes, about the collision of two irreconcilable worlds, from which one (the proletariat) still cannot, and the other (the bourgeois) can no longer rule in France.

---

188 See discussion of Youngblood, under section “History of the Production” earlier in this chapter.
189 In contrast to these reviewers, Petrov-Bytov compared the The New Babylon to Harry Piel, a German “Charlie Chaplin.” See Petrov-Bytov, “U nas net sovetskoy kinematografii,” in Film Factory, 261.
190 In Russian the phrases appear as “videt’ ne mogu etogo idiota,” and “kakaya dura.” Sovkino report from “Novyi Vavilon,” 54, Gosfil’mofond. The survey summary continues saying that audiences found the film far “too dry to watch.”
191 Sovkino report from “Novyi Vavilon,” 55, Gosfil’mofond.
Semiradsky supported FEKS’s work overall and found the film to fulfill its goals of illustrating the class war. Another reviewer also stated that FEKS was not interested in creating an historical film, but in expressing the tragedy of the fall of the Commune.193 A third favorable reviewer, directing disagreeing with DEBE, found the film not to be “educational” (or historical), but expressive. He wrote,

The film is not the textbook of politgramota, it should not give one the tasks of education. We have enough excellent books about the Commune. Film should act on the feelings of the viewers. Does this film “The New Babylon” agitate the feelings of action in the communards?…Yes, yes, yes!194

Another reviewer also contested the notion of a lack of historicity on the part of FEKS:

frenzied Versailles people and heroic communards reveal themselves with such persuasiveness and truth, that …can never agree with the assessment of the “the New Babylon,” given by DEBE. The film was excellently made.195

Opposing the idea of negative typage in the film, and criticizing Alpers claim that the film is “dead art,” another reviewer stated that

The film of “FEKS” shows living people who seize their (emotional) experiences, their enthusiasm, and passion. They agitate and thrill, in spite of some symbolism of the characters.196

194 V. Grishanin, “He agitka i ne politgramota,”[Not Agitka and not a Political Object Lesson] Komsomol’skaya Pravda, 72 (29 March 1929): 4. Politgramota can be translated as a lesson in politics, in this case, the politics of the Parisian Commune.
Even a handful of RAPP members supported the film, stating that the “milk scene” was one of the most persuasive parts of the film, which showed the verisimilitude of the situation and went beyond the simple typage of the Communards.\textsuperscript{197}

In addition to challenging claims of historical incorrectness and typage, another reviewer supported the “formalism” that others contested. Adrian Piotrovsky, a scriptwriter and critic who initially considered \textit{The New Babylon} a mistake because its theme concerned a “foreign” topic, openly supported film that could be both artistic (i.e., experimental, innovative) and functional, and criticized Petrov-Bytov’s article for encouraging a pandering to the “lowest common denominator,” forbidding directors to continue to experiment with film style.\textsuperscript{198} Overall, the positive reviews of \textit{The New Babylon} generally defended the film’s “experimental” style and the (re)presentation of the historical content. Interestingly, many of the positive reviews focused on the music, claiming it as the film’s saving grace.

**Reception of the Film’s Music**

In some circles, the music to the film had been badly received. This was mostly because of the poor performances it received in the theaters at the premiere. Yet, the music itself was what Sovkino had hoped for – a truly “composed” score carefully

\textsuperscript{197} A. Fadeev, V. Sutyrin, V. Ermilov, L. Averbakh, V. Kirshon, “Protiv unter-ofitserskih priemov kritiki,” [Against Boorish Critical Techniques] \textit{Komsomolskaya Pravda}, (23 March 1929).

\textsuperscript{198} Adrian Piotrovsky, “Zapanichestvo v nashem kino,” [Westernism in Our Cinema] \textit{Zhizn’ iskusstvo}, (30 June 1929): 7, in \textit{Film Factory}, 262-263. Piotrovsky also wrote directly of \textit{The New Babylon} in “Novyi Vavilon v Lenarke.” He found the film to be what Soviet films should be (moving from “emotion to intellect”), noting that despite the Party disapproval, they should still support the film. Trauberg, in an article that predates the release of \textit{The New Babylon} by three months, states that he does not understand what the phrase “intelligible to the millions” means and how it should be applied to film, showing that the directors were not clear on what “intelligible” meant in terms of film style. Trauberg, “An Experiment Intelligible to the Millions,” in \textit{Film Factory}, 250-251.
written for a specific film, with music that played an integral role. As Sovkino reported after screening Shostakovich’s music with the film before the premiere,

This music is distinguished by its considerable closeness to the style and rhythm of the film, by great emotional strength and expressivity. The effect of the picture is greatly heightened. Furthermore, despite the originality and freshness of the form, the music is sufficiently simple and can be appreciated by the mass viewer.199

The score was not received as well by every audience. The press and Sovkino’s surveys reveal the complexity of both sides of the reception.

Kozintsev related in The Deep Screen that

The specially composed music added fuel to the fire. On the day of film’s demonstrations the complaints book of many theaters revealed outraged notes, from which a person said, “Today the director of the orchestra was drunk!”
The directors of the theaters organized their own discussions – cursing the insolence of the composer, they accused him of not knowing how to orchestrate.200

Other complaints against the score focused on the musical details. In an article, “The Music to The New Babylon,” Klimenty Korchmaryov stated,

The author of the music is composer Dmitry Shostakovich, a very talented person, [who] came to this work without enough caution; he obviously wrote the music hurriedly, [and] as a result of that, it emerged uneven in quality and style; among the simple, even primitive presentation of the borrowed material (the Marseillaise, Carman’ola, fragments from the operetta of Offenbach), there was much muddled atonal music, which was difficult to perceive. The most successful music [was] to the first part, where the composer emphasizes the dynamics of the film language well. Unfortunately, the extraordinary technical complexity in both the orchestral parts, and especially the piano would prevent the performance of this generally interesting work in the provinces.201

Korchmaryov’s complaints focused mostly on the “uneven quality” of the work, its “primitive borrowing” of musical material that led to “atonal muddle,” and the

200 Kozintsev, Głuboki ekran, 103.
“extraordinary technical complexity.” He did credit Shostakovich with emphasizing the
dynamics of the film language well, i.e., the film’s style, including its editing.
Korchmaryov focused mainly on the first part, likely the most easily understood reel of
the film, since the block-like quality of the music mirrored the crosscutting of the reel.
Even in the thirties, another film music critic discussed The New Babylon as having been
connected with the “formalism” and “constructivism” of the late twenties.202 The
language of these comments, especially of “muddled atonal music,”203 reappears in
discussion of Shostakovich’s later film scores as well.204

Generally, however, the music had a rather positive reception, particularly in
reviews that primarily concerned the film. In a New York Times review of the American
premiere of the film, the critic said that the Marseillaise conveys the enthusiasm of the
film well, one of the few positive comments on the film.205 The Russian critic
Semiradsky praised the young composer for his fine work:

In the music of Shostakovich you hear the organic combining of the rhythm of the frame with the
rhythm of the musical form. There is a need for a special study of this new work of
Shostakovich.”206

He also singles out the use of revolutionary tunes, stating that the Marseillaise evokes
the tragedy of the film well. Another reviewer, M. Gartsman, found that Shostakovich’s
music effectively evoked the ideology of the film (and the historical era) with quotations

202 I. I. Ioffe, Muzika sovetskogo kino [Music of the Soviet Cinema], (Leningrad: State Musical Scientific-
Research Institute: 1938), 33.
203 The original Russian phrase in Korchmaryov’s article is transliterated as “sumburnaya atonal’naya
muzika.”
204 For example, Alone.
the propagandistic quality of the film and the Soviet montage-style of editing to be overwhelming. This
makes the positive reception of the music even more impressive.

225
of revolutionary songs, such as the *Marseillaise*, over poignant moments in the film’s action.\(^{207}\) He expressed that Shostakovich’s ability to fuse music so well with image demands future hiring of composers for film. Gartsman enthusiastically stated that the score was

> an outstanding event in the history of cinema music…Dmitri Shostakovich carried out the instructions of the party assembly: his music is an integral part of the film. And we will add, one of the best parts.\(^{208}\)

Even reviewers who negatively criticized the film often praised the music. In his brief statement, Timofeev claimed that the film is not understandable for the viewers, but “For the film the music of Shostakovich is very valuable.”\(^{209}\) It seems, then, that the music itself was not entirely to blame for the film’s failure.

Other critics, particularly Yuli Vaynkop, argued in favor in Shostakovich’s score, considering it of “extremely significant direct artistic value,” and calling it “an attempt to pour a fresh stream of music in to the putrid atmosphere of the musical cinema circuit.”\(^{210}\) He also chastised the performances, discerning a difference between the score and its showings:

> An overly enthusiastic cinema entrepreneur was too hasty in sounding the alarm about Dmitry Shostakovich’s music to the film *The New Babylon*, by ascribing the film’s failure to the young composer’s supposedly unsuccessful music. This classical maneuver of shifting the blame to someone else’s shoulders should have met with the appropriate rebuff, particularly since this

\(^{207}\) M. Gartsman, “Ne plokho, no i ne sovsem yeshchyo khorosho,” [Not Bad, but not yet Entirely Good], *Sovetskiy Ekran*, 15 (9 April 1929).

\(^{208}\) Gartsman, “Ne plokho.” Also translated in part in Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 546. See Chapter Two and the “History of the Production” section of this chapter for a discussion of the goals of the Party assembly cited here.

\(^{209}\) Timofeev, “Novyi Vavilon v Lenarke.”

\(^{210}\) Vaynkop, “Music to *The New Babylon.*” I have corrected some words in this translation, which is otherwise borrowed from Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k nemomu kinofil’mu ‘Novyi Vavilon’,” 545.
accusation is supported by many cinema conductors deprived of ‘royalties’ for their musical-illustrational compilations due to the presence of a ready score…

This music is played horribly everywhere, although to be fair we should say that M.V. Vladimirov (conductor at the Piccadilly cinema) treated it with more care than the rest, achieving the most piquancy and expressiveness and the least mistakes and tempo confusion.²¹¹

Vaynkop’s brief review points out several issues central to the reception of Shostakovich’s score over the course of the past century. His first claim, that Shostakovich’s music was deemed unsuccessful because compilers were upset at losing their fee and therefore sabotaged his music, shows that the music itself was likely suitable, but its performance was poor.²¹² In defense of one conductor, Vaynkop stated that Vladirimov conducted the music better than the other conductors around Leningrad, which may indicate that although his performance was still flawed, Vladimirov had no interest in ruining the composer’s music.

Shostakovich himself also noted that some performances were suitable, though he was initially worried about the reception of his music. In a letter to Sollertinsky, dated 22 March 1929, Shostakovich asked Sollertinsky to come to the screening of the film at the Picadilly Cinema, which would also be attended by members from the “artistic staff of the film studio” and defend him if he is attacked, particularly by Vladimirov.²¹³ It is unclear as to how the film studio members or Vladimirov actually received the music that evening. Yet, Shostakovich later noted that Vladimirov “handled the orchestra quite well.”²¹⁴ In a letter to the editor (in response to Vaynkop’s article), Shostakovich also

²¹² For a discussion of the role of compilers and compilation scores of the silent film era, see Chapter Two.
²¹⁴ In one of several a letters to the conductor Ferdinand Krish about the orchestral parts for the Moscow theaters, he relates this comment before he begins instructing the conductor on how to conduct each reel. See I. A. Bobïkina, Dmitry Shostakovich v pis’makh i dokumentakh [Dmitry Shostakovich Through his
noted that Tressler, the conductor at the Gigant Cinema, conducted with “a high degree of successful results” despite a lack of rehearsal time. In other theaters, however, the score may not have been treated so well. Lev Arnshtam related how badly Shostakovich’s music was performed, claiming that the composer ran from theater to theater only to find that orchestras were nearly destroying the score. It seems that at least two conductors at two separate theaters treated Shostakovich’s music with care, which suggests that the music itself was probably not the reason for the film’s presumed failure.

Surveys were taken by Sovkino during the running of the film that indicated how the film and its different components were received overall. These survey reports indicated that at least half of the viewers at various worker’s clubs and factories enjoyed the film based on the following categories: the film as a whole, its content, the performance of the actors, the cinematography, and the music. These results also indicated that the workers understood the film and could relate well to the work of the directors. In all three of the reports of the survey results, an average of 56% of the viewers enjoyed the “musical illustration,” and in one set of survey results, the music scored the highest percentage of all of the categories, even ahead of the usual favorites of the audience – the performance of the actors and the cinematography. From these

Notes:
215 Dmitry Shostakovich, “Pis’ma v redaktsiyu,” [Letter to the Editor] Rabochiy i teatr, 16 (14 April 1929).
218 See earlier discussion of the results of the reception of the film.
219 From the first summary of the results, (svodka No.1), Sovkino report from “Novyi Vavilon,” 50 Gosfil’mofond.
results it is clear that Shostakovich’s music was well-received, even by the population that Petrov-Bytov said would find the film “unintelligible.”

Overall, it seems that it was the performance of Shostakovich’s music in combination with the politics of the time, rather than just the music itself that caused most of the controversy around the film and prompted its speedy removal from most cinema screens. Aside from performance quality, however, it seems that even with Shostakovich’s music there were issues of following the film’s language, particularly its “montagist” editing, and comprehensibility to viewers (echoing the reviews of the film that sought realism over formalism). In these ways, it may be that characteristics of his film score embraced the modernism of its time and looked toward socialist realism.

**Conclusions**

*The New Babylon* was one of FEKS’s last “modernist” films. Using some of the same techniques of past films, yet attempting to develop a theme that was applicable to current Soviet politics, they created a film that had a modernist approach to style and a socialist theme. This film was made in 1928, the year that cinema was redefined in the Soviet Union as a more powerful propagandistic tool than it had been in previous years. *The New Babylon*’s modernism therefore seemed somewhat out of place in the first years of the Cultural Revolution and the move towards a socialist realist style in the arts.

The modernism of *The New Babylon* is primarily in its style. As reviewers complained, the film was too “formalist” or “aesthetic,” language that foreshadowed the criticism of the following decades. This often meant that the characters were presented as “types,” film editing was too quick and fragmented, and the shooting and lighting too
dark and impressionistic. The music followed the film quite closely, as reviewers and
Sovkino noted, emulating the tone, mood, and tempo and rhythm of the film editing.
This approach to the composed score was particularly new for the time, since the intent of
both the composer and the directors was to depict the “inner meaning” of the film, instead
of simplistic illustration. The music was therefore highly sophisticated and innovative
modernist film music.

Apart from adapting to writing music especially composed for the film,
Shostakovich’s modernist and sometimes Gogolian style is reflected in this score. This is
particularly clear in his approach to borrowing of dance genres and revolutionary songs.
There are clear moments of irony and grotesque throughout, particularly in the manner in
which he manipulates and develops borrowed thematic material. His novel choice of
instrumentation, such as the flexatone, and his use of instruments as part of his coding of
thematic material is a stylistic indicator and part of his development of musical material.
Shostakovich’s main goal was to “intensify its [the film’s] impression” with his score,
therefore he paid special attention to aspects of film form as well as thematic material.
The film’s form was “block-like” because of the montagist editing of many of the reels,
yet Shostakovich managed to create unity and continuity in a score that he wanted to be
“continuous and symphonic,” and “in the [same] tempo and the rhythm of the film.”

The score was successful in its following of the nuances of the action, sometimes
appearing block-like, yet maintaining unity by introducing and developing leitmotifs and
coding themes through instrumentation.

---

The non-modernist, potentially socialist aspects of this film are found more in its content. The film’s topic is centered on a specifically Communist event, well-known at the time of the film’s premiere. Although FEKS had made earlier films that centered on socialist topics, this film was the first to deal with the concept of a commune and fulfill the new requirements for film discussed in 1928. Showing the tragedy of the Commune and its failure and the grotesque “rottenness” of the French bourgeoisie was their attempt at clearly depicting the tragedy of what directors judged to be true socialist heroes. The mixed reception of the film and to some degree, its music, shows that critics, filmmakers and the public at large were all uncertain as to what “Soviet” film should become. As Bordwell has argued, “…the historical-materialist films [such as The New Babylon] paved the way for socialist realism in their use of referentiality [and] exemplary heroes.” Sergey Gerasimov stated that “from this film dates our transition from the eccentric cinema to the political cinema.” It is true that The New Babylon uses exemplary heroes and historical reference. The “negative” topic and manner of reinforcing a socialist agenda in The New Babylon, however, was not the way in which socialist realist films would develop in terms of plot. The positive hero, as seen The Maxim Trilogy, was to become the stereotype for socialist realist film; a “negative” topic like the French Commune simply did not suffice.

The New Babylon was one of the last modernist films, yet had characteristics that subtly pointed to socialist realist trends several years in the future. The unsettled reception of the film and its music show that the State’s ideas about what Soviet film

221 Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film, 269.
should be was quickly changing towards a new aesthetic and away from modernism.

Although this was FEKS’s last modernist film, it was Shostakovich’s first film composing experience. Certainly his next score to the film *Alone* (1930-1931), though very different stylistically from *The New Babylon*, allowed him to continue to develop as a film composer who gradually adopted aspects of the socialist realist aesthetic as part of his approach to film scoring.
CHAPTER 4
BEGINNINGS IN RUSSIAN SOUND FILM: ALONE (1929–1931)

Introduction

After the somewhat unsuccessful premiere of The New Babylon in 1929, Kozintsev and Trauberg embarked on a new film, Odna (Alone, 1929–1931). At this point, the Cultural Revolution was well underway, and the arts, including music and film, were experiencing a shift into what would become the socialist realist aesthetic that dominated the thirties. Composers, artists, writers, and film directors were placed in a position where they were increasingly forced to negotiate between state politics and progressive art. On the film “front,” technology was rapidly changing. With the introduction of the possibilities of sound film, many directors, such as Kozintsev and Trauberg, were already beginning to experiment by adding music and sound effects to their film projects. By 1931, the first sound films were introduced to the public, among them, Alone and Dziga Vertov’s Enthusiasm (Symphony of the Donbass).

Film underwent changes in technology, formal technique, and approach to narrative, drawing from modernist, avant-garde and “agit-prop” trends from the mid-twenties forward. Unlike music, film became the main medium for the socialist message,
a medium that needed to be, as stated by Sovkino, “intelligible to the millions.”¹ Film music, therefore, particularly from 1928 to 1932, needed to follow this vague “guideline.” During the Cultural Revolution,² film music, particularly Shostakovich’s score to Alone, was evaluated accordingly, as either “intelligible” enough to the public, or too “formalist” (i.e., modernist) to serve the “millions.”

Alone, the first sound film for which Shostakovich composed, embodies and symbolizes a transition from modernism of the 1920s to the socialist realism of the early 1930s. Beginning with The New Babylon, film music served the political agenda of the post-revolutionary period by providing an outlet for the function of music – music could finally be “for the masses.” Moderate modern composers like Shostakovich became part of the process of negotiating between innovative musical trends and the increasing need for music that reflected the socialist idea in film.

Alone is key example of the transitional nature of politics, music, and film in the late twenties and early thirties. The film and its score exhibit traits typical of twenties-era modernism, in the form, structure, and techniques of the film, while also exhibiting socialist realism traits, primarily in the content or the socialist message and representation of the “folk.” Similar to The New Babylon, the musical approaches that Shostakovich used in this film reveal the composer’s sensitivity to editing, shooting, and mise en scène

² The “Cultural Revolution” is one way of describing the period of 1928-1932, which coexisted with the first Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union under Stalin. As James Billington states, “This ‘proletarian episode’ in Russian culture... [was] part of the unprecedented effort to transform Russian society by forced-draft industrialization and collectivization.” Everything drastically changed during this period, including increased government control over the arts, and a fierce movement to create a socialist realist aesthetic. See James Billington, The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretative History of Russian Culture, (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 523.
of the film. Sometimes described in retrospect as the FEKS group’s last film, *Alone* reveals less of the “eccentrism” of their earlier films. Instead the directors sought to create a severe, dramatic, psychological film product that represented socialist utopian ideals. *Alone* thus exhibits traits of the modernist past and socialist realist future.

**Synopsis of *Alone***

Similar to *The New Babylon*, *Alone* addresses a theme that resonated with the shaping of the developing socialist utopian ideals. The title, *Odna*, or *Alone*, refers to a young woman, played by Elena Kuz’mina, who has the same name as the actor. Recently graduated from the Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad, Kuz’mina is sent to teach in the Altai region in Siberia by the government. The first half of the film concentrates on her anticipation of her new life after graduation. The film begins with her rising out of bed, ecstatic and happy, preparing for the day. She later meets her fiancé, with whom she travels around the city, gazing through store windows at china sets and picking out new furniture and other fixtures for their future “bourgeois” home. Dressed in white, these two lovers prance around the city in ecstasy, hanging off trolleys covered in white flowers, and playing instruments and metal pots in department stores, while the main leitmotif of the film, the song “Kakaya khoroshaya budyet zhizn” (How good life will be) plays in the background.

The mood, color palette, and the music of the film shift, as the young woman leaves her fiancé temporarily to inquire about her teaching assignment. Until this point in the film, she had dreamed of teaching in the center of Leningrad, as shown in a daydream

---


4 It was not uncommon for films of the twenties to use the name of the actor as the name of the character.
scene where she is teaching attentive students in newly remodeled classrooms. Teaching in the city would allow her settle into her new married life. She arrives and discovers that she will be sent to the Altai region to teach children, far from her dreams. She leaves the building with the intent to complain about her assignment and request a new one in the city. She makes her way to Ministry of Education and is confronted by another woman who expresses admiration of Kuz’mina’s assignment in the Altai, wishing that she too could better “serve her country.” Kuz’mina then telephones her fiancé, who responds indifferently to her dilemma. After her conversation with her fiancé and coming into contact with an “anti-socialist,” she decides with some hesitation that she will take the job in the Altai.

The second half of the film opens with a serene landscape shot of the Altai mountain region, reminiscent of Aleksandr Dovzhenko’s films. With a fade out, then fade in, we see Kuz’mina arriving in the Altai, lukewarmly greeted by the local people. She states, through intertitles, that she has arrived to teach the children of village. With her arrival and settling in, the viewer recognizes through sparse statements and the actions of the villagers that there is conflict over the shepherding and trading of the sheep between the people of the village and the “bai,” or the owner of the land. Kuz’mina unknowingly has arrived in the middle of a “class war.”

The next section of the film shows Kuz’mina’s attempts to teach the children of the village, despite their obligation to learning their daily village duties. With much

---

5 Aleksandr Dovzhenko (1894-1956) was an Ukrainian avant-garde film director developed a “poetic” approach to montage techniques, where he used long, impressionistic shots of the Russian countryside, and its people. His interests in folklore and the everyday life of the “folk” permeated his later works, and became a symbol of his style. Of the main film directors of the time, Dovzhenko was the most “lyrical” of them.

6 A bai is commonly known as a Central Asian landowner.
resistance from the bai, Kuz’mina manages to teach the children for a brief time before becoming deeply involved in the villagers’ conflict. This change in her character, her decision to teach in Siberia away from home, and her involvement in defending the villagers against the bai, signals a turning point in the film. She has developed beyond “petty-bourgeois” urbanite and become a representative builder of the socialist dream. For her interference and initiation of a riot of the oppressed villagers, the bai orders a driver to leave her in the mountains to freeze to death in the wilderness of the Altai, as she leaves the village to seek help for the villagers.7 The villagers rescue Kuz’mina and take her to village, while sending a message to Leningrad to come and retrieve her. The “airplane from heaven” arrives, to take the nearly dead Kuz’mina home.8 As the plane leaves, the villagers comment on the fate of Kuz’mina, who, the viewer is led to assume, will recover upon returning home.9

Interpretation and Reception of Alone

Alone as a Transitional Film

Alone was a transitional film in terms of narrative strategy and cinematic technique, the role of the heroine, the content, and the role of sound and music. The directors began with a theme often used in Russian film of the twenties – the ideal individual who represents the motives and power of socialist politics, ultimately glorifying the people and serving the State.10 Inspired by a newspaper article about a

---

7 This reel (reel six) is lost, so the details of the events of the reel are unknown.
8 A common phrase used in reviews of the film when describing the plane that comes from Moscow to retrieve Kuz’mina.
9 Kozintsev wrote that he found the last scene of the film “unsuccessful,” deeming it “lifeless” and too “schematic.” See Grigory Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran [The Deep Screen] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1971), 156.
10 As seen in the films of Sergey Eisenstein, such as Battleship Potemkin (1925), and The Strike (1924).
woman rescued by the government from a near-frozen death in Siberia, Trauberg initiated the idea of having a heroine who undergoes character transformation as the central focus of the film.\textsuperscript{11} The film also engages the general theme of construction, in this case, industrialization, which preoccupied many filmmakers during the Cultural Revolution.\textsuperscript{12} After \textit{The New Babylon}, a film about the “general” heroics of a people set in the historical context of the Parisian Commune, Kozintsev and Trauberg were likely encouraged to create a realist film that examined the inner workings of person’s mind, particularly in the early thirties. Received as a one of the first “psychological” films, \textit{Alone} thus departed from the usual idea of the individual representing the mass, focusing more on the psychology of the individual as she transforms herself from the child-like “petty-bourgeois” \textit{intelligent} into a functioning adult of the socialist State.\textsuperscript{13}

The intention of Kozintsev and Trauberg to create a realist film based on the transformation of the individual in service of the State can be viewed in part as a metaphor for their own transformation as film directors in the context of the Cultural Revolution.\textsuperscript{14} Slowly, by the end of the twenties, the “eccentrism” expressed in their earlier films was becoming more conservative and less of a modernist “slap in the face.” Already with \textit{The New Babylon}, they were heading towards their own brand of realism in terms of content by engaging a historical revolutionary theme. In his essay on \textit{Alone}, Kozintsev implicitly expressed a criticism of the film techniques of Sergey Eisenstein and


\textsuperscript{13} The word \textit{intelligent} here is used as a noun, as it commonly is in Russian, to connote a person that belongs to the \textit{intelligentsia}, or the educated upper class.

\textsuperscript{14} Medvedevsky analyzes \textit{Alone} as part of the biography of the directors, coming close to this idea of \textit{Alone} as a metaphor of their shift in personal taste and aesthetics.
Dziga Vertov, where he regarded the montage editing and typage of characters in their films to have “outlived their usefulness.” Kozintsev repeatedly emphasized that the montage technique failed to be useful in discovering the inner world of an individual character. Thus, Alone utilized longer, lingering shots, slower editing, and only occasional dialectical montage that served to depict the inner world of the heroine, moving towards what would become Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s brand of realism, in severe contrast with their frenetic, rebellious style of modernist filmmaking the mid-twenties. This realism, in filmmaking and film music, would become the standard for dramatic socialist realist film for the remainder of the thirties.

Alone was situated in a time when modernism still flourished as early traits of socialist realism in the arts were being formulated. The heroine’s transformation of her personal character, which serves a model for the ideal Soviet citizen, also parallels the arts, including music, where many composers were making the transition into an early socialist realist aesthetic. Just as Asaf’yev and Myaskovsky were sensing the need to write music to accommodate a shift in aesthetics, Kozintsev and Trauberg were moving away from agit-prop and towards “austere realism.” The heroine’s character transformation was intended as a positive move towards a utopian future, just as socialist realism in the arts was intended to serve the overall motives of the government and reinforce the messages and ideals of the Soviet state.

15 Kozintsev, “Odna,” 47. Fast-paced montage and superficial character typage were also typical of Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s earlier eccentric films as well, including The Adventures of Oktyabrina (1925) and The Devil’s Wheel (1926).
16 Ibid., 47.
18 E. Misalandi, Booklet from the VHS cassette of Odna [Alone], (1931; Belye Stolbye, “Krupnî Plan”/Gosfîl’mofond/Musey Kino, 2002).
The Polemics of *Alone*

Considering its historical circumstances, *Alone* received a mixed reception by reviewers and members of Lenfil’m studio committees. This was partly due to the shift in politics in the arts and the need for a definition of what was becoming socialist realism. The polemics of filmmaking were focused on three interrelated issues: realism and its development in film, a move away from and critique of twenties modernism, and the use of new sound technology. Rarely armed with specific examples, critics gauged the realism of the film in regard to character development, cinematography, or music. The members of the Sound Committee at Lenfil’m studios, for example, regularly commented that the character development was “unrealistic.”19 One “unrealistic” aspect of the film, they claimed, was the stereotyping of a graduate of the Pedagogical Technical School as “bourgeois.” Trauberg, present at the meeting of this committee, commented that it was realistic to find “bourgeois attitudes” at this Institute, and that the script was sent to Narkompros20 several times and was approved as realistic and representative of graduates of this Institute. Another aspect considered “unrealistic” was the design of character transformation. Two of the members complained that the heroine’s character transformation was abrupt and unmotivated, and therefore unconvincing.21 These critics concluded that the directors were in support of the “bourgeois ideology” and did not intend to create a socialist propagandist work.

---


20 “Narkompros” is an abbreviation for “Narodni komissariat prosveshcheniya,” or the People’s Commissariat for Public Education, as it was known in the early USSR. It later became known as the Ministry of Education.

21 These members were Peres and Berkov, two sound critics quoted in the “Gruppy po zvukovomu kino” report.
Other members of the committee disagreed and found the development of the character and the focus on the psychological development of the heroine suitable for a socialist film. They considered appropriate the topic of an individual’s transformation as representative of the masses. This corresponds to what the directors claimed they had set out to do. Trauberg commented that the film was designed to be understated in its technical approach and that the class struggle was shown as a natural development instead of a riotous affair prompted by an outside source. In Trauberg’s words, “The struggle is shown without emphasis on white or red flags,” a reference to the opposing sides of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War that followed. Kozintsev echoes this sentiment in a later article, stating that the first half of film, showing the heroine’s dreams and “bourgeois” inclinations, was intended to be ironic and critical of contemporary “bourgeois” attitudes. The second half the film, as Kozintsev stated, was intended to be a realistic development of the character, demonstrated through a more detailed, less stereotyped depiction of her inner world. What Kozintsev and Trauberg and other critics therefore recognized was a desire to move away from “inhuman” character typage typical of their earlier modernist films and towards a more detailed look at the individual. This was made apparent in other essays and reviews about Alone, where one reviewer claimed that “Alone was a victory over formalism.” The dissenting critics instead were viewing Alone in comparison with these earlier films and interpreting it accordingly, failing to see

---

22 Liss was one of the dissenting members.
23 "Gruppy po zvukovomu kino,” 3.
Kozintsev and Trauberg’s attempt at character development.\textsuperscript{26} Thus, the differing opinions of this committee show that 1) Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s approach to realist film style, storyline, and character development was unwelcome, revealing the multiple definitions of how socialist realism should be portrayed, a common occurrence throughout the thirties, and 2) that some critics were having difficulty accepting Kozintsev and Trauberg’s change in style as a genuine rejection of their past modernist experiments. These attitudes and critiques were echoed in many other reviews and essays on \textit{Alone}\textsuperscript{27} and show how this was a transitional film placed in the center of current filmmaking polemics.

\textbf{Sound, Music, and \textit{Alone}}

\textbf{Sound and Image}

\textit{Alone} was the first film of its time and place to be conceived as a “sound” film. In his book \textit{The Deep Screen}, Kozintsev expressed how he had wanted to continue the work of \textit{The New Babylon} with Shostakovich, implying that he wanted to make and had later considered the music to be an integral part of the film, a “mise-en-bande.”\textsuperscript{28} This is supported by the script that was submitted to the studio, where Shostakovich’s name was added to the roster of the “work team” in July of 1929, just a few months after the rather

\textsuperscript{26} Pavina Ribakova for example, remained unconvinced of Kuz’mina’s true development as a socialist throughout the course of the film. See Pavina Ribakova, “Muzika Shostakovicha k zvukovym fil’mam ‘Odna’ i ‘Zlatie gori,’” [Shostakovich’s Music to the Sound Films \textit{Alone} and \textit{Golden Mountains}] \textit{Rabochiy i teatr}, 24 (August 1933): 39.

\textsuperscript{27} Among the articles already mentioned, there are B. Alpers, “Oshibka ‘Feksov’” [The Mistakes of FEKS] \textit{Sovetskoje iskusstvo}, 54 (18 May 1931) and Klimenty Korchmaryov, “Muzika k fil’m ‘Odna,’” [Music of the Film \textit{Alone}] \textit{Sovetskoje Iskusstvo}, 58 (15 June 1931), that reveal how \textit{Alone} was “transitional.”

\textsuperscript{28} Kozintsev, \textit{Gluboki i ekran}, 151.
unsuccessful premiere of *The New Babylon*.\textsuperscript{29} By September, a contract was offered to Shostakovich, after much discussion over his qualifications. In the previous month, councils within the Sovkino studio expressed trepidation over hiring the composer responsible for the music of *The Nose* and *The New Babylon*. They stated,

If Shostakovich does the same thing he did with *The Nose*, the entire music part will be very unpopular. Since this film is targeted at the mass viewer, we must make sure that all the criticism we heard about *New Babylon* is not repeated, Shostakovich should be asked to write music that everyone can understand.\textsuperscript{30}

Also in early September 1929, the film crew left to shoot on location in the Altai for a few months.\textsuperscript{31} They returned to Leningrad, presumably to shoot the rest of the film there. Almost a year later, in September 1930, the film had been shot and edited enough to begin recording the soundtrack. According to timetable of completed works in Kozintsev’s *Collected Works*, the work on the “sound variant” of the film began 3 October 1930.\textsuperscript{32} The film was first premiered in March of 1931 and had subsequent showings thereafter. It officially released “for hire” in 10 October 1931.\textsuperscript{33}

There seems to be some confusion over whether or not the film was shot as a sound film or a silent film. The film exhibits many “silent” film characteristics, such as the use of intertitles and only occasional spurts of synchronized speech. As Kozintsev

\textsuperscript{29} This and other information found on the sound production process can be found in Kozintsev’s *Glubokiy ekran* and Yakubov’s essay “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna.’ Istoriya sozdaniya, otsenka kritiki,” [Dmitry Shostakovich’s Music to the Film *Alone*: How it was Composed, Critics’ Appraisal] in *Dmitry Shostakovich: Novoye Sobranie Sochineniy, Tom 123, “Muzika k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,”* [Dmitry Shostakovich: New Collected Works, Volume 123, Music the Film *Alone* Op.26] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 317-321 (Russian) and 330-334 (English).

\textsuperscript{30} Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna,’” 330.

\textsuperscript{31} Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 156.


\textsuperscript{33} This is likely the reason why Fay gives October 1931 as the date of release of the film, even though it shown earlier in the year. See Laurel Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 50 and Yakubov, “Muzika D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” 333 for more information.
related, it was impossible to bring sound equipment to the Altai, so the sound was added after the shooting in the Altai.\textsuperscript{34} Despite technical restrictions, however, Kozintsev further stated that the film was shot “theoretically” with sound in mind.\textsuperscript{35} Upon their return, the directors found that the studio had set up a sound recording system with the newest technology, the recording apparatus developed by A. Shorin.\textsuperscript{36} It is unclear as to whether or not the directors began experimenting with the equipment early in 1930 or after they officially began recording the soundtrack in October 1930.\textsuperscript{37} Regardless of when the sound effects and voices were recorded, it is believed that Shostakovich began his work on the music in the autumn of 1930 and continued his work through the early part of 1931.\textsuperscript{38}

Just as \textit{Alone} is transitional in terms of its plot and film techniques, it is also transitional and innovative in its approach to sound. As a result of the newness of the technology and unavailability of sound equipment during shooting, \textit{Alone} uses a combination of both silent film techniques and sound film. One of the first sounds that Kozintsev and Trauberg tried to record was the voice. Attempting to record the image and voice simultaneously, the directors found the voice too difficult to record, since the

\textsuperscript{34} See Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 155-156.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Shorin was one of two sound engineers that developed the “sound-on-film” system in the USSR. Shorin’s system was used by Lenfilm, while the other engineer P. Tager, worked in the Moscow studios (Mezhrabpom.) In his book, Jay Leyda claims that \textit{Alone} was the first film to use Shorin’s system successfully. See Jay Leyda, \textit{Kino: A History of Russian and Soviet Film} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 283. Leyda claims that later, Vertov assisted Shorin in developing a portable sound recording system. See Leyda, \textit{Kino}, 282.
\textsuperscript{37} Yakubov argues that they began on the soundtrack recording on 3 October 1930. Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna,’” 331. This is also confirmed in Kozintsev’s collected works timetable. See Kozintsev, \textit{Sobranïye sochinenï}, 1: 528. Kozintsev seems to imply however, that when they recorded the soundtrack that they did it all at once. See Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 156.
\textsuperscript{38} Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky also confirm that Shostakovich worked on the score to \textit{Alone} in August 1930. See Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, \textit{Pages from the Life of Dmitri Shostakovich} (London: Robert Hale, Ltd., 1980), 62.
sound of the cameras overpowered the voices. Kozintsev related, “We proceeded to sound recording. In some scenes we wanted to reinforce crucial places with loudly spoken phrases. However, even individual frames could not be filmed synchronously: the noise of the camera drowned out the voice.” The directors tried muffling the sound in various ways (from layering coats over it or enclosing the camera in a “kiosk-like” enclosure) and found that they were occasionally able to record. Only twice was there synchrony between the actors and their speech: after Kuz’mina vehemently refuses to go to the Altai and when the wife of the advisor sings the song “Russian Lot.” The majority of the film, however, primarily functioned “silently” with intertitles to relate the action. As in silent films, the viewer predominantly sees the mouths of the actors moving silently with intertitles in between images to relate the conversations, with the occasional synchronized voice, as seen in *The Jazz Singer* (1928). Some of the time, the speech that is heard is made abstract. There are moments where speech comes from the loudspeakers in Leningrad (representing the State), is overdubbed to narrate the action (when the government officials type letters about Kuz’mina’s job, or rescue Kuz’mina from the Altai) – none of which require exact synchronization with specific actors.

---

39 Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 156-157. Kozintsev discusses how they were unable to fulfill their intentions because of the inability of the sound equipment to pick up certain sounds and record synchronously with the film.
41 Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 156-157. Kozintsev said that they did record, but the character of the sound was changed. Barry Salt talks about how only one American studio (Warners) was using the “‘icebox’ type of soundproof booth containing both camera and operator for sound filming,” in 1930. By 1931, Americans were using “blimped” cameras. See Barry Salt, “Film Style and Technology in the Thirties: Sound,” in *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*, ed. Elizabeth Weis and John Belton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 37-43.
42 *The Jazz Singer* has been canonized as one of the first American “talkies.”
This lack of synchrony and abstraction of speech was an early limitation of sound film that other directors, including Vertov, encountered when experimenting with the new technology.

Later, Kozintsev related that he and Trauberg initially did not want speech to be part of the overall sound. He stated, “we were against speech and dialogue…we didn’t want to give up the power of the visual poetry… we wanted to reinforce the visual images, to have them juxtaposed with sound.” It seemed that in keeping with the well-known “Statement on Sound” (1928), Kozintsev and Trauberg wanted to maintain the integrity of the visual, while using the aural to complement or develop the images. The directors achieved this through the use of sound effects and the music of Shostakovich.

Sound effects and music were not only possible with the existing sound technology, but part of Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s preferred sound design. As Kozintsev explained, the voices, sound effects, and Shostakovich’s music were all recorded at once as a complete soundtrack. For the sound effects, the directors had to learn how to substitute and balance the recorded sounds to properly evoke the images on the screen. Initially, as Kozintsev explained, each of the sounds within the film was recorded as they normally existed, such as the whistling of the teapots, the ticking of the clock, and the sounds of the shaman. But as many modern Foley artists relate, “real” sounds do not necessarily sound as realistic on the screen; nor are they balanced in term of volume control. In one scene for example, the sound effect of the ticking clock was

---

44 See Chapter Two for a discussion of the “Statement on Sound.”
45 Kozintsev discusses this in Gluboki ekran, particularly 156ff.
46 A Foley artist is a person that finds sounds effects and adds them to a film. See Tom Kenny, Sound for Picture: Film Sound through the 1990s (Milwaukee: H. Leonard, 2000) for information on the technique of
not an actual clock, but an overdubbed sound of a stick hitting the floor.\textsuperscript{47} The song “How good life will be” proved to be too quiet and the directors had to settle for one phrase of text instead of the entire text of the song.\textsuperscript{48} For the teapots, Kozintsev said that the whistling was too quiet for the sound equipment to pick up and too difficult to manipulate into “singing,” so they had to invite a tenor to sing along, adding to the texture.\textsuperscript{49} They also found that the shaman that they had brought from the Altai was too loud for the equipment.\textsuperscript{50} Other sounds were invented to accompany the items on the screen and then dubbed over the images. This is true for every scene that needed a sound effect, such as the typist at the office where Kuz’mina went to complain, Kuz’mina’s phone call to her fiancé, the images of the speakers with the words of an announcer, and the flight of the airplane in the final scene. Thus, most of the sound effects for \textit{Alone} were dubbed over the images post-production, allowing the directors more control over not only the kinds of sounds used, but also the “counterpoint” of the visual and aural.

\textbf{Sources}

The sources for this film and its score are more limited than \textit{The New Babylon} because of the nature of early sound film. In other words, there was no need for a separate film and a separate score. The film that I have viewed was released by Gosfil’mofond under the label “Krupnï plan.”\textsuperscript{51} This copy of the original film was once

\textsuperscript{47} This technique is common in today’s filmmaking, but was particularly new in 1929. Kozintsev, “Odna,” 52-53 and \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 156.
\textsuperscript{48} Kozintsev, \textit{Glubokiy ekran}, 156-157.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Odna} [Alone], VHS, directed by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg (1931; Belye Stolbye: “Krupnï Plan”/Gosfil’mofond/Musey Kino, 2002).
available in the United States, though it may still be currently out of print. This is the original version of the film from 1931, re-released in 1966. The sound of this copy of the film appears to be in its original form, that is, sometimes nearly silent because of the poor quality of the recorded soundtrack.

One main manuscript of the score is extant. This manuscript is a piano score in fragments, with many orchestrations and notes for orchestration throughout. It also has several pages of seemingly displaced fragments in the front of the manuscript, before the music begins with the introductory material. This manuscript, along with the phonogram, has been made into a new edition by Manashir Yakubov in the most recent set of the collected works of Shostakovich. Unlike the previous edition of Alone, which only published fragments of the aforementioned manuscript, he presents a completed score of the film. Most of the “numbers,” i.e., sections of the manuscript that are labeled with numbers, are from the manuscript; what is not, was filled in by the phonogram, or soundtrack, of the film. The first several displaced pages of the manuscript that were excluded in the previous edition of the collected works has now been added to and reorganized as part of the recent edition. As of October 2006, an archivist, Ol’ga


55 Yakubov was assisted by conductor Mark FitzGerald in this project.
Digonskaya has found previously unknown manuscripts by Shostakovich that include some fragments from *Alone*.56 These fragments have yet to be examined or published.

Additionally, there is one other source that is currently not widely available in the United States. In 2004, Mark FitzGerald reconstructed the soundtrack of *Alone* at the initiation of Theodore Van Houten.57 FitzGerald assisted Yakubov in the creation of the most recent edition of *Alone* in new collected works, which involved a merging of the original phonogram of the film and the original manuscript. The score had to be re-recorded and remastered, since the initial sound quality was poor, which resulted in the current phonogram of the reconstructed version of *Alone*. The new edition of *Alone* appears to have been used for the reconstructed version of *Alone*, since the score of the new edition lines up exactly with this version of the film. The resulting remastered sound is far clearer than the original, filling in many “silences” that were poorly recorded in 1931.

My analysis is therefore informed by the original film, the remastered version of *Alone* from 2004, Shostakovich’s manuscript, and Yakubov’s older and recent editions of the film score.

56 This information was released to the Western public at the recent conference the International Shostakovich Centenary Conference, 28 September – 1 October 2006. Ol’ga Digonskaya, “Shostakovich’s Unknown Manuscripts,” (paper, International Shostakovich Centenary Conference, University of Bristol, 28 September – 1 October 2006) revealed this new find, among many others.

57 *Odna* [Alone], DVD, directed by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, music re-constructed by Mark FitzGerald, with the initiative of Theodore van Houten, in collaboration with Theodore van Houten, Nic Raine, Mark van Tongeren, Krzysztof Meyer, and with the support of the Shostakovich Estate, Paris (Hamburg: Musikverlag Hans Sikorski, 2004). My thanks to Peter Kupfer for sharing a copy of this film with me.
The Music

For the depiction of the heroine’s inner life, underscoring, or sound effects and music intended for the diegesis the directors used Shostakovich’s music performed by a symphony orchestra hired by Lenfil’m studios. Shostakovich’s music permeated most of the film, acting as a commentary, or active player in the drama and extending the philosophy of sound/image interaction with which both the directors and composer had began to experiment in The New Babylon. The score used predominantly recurring motifs, extensive repetition, and “found” music, often interwoven together in various passages to depict the inner world of the characters or serve as a placeholder for speech. The composer and the directors thus created a score that exemplified the “counterpoint” between sound and image. As with The New Babylon, an examination of the form, unity, or lack thereof, and narrative devices will illustrate how Shostakovich’s music fit in the overall soundscape of the film.

Form and Unity

In 1937, Shostakovich complained,

I always tried to find unified development, so there would not be a tavern scene followed by something completely different. I always tried to seek a unified idea, which I was not especially successful at in the film Alone; it had no unified symphonic development; it had individual numbers: No.1 – a rushing tram, No.3 – a playing barrel-organ, and so on, but I was unable to achieve unified development.58

It is likely that it was fashionable for Shostakovich to openly complain about any aspect of the film he may have disliked in 1937, since the film and its music were eventually

canonized as a “formalist” failure. Notably, however, his comment on the film having “individual numbers” does correlate to the manuscript and the recent edition of the score. Compared to *The New Babylon, Alone* does appear immediately more fragmented and less “symphonic” due to its number-like episodes, constant and often exact repetition of recurring motifs, and localized key areas.

The film and its score consist of seven reels, each of which has individually numbered episodes that correlate to scenes in the film. Unlike the score to *The New Babylon*, there are few instances where there is an “attacca” between episodes, resulting in significant pauses between numbers. There is also much more exact repetition in this score. Instead of developing ideas, or changing, modulating, or somehow transforming specific tunes, Shostakovich composed sections, or “blocks,” of music that would repeat almost exactly within sections and throughout the film. The lack of variation is therefore the main indicator of these number as “blocks.” These blocks vary in size, depending on the action. They consist of motifs such as the song “How good life will be,” the music of the shaman, the “Russian Lot” tune, and the music for the *bai* and of the village advisor (sel’soviet). Each time these motifs repeat there tends to be very little variation: the overall integrity of the tunes (contour, cadence, and so forth) tends to remain the same. The changes that do occur often tend to be in key or mode. The film may therefore not

---


60 There is the exception of the Sixth Reel, which is missing from the film, but partially exists in the score. Notably, this section uses a theremin, the first use of this instrument in film music. Unfortunately, since is no image to align with the music, it is unclear how the theremin operates in this reel. Some scholars have also noted this reel, though without much discussion. Egorova speaks of this reel as a “programme piece” that evokes the heroine’s innermost feelings. Egorova, *Soviet Film Music*, 16.

61 For a table of these recurring leitmotifs, see Appendix F.
have the development that Shostakovich would have wished for, but it is unified in its constant repetition of musical ideas throughout the film.

It is curious that Shostakovich chose not to develop his musical ideas as he did with the previous film score – was it because he did not have enough time or was it because he was attempting to make the music more “understandable” to mass viewers? Or was the technology too limited and unable to record his music? It is also possible that he chose to have ideas exactly repeat because he experimenting with different ways of evoking the inner feelings of the characters, as I discuss shortly.

Narrative Device and Cueing

Recurring and Non-Recurring Motifs

The “leitmotifs” that recur consistently and are used throughout the film were designed for specific characters and/or ideas or as generalized non-diegetic music that functioned as underscoring. For some themes, “reminiscence motif” is more appropriate, since these motifs do not necessarily connect with the overall message of the film or act as “leading” components of the overall musical design. They can, however, recur throughout the film or be limited to a section. For other cases where the theme or fragment of a theme may recur infrequently and only within a section, I use the term “motif.” This separation between varying kinds of motifs and underscoring implies what Claudia Gorbman has outlined as “unheard melodies.”62 The recurring motifs used throughout Alone, however, were intended to be heard more prominently than the more

---

general underscoring. My focus, therefore, is on the prominent main themes, leaving some of the non-diegetic music for later discussion.63

*Alone* begins with three motifs, two of which recur throughout the film. The entire first part of the film, when Kuz’mina rises out of bed through the moment she receives her assignment, has been described by Kozintsev as “parodic-naïve” dream life of Kuz’mina, intended to be ironic.64 He considered the cheery “tonality” of the first half “important for the contrast with the real life” of the second part of the film.65 The song that follows the opening number, “Konchen, konchen tekhnikum…” (Graduated from the institute…), immediately captures Kuz’mina’s naïveté. This song, which was probably written by Shostakovich but does not appear in his known manuscripts, is for soprano and light string accompaniment. The lyrics address preparing for graduation from a “Tekhnikum” and how great life will be from here forward. As this song continues in underscoring, Kuz’mina’s bounces around her apartment, getting ready to meet her fiancé. This non-recurring song segues into the first appearance of the hurdy-gurdy tune (Appendix F). This tune is performed by an off-screen orchestra, yet as Kuz’mina looks out the window, she sees a hurdy-gurdy player on the street playing to the tune heard in underscoring. This tune operates as a reminiscence motif throughout the film, eventually building to signify the city and her bourgeois life. At this moment in the film, however, it simply accompanies her morning routine and acts as part of the general soundscape of the city.

---

64 See Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 152.
65 Ibid.
The third motif is one of the two main motifs which act as polar opposites throughout the film. Both motifs participate in character development and act as commentary on the main social message of the film (Appendix F). The first of the motifs is the galop, “How good life will be,” which is the only leitmotif of the film.66 This song appears after Kuz’mina prepares for the day and meets her fiancé on the street, therefore initially associated with the happy young couple. It is highly repetitive and begins with an instrumental introduction, before the entrance of the song itself (Appendix G, Figure 29). The song appears, reiterating the words “How good life will be” throughout, with little variation in the text or the music (Appendix G, Figure 30).67 Kozintsev repeatedly stated that this song was entirely intended to be “ironic” in its depiction of a young naïve girl and her unarticulated and trite desires.68 He instructed Andrey Moskvin, the cameraman, to shoot the beginning of the film entirely in white, an impossible color to shoot at the time, to reflect the “non-stop smiling” of young people building their new bourgeois lives. As Kozintsev stated, the work team of Alone did not subscribe to the non-stop smiling socialist aesthetic that, even more ironically, later became the crux of the socialist realist filmmaking aesthetic. The shooting and the editing in combination with the exaggerated “happy” content of the music therefore creates a sense of irony. By itself, the music may not easily be interpreted as ironic. Yet, Shostakovich has commented before, when referring to his opera The Nose, that his music does not try to “be witty”:

66 Trauberg claimed that this song was his own in an interview from 1984. He states, “I wrote the song and instructed Shostakovich on how to compose it, and he wrote it right away, a very good song.” See Theodore Van Houten, Leonid Trauberg and His Films: Always the Unexpected (‘s-Hertogenbosch: Art & Research, 1989), 144.
67 The song has its own internal form within the number in which it appears: C-C-D-D1-D.
68 Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran, 151-152.
The music does not carry any deliberately ‘parodying’ overtone... Despite all of the comicalness of what is happening on stage, the music does not make things comical.\textsuperscript{69}

It is possible that this song was composed with the same principle in mind. The combination of the shooting, color palette, music, and editing relates to the irony of which Kozintsev spoke. This “syncretion,” or the synthesis of the visual and aural, renders the irony particularly potent.\textsuperscript{70} The images of the white and sunny clothing and character of the couple, their playing of pots, pans, and a violoncello in department stores, and carefree rides on the tram are edited to converge exactly with specific cadences, climaxes, and repetitions of the musical phrases. It was Shostakovich’s modernist sense of musical timing and humor that contributed to the end result – an overly positive rendering of the couple that Kozintsev felt was a parody of bourgeois ideals. As Kozintsev intended, this greatly contrasts with the burgeoning socialist ideals that appear in the second half of the film.

The contrast of the film begins at the point when Kuz’mina receives her assignment. Walking out from a building’s shadow, creating a shot that is half black and half white, Kuz’mina stands silent as a “march,” as it is notated in the score, sounds in the underscoring. This march (labeled March “A” in Appendix F) had appeared initially when Kuz’mina walked onto the street to wait for her fiancé (Appendix F). The martial dotted rhythmic-melodic idea in the key of C major dominates the tune and appears to


emulate the physical motion of Kuz’mina’s cheerful walking. On the street with her new, Altai assignment, however, the march, generally unchanged, takes on a different character in its new key of E minor, as she stands contemplating her fate. The music here “anchors” the image, providing an indication of the souring of her dreams.71

The second appearance of the main leitmotif “How good life will be” occurs when Kuz’mina is attempting to change her assignment. Standing in the hallway, with a new march in the underscoring (March “B”), she encounters an enthusiastic citizen who wishes to be sent far away, but is not allowed to go (Appendix F).72 Kuz’mina momentarily doubts her desire to request a different position. Nonetheless, she complains and begs not to be sent to the Altai, especially since she is to be married and buy new furniture. At this point, March “A” from earlier in the film (when she goes to meet her fiancé) returns to accompany her question, “Why am I chosen to go the Altai?” (Appendix F).73 As she then begins to enumerate all of the lovely things she anticipated, March “A” immediately segues into a reappearance of the hurdy-gurdy motif in exactly the same key.74 The instrumentation has changed, however, to a “hand organ.” This formerly underscored tune attributed to the diegetic hurdy-gurdy player on the street is now for the first time played on the instrument for which it was intended. The circus-like nature of the instrument lends an ironic character to this scene, further continuing the “parodic-naive” tone which Kozintsev intended. After leaving the room with her new assignment, Kuz’mina stops in the hall, contemplative. Confronted by an older man who

71 See Chapter Two for a discussion and definition of “anchorage.”
72 This march appears only once and is repeated in the following number. Also, this march bears a strong resemblance to the first theme of the “chase” music of Shostakovich’s theater piece Hamlet (1932). It is likely that he reused this march of Alone for the first theme/section of this number in Hamlet.
73 This is Number 12 in the score.
74 There is an indication of “attacca” in the score between numbers 12 (march) and 13 (hurdy-gurdy).
begins to commiserate with her, the leitmotif “How good life will be” returns with its original text and original key area, finishing with an overdubbed spoken statement of the song’s text (Appendix F and Appendix G, Figure 32). At that moment, Kuz’mina tears up the new assignment and storms out of the building, having decided to accept the post in the Altai. The leitmotif here is less forceful and clearly placed at a turning point, signaling a deserting of her possible “good life” for another path that, as the film later shows, is a better “socialist” life than the one she would have had.

The final appearance of the main leitmotif is when Kuz’mina confronts the village advisor. After she arrives and just before she screams at the snoring advisor to get out of bed, the main leitmotif returns. The music continues over images of Kuz’mina standing and waiting for the advisor to rise and images of teapots and samovars in the home. It appears that after surveying the home of this advisor, this song signals the moment where Kuz’mina finally begins to act in the interest of the village. At this point, the song indicates that a “good life” is not the bourgeois existence ironically portrayed in the beginning of the film. Instead, the song here could be a commentary on the life of the advisor, who shortly after the appearance of this leitmotif reveals his allegiance to the bai and lack of interest in the life of the villagers. Since the focus is on Kuz’mina, this motif could also be a commentary on her new “good life,” which involves the building of socialism in this remote village. The original ironic meaning is therefore transformed by the new context. While it may still remain a parody of anti-Soviet life, it can also be sincere: a “good life” is a socialist life. The main motif of the film therefore mirrors the dramatic focal point of the film – Kuz’mina’s character transformation from “bourgeois” intelligent to socialist citizen.
The text of the song, “How good life will be” appears at the end of the film without the accompanying musical motif, when Kuz’mina is loaded onto the plane headed for Moscow and the villagers are watching. The accompanying music is new; with the full orchestral sound of an overture, it soars above a series of cuts between the plane and the smiling faces of the villagers. This “good life” text appears at the very end and continues the new meaning of the song, which had been transformed by the action – “good life” is the message that the villagers have absorbed since Kuz’mina’s arrival. The “good life” textual inclusion was intended to indicate to the viewer that the villagers have learned to rise against the oppression from the bai and the kulak and are converted to a socialist mindset.

The approach to the song “Graduated from the institute…,” the hurdy-gurdy reminiscence motif, March “A” and the main leitmotif and its ironic, parodic use can be read as an interesting combination of traits of modernism and socialist realism. Initially, the ironic first appearance of “How good life will be,” following the other urban/bourgeois motifs, is modernist in its multivalency and sense of humor, mirroring the same approaches Shostakovich used in The Nose. The final appearance of the tune clarifies that this modernist use of irony was intended for a socialist meaning – it was Kuz’mina’s character, not the musical idea that was initially insincere.

76 A kulak is commonly known as a wealthy peasant landowner. Under Stalinism, it was often used as pejorative to describe people that retaliated against the government during collectivization. See Billington, Icon and the Axe, 362 and 541.
Motifs for the Altai

Another point of motivic interaction between the music and image is the musical representation of the land and people of the Altai region. In the second half of the film, the first shot of the Altai landscape is accompanied by underscoring consisting of solo oboe and flute. As Kozintsev has remarked, the music has changed from the “bright” tone of the first half of the film to a “darker” tone for the second. The music here opposes the “bright” tonal homophony of the first half with minor-mode linear layering of solo wind instruments, including oboe, bassoon, and flute. The music to the Altai and for the bay are quite similar, although the Altai music is either accompanied by a half-step undulating line and solo bassoon or oboe, or a scalar melody that ends in a long trill (Appendix G, Figures 33 and 34). These instruments also play several melodies that are not exact, but have many traits in common. The consistent instrumentation and quality of these melodies almost constitute a motif for the bay. These melodies are played by one or two solo woodwinds, accompanied sparsely in either in steady eight-notes or a drone, scalar in ascent and descent, and use grace note “hiccups,” almost “leit-gestures” that add to the grotesque sound of the bay. The three instances of these related motifs were described by Kozintsev as a representation of the bay and were designed as a sharp contrast to the music of the “good life.” Their linear texture and instrumentation led to the reception of these motifs as “atonal wandering” by critics. These specific instruments and their motifs vary each time they reappear throughout the remainder of the film and only in association with the bay. He appears in three moments throughout the second half of the film 1) when Kuz’mina introduces herself to the village advisor; 2)
in the classroom to intimidate Kuz’mina and take the children into the field to help shepherd the sheep; and 3) at the end, when they argue over the fate of the sheep and the villagers (Appendix G, Figure 35). Just as the second half of the film sharply contrasts the first, the bai’s leitmotif contrasts Kuz’mina’s leitmotif of the “good life.” These instrumental motifs reappear to reinforce the power of the bai and, as Kozintsev has said, act as his “old and rattling voice.” The texture, instrumentation, and “atonal” quality contribute to the exaggeration and physicality that lend the bai’s leitmotif a grotesque manner, particularly when it is seen as substitute for his unheard voice. They also serve as a musical depiction and reinforcement of the landscape of the Altai as sparse, highlighting how Kuz’mina is “alone.”

In contrast to the bai and the village advisor, which I discuss later, the villagers were musically depicted without grotesquerie and irony. Instead, village song, revolutionary song, and ethnographic recordings were used as a sincere representation of socialism in the soundtrack. The motifs that represent the villagers are limited to the second half of the film and often locally developed within smaller sections. The tune, entitled by film music critic Ieremiya Ioffe as “Russian Lot,” repeats three times throughout the fourth and seventh reels, firstly introducing the snowy winter of the Altai and later somberly sung by the wife of the advisor (Appendix G, Figure 37). This song bears a slight resemblance to Russian village music, (changing meter, melodic contour, and limited range) and was said to be written by Shostakovich, though it does not appear

79 Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran, 154. See footnote 109 of this chapter for Kozintsev’s description of the bai’s “voice.”
80 In Russian the name of the song is “Dolyushka russkaya.”
in any of his known manuscripts. It is unclear whether this tune was borrowed or was composed with Russian village music in mind. Regardless, it is used once as a “number,” directly before the moment when the advisor’s wife sings the tune; from that point forward, it is only used as underscoring. Its last appearance is over a series of images of the Altai and of Kuz’mina on her sickbed (Appendix F). This move from underscoring to diegesis to underscoring again shows how fluidly music moves between these two spaces and how this particular tune can represent both the people and the landscape. As Kozintsev related later, the directors were attempting to characterize the people of the Altai in the most “authentic” way possible, avoiding a misrepresentation of the people. This reminiscence motif is localized to the second half of the film and appears initially and finally to epitomize the forlorn character and the desolation of the Altai wilderness, while also segueing into Kuz’mina’s unsuccessful confrontation with the advisor. This attempt to musically and visually depict the Altai and its people was met with criticism nonetheless, as I discuss in the next section.

Another element of the “folk” was also incorporated to evoke the Altai aside from the “Russian Lot” music. In the first shot of the Altai at the beginning of the second half of the film, overtone singing is heard. This singing style is common to the region where the directors shot the Altai section of the film. Many groups of the Altai region, categorized as “Altai Turks” or “Altai Mongols” use overtone singing for various activities.

---

81 This song only appears in the phonogram. See Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” 366 and Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 34. Yakubov takes his version of the song from Ioffe’s book, which was the first publication of the song. Ioffe took his transcription from the phonogram of the film.
contexts, ranging from lullabies to hunting. The singing in *Alone* is only a fragment, leaving the context unclear. Original context and functional meaning may not have been the intent of the directors, since the use of overtone singing appears to generally signify the Altai region, rather than specifically signifying a ritual or a group. The use of this fragment of overtone singing seems to reinforce the “folk” aspect of the film and the directors’ desire for “authenticity” and realism.

One other element of “folk” realism appears in the second half of the film. From the beginning of the second half of the film through the end, an *akïn*, or village bard, appears when the villagers are working and when Kuz’mina is taken away by airplane. Each time, he appears with a string instrument that resembles a *dombra*, an instrument typically used by *akïn* in the Altai region. Although he accompanies his singing with this instrument, the sound he creates is not heard, since sound equipment was unavailable during shooting in the Altai. Instead, Shostakovich’s music accompanies him. In his first appearance, he sings to the villagers as they shear sheep, while Shostakovich’s music, consisting of a horn line of a rising third and a harp line of two notes, sounds in the underscoring. The use of the harp is particularly creative, since it is the only orchestral solo string instrument that has the volume to be heard over the horn. Shostakovich has thus found a unique way of dealing with the lack of “real” sound by substituting a near equivalent in the underscoring.

One element of the “folk,” which was successfully received as “socialist,” appears in a later scene when Kuz’mina sits with the children of the village and attempts to teach

---

them about the *kulak* resistance during collectivization. To keep from freezing, she invites the children to dance in a circle, at which moment the music shifts instrumentation (low strings, clarinet to flute), mode (from D-flat minor to F major) into a subtle, yet recognizable reference to a Civil War song known as “marsh Budyonnogo.” This reference becomes clearer when the intertitles appear with the phrase “Konnaya Budyonnogo” (cavalry of Budyoni), which coincides with an eighth-note pattering of tune that more clearly resembles the original song, as well as evoking connotations of the known Civil War hero (Appendix G, Figure 38(a) and 38(b)). The content of this well-placed revolutionary song creates an apparently effective connection to the idea of socialist building in the Altai, since Korchmaryov, who negatively reviewed the film score overall, considered the song to be an “especially impressive” moment in the score. The revolutionary song therefore functions as a positive rendering of the State and of socialist construction.

The reminiscence motif for the children is also limited to the second half of the film. It first appears when Kuz’mina teaches the children for first time and reappears when the children come to visit her on her sickbed (Appendix G, Figure 39). This sparse, percussive leitmotif, consisting of a steady pattering of percussion and sparse bursts in the solo woodwinds (piccolos, flutes, oboes) and brass (trumpet) is associated with Kuz’mina’s dreams of teaching and the education of the children. Its use of major mode, emphasis on thirds and fourths in the winds and brass references the “brightness” of the first section of the film, where Kuz’mina dreams of her ideal classroom and

---

83 I thank Margarita Mazo for helping me to identify this song.
84 Shostakovich can afford to be subtle in his reference to this song at the beginning of the scene, since the intertitles clarify to whom the song refers.
schoolchildren. The added predominant percussive quality also lends a militant feel to the reminiscence motif, perhaps implying through “coding” that these children are getting education from an urban teacher that was sent by the State. The initial statement of the motif, where the bright, militant music plays as Kuz’mina teaches, is rudely interrupted by the bai’s “rattling” voice. Kozintsev commented that when the bai interrupts Kuz’mina’s teaching of the children, her dreams of teaching are altered by the reality of her situation, emphasizing the awakening of the teacher to the needs of the village.85 This motif as representation of Kuz’mina’s dreams and hopes resurfaces as the children visit her on her sickbed, reiterating the role of the children and their education in the ideals of the State.

Thus far, the terms leitmotif, reminiscence motif, and motif, have mainly referred to melody-oriented ideas. Instrumentation, however, can also have a “leit” role. The term “leittimbre,” for example, has been commonly used in Russian music scholarship.86 Throughout the score, certain instruments are strongly associated with specific situations or characters.87 The use of solo woodwinds for the motifs associated with the Altai and the bai, for example, was intended by Shostakovich to be a timbral association or “leittimbre.”88 The hurdy-gurdy for Kuz’mina and urban life also shows that

85 Kozintsev, Glubokiy ekran, 153-154.
86 See Yuri Keldysh, Mark Aranovsky, L. Korabel’nikova, and Yu. Khokhlov, eds., Muzïkal’nyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar’ [The Musical Encyclopedic Dictionary] (Moscow: Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, 1990). It has also been used in reference to film music in the Soviet era. See M. Cheremukhin, Muzïka zvukovogo fil’ma [Music of Sound Film] (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939), 143. Cheremukhin mentions both “leit-timbres” and “leit-colors” in this text.
87 To some degree, The New Babylon uses instrumentation in this manner, though not consistently enough to be called “leittimbre.”
88 Kozintsev relates that the association of the woodwinds and flute with the bai was created by Shostakovich. See Glubokiy ekran, 154.
instrumentation is attached to specific characters or places. Cheremukhin points out that the trombone glissandi of the “snoring” scene of the village advisor acts as a “leit-timbre,” returning later in the film and falling into the category of low-range instruments and their association with the Altai and bai throughout the film.

Although the trombone glissandi do appear in the second half of the film, I argue that they are associated with the smug indifference of the village advisor, since these glissandi appear in three places specifically associated with him: 1) the initial “snoring” scene, 2) shortly after the “snoring” scene when the advisor drinks tea with his wife and comments on the uselessness of Soviet propaganda posters, and 3) at the end, when he discusses Kuz’mina’s impending death. Instrumentation, therefore, plays a significant role in musical form and its connection to the syuzhet, particularly in Alone.

Perhaps due to the nature of the medium itself, silence appears as its own leitmotif throughout the film. Kuz’mina’s loneliness is often punctuated by silence as well as the above leitmotifs. After Kuz’mina has arrived in the Altai, instead of a non-diegetic orchestral accompaniment, the viewer/listener hears silence, in itself a commentary on her being “alone,” as she gazes up at the skin of horse, a shaman totem hanging from a pole. There are, however, many other “silent” moments in the film, probably because the film and sound recording were unintentionally not synchronized or the music was intentionally not supposed to be continuous. Lack of synchrony was due to the experimental nature of the sound system. There are moments, however, when the music

---

89 Also, the aural montage of the “hut” scene, which I discuss shortly, would not have the same effect if certain themes/instrumentation were not already imbued with specific character or place associations.
90 Cheremukhin, Muzïka zvukovogo fil’ma, 127.
92 Cheremukhin, Muzïka zvukovogo fil’ma, 128.
was seemingly designed to cut off with the image. As Shostakovich has said, the score was not “unified.” The result is the occasional pause between the “numbers” of the score, during which the action continues unaccompanied by sound.

**Non-Composed Sounds and Borrowed Music**

“Found” or borrowed sounds chosen by the directors are also part of the film score, sometimes intertwined the composed music of Shostakovich. As Kozintsev explains in *The Deep Screen*, sounds like the hurdy-gurdy, the shaman’s music, the alarm clock, the wall clock (in the advisor’s house), the teapots, and the office sounds were “real-life” symbols.93 Unfortunately, due to the limitations of the sound equipment, certain sounds had to be replaced with sounds that would translate as “real” on the screen, as discussed earlier. Voices were also too difficult to record, which resulted in the substitution of either sound effects or composed music, resulting in a film that critic B. Alpers found to be “in contrast to realistic speaking film,” further stating that “*Alone* advances the principle of the musical film, in which the word loses its independent meaning, a mover of dramatic events.”94

Since there was little in the manner of synchronized speech, the music was received as “vocal” in its own way. Ioffe, who argued that instrumental music is a metaphor for speech, described Shostakovich’s music as “imitating speech” in an almost onomatopoetic manner.95 Using the musical metaphorical “speech” of the *bai* as a case in point, Ioffe argued that the music not only imitates the speech intonation and the general emotions of the character, but also the timbres, accents, and rhythms of the

---

94 Alpers, “Oshibka Feksov.”
“intonational-vocal image” of the person. In this sense, the music acts as a substitute for speech, allowing it an even more specific “coding.” In the case of the bai, as related earlier, the chosen instruments and their angular melodies produce a “rattling voice” that becomes associated with the character throughout the remainder of the film. The music, when representing the bai, acts not just as a quasi-“motif” but as a bridge between diegetic and non-diegetic space. It is a kind of musicalized speech.

The undefined boundary between diegetic and non-diegetic space is also apparent in the cinematic and musical representation of “folk” in this film. Unlike the composed music for the hurdy-gurdy, there was an ethnographic recording of a shaman and his drumming made by Kozintsev, which he intended to be “authentic” and realist. When Kozintsev and Trauberg shot Alone in the Altai, they decided to take a shaman back to Leningrad. There, the shaman recorded his music, which Kozintsev and Trauberg later dubbed over the film, corresponding to the non-acted images of the shaman performing a ritual to heal the sick. This recording of the shaman is an aural equivalent to the horse skin draped on a pole, a sign of shamanism. The recording first appears after Kuz’mina gazes at the horse and converses with the village advisor. During this conversation, they

---

96 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 35-36. When Ioffe described music as speech, he addressed the scene where the bai interrupts Kuz’mina as she teaches the children. The first two staves of the musical example that he provides between pages 35 and 36, however, is the beginning music from the “snoring scene,” not from the scene of bai and Kuz’mina. The remaining lines are from a later incarnation of the music of the “snoring scene” from the end of the Fifth Reel, probably where the kulaks and bai are making a deal over the sheep. See Yakubov, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 123, “Odna,” Number 33, 185-187.

97 Kozintsev relates a fascinating opinion of the shaman whom he invited to Leningrad to record. He related, “I met Kondratiy Tanashev. He was a professional shaman and knew his business. He worked on real fuel, never free-wheeling: an epileptic, he knew the signs, how to take advantage of an oncoming fit. Besides that, he was an inveterate drunkard. He used to heal sick children before my very eyes in the dark, smoky, yurt. He would strike his tambourines with a stick, wail, intone some sort of incantation in a husky voice and then leap up, twirl round and round, stamping his boots...We took Tanashev to Leningrad to film him in the studio. He obliging repeated (several times) the whole gamut of his incantations. Nothing of their power came over on the screen.” See Grigory Kozintsev, King Lear: The Space of Tragedy: The Diary of a Film Director, trans. Mary Mackintosh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 225-226 for further discussion.
both hear the shaman’s music, which, as they attend stage left, is made visible through a cut to the image of a shaman healing a sick woman, which the advisor explains as the old, pre-Soviet ways. Thus, not only does the viewer/listener then associate the shaman and his music with the Altai, but the montage, strongly influenced by Kuleshov’s experiments, indicates that the shaman and his music are diegetic, i.e., part of Kuz’mina’s surrounding soundscape. The shaman’s music later becomes a reminiscence motif for the wilderness and “pagan” qualities of the Altai, as the solo woodwind instruments represent the bai.

There are two instances where Shostakovich’s music subtly interweaves with “found” sounds, moving between diegesis and non-diegesis. The second and last appearance of the shaman’s music is one instance of this movement, as well as the first significant instance of visual/aural polyphony. This music appears as Kuz’mina settles into her new “hut,” starts to think of her life in the city, as indicated by her gazing at the portrait of her fiancé, and repeats exercises that she performed in the beginning of the film. Kozintsev described the scene:

The sound part was difficult enough. The simplest sounds received their own development in the scenario, [where] living sounds grew into real-life symbols. Every morning a barrel-organ played in the courtyard where the young woman lived (as was customary at the time). Shostakovich composed a ‘galop’ (it was recorded onto a reel); the barrel-organ theme then shifted into an orchestral arrangement. The light-hearted city melody went with the young woman, as though accompanying her, to the distant village: a reminder of her thoughtless past. The sound fabric of the episode of the teacher’s arrival was complex. The young woman was settling in, unpacking her things; suddenly the alarm clock went off, and then the tune of the distant city barrel-organ was heard. A tambourine’s crude strikes and the hoarse cry of the shaman (a genuine recording) invaded the merry motif. A device for threshing corn pounded and squeaked (a genuine

---

98 The last word of the phrase actually translates as “living sounds that grow into generalizations [obobshenii],” but here I used Yakubov’s translation which does evoke the idea of “real” sounds as symbols. See Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 154 for the original Russian.
recording), and then as if stitched into the sound fabric, a woodwind phrase arose – the voice of the *bai*, composed by Shostakovich. The voice, rattling and senile, appeared several times in the film, became stronger and grew in power.99

The sound of the scene of Kuz’mina’s arrival is initiated by a ringing from her alarm clock, followed by a third appearance of Shostakovich’s music for hurdy-gurdy repeating music first heard in Kuz’mina’s courtyard as she awoke in the opening scene of the film (Appendix G, Figures 40 and 41). In the manuscript draft and newly published version of *Alone*, the only music that appears is a ten-measure ostinato for organ and low woodwinds (bass clarinet, bassoon, and contrabassoon), which repeats once and continues into an English horn solo, which accompanies Kuz’mina’s gaze as she looks out the window and images of the Altai.100 After the English horn solo, the hurdy-gurdy player’s music enters in C minor, in contrast to the original appearance of the tune in C major. Here, the hurdy-gurdy music is technically non-diegetic, though it could be a sound that she hears in the diegetic space of her mind, her “imaginary” soundscape, as opposed to the general diegetic space of the film. This hurdy-gurdy thus represents her ideal city life, and according to Kozintsev, is a “real-life” symbol – “a reminder of her thoughtless past” (Appendix F). The sudden and diegetic intrusion of the shaman’s music on her daydream is indicated in part by her sudden turn towards the window (stage left). Slowly, the hurdy-gurdy music overlaps with the shaman’s music, which is not indicated in the original manuscript.101 The hurdy-gurdy and music of the shaman in combination with the eventual addition of a hammering and pounding sound creates a

temporary polyphonic cacophony. This musical layering continues over a montage of images of the shaman, villagers working, and the horse skin. This layering, montagist approach to music and sound, more characteristic of modernism than socialist realism, is used to represent the wild, non-Soviet character of the land, particularly in contrast with the new urban arrival. It also provides a brief glimpse into Kuz’mina’s state of mind and her ability to adapt to her new surroundings. The use of the shaman in particular could also be read as a fetishizing of the “folk” Other to both embrace diversity as a symbolic depiction of the “folk” to the “folk,” which later became popular under the doctrine of socialist realism. The realist intent, however, was overshadowed by the montagist presentation – as critic Klimenty Korchmaryov expressed, the scene was one of the “defects” of the film, because it was symbolic instead of “real.”

Another moment of the interweaving of composed and “found” sounds moving between diegetic and non-diegetic space is the “snoring” scene. One musical idea, which is a reminiscence motif instead of a leitmotif, appears twice throughout the second half of the film and is associated with the village advisor, though often mistakenly attributed to the bai. For the village advisor, a motif, or section, of music first appears after the

---

102 Egorova mentions that there is “polyphonic sound montage” in Alone, perhaps referencing scenes like this one, though she does not specify what she means by this phrase. See Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 17. Polyphonic layering of sound was also common to other films such as Vsevolod Pudovkin’s Deserter and Dziga Vertov’s Enthusiasm. She also compares the early film experiments of sound layering with “constructivist” symphonies by composers such as Aleksandr Mosolov and Vladimir Deshevov. Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 14.

103 Castillo has discussed this issue of taking elements of peripheral culture of the Soviet Union and melding into the socialist realist aesthetic in architecture under Stalinism. See Greg Castillo, “Peoples at an Exhibition: Soviet Architecture and the National Question,” Socialist Realism Without Shores, ed. Thomas Lahunen and Evgeny Dobrenko (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). See also Chapter One. Of the set of three aspects to socialist realism discussed in Chapter One – idei’ nost, parti’ nost and narod’ nost – narod’ nost is the most difficult to translate, since it could mean “of the folk,” “by the folk,” among other things, depending upon the context of the word.

104 Korchmaryov, “Muzika k fil’me ‘Odna’.”

105 Ioffe attributes this motif to the bai. See Ioffe, Muzika sovetskogo kino, 35-36.
“Russian Lot” song is sung by the wife of the advisor and when Kuz’mina finds him in his home accompanying himself with obnoxious snoring. After finally rising out of bed, the advisor is accompanied by what Kozintsev calls a “symphonic snore,” which enters with a dirge-like motif in the contrabassoons and low brass.\(^{106}\) This consists of a half-note undulating motive accompanied by snore-like glissandi in the low range of the trombones, musically picking up the actor’s snore and using it as an ostinato throughout the remainder of the scene, where the advisor denies Kuz’mina any help in her situation (Appendix F and Appendix G, Figure 36). This reminiscence motif/section appears again at the end of the film in two places in the exact same key, melodic, and rhythmic structure: where the advisor, kulak, and bai meet to discuss the purchase of the villager’s sheep; and where the advisor speaks to the people about preparing for Kuz’mina’s burial.\(^{107}\) The only musical change in this reminiscence motif is when it appears at the meeting of the bai, kulak, and village advisor. The trombone glissandi are omitted and the instrumentation is slightly scaled down. At this point, it is clear that this reminiscence motif symbolizes the advisor’s allegiances to the bai and the kulak as well as his smug indifference, which positions him as the enemy of the villagers and ultimately, the socialist State. This characterization was not missed by later critics, such as Cheremukhin, who found the music of the “snoring” scene, especially the use of the trombone glissandi, to effectively capture the “savage, lazy mug” of the character of the village advisor.\(^{108}\)

\(^{106}\) Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran*, 155.

\(^{107}\) When this reminiscence motif appears at the meeting of the bai, kulaks, and village advisor, the trombone glissandi are omitted and the instrumentation slightly scaled down. See Yakubov, *Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 123*, “Odna,” Number 33 (midway through the number), 184-185.

\(^{108}\) Cheremukhin, *Muzika zvukovogo fil’m*, 127.
In his discussion of the film’s music, Kozintsev described the “snoring” scene as an instance where sound “leads” the image.\(^{109}\) He wrote:

The teacher in the severe winter cold ran to the hut of the village advisor…The early glow of the samovar, the woman with the lifeless face, the monotone swing of the cradle; on the stove a person sleeps on a sheepskin coat…The snoring, at first usual, mundane, was the only sound of the scene; then the snore became louder, started to burst and whistle (we invited a special imitator) and finally, the whole creation of symphony orchestra joins in a hoarse wheeze, turning his loud snore into a kind of prehistoric animal. The teacher asks and pleads, in her eyes appear tears, but slowly and heavily the musical action gathers strength, growing into a symphonic snore.\(^{110}\)

Kozintsev’s description of the snore turning orchestral, or as he also described it, using a sound to lead the image, picks up on Shostakovich’s first “principle,” the “principle of the shot” that he used in *The New Babylon.*\(^{111}\) He uses his music as the main agent of meaning to clearly depict the advisor as grotesque and antithetical to Kuz’mina. This is reminiscent of similar techniques in *The Nose* used to express the physicality of the imagery, as in the opening act of the opera when the obnoxious snore of the main character, Kovalyev, acts as part of the orchestral texture, which mainly consists of glissando slides in the trombone and the violin. In the case of *Alone,* following the main idea of the scene, the music comes to depict the advisor’s indifference to Kuz’mina as well as his questionable and boorish character. Shostakovich thus continues the experiment of *The New Babylon* by following the main idea of the scene – he made the physical musical, characterizing the advisor as an “enemy.”

\(^{109}\) Kozintsev, *Glubokiy ekran,* 154.
\(^{110}\) Ibid., 155.
\(^{111}\) See Chapter Three for a discussion of Shostakovich’s “principles.” In a letter from Kozintsev in December 1947, one can see the closeness of the relationship between visual/aural, director/composer. He expressed to Shostakovich, “I already for many years have repeated: when I hear your music, I hear my ideas.” See Grigory Kozintsev, *Perepiska G. M. Kozintseva* [The Correspondence of G. M. Kozintsev] (Moscow: Artist, Rezhissyor, Teatr: 1998), 83. This quote was brought to my attention in a recent paper. Ol’ga Dombrovskaya, “The Music of Shostakovich to Kozintsev’s films *Hamlet* and *King Lear,***” (paper, *Shostakovich Festival and Symposium 2006,* Rutgers University, 7-9 April 2006.)
The numerous aspects and approaches to the filmmaking and scoring show how *Alone* negotiates traits of modernism and socialist realism. The unifying approach to the overall form of the score using recurring motifs, despite its fragmented, “number-like” sectionalization, the counterpoint of images and sound/music, and the fluid boundaries between diegetic/non-diegetic and silence/sound exhibit how integral and “modern” Shostakovich’s music is to the overall creation of meaning in the film. The montagist approach to film technique, echoed by the music, is also a modernist trait that is reminiscent of filmmaking in the twenties. The sound effects and ethnographic recordings, the visual and aural representations of the “folk,” and depictions of character psychology have traits of both modernism (grotesque, ironic) and socialist realism (realism and the “folk”). The desire for realism via representations of the “folk,” experiments with “real” sounds, or “psychological” depictions of the heroine, balanced with innovations such as visual/musical montage reveal *Alone* to be a transitional film that cannot be easily categorized as only modernist or socialist realist.

Layering the visual images with aural equivalents or creating a sound correlation to the montage were common techniques throughout *Alone* that can be interpreted as both modernist and socialist realist. As Kozintsev noted in an interview in September 1929,

We are not going to build our film on the chaotic introduction of a series of sounds depicting particular purely naturalistic aspects, but on the original introduction of sound frames into the montage, which are arranged along with the frames, not accompanying them.\(^{112}\)

The montage film technique, coupled with the layering of musical “lines,” for example, was a technique repeated throughout the film and seems to reflect the idea of introducing

sound in an organized manner that complements the images instead of following them in rhythmically exact manner. One prime example is the instance of Kuz’mina’s settling in to the Altai with the layering of the shaman’s music and the hurdy-gurdy. The cinematic montage of this example draws upon the montage technique of Sergey Eisenstein and Lev Kuleshov. Shostakovich and Kozintsev created a musical complement to the visual montage, producing a cinematic technique that parallels the musical linearism common to the Leningrad modernist school. Another example of layering, in this case, of sound effects, is Kuz’mina’s telephone conversation with her fiancé. Instead of hearing her voice, we hear several layers of voices, typing, and other ambient sounds of an office played over the shot. This layering of non-musical sounds bears a striking resemblance to Vertov’s modernist film Enthusiasm, where he layers sounds of the city atop each other to evoke a busy city day. Another example of layering occurs at the very beginning of the film, where Shostakovich’s orchestral music is interwoven with sound effects of the city, such as traffic sounds and horn honking. This eventually gives way to the main leitmotif, “How good life will be.” Overall, the layering techniques used for the interaction of the visual and aural reflect modernism of the twenties, in complement and contrast to the more “realist” musical material, such as “folk” songs and the shaman’s music used throughout the film. These techniques also continue the experiments that Shostakovich began in The New Babylon.
Reception of the Music of *Alone*

With the new sound technology and the role of the film composer becoming increasingly common, critics of the music to *Alone* focused their discussions of the music in ways different from *The New Babylon*. Music was still understood as a carrier of meaning or way of heightening emotion, yet *Alone* was generally received as an “emotional” film that attempted to get at the inner psychology of the main characters and the social situations in which they were found. The focus of the reception of the music was on three intersecting set of issues: realism and representation of people of varying “classes” and socialist ideals, the music’s interaction with the cinematic action and depiction of the heroine’s inner world, and the use of the new technology by the directors and Shostakovich. In various reports, newspaper articles, and other essays, a majority of the critics praised Shostakovich’s music, with only a few dissenters disapproving of the music’s interaction with the image or the appropriateness of the musical “content.” The reception was varied and rich, revealing the shifts being made in art politics of the early thirties.

With the “Statement on Sound” in recent memory, many critics and the directors commented on the relationship of the music and the action, focusing on whether or not the music accompanied the action or worked as an equal partner to it. As Kozintsev explained “we wanted to continue Shostakovich’s experiment from *The New Babylon*.”

Here, Kozintsev refers to his desire to make the music as much of a character in the film as the heroine herself. As he stated in his discussion of the music to *The New Babylon*,

---

In those years music was used to strengthen the emotions of reality, or, to use the current terminology, to illustrate the frame. We immediately came to an agreement with the composer that the music would be linked to the inner meaning and not to the external action, that it should develop by cutting across events, and as the antithesis of the mood of a specific scene.\textsuperscript{115}

To continue the experiment from \textit{The New Babylon}, he wanted to “reinforce the visual images, to have them juxtapose with sound.” One of the main points from the “Statement on Sound,” was the intent to keep the art of montage intact, while incorporating sound, producing a “counterpoint” to the image.\textsuperscript{116} The result would be a montage, or juxtaposition of the sound with the images, while the images themselves were organized according to the principles of the Russian montage technique of the twenties.

Kozintsev’s intended effect of the counterpoint of sound and image was recognized by a prominent film music scholar and composer, Sergey Bugoslavsky. In one of the most revealing statements of Lenfilm’s Sound Committee report, Bugoslavsky plainly stated, “The music of Shostakovich appears to be a major step towards the work of montage film-music.”\textsuperscript{117} This statement, followed by a long description of Shostakovich’s music, clearly reveals that Shostakovich’s music was heard as an active player in the film, working in counterpoint with the images. B. Alpers, who authored the newspaper article, “The Mistakes of FEKS,” supported Bugoslavsky’s interpretation: “The action of the film almost always is accompanied by symphonic music which plays the role of psychological commentary on dramatic situations.”\textsuperscript{118} Both Bugoslavsky and

\textsuperscript{116} See Chapter Two for a discussion of the Statement. See also Sergey Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Grigory Aleksandrov, “Statement on Sound” in the \textit{Film Factory}, 234-235.
\textsuperscript{117} Bugoslavsky, “Gruppy po zvukovomu kino,” 1.
\textsuperscript{118} Alpers, “Oshibka Feksov.” Here, symphonic simply means underscoring.
Alpers described how the music “grows out of the whole ideological conception of the work,”\textsuperscript{119} and that

the music of Shostakovich is worthy of being placed on the level of active involvement with the action and is involved in the discovery of the relationship with the characters and their behavior, as well as in the establishment of leitmotifs, which characterizes the experiences of individual and the social groups (the bourgeois attitude and the kulaks).\textsuperscript{120}

In these interpretations and Kozintsev’s descriptions of the sound design in \textit{Alone}, it appears that Shostakovich’s music had transcended the role of accompaniment and became integral to the film.

The score to \textit{Alone} was received by many as an incredible achievement for sound film. As with \textit{The New Babylon}, surveys of \textit{Alone} were also taken during the film’s first showing for the employees of Soyuzkino Studio on 10 March 1929.\textsuperscript{121} Nearly 800 people answered the questionnaire and debated over the film for several hours. According to Yakubov’s summary of these surveys, the audience showed overwhelming support for Shostakovich’s music, stating that “the music saved the picture. The picture is a kind of illustration to Shostakovich’s music.”\textsuperscript{122} The audience was nearly hysterical and many of the people, included the actress Kuz’mina herself, were deeply moved by Shostakovich’s music.\textsuperscript{123} Other critics, including Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky, found Shostakovich’s music to be “correct” and “Soviet.”\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Alone} was also one of the first

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Bugoslavsky, “Gruppy po zvukovomu kino,” 1.
\textsuperscript{121} This is based on Yakubov’s summary of surveys found in TSGALI in St. Petersburg. See Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” 332. Also note that by 1931 Sovkino had changed its name to Soyuzkino.
\textsuperscript{122} Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” 332.
\textsuperscript{123} For more discussion of the crowd’s reaction and Kuz’mina’s in particular, see Yakubov, 332 and Elena Kuz’mina, \textit{O tom, chto ya pomnju} [On What I Remember] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1989), 251-252.
\textsuperscript{124} V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky, “Slushaya zvukovoi fil’m...” [Listening to a Soundtrack Film...\textit{] Rabočiī i teatr} 24 (August 1933): 14.
sound films that Stalin watched, prompting him to suggest that the industry needed more support to continue its growth in sound filmmaking.125

The critics who disapproved of Shostakovich’s music generally focused on the musical language, not the interaction of the music and the image. One Sound Committee member complained that “The music is leftist, deeply intellectual, far from the proletarian ideology, difficult to understand; it is complicated.”126 Here, the words “leftist” and “intellectual” refer to the modernist musical practices of the twenties and are received as contrary to musical practices that would be considered socialist realist, using language that would become all too familiar in 1936. Another critic, Korchmaryov, summed up Shostakovich’s music more generally with descriptors such as “atonal muddle” or “ambivalent.”127 Korchmaryov continued,

There is one pleasing moment in the work of Shostakovich – the move from atonal muddle, borrowing from the painful, negative model of the bourgeois West, to clear harmonic and melodic concepts. Of course, the path of the Soviet composer lies not in the looking back on decadent models of the West, but in a satisfying and understandable manner of execution.128

The focus of these critics on the musical language, as opposed to its interaction with the image, led to the use of the usual descriptors “leftist,” “atonal,” “bourgeois,” or “decadent” to emphasize the excessive modernism of the film. Ioffe also deemed Alone and Shostakovich’s other early music as “formalist” and “constructivist.”129 He

125 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 16.
127 Korchmaryov, “Muzïka k fil’me ‘Odna’.”
128 Ibid.
129 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 33 and 45. Ioffe listed The Bolt, The Nose, and The New Babylon as “formalist” and “constructivist.”
specifically described Shostakovich’s music to *Alone* to be “grotesque” and “parodic,” particularly when instrumental music replaced the speech of the characters, as in the case of the *bäi*.

The musical language, however, was not the only aspect considered unappealing by these critics. The exclusion of synchronized speech and natural sounds indicated to some critics that this film should be considered a silent instead of a sound film. One critic stated that, “*Alone* is a silent film…that has the inherent defects of a silent film,” while another claimed that the filmmakers, “had shown fear of human speech.” Other, more supportive, critics suggested that speech should be added in moments of silence.

Another contemporary critic, Pavina Rïbakova, in an extensive essay on the comparative strengths and weaknesses of *Alone* and *The Golden Mountains*, found that the speech that was included in *Alone* was secondary to the musical underscoring. In fact, Ribakova insisted that the music either revealed the “veiled meaning” of the scenes, implying that the music substitutes for speech in this “silent”-styled film, or brought out the film’s deficiencies that would otherwise go unnoticed in its silent version. She also claimed that Shostakovich’s use of “folk” songs and dances as motifs to represent characters or groups was ineffective because it was too generalized or misrepresentative in the context of the main theme of the film: the “rebuilding” of Kuz’mina. Rïbakova instead considered Kuz’mina’s themes (the hurdy-gurdy and “How good life will be”) to be “hostile music” for a young woman from a “Soviet city,” implying that she thought

---

131 Korchmaryov, “Muzïka k fil’me ‘Odna’.”
132 Alpers, “Oshibka Feksoy.”
133 “Gruppy po zvukovomu kino.”
135 Ibid., 40-41.
Kuz’mina’s themes to be perhaps too “bourgeois.” As Ribakova complains earlier, no “revolutionary songs” were used by Shostakovich, which should naturally have a “connection with the struggle of the proletariat.” This is incorrect, since Shostakovich did use a revolutionary song, “marsh Budyonnego,” that went unnoticed by this critic.

In addition to discussion centered on the relationship of sound to image and general musical language, critics also discussed the role of song as either socialist realist or modernist. As Kozintsev had stated, the music in the first half of the film echoed the cinematographer Moskvin’s use of the color white – bright, tonal, and clear. The song that functioned as the main leitmotif of the film, “How good life will be,” acted as an aural complement to the visual brightness. Very few critics directly discussed the song itself, but generally commented that the first half of the film used music that was clearly understood. Ioffe, however, did recognize the section with the “flying tram” and “How good life will be” as “parodic,” especially in comparison to the “internal, subjective” musical nature of the second half of the film. Glavrepetkom (Central Repertory Committee) also had a negative interpretation, stating that the “repetition of the vocal phrase “How good life will be” put the viewer in an ‘undesirable frame of mind.’” As discussed earlier, Kozintsev later commented that the first half of the film and its musical “brightness” was designed to be ironic, but became the standard for socialist realist film music in the thirties. In other words, the main leitmotif had depth because it was presented as ironic in combination with the images; and Kozintsev implicitly criticized

---

137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kina, 34.
140 Yakubov, “Muzïka D. D. Shostakovicha k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” 320 and 332. The translation is mostly Yakubov’s that I have somewhat altered.
later film music that used similar musical characteristics as empty, lacking seriousness and depth.

Other criticisms and comments about the film were concerned more with the technology than artistic direction or musical style. Since Kozintsev and Trauberg were among the first to experiment with sound in film, they made mistakes and encountered difficulties with producing sound effects and recording. Although Shostakovich’s music, particularly his use of orchestral color, was received well, many critics commented that the placement of the recording microphones diminished the quality of the sound. One critic claimed that the flute and oboe were “deficient” in timbre, while another stated that these same instruments were “badly recorded.” Sergey Gerasimov, the actor who played the role of the village advisor, also commented that the music to *Alone* lacked technical sophistication. Kozintsev also related that Shostakovich was reported to the authorities by sound specialists at the studio for not considering the limitations of the recording equipment as part of his composition, claiming that he was trying to sabotage the film. Before the film was released, Ippolit Sokolov had published an article scolding directors in general for not taking the limitations of the sound equipment into consideration, going as far as to suggest that

---

142 Ibid. Cheremukhin has written that early recording apparatuses had difficulty in picking up extreme ranges of some instruments such as trombones and flutes, and had great difficulty with instruments at either extreme such as contrabasses or piccolos. See Cheremukhin, *Muzika zvukovogo fil’ma*, 21.
There is now a battle going on in sound cinema between technology and content plus form. In art, the substitution of naked technology for content and form is the most extreme kind of Formalism, the narrowest form of technicization.\footnote{Ippolit Sokolov, “Vtoraya programma tonfil’m,” [The Second Sound Film Programme] in Film Factory, 308-309. Translation by Richard Taylor and Ian Christie.}

Sokolov chastises directors for not considering the limitations of the equipment and allowing the novelty of sound to act as a substitute for “content and form.” Shostakovich himself also commented about the terrible quality of the film’s recording:

> I cannot complain about the orchestra in my own work for Alone and Golden Mountains. I had an exceptionally high quality orchestra under the direction of the extremely talented conductor N. Rabinovich. And the result? When you’re listening to a soundtrack, you become convinced that all the work was reduced to dust: the screen wheezes, hiccups, and emits various sounds, which brings to naught the works of a first class orchestra and of the composer.\footnote{Dmitry Shostakovich, “Declaratsya obyazannostey kompozitora,” [Declaration of a Composer’s Duties], Rabochiy i teatr, 31 (20 November 1931), 6. Also found in I. A. Bobyikina, Dmitry Shostakovich v pis’makh i dokumentakh, [Dmitry Shostakovich Through his Letters and Documents] (Moscow: The Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture, 2000), 493-496.}

Almost twenty years later, Shostakovich recalled Alone as “not really a sound film.”\footnote{Dmitry Shostakovich, “Kino kak shkola kompozitora,” [Cinema as the Composer’s School] in 30 let sovetskoy kinematografii [30 Years of Soviet Cinematography] ed. D. I. Eremin (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1950), 354.}

He states that “In those years, the methods, techniques, and decisions for the real artistic connection of sound and image were only just being sought.”\footnote{Ibid.} Contemporaneously and in hindsight, it is clear that there was still much experimentation that needed to be done when recording a symphony orchestra for film in the early thirties.

Other supportive critics, such as Bugoslavsky, commented that background noise was a common occurrence in the film as well. He stated that although the viewer/listener could recognize timbres, there was also “extra-ordinary noise” heard in the background. Although Kozintsev and Trauberg were unsuccessful in blocking out ambient noise, most of the critics that commented on the “noise” understood that this was the result of

\footnote{Dmitry Shostakovich, “Kino kak shkola kompozitora,” [Cinema as the Composer’s School] in 30 let sovetskoy kinematografii [30 Years of Soviet Cinematography] ed. D. I. Eremin (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1950), 354.}
experimental technology and concluded their statements with demands to “force the improvement” of sound film.149

Conclusions

As argued here, Alone was a transitional film. Its visual and aural components can be interpreted as both modernist and socialist realist. At the time of its premiere, it was received as both ways because of the change in politics of the arts, the advent of new sound technology, and the changing role of the composer. Every individual involved in filmmaking, including the composer, was struggling to anticipate the next trend in aesthetics and adjust their work accordingly. During the Cultural Revolution, particularly between 1929 and 1931, there was a desire to move closer to a definition of what was socialist about the State, its people, and its arts. Alone reveals the complexity of this eventual shift into socialist realism.

Alone is partly a modernist film. The approach to technique, including Eisensteinian and Kuleshovian montage and overlaps are reminiscent of Kozintsev’s and Trauberg’s earlier FEKS-oriented films. Their use of sound was modernist in the way in which they layered ambient sounds of everyday life or mix them with Shostakovich’s musical score, much in the way avant-garde directors such as Vertov layered sounds and music. For the first time, Shostakovich had the opportunity to fully explore the movement between diegetic and non-diegetic sound, as heard in the snoring scene. His music often served as a representation of the personality and political position of a character – as ironic, grotesque, or sincere; or as evocations of the heroine’s inner world. His layering of musical ideas over complex montage sequences, or even over still shots,

149 Korchmaryov, “Muzïka k fil’me ‘Odna’.”
showed how he attended to the new ideas of the counterpoint of the visual and the aural using modernist musical techniques. He participated in Kozintsev and Trauberg’s idea of grasping the inner world of the individual and her psychology to represent the transition of the masses and the culture from the twenties to the thirties. Shostakovich’s music was innovative and played an integral role.

*Alone* also anticipates socialist realism in film. The film represents the individual in a realist fashion, moving away from modernist character typage and the frenetic pacing of the editing. The techniques included longer, sparse shots that were austere and understated and allowed for a deeper look into the heroine’s inner world. The filmmakers attempted realism in sound with the recording of “authentic” “folk” music and everyday “noise.” Shostakovich’s contribution to realism particularly involved the references to village and revolutionary song and his musical representation of the *akïn*, evoking both the “folk” aspect and socialist message of the film.

The complexity of *Alone* encouraged a myriad of conflicting receptions, interpretations, and approaches, documenting the transitional nature of the politics of the time. As a film, *Alone* signaled a shift in style for Kozintsev and Trauberg, particularly in their approach to sound. As film music, *Alone* has shown that Shostakovich could write music that may be received and analyzed as both modernist and socialist realist. His music was received positively and negatively, indicating its effectiveness in the midst of the eventual shift into socialist realist aesthetic. *Alone* and its varied reception are therefore rich, historical documents of a time when modernist and realist means were used to a socialist end.
CHAPTER 5

AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE SOCIALIST REALIST AESTHETIC, I:
THE GOLDEN MOUNTAINS (1931)

Introduction to The Golden Mountains and The Counterplan

Two films, Zlatie gori (The Golden Mountains, 1931) and Vstrechnyi (The Counterplan, 1932), both by the FEKS directors Sergey Yutkevich and Fridrikh Ermler, have been canonized as examples of brilliant success and dismal failure in the socialist realist aesthetic. Both films, with scores by Shostakovich, demonstrate different stylistic approaches to filmmaking and music making and act as examples of successful and unsuccessful socialist film music as received by the contemporaneous public.

The Golden Mountains, a film that was initially designed to be a mainstream socialist realist song-based film, used innovative modernist film techniques and a significant amount of film music compared to other song-based films of the thirties. This film score reveals the composer’s negotiation of music and image with more effective sound technology, as it continues his musical “principles” used in his previous films. Despite its attempts at fulfilling the industry’s current political needs and its initial relatively positive reception, the film was never canonized as a “classic” socialist realist film after its initial premiere in 1931.
In contrast, the film *The Counterplan* enjoyed great and continued success due to its famous theme song, the “Song of the Counterplan.” As indicated by many of Shostakovich’s sketches, this song was carefully crafted to be the centerpiece of the film. Unlike *The Golden Mountains*, *The Counterplan* was dominated by this song and its variations, with far less underscoring throughout the film. According to much of the daily press, the film was “hyped” as an overwhelming success primarily because of this song and its relationship to official nationalist sentiments and the socialist realist aesthetic of the time. This film was intended to be and later became one of the prime examples of socialist realist filmmaking and exemplified the proper role of music in a socialist realist film that predates the legendary *Maxim Trilogy* (Kozintsev and Trauberg, 1934-1938).

Further, much of the press and Russian film music scholarship suggests that the theme’s and subsequently the film’s popularity were a significant turning point in Shostakovich’s film music career. By 1932, Shostakovich, although still very young, had significant experience with theater, opera, and film music. From this film forward, he established a reputation as one of Russia’s greatest film music composers. I therefore conclude with a discussion of the implications of the reception of *The Counterplan* for his overall film music output after the establishment of socialist realism.

**Historical Background of The Golden Mountains and The Counterplan**

As discussed in previous chapters, people involved in or concerned with the Soviet film industry were becoming more intent on how sound cinema should evolve, especially during the gradual move from partial to full sound films in the early thirties. With criticisms resembling those of Ippolit Sokolov and his dislike of partial sound films
and their potential formalism, critics were still focusing on the industry’s lack of organization and its crisis.¹ In early 1931, the reborn journal Proletarskoe Kino (Proletarian Cinema) (formerly Kino i zhizn’ (Cinema and Life)² complained of these issues, urging a “socialist reconstruction” and establishment of a “correct political line” that in theory would attempt to get rid of any “bourgeois method” in cinema.³ Over the course of 1931, an argument over what was proletarian versus Bolshevik became more prominent. This argument seemed to be focused on issues of documentary film and its ability (or lack thereof) to participate in “socialist reconstruction.”⁴ This fight between what has been described as separate interest groups led in part to the 23 April 1932 reorganization of cultural organizations such as RAPM, RAPP and ARRK.⁵ In the midst of this “reconstruction” and “reorganization,” several sound films were released, including the previously discussed Alone, Vertov’s Enthusiasm (Symphony of the Donbass, 1931), Sergey Yutkevich’s film The Golden Mountains and Ermler’s and Arnsltam’s The Counterplan.⁶ Needless to say, the arguments over the proper use of sound technology and its relationship to form and content and the composer’s role in the creation of the soundtrack (implicitly and sometimes explicitly) still continued in the

² Organ of the ARRK (Association of Workers in Revolutionary Cinematography).
³ Ibid., 318.
⁵ Film Factory, 315.
⁶ The theme of industrialization was also related to these new themes for cinema. Also, as a result of various economic and ideological reasons, film production significantly dropped each subsequent year from 1930 forward. In 1931, Soviet filmmaking dropped from 147 films (1930) to 103 (1931), then to 90 in 1932 and later 35 in 1933. This was the result of several factors, including censorship of film scenarios, economics, and to some degree the advent of sound technology. See Denise Youngblood, Movies for the Masses, Popular Cinema and Soviet Society in the 1920s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 32-33.
discussion of the relative successes and failures of these films. The next two films for which Shostakovich wrote music engaged a similar set of issues that began with *Alone* – realism, naturalism, and the evolving prototype of socialist realism.

**The Golden Mountains**

**Production**

Produced in a time of politico-aesthetic uncertainty and immense change in sound technology, *The Golden Mountains* was one of the first true sound films. According to film scholar Tatiana Egorova, Yutkevich began shooting the film around the time that *Alone* was being shot, in 1931. A document from Gosfil’mofond shows that Yutkevich submitted the first version of the film’s scenario on 6 March 1930, with the name of the film “Metallozavod,” or “Metallurgy Factory.” He resubmitted a revision of this scenario a few days later with the title “Shastlivaya Ulitsa” and some changes to the overall plot. It is possible that Yutkevich began shooting sometime in 1930, after the scenarios were approved, but there is no other evidence at this time to show that he began shooting that year. Egorova’s time frame is therefore strange, since by early 1931, most of *Alone* was shot and the soundtrack was being recorded. Nonetheless, the film was finished and shown for the first time on 6 November 1931 at the Khudozhestvenni.

---


9 I examined this in “Zlatïe gorï,” [The Golden Mountains] ed. khr. 847, Document 72, Gosfil’mofond [State Film Archive], Belye Stolbye, Russia.

10 A collection of documents that I examined from Gosfil’mofond also show that Arnshtam was not involved in the creation of the scenario early in the process. It is unclear from these documents exactly when he would have joined the group. “Zlatïe gorï,” ed. khr. 847, Gosfil’mofond.
Theater in Moscow, the only theater equipped for sound at that time.\textsuperscript{11} A silent version of the film was also released in 1931.\textsuperscript{12} According to a \textit{montazhnï list} (editing sheet) that I examined at Gosfil’mofond, this version had six parts and was 1757 meters long, presumably shorter than the first sound version of the film. It was also re-released, likely with significant changes to the film and soundtrack in 1936.\textsuperscript{13} Arnshtam wrote of “removing over half of the film” and rewriting the scenario, but does not explain the reason for the cut.\textsuperscript{14} John Riley claims that the film originally existed in 3583 meters, 131 minutes, and was cut down to 2605 meters, 90 minutes, a cut of over one-third of the film.\textsuperscript{15} If Arnshtam’s and Riley’s claims are correct, then it seems that at least three versions of the film existed. The second sound version of the film released in 1936 (approximately 90 minutes) appears to be what remains available.\textsuperscript{16}

\section*{Plot Synopsis}

Similar to \textit{Alone}, the plot for \textit{The Golden Mountains} is a product of its time and a near-model for future socialist realist films. It focuses on the development/conversion of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{11} I take this date from Arnshtam’s essay “Zlatïe gorï,” [The Golden Mountains] in \textit{Muzïka geroicheskogo [Music of the Heroic]} (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1977), 66. See also L. Arnshtam, “Zlatïe gorï,” [The Golden Mountains] \textit{Sovetskiy Ekran}, 23 (1971): 18-19, which is the first (and most edited) incarnation of this essay. In the editor’s note in volume 41 of the collected works of Shostakovich, Yakubov states that it was September 6, 1931, but he gives no evidence of this being the correct date. I am inclined to believe Arnshtam’s date, since most of the press about the film was written in late November of 1931. Ian Christie talks about the Khudozhestvennï Theater in “Making Sense of Early Soviet Sound,” 187. See also Manashir Yakubov, ed., “Ot redaktsii,” [Editor’s Note] in \textit{Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, “Muzïka k kinofil’ma, partitura ,”} [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, Volume 41, “Music to the Film Scores, Orchestral Score”] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 7.
\bibitem{12} See “Zlatïe gorï,” ed. xp. 847 and “Zlatïe gorï,” (nemoi [silent]), \textit{montazhnï list} (editing sheet), Gosfil’mofond.
\bibitem{13} Since the earlier version of the film is unavailable, it is difficult to say with absolute certainty how and what was taken out of the film for the 1936 version. A copy of the \textit{montazhnï list} (editing sheet) from 1936 is available in the Gosfil’mofond archive. “Zlatïe gorï,” ed. xp. 847, Gosfil’mofond. Yakubov says that a revised version of the film was released on August 14, 1936. See Yakubov, ed., “Ot redaktsii,” 7.
\bibitem{14} See Arnshtam, “Zlatïe gorï,” in \textit{Muzïka geroicheskogo}, 64.
\bibitem{15} John Riley, “If Only I Had… the Rest of the Film,” \textit{DSCH Journal}, 5 (Summer 1996): 38.
\bibitem{16} Riley, “If I Only…,” 38.
\end{thebibliography}
the apolitical individual towards the socialist cause, the construction of the Soviet state, the class “war,” and the abolishment of pre-revolutionary ways. Set in 1914, the film opens with an oil field worker’s strike in Baku that, as the viewer discovers by the end of the first reel, is running parallel to a similar workers’ strike developing in St. Petersburg. Ending with a plea from the Bolshevik Vasily to fight for the freedom of the Baku workers at the end of the reel, the following reels show the life of the factory workers in Petersburg under the “son” of the owner. Depicted as villains through alcohol and religion, the pre-revolutionary bourgeoisie is depicted in sharp contrast with the workers of the factory. The religious service on the factory grounds blesses and condones the owners of the factory, complete with priests and a diegetic choir that sings a concerto of Dmitry Bortnyansky to an on-looking crowd.17 To emphasize the “incorrectness” of such a display of alcohol and religion, one of the members of the choir is shown fidgeting and flirting during their performance, only to be reprimanded by the “master” (played by Nikolay Michurin), one of the main “bourgeois” characters of the film.

The following reel shows a workers’ meeting in the lavatory of a factory (where the sign says that no one is allowed to linger for more than five minutes) to discuss the unfairness of their employment situation. Attempting to ease the situation through music, the workers sing and dance until the bad news about the illness of another worker’s wife is too difficult to bear. The scene ends with the “master” breaking up the meeting and Peter, the main hero of the film, (played by Boris Poslavsky) left wondering if life in the city would be easier.

In contrast to the workers’ meeting, the next reel opens with images of the son of

17 In his essay, “The Golden Mountains,” Arnshtam stated that a Bortnyansky concerto was used for this scene. See Arnshtam, “Zlatie gorì,” in Muzïka geroicheskogo, 64-65.
the owner of the factory, also known as the engineer, who is interrupted in his personal performance of an Emile Waldteufel waltz (at once a symbol of the bourgeoisie and use of diegetic sound) and informed of a potential strike at his factory. He concocts a “little idea” which, as the viewer sees in the next reel, is to bribe a factory worker to break the strike. The engineer and his men choose Peter, a recently hired employee of the factory, who left his job in the country for a better life in the city. The son/engineer awards Peter for his diligence with a pocket watch and waistcoat to match. Peter reacts happily, proudly displaying his appreciation. After the son/engineer leaves, the workers fawn over Peter and his new possession and realize that the watch plays a song – the same waltz that the son had played earlier in the scene – a symbol of the bourgeoisie and their control over Peter. Vasily approaches Peter and warns him about selling out, upsetting him. Vasily spoils the merry mood and forces the workers to return to their jobs as the reel fades out.

The next reel fades in to Peter and the master at the local traktir (tavern). Setting up the scene with a tracking shot, with the camera moving into the tavern through a window, the viewer sees Peter and the master drinking. As Peter becomes progressively more intoxicated, the master convinces him to break the strike, while Peter talks about his horse in his village. Falling into a momentary nap, Peter dreams of his horse and returning to his village a rich man. This dream of “golden mountains” is his primary focus and the lure that the master uses to continue to seduce Peter into breaking the workers’ strike. After awaking from his dream, Peter continues to drink and sing. With a sudden cut to the tavern’s light fixture, which also began the scene, the scene fades out and into a hallway of a building. Encouraged by the master, Peter stumbles drunk into
the workers’ meeting interrupting and waving his watch to the disgust of Vasily and the other workers. Upon hearing the words of Vasily, which Arnshtam claimed were excerpts from Marx’s *Communist Manifesto*, and Vasily’s call to help the Baku workers, Peter leaves the meeting confused. As Peter begins to doubt his role, the master consoles and manipulates him into forgetting what he heard and continuing with the plan to break the strike. In silence, the scene fades out and into the image of a person picking up a rock. This is the first time in the film that a scene begins with a close-up, instead of the establishing shots, seen in the previous scenes. The next shot establishes the scene, revealing another worker who, with Peter, plans to kill Vasily in the alleyway. Vasily is grabbed by the other worker and Peter strikes Vasily with a rock. They haul his body into another corridor and the worker robs Vasily and runs away. Peter lingers, eventually leaving and encountering another worker, who hears Vasily groan. He takes Vasily home as Peter follows.

The scene fades out and into the next again in silence, with an image of a baby. Vasily enters and lies down, instructing the two other workers to continue the strike. As Peter attempts to entertain the baby, we start to see the beginning of his conversion towards the socialist cause, as he reads aloud the inscription on the watch. The police arrive and arrest Vasily, leaving Peter in despair. He finally realizes his mistake and fully converts to the side of the strikers. Upon this revelation Peter runs out of the house and to the house of the “boss” of the factory. Peter barges into the boss’s house and confronts him, ultimately discovering that he is the same boss who owned the factory in Peter’s previous job. He attempts to attack the boss and is escorted out of his house. Peter then

---

18 Arnshtam explains that the substituted parts of the manifesto in place of Vasily’s already rehearsed lines gave the scene a “poetic sound.” See Arnshtam, “Zlatie gorì,” in *Muzika geroicheskogo*, 66.
runs to the factory, breaks into it, and begins a riot, setting off the strike. In an approach
to editing reminiscent of Eisenstein and Pudovkin, the viewer’s attention is turned
towards the revolution in general with large groups of workers running from one side of
the screen to the other, eventually multiplying in number, and resulting in the final image
of Peter marching in the midst of other workers, many years later. This last shot
reinforces the permanence of Peter’s conversion to the appropriate cause and
metaphorically links the Petersburg’s strikers with the Baku strikers, as indicated by an
intertitle.

Film Reception and Analysis

As one can see from the summary of the plot, the film was intended to be a moral
tale of the transformation of an apolitical peasant to an active revolutionary, a theme that
Herbert Marshall identified as common to films of the time in his discussion of The
Golden Mountains.19 The intent of the director and the scenarists was to create a film
that resonated with the current demands for socialist film. The pro-Marxist critiques of
the middle class, religion, and alcohol are woven into the story of Peter’s conversion and
the “class war.” The move away from twenties-style character typage and towards a
development of the individual was a main concern for the director and scenarists, as was
the inclusion of synchronous speech, sound effects, and musical underscoring. Some
influences of the twenties, however, were betrayed in the style of the film. The emphasis
on the parallel montage, reminiscent of Kuleshov and D.W. Griffith, is seen in the
continuous parallels drawn between the workers of the Baku oil fields and Petersburg

---

19 Herbert Marshall, “The Soviet Cinema, Plans Themes, and Achievements,” British Russian Gazette and
Trade Outlook, (September 1933): 311-313.
factory workers. The strikingly unique framing of shots of the workers is also somewhat reminiscent of Pudovkin’s filmmaking: at the beginning of the lavatory scene, only the workers’ heads are shown; and during speeches by Vasily and the tavern scene between Peter and the master, the camera shoots from behind or from the side, never once relying on shot-reverse-shot techniques.\textsuperscript{20} In his essay on the film, Arnshtam also emphasized the development of new techniques, including the invention of “inner monologue.”\textsuperscript{21} Specifically citing Peter’s monologue in the lavatory, Arnshtam describes Peter’s statement, which concerns the cost of a peasant’s life, in rubles, as the first of its kind in Soviet film. There are also other instances in the film where Peter’s voice is heard over an image of him, as if he is “thinking” the phrase. Perhaps not quite the “inner monologue” that Arnshtam intended, it is an innovative use of sound to evoke the character’s state of mind. Although \textit{The Golden Mountains} was closer to the socialist ideal in film, its film style and technique still revealed the legacy of modernist filmmaking.

The film’s relative success was immediately felt in the press, although later overshadowed by the successes of \textit{The Counterplan} and \textit{Chapayev}. Most of the reviews of the film in 1931 centered on concerns similar to those of \textit{Alone}, including the content of the film and its socialism, film techniques and their realism, and the use of speech, sound effects, and musical scoring. The positive reviews from \textit{Komsomol’skaya Pravda} and \textit{Vechernyaya Moskva} declared \textit{The Golden Mountains} a “victory” for socialist film,


\textsuperscript{21} Arnshtam, “Zlatye gorì,” in \textit{Muzika geroicheskogo}, 66.
emphasizing Peter’s path to socialism as the correct “path of the millions,” subtly evoking the phrase used to describe film, “intelligible to millions.”\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Komsomol’skaya Pravda} stated, “\textit{The Golden Mountains} is unarguably one of the best of our sound films, which appears with the guarantee of further victories already in the near future.”\textsuperscript{23} Both of these reviews focused heavily on the character development of the hero and his potential as a model for Soviet citizens. Another reviewer, Konstantin Fel’dman from the newspaper \textit{Kino}, also provided a positive review, stating that the film was a “serious attempt to deepen reality” and clearly the best work of Yutkevich to date.\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Izvestiya} also praised the film for its “harsh and “stingy” realism.”\textsuperscript{25} These reviewers focus on the realism of the plot and its execution, criteria that distinguish it from previous “modernist” films.

Reviewers found aspects of the filmmaking and style to be the “shortcomings” of the film. \textit{Vechernyaya Moskva} claimed that aspects of the general plot were “primitive” and underdeveloped.\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Izvestiya} also claimed that “In general the film…may be characterized by the words “promising,” but still not “fulfilling the duties.”\textsuperscript{27} Reviewers also found the two parts of the film (Peter pre-conversion and then post-conversion) to be disconnected and uneven, claiming that the epilogue was too short and that there were hardly any women throughout the film.\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Pravda} and \textit{Komsomol’skaya Pravda} agreed that the epilogue lacked substance and that the development of the Bolshevik character


\textsuperscript{23} B.R., ““Zlatiie gori” proizvodstvo “Sovkino.””


\textsuperscript{26} Grinval’d, “Oktyabr’skiy podarok sovetskogo kino.”

\textsuperscript{27} N. OS., “Zlatiie gori.”

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
Vasily was weak.\textsuperscript{29} Other reviewers considered the scenes with the Baku workers to be too “schematic” and poorly executed – scenes which later made the film infamous for its “formalism.”\textsuperscript{30} Apparently, this made an impression on Yutkevich, who apologized for the film in a 1932 speech to the ARRK.\textsuperscript{31} He claimed that the film had mistakes, some of which were related to the organization of the plot and the development of the characters. Despite their criticisms, however, all of the reviewers considered the film to be an overall success.

The most well-received and “realistic” aspect of the film for most of the critics was the sound component of the film. \textit{Izvestiya} stated that

\begin{quote}
\text{it stands on the level of the best foreign sound films. Not only (do) all the words reach and correctly go together with the viewers’ feelings, but give flexible timbres of the voices and shades of expression of the speakers. The music of Shostakovich is interesting, fresh, corresponding to the content of the film.}\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

\textit{The Golden Mountains} was the first true “speaking” film of its time, which led other reviews to comment on the ability to hear speech. \textit{Komsomol’skaya Pravda} also supported the film’s use of synchronized sound and music, emphasizing how the realism of the speech adds to the impact of the film’s message:

\begin{quote}
\text{From the viewpoint of sound techniques, this film appears brilliant: the precision, clarity, sharpness, and the artistic finish of these aspects of the film…increase the strength of its agitational-artistic impact. On our sound screen, perhaps, the first to have success in giving distinct vocal timbres: each character speaks with his own voice without a forced assortment of}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29} A. Agranovsky, “\textit{Pobeda zvukovogo kino},” [A Victory of Sound Film] \textit{Pravda}, 325 (26 November 1931) and B.R., “\textit{Zlatie gori},” proizvodstvo “Sovkino.”

\textsuperscript{30} N. OS., “\textit{Zlatie gori},” and Agranovksy, “\textit{Pobeda zvukovogo kino}.”

\textsuperscript{31} See S. Yutkevich, “\textit{Vstupitel’noye slovo k diskussii (Stenogramma vystupleniya na diskussii o fil’me Zlatie gori, v moskovskii ARRK)},” [Introductory Words to Discussion (stenogram of a speech on the discussion about the film “The Golden Mountains” in the Moscow ARRK)] \textit{Proletarskoe kino}, 1 (1932): 5-9.

\textsuperscript{32} N. OS., “\textit{Zlatie gorii.”}
lisps. This is especially important because the actors in role of the bourgeoisie perform well. It is very good and all of the music compiled by Shostakovich [sic] is clever, talented, and inventive.\textsuperscript{33}

Speaking again of the film’s “victory,” \textit{Vechernyaya Moskva} also emphasized the clarity of the sound, and more than other critics, praised Shostakovich’s music in some detail:

The victory, finally, is in the indisputable \textit{technical merits} of the film, which rejoices [in] the excellent audibility of the sound, in the expressive and organic resulting effect of the music (D. Shostakovich [sic]), [with] many superb \textit{truly artistic} shots (oil fields, short church service, the inn, and so forth.)\textsuperscript{34}

Even \textit{Pravda}, which, like \textit{Izvestiya} was extremely critical of the film in comparison to other reviewers, found the soundtrack to be a “victory.” Unlike most other reviews, it emphasized Shostakovich’s music over the other aspects of the soundtrack:

\textit{The Golden Mountains} has wonderful musical parts. It has so much expressivity. In regard to technical transmission, content, and composition, [the music] not only amplifies the film, but subordinates it, controlling the hall in a number of places. The music in \textit{The Golden Mountains} does not “play,” but speaks, converses. \textit{The Golden Mountains} is a major victory of Soviet cinema.\textsuperscript{35}

Overall, the reviewers found the soundtrack to be clear, sharp, organic, and expressive because of the realism of the voices heard on the screen. Although intertitles were used throughout the film, they served as a commentary rather than as a replacement for actual speech. Intertitles appear between shots, for example: when the Baku workers negotiate for fair hours and wages (“looking for a contract for fair working hours”), when the son/engineer concocts his “idea,” (“The little idea of the engineer”), and when the son/engineer is praised by his workers (“the boss loves his workers”). In this sense, \textit{The

\textsuperscript{33} B.R, “‘Zlatie gorî,’ proizvodstvo “Sovkino.” Strangely, many of the reviewers spelled Shostakovich name “Shestakovich.”

\textsuperscript{34} Grinval’d, “Oktyabr’skii podarok sovetskogo kino.” Grinval’d’s emphasis.

\textsuperscript{35} Agranovsky, “Pobeda zvukovogo kino.”
Golden Mountains was the first successful “speaking” film and the use of the music was perceived to be all the more “organic” and “expressive” – contrary to the opinions of specialists in film music.

Music to the Film

Sources

The sources used for this chapter include the 1936 version of the film, the published version of the suite to The Golden Mountains in the first version of Shostakovich’s collected works edited by Manashir Yakubov (volume 41), and manuscripts of this suite and manuscript fragments and sketches from the original score. The 1936 version of the film is the only copy of the film that is available today. This is the version I have also worked with and consulted in my discussion and analysis. The suite is the only published music from The Golden Mountains to date. I have also worked with the manuscript to the suite and sketches to the unpublished score, which are available in the Glinka Museum Archive and RGALI in Moscow (The Russian State Archive for Literature and Art). These consist of 1) a fragment, which appears to be from the tavern scene; 2) a piano score; 3) a partitura, or mostly full score of the suite; and 4) a partitura, or mostly full score of the entire film score. I use the word “mostly,” because

36 Zlatie gori [Golden Mountains], directed by Sergey Yutkevich and Fridrikh Ermler (1931; Belye Stolbye: Gosfil’mofond, 1936).
37 A copy of this film can be extremely difficult to find and is not currently available in the U.S. to my knowledge. I have viewed a copy from Gosfil’mofond provided by the Shostakovich Archive in Moscow. My thanks go to Irina Shostakovich and Ol’ga Dombrovskaya for their help in this matter.
38 Yakubov, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, “Muzika k kinofil’ma, partitura.”
not every part of the score to the suite or film score was orchestrated in these manuscripts. These are the sources used for the musical analysis and discussion of the film and the score.

Production and Process

According to Shostakovich, he wrote the scores for The Golden Mountains and The Counterplan in 1931. Sof’ya Khentova supports this claim, stating that he wrote the score for The Golden Mountains in the fall of 1931. This time frame seems likely, since he had finished the score to Alone in spring of that year and was busy with several other projects through the summer and fall, including Declared Dead and Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk District. In a few months, Shostakovich produced a score for the film and a suite, performed around the time of the premiere of the film. The film score, which only exists in manuscripts and in the phonogram of the film today, was written in approximately eight parts, corresponding to the organization of the film in seven parts and a finale. The film score in partial partitura was probably an orchestration of the

---

39 The fragment is found as Muzïka k kino-fil’my “Zlatïie gori,” “fragmenti” “traktir” [Music to the sound film “Golden Mountains,” “fragments,” “tavern”] in Fond 32, inv.103, post. 6419; the piano score is found as Muzïka k kinofil’mu “Zlatïie gori” Fragmenti in Fond 32, Inv. 104, N.6419; the suite is found as syuita iz muzïki k fil’my “Zlatïie gori”in Fond 32, inv. 42, No.4869. All of these are in the Gosudarstvenny tsentral’ny musey muzïkal’noy kulturi imeni M. I. Glinki [The Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture], Moscow, Russia. The full film score is Fond 2048, Opis’ No.3, 33, RGALI (Russian State Archive for Literature and Art), Moscow, Russia. I viewed a copy of the RGALI score in the Shostakovich Apartment Archive in Moscow. My thanks go to Irina Shostakovich, Ol’ga Dombrovskaya, and Ol’ga Dignonskaya for their help in allowing me to see this manuscript.


42 The piano score is found in Fond 32, Inv. 104, No. 6419, Gosudarstvenny tsentral’ny musey muzïkal’noy kulturi imeni M. I. Glinki [The State Central Museum of Musical Culture named after M. I. Glinka], Moscow, Russia. The suite is found in Fond 32, inv. 42, No.4869 and fragments (in partitura) are found in Fond 32, inv.103, post. 6419. Also, a more finished version of the score can be found in Fond 2048, Opis’ No.3, 33, RGALI (Russian State Archive for Literature and Art), Moscow, Russia.
piano score. Similar to manuscripts of his earlier scores, these manuscripts show details of Shostakovich’s process, including his thoughts on orchestration, timing, and character entrances and instrumentation. His piano score especially shows his working out of timings, characters and their relationship to music, and instrumentation. He will often notate what event is happening in the score along with a fragment of music, such as “Peter runs,” when he runs from Vasily’s house, or “The Death of Vasily,” when Vasily is dying. Some of the more interesting notes in the manuscripts concern instrumentation. He spent some time experimenting with different “folk” instruments such as the balalaika, dombra, and bayan and other somewhat unusual instruments such as the harp for earlier parts of the film score, which appear to correspond to the lavatory scene and Peter’s running around at the end of the film. The harp appears in the score, while the other “folk” instruments appear as early as the piano score. Of the film scores, this is probably his most experimental in terms of instrumentation, featuring other unusual instruments such as saxophones and Hawaiian guitar, instruments that were popular in music-hall works of the time.44

The suite manuscripts also exist today, as Yakubov has described in volume 41 of the Collected Works.45 This suite, which consists of six parts including the fugue, but not the Golden Mountains tune, was premiered in 1931 and was first published by Muzgiz in

---

44 Shostakovich was writing the music hall revue Declared Dead around the same time of this film score. It is possible that his work on that project influenced his orchestration of The Golden Mountains.
45 Yakubov, Sobraniye Sochinenny v soroko dvuh tomakh, “Muzika k kinofil’m, partitura.”
1935, long after the film’s first release.\textsuperscript{46} The suite is an abridged version of the film score, highlighting most of the main melodies and musical ideas that correspond to major events in the film. Only the first, second, and a fragment of the fifth movements correspond with the phonogram of the film. The fugue, the “Intermezzo,” and most of the “Finale” – also known as movements three, four, and five – do not appear in the 1936 version of the film.\textsuperscript{47} It is also possible that this suite could have served, at least in part, as the score for the silent version of the film, since they both are almost thirty minutes long and include the majority of the music needed for the film.

The sound production of the film was carried out differently from that of \textit{Alone}, although not without its challenges. Yutkevich had stated that the film had to be “shot all at once,” because there was no apparatus for rerecording the sound.\textsuperscript{48} As a result, the speech, ambient sound, and the orchestra needed to be organized in such a way that everything could be recorded all at once. Yutkevich praised the sound operator Ilya Volk, who was instrumental, in his opinion, in balancing the multifarious sounds of the film. He states, “The labor of the sound director I.F. Volk was wonderful. He amazingly “orchestrated” for cinema the \textit{balalaika} with percussion and French horn, barrel-organ, and orchestra with organ.”\textsuperscript{49} Arnshtam also claimed that the camera had to be housed in a box the size of a “small coffin” that was airtight and upholstered with a “thick layer of felt.”\textsuperscript{50} The boxing in of the camera was designed to keep the sound of the camera from

\textsuperscript{46} Riley says the suite was premiered in autumn 1931 by the Bolshoy Theater Orchestra. Riley, “If I Only...,” 37. Yakubov also says that the suite was premiered in 1931 and was first published by Muzgiz in 1935. See Yakubov, “Ot redaktsii,” 8.

\textsuperscript{47} These “movements” are referred to as “numbers” in the score.


\textsuperscript{49} Yutkevich, “Vspominaya Shostakovicha,” 23.

\textsuperscript{50} Arnshtam, “Zlatïe gorï,” in \textit{Muzïka geroicheskogo}, 64.
registering on the sound equipment. This box-like construction around the camera also was used in Alone, illustrating how slowly sound technology evolved in that period.51

Music Analysis

The Golden Mountains extended many of the experiments and music/image relationships of its immediate predecessor, Alone. Unlike Alone, where only bits of “live” speech were sprinkled throughout, The Golden Mountains was a true “speaking” film.52 Arnshtam considered it an enormous task to fit the speech, sound effects, and what he referred to as “blocks” of music into the film. As a result, Shostakovich had to weave his musical score into the various sound effects and synchronous sound speech, with different considerations for the relationship between sound and image.

Many of the main arguments and discussions of the score to The Golden Mountains centered on its unity or its “block-like” fragmentation. Following previous discussions of The Golden Mountains, Egorova argues that because Shostakovich had to cope with fragmentation resulting from the variety of sound sources in the film (speech, effects, and diegetic music), he was forced to create a film score that would appear continuous and “symphonic.”53 Even though The Golden Mountains is a “musical” film like Alone, the greater presence of speech created the greater possibility for fragmentation and lack of musical continuity. Egorova claims that Shostakovich’s use of leitmotifs was the answer to maintaining unity in the score. Egorova’s claim of The Golden Mountains

51 Coffin is perhaps an appropriate term, since the cameraperson was hardly able to breathe in this tight space with only “thick glass” to see through. See Arnshtam, “Zlatie gorî,” in Muzïka geroïcheskogo, 64, and Chapter Four for a description of the camera “box” used for Alone.

52 As seen above, many reviews spoke of The Golden Mountains as a “speaking” film. Alone was often typified as a film where the music “spoke,” while The Golden Mountains was a true “speaking” film with music.

53 Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 21.
as “symphonic,” however, implies that this was not a consideration in his earlier films. Shostakovich had already used leitmotifs in earlier scores, as discussed in previous chapters, and was already quite adept at creating a “symphonic” and continuous score.

Notably, this is the first of Shostakovich’s film scores that is interpreted as having a “leitmotivic system.” Many contemporaneous authors such as Ioffe and Cheremukhin, and later scholars such as Egorova and Khentova all use the term “leitmotif” in connection with this film, yet disagree in their classification of the film as more “symphonic” than his previous scores. Labeling the film in this way is likely a result of the time and perceptions of realism in film and its music. To describe something as “leitmotivic” implies a certain unity and “symphonic” organization that Shostakovich’s earlier “formalist” films may not have had. As I discuss later, The Golden Mountains was later received as a “formalist” mistake regardless of its immediate positive reception in 1931.

The Leitmotivic System and the Music/Image Relationship

Typically, two central leitmotifs have been identified in this film score. The first is an urban song, “If I Only Had Golden Mountains,” and the second is a waltz by Emile Waldteufel entitled “Les Violettes” (Appendix H, Figures 42 and 43). The waltz has greater prominence throughout the film and is used at various points of Peter’s slow conversion. The “Golden Mountains” song, however, is limited to the first part of the film, often taking on the meaning that the urban zastolnaya pesna (drinking song) implies

54 Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 273.
55 Ibid. Arnshtam also considers the film to be leitmotivic. See Arnshtam, “Zlatie gori,” in Muzika geroicheskogo, 63.
56 Arnshtam called this waltz “Spring Flowers,” but the waltz is called “Les Violettes.” See Emile Waldteufel, Die schönsten Walzer, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Henry Litolff’s Verlag).
the wish for “golden mountains,” or more simply, a better quality of life. Both of these leitmotifs come to represent either side of the “class war” in the film. The waltz is associated with the negatively portrayed bourgeoisie while the “Golden Mountains” song is associated with the workers. Each leitmotif exemplifies or underscores cinematic/musical techniques that are used to represent characters and act as a commentary on the overall message of the film.

The waltz appears eight times throughout the film, four times as a fragment.\(^5\) It is first used at the beginning during the celebration at the factory, appearing after the toast to the boss of the factory is made by his son, the engineer. The waltz is repeated several times, coinciding with the hoorays of the factory workers. This first appearance of the waltz initially complements the control of the owners over the workers, but takes on another meaning when the son/engineer leaves the factory. As he confronts the job-seekers outside of the factory, among them Peter, the waltz continues to sound, as do the hoorays from inside the factory walls. The context of the celebration and affirmation of the power of the owners, orchestrated in full orchestra with brass instruments as the primary soloists, creates a counterpoint against the poverty and the powerless of the begging peasants. The use of the waltz in this counterpoint underscores the main message of the film and effectively vilifies the owners while creating sympathy for the workers.

The second appearance of the waltz is in the lavatory scene, when the master finds the workers congregating and discussing their situation. The waltz’s appearance here is brief – mostly a repetition of a fragment of the tune, making it almost

\(^5\) See Appendix I for a chronological table of musical occurrences throughout the film, including the appearances of the waltz.
unrecognizable. The third appearance of the waltz is at the beginning of the fourth part, where the son/engineer is playing the piano. Playing the waltz through and temporarily stopping to speak with the master, the son manages to complete a full statement of the waltz by the end of the scene. The waltz continues to be strongly associated with the son and his power over the workers, which becomes especially clear when he concocts his “little idea” during his performance of the waltz.

The central and perhaps most memorable moment of the waltz as leitmotif is its fourth appearance, the watch scene. As the son gives the watch to Peter, the waltz appears in underscoring, with Hawaiian guitar playing the melody with the accompaniment of a string orchestra (Appendix H, Figure 43).58 This music continues over images of the son, Peter, and the on-looking workers. The waltz stops in the underscoring giving way to speech between Peter and the workers. As they talk about the watch and Peters opens it, the waltz (and its variations) in a music-box timbre are heard, sounding diegetically from the screen (Appendix H, Figure 43).59 The watch and the waltz combined therefore can be interpreted as a building upon the waltz and its diegetic signifier, the watch, as a symbol of the bourgeoisie’s control over Peter.

The fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth appearances of the waltz reveal a shift in mood, to correlate with Peter’s slow conversion to the revolutionary cause while evoking the possible destruction of the strike. It appears a fifth time immediately after Vasily is attacked in the alleyway. After Vasily is grabbed and hit on the head with a rock, all of which is shown in moderately quickly edited shots (although never showing the face of

---

58 The suite reproduces the exact music from this part of the scene.
59 See Number 2 of the suite in Yakubov, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, “Muzïka k kinofil’mu, partitura,” for the full reproduction of the music to this moment in the scene.
the victim), the only indicator of his consciousness is revealed in a shot of his legs. The waltz leitmotif begins only after his legs go limp, cueing to understand that he might be dead, then cutting to the master at the tavern. This montage in combination with the waltz therefore cues the momentary victory of the owners. The reappearance of the waltz continues to symbolize control over the workers, more specifically played in the elimination of the strike leader.

The waltz appears a sixth time when Peter is singing a fragment of the waltz (the exact fragment as heard in the lavatory scene) to the baby in Vasily’s home. After re-reading the inscription on the watch aloud (“For diligence, from the boss”), Peter begins to realize the true intent of the gift. After the police enter and take Vasily away, the master enters and the waltz appears a seventh time in non-diegetic underscoring, aurally paralleling the removal of the central leader of the strike and continuing the domination of the workers.

The last appearance of the waltz, however, is the turning point and the final moment of Peter’s conversion. After running out of Vasily’s home and to the mansion of the unseen “boss,” Peter finally meets the owner of the factory and confronts him, speechless, with the waltz accompanying him in underscoring. Upon realizing that this boss is the same man who owned the factory for which he previously worked, Peter tries to attack him, only to be hauled away. During this moment the waltz appears in full volume and with a different character and instrumentation from its previous statements to exemplify both Peter’s rage and his complete transformation. Instead of the original triple meter version of the waltz, the first few measures of the waltz tune (Appendix H, Figure 43, measures 13-19) are fragmented and played by the brass in strident triplets in
dupe meter, which are further fragmented and repeated while punctuated by a series of chords in the rest of the orchestra. This use of the waltz led Arnshtam to describe its use first in song and then later in “symphonic” form as typical for Shostakovich and representative of how the composer used “major symphonic forms” in the film.

The use of The Golden Mountains tune is far more limited than that of the waltz, appearing only four times in the film (Appendix I). Its first appearance is during the opening of the film, sounding over the credits (Appendix H, Figure 42(b)). Similar to an overture, it serves as an introduction; a reasonable musical choice for a film of its name. In this overture, the tune appears in E-flat major in the horns, with full orchestral accompaniment, it has an “ABB + coda” form that is played twice over the credits. The coda part of this form is original music written by Shostakovich. The ABB part of the form is the same musical form as the original well-known song, on which Shostakovich based his version of the tune (Appendix H, Figure 42(b)). Shostakovich’s first phrase (A) is a variation of the known song, while the second phrase (B) is nearly identical to the original (Appendix H, Figure 42(a) and 42(b)). Hence, Shostakovich has produced a leitmotif that is similar enough to the original version of the song to be recognized by its audience.

The second appearance of the tune is diegetic, played by the accordion player in the opening scene of the film. This musician, played by actor Boris Tenin, plays through several verses, flirting with the woman beside him, introducing a melodic variation of the tune. Because this song is traditionally known as an urban drinking song and has been

60 Arnshtam, “Zlatïe gorï,” in Muzïka geroicheskogo, 63.
61 The musical example in Appendix H, Figure 42(b) is my transcription of the melody of the tune.
62 It is important to note that this song, “Zlatïe gorï,” has been transmitted orally, hence many possible versions do exist, of which the example of the Appendix is one.
transmitted orally, it exists in several variants. As seen in Appendix H, Figure 42(a) and 42(b), these variants differ mostly in the first half of the musical phrase. In these initial appearances, the song operates as an introduction and could also be a way in which Shostakovich attempted to draw the listener/viewer into the film and identify with the characters with a popular culture reference such as this well-known zastolnaya pesna.

The tune’s third appearance is in the lavatory scene, coupled with another recurring theme (Appendix I, Theme B). The scene begins with this theme for string duo (Theme B), which underscores the speech of one worker describing the illness and eventual death of his wife to the other workers. Reminiscent of the Altai theme from Alone in its texture, instrumentation, and steady, slow rhythmic ostinato, this theme uses two string instruments, a balalaika and dombra (or mandolin and harp).63 One instrument repeats an ostinato consisting of two pitches to accompany (a half-step apart), while the other plays an undulating tremolo melody. This musical idea returns only once, over the images of Peter running from the owner’s house to the factory to initiate the strike. This theme (Theme B) evokes a sense of desolation in its instrumentation and sparse and nearly static ostinati, much as Alone’s Altai theme represents the loneliness of the wilderness. Given its placement in each scene, this theme (Theme B) appears to be associated with the anticipation to and eventual action of the strike of the workers.

After sad news of the workers is heard, one worker begins to play the “Golden Mountains” song on harmonica. Instead of hearing a harmonica, however, the listener hears a bayan, playing the tune much in the same way as the accordion player in the

---

63 This instrumentation is gleaned from the manuscripts of The Golden Mountains, specifically the more finished draft of the score found in Fond 2048, Opis’ No.3, 33, RGALI, where Shostakovich indicates the instrumentation for this scene.
opening scene of the film. In the context of the complaining worker, a dream of “golden mountains” implied by the song seems absurd in comparison to his dream for basic health care, but does reveal both an attempt to brighten the situation and comment on the sheer poverty and poor conditions of the workers. It can also be read more literally – the workers wish to have “golden mountains,” which in this case, means better benefits and working conditions – the same requirements demanded by the workers in Baku.

Simultaneously this leitmotif and the recurring theme (Theme B) act as cues and in counterpoint to the images on screen, while unifying the film through repetition and associative meaning. Shostakovich therefore continues his ideas of creating music that acts as a counterpoint to the action, while also providing a multivalent commentary that suits the anti-bourgeois message of the film.

The final appearance of the “Golden Mountains” tune, only mid-way through the film, is during the tavern scene with Peter and the master. The song appears several times throughout the scene, first in underscoring and then in the diegetic space of the characters. Its first appearance is in underscoring as the camera tracking leads the viewer into the space of the tavern to the table where Peter and the master sit, with the “Golden Mountains” tune underscored as accompaniment. The melodic shape, key (E-flat major), and instrumentation (upper winds and horns) of the tune in underscoring is exactly the same as the initial version of the tune that appeared in the underscoring over the opening credits. It ends, just before the master speaks. He requests that music be played and instantly the “Golden Mountains” song is played in the tavern, becoming diegetic, yet is still the same underscoring of the tune in the key of E-flat major. After some conversation, Peter drunkenly sings along with it, singing the last stanza of the known
version of the song, i.e., the AB part of the form, corresponding to the lyrics of “Za laski, rechi ognevye/Ya nagrazhu tebya konyem. Uzdechka, khystik zolotye/ Sedel’tse shito zhenchugom” [For kindness, fiery speech /I shall reward you with a horse. A bridle, a golden whip/ A saddle embroidered with pearls], which refers to wealth and the decoration of objects that would be used in horse riding.\textsuperscript{64} This confirms its context as a true zastolnaya pesna, which is then interrupted by the master. Just as Peter eventually passes out, the “Golden Mountains” song segues with a variation of the tune in organ, again presumably heard in the diegesis of the tavern. It then slips into underscoring and follows him into his dream of his glorious horse, becoming a variation of the tune in orchestral accompaniment to his dreams of “golden mountains.” The shift from his singing to sleeping is cued in the music, where his singing along with the simplified wind instrumentation of the tavern music expands into a full orchestral statement that towards the end of his dream becomes dissonant and out of tune. The “sourness” of the music near the end of his dream also cues the viewer/listener to expect a shift in the action; in this case Peter’s waking from the dream. When Peter awakes, the “Golden Mountains” song ends in the orchestra and the music of the diegetic space has shifted to different music in the diegetic space of the tavern, a song for female voice and guitar.

The last appearance of the “Golden Mountains song” operates as a leitmotif that cues Peter’s state of mind as it seamlessly moves between diegetic and non-diegetic space to immediately accompany Peter’s desires and foreshadow his future character development. The song represents Peter’s wishes for “golden mountains,” contrary to the desires of the workers: wealth and recognition, resulting from his work in the factory.

\textsuperscript{64} For the text of this song, see B. Zharov, \textit{Lyubimye russkiye narodnye pesni} [Favorite Russian Folk Songs] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1985), 58.
The meaning of the song in the film as a whole thus becomes clear at that moment – it exemplifies the dreams and aspirations of the character that are used by the owners of the factory to keep Peter in a state of ignorance and intoxicated by his own desires. Yet, the shifts in the music (instrumentation, diegetic/non-diegetic) that accompany his movement between his conscious and unconscious states follow his dreams of “golden mountains” and can be read as the souring of those dreams and as a potential foreshadowing of Peter’s eventual transformation.65 This interweaving of speech, image, and song with underscoring was a significant feat for Shostakovich. Not only did he demonstrate his ability to continue to apply and adapt his own theories of film music to sound film as he had in his two previous film scores, he manages to cue and exemplify the hero’s present behavior and foreshadow his later transformation. Lastly, this well-known “folk” song has the potential to cue listener/viewer identification and assimilation, in Anahid Kassabian’s sense of the term.66 Much like Alone, Shostakovich’s use of such a “folk” song taps into the burgeoning socialist realist aesthetic and its eventual exploitation of “folk”-ness in music as a future aspect of socialist consciousness.67

Structurally, these two leitmotifs highlight the main scenes of the film and the class war between the workers and the factory owners. They unify the film by continually building the characterization of the owners and the portraying the slow evolution of Peter from country peasant to urban revolutionary. They act “leitmotivic” in that they do transform at different moments, mostly in terms of orchestration and texture.

As I have suggested, however, this is not the first time Shostakovich used leitmotifs, nor

---

65 Riley has suggested that the music seemed “incomplete,” hinting at the possibility that the strike would be unsuccessful. Riley, “If I Only . . . ,” 37.
66 See Chapter Two for a discussion of Kassabian’s ideas of assimilating identifications.
67 See Chapter Four for a discussion of the “folk” in Alone.
is this the only approach that he uses to unify the score to make it “symphonic.” His score to *Alone* certainly used a series of recurring motives, one of which can be identified as a leitmotif, but the composer also used other techniques in both *The New Babylon* and *Alone* that created a sense of continuity in the overall score.

In *The Golden Mountains* Shostakovich used recurring sections of music to unify the film. Only a few musical ideas outside of the “leitmotifs” therefore recur throughout the entire film. The theme from the lavatory scene (Theme B) is one example. Another example is the galop from the beginning over images of the Baku workers (Appendix I, Music A, galop 1), which Ieremiya Ioffe described as “full of anxiety and alarm,” reappears when the images crosscut between images of Vasily speaking to the Petersburg workers and images of the Baku workers beginning to strike.68 This galop represents the impending and metaphorical union of the Baku and Petersburg workers at the end of the film.

There are other locally recurring ideas that consist of sound effects instead of specially written music and add to the “realistic” component of the film. The repetition of the church bells during the church ceremony and the cheering of the crowds during the opening factory scene add to the overall realism of the film. The sounds of the train near the end of the film, when Peter begins the strike, and the sounds of wind, which accompany Peter as he runs to begin the strike, are real sounds that could be also read as a representation of the themes of industrialization and isolation in the film.

The factory whistle – also a diegetic sound – acts both as a unifying factor and a commentary on the action. It is used twice in the film – once to indicate the changing of

shifts at the factory in the beginning of the film and again to initiate the beginning of the strike sequence at the very end of the film. This whistle bookends the film, transforming meaning in its last appearance. Initially, it calls the workers to their daily tasks, but later it calls the workers to strike. The diegetic realism of all of these sound effects aids in the realism of the film and effectively draws the listener/viewer closer to the film’s overall message.

In addition to recurring music and sound effects, there is musical continuity editing between the music and the images.\textsuperscript{69} Continuity in this sense means that Shostakovich wrote music that would smooth gaps produced by editing such as fades or quickly edited passages. The use of the waltz leitmotif in the first scene of the film can serve as one example. Shostakovich wrote repetitions of the waltz to continue over images of the boss leaving the factory and speaking to the workers. The composer lowers the volume to have the speech foregrounded, but the music continues nonetheless. This is also used in the lavatory scene, when the ostinato of the string duo continues under the speech of the workers throughout the scene, only stopping when “diegetic” music would begin (the \textit{chastushka}\textsuperscript{70} and the harmonica player). This kind of underscoring, which allows music and speech to exist simultaneously, was a new technique for Shostakovich.

\textsuperscript{69} The term “continuity editing” is borrowed from discussions of Hollywood cinema. See Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson, \textit{Classical Hollywood Cinema}, 194-213. Here). I use the phrase “musical continuity editing” as a musical version of continuity editing.

\textsuperscript{70} A \textit{chastushka} is a vocal instrumental genre often in the poetic form of a single stanza couplet that has four lines of text, often in a specific syllabic structure (8+7+8+7). They vary in context, but can sometimes have playful connotations. See Izaly Zemtsovsky: “Russian Federation, Traditional Music, Russian, Chastushka” Grove Music Online ed. L. Macy (Accessed 6 October 2006), http://www.grovemusic.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu.
Resulting from the advancements in sound film technology, the composer had the opportunity to allow music to seamlessly disappear yet continue over the speech and images.

A second instance of musical continuity editing, although without speech, appears when the underscoring links the scene of the son at the piano to the following scene of him walking through the factory to find Peter. The music begins before the fade into the next scene over the fade and over the images of the son walking, creating a sound bridge.\(^{71}\) The music ends when he finds Peter and begins to speak to him. Here, Shostakovich used what I consider to be a three-part ABA’ form. The music used in the film was probably transferred by Shostakovich to the suite version of the score (Appendix H, Figure 44, “Introduction”).\(^ {72}\) In this scene, the music acted as a smoothing over of the images to give a sense of continuity between two disjunct locales. This and other instances throughout the film show how Shostakovich maintained a “symphonic” continuity by having music sound over potentially fragmented editing, particularly during fades in and out of scenes.\(^ {73}\)

**Unity, Fragmentation, and the “Symphonic”**

In terms of musical development, Shostakovich did not have the opportunity to create a score where the music was the primary carrier of meaning, as seen in the discussion of *Alone* in Chapter Four. Instead, Shostakovich was forced to negotiate and

---

\(^{71}\) A sound bridge occurs when sound or music that belongs to the next scene is heard in advance before the image appears. See Frank E. Beaver, *Dictionary of Film Terms* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), 317.

\(^{72}\) After the son speaks and gives the watch to Peter, an orchestral version of the waltz appears, which corresponds exactly to the whole of Number 2 in the suite, as previously discussed.

\(^{73}\) At times Shostakovich wrote in small fragments that intended for other sections. In one instance in the manuscript in Fond 32, Inv. 104, N.6419 at the Glinka Museum Archive, he wrote notes in the margin indicating a rearrangement or rewriting of a fragment.
interweave speech, sound effects, and his score into the overall fabric of the film. Generally, he had no space to develop material, since it tended to be composed by “number” and isolated to specific scenes. He resorted instead to repetition and variation of his material throughout using the waltz and “Golden Mountains” leitmotifs and a few recurring sections of music. He sometimes, however, developed non-leitmotivic musical material “locally,” confined to specific scenes in the film. The “BA’” sections of the ABA’ music used to accompany the boss walking through the factory, for example, only appear again at the end of the scene after Peter has accepted the watch and the workers disperse (Appendix I). Two other instances include the music in the alleyway before Vasily is attacked and the music to the strike at the end of the film, both of which contain original music whose development is also confined to the scene and often consists of little variation. The scene of Vasily’s attack is one significant example. It begins with silence. The music (Music G) enters only when Vasily is hit over the head, again to reappear over an image of the fleeing thief/attacker, as seen in the map below (See also Appendix I). Music “G” is sparse, alternating between bass clarinet solo, which consists of an ornamented ascending minor fifth, with a series of chords in the low wind and pairs of low winds (bassoon and bass clarinet) with low wind accompaniment. The overall timbre produced is effectively unclear and dark, emulating the tension and eeriness of the scene. This recurrence unifies the scene and acts as commentary on the action, while revealing the variety of sounds that Shostakovich negotiated.

---

74 See manuscript in Fond 2048, Opis’ No.3, 33, RGALI.
75 Only the “BA’” part of the original “ABA’” appears as the workers disperse (beginning with the orchestral flourish of the B section).
76 The music of the boss and the finale music can be found in the suite in the first number (Introduction) and the last number (Finale).
77 This is after the fifth appearance of the waltz in that same scene.
As seen above, the sound of Peter’s ticking watch, the music to Vasily’s attack and the fifth appearance of the waltz leitmotif are woven together as a linear sound montage to evoke the nexus of Peter’s (in)direct involvement with the attack on Vasily, his connection to the master, and their desire to destroy Vasily and the strike. Overall, development across the film is isolated to leitmotifs and other musical recurrences, forcing Shostakovich to sometimes compose moderately developed localized sections of music that still manage to evoke the larger issues in the film. This is probably why scholars such as Egorova consider the score symphonic, despite its apparent “blockiness.”

In his essay, “The Golden Mountains,” Arnshtam described the score to *The Golden Mountains* as being in “blocks,” likely referring to the number organization of the score as opposed to its lack of continuity.\(^\text{78}\) As in *Alone*, *The Golden Mountains* was a score with musical “numbers” composed to correspond to the numbers of a scene or its parts.\(^\text{79}\) In contrast to *Alone*, the pauses between numbers work well with the film, since these pauses give way to speech or other sounds. Also, in contrast to the previous film,

---

\(^{78}\) Arnshtam “Zlatie gori,” in *Muzika geroicheskogo*, 63.

\(^{79}\) These numbers are apparent in the manuscripts of *The Golden Mountains*.
Shostakovich never complained of *The Golden Mountains* as being fragmented or lacking in continuity. The “blockiness” of the score was therefore part of the natural state of the soundtrack. Shostakovich’s approach to development was limited to leitmotifs, recurring sections, localized sections, and the practice of musical continuity to smooth over the “number-like” and potentially perceived fragmentation of the score.

When concerned with fragmentation or deficits in the structure of the score, critics, such as Ioffe, often looked to the closed forms used throughout the film. In his discussion of the score, Ioffe stated with negative emphasis,

> Each of these episodes [of the score] could be expanded into a musical symphonic piece, and all together - to form an independent instrumental suite, only externally connected with the picture. The method of creating such film-music is not distinguished from a method of pure symphonic music. Here there was a lack of organic synthesis.\(^8^0\)

The waltz was often cited as a “closed musical piece,” particularly in four of its appearances (first, third, fourth, and eighth). At these points, it appears in whole statements, sometimes repeated two or three times. Also, not at all mentioned by critics, Shostakovich used an ABA′ form in underscoring for the transition of the scenes between the son at the piano and watch scene. The music to these scenes therefore is “symphonic” in the manner that Ioffe explains – music that can act as film music and be excerpted easily for concert performance, as Shostakovich appeared to do for the release of the suite in 1935.\(^8^1\) This “symphonic” quality was not received as a positive trait of Shostakovich’s music, since high art forms of music were regarded as anti-Soviet, revealing Ioffe’s general criticism of the score as a formalist excursion.

---

\(^8^0\) Ioffe, *Muzïka sovetskogo kino*, 39.

\(^8^1\) It is unclear whether or not Shostakovich intended to write the score to *The Golden Mountains* in such a way as to easily excerpt it later.
Arnshtam similarly claimed that the score was “symphonic” in its use of closed forms:

what streams of great symphonism music can bring to cinema! …in “The Golden Mountains” we used great symphonic forms, where many parts of the film could become parts of the symphony; in the film there is no music for filling any sort of emptiness.\(^\text{82}\)

Arnshtam thought of *The Golden Mountains* as simultaneously block-like and symphonic. Here, Arnshtam considered the score “symphonic” in the sense that Shostakovich imported symphonic forms like the fugue or used unifying characteristics (or ideas) in the music, such as leitmotifs. The borrowing of “symphonic” forms therefore did not impede the score overall. Unlike Ioffe, he considered it a positive trait of the film of which he was particularly proud.\(^\text{83}\)

**Counterpoint, Parallelism, and Diegetic/Non-Diegetic Movement**

Shostakovich employed counterpoint and another technique, parallelism, which he used in his previous films. He used counterpoint in the initial appearance of the waltz. His first use of counterpoint in the film, however, is in the first scene of the film. When the Baku workers are shown, there is a moment of music/image counterpoint followed by rhythmic/musical parallelism. The moment of counterpoint occurs when a galop sounds over images of Baku workers laboring with great difficulty (Appendix I, Music A). As Yutkevich described,

\(^\text{82}\) Lev Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” [Sound Design in *The Counterplan*] *Vstrechnyi, kak sozdavalsya fil’m [The Counterplan – How the Film was Created]* (Moscow: Kinofotoizdat, 1935), 98.

\(^\text{83}\) Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 98. It seems that in retrospect he considers *The Golden Mountains* more “symphonic” than *The Counterplan*, yet sees “symphonic” moments in that score as well.
We were immediately convinced that he [Shostakovich] wrote in musical forms, consisting of the counterpoint with the visual series. Let’s refer to the film *The Golden Mountains*. [For] the galop [there] was shot of horses; then when the workers haul the pipe, the representation went slowly – the theme was unusually heavy labor, but the music sounded energetic: the effect was staggering.

After shifting from this galop-styled music, a percussive section solos over images of the Baku workers moving a pipe. As one of these workers falls to the ground, the music comes to a halt with a cymbal crash. The shots that flash in quick editing emulate the last fuzzy images that he worker sees before falling unconscious, punctuated by bass drum and woodblock hits. This technique momentarily evokes the character’s state of mind, while the rhythm, timing, and timbral shifts of the music correspond directly the rhythm of the cuts, effectively evoking the fainting spell and reinforcing the message that the workers are overworked, thus setting up the impetus for the strike and class war of the film.

One technique that Shostakovich used in previous films and continued to employ in *The Golden Mountains* was what Michel Chion names “acousmatism.” Acousmatic music is when the viewer/listener hears a sound before seeing its origination or inspiration on the screen. After the viewer/listener sees the sound origination point, the sound has then become “de-acousmatized.” In the opening of *The Golden Mountains*, a galop (Music A) is heard before the images of horses and Baku workers appear. This is quite similar to *The New Babylon*, where the galloping music of the German cavalry is

---


85 Arnshtam also spoke of “music anticipating action” in his article on *The Counterplan*, which describes what Chion calls acousmatism. See Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 96-97. This can also be described as a sound bridge.
heard before it is seen, alerting the viewer/listener and carrying and initiating the associative meaning of the scene. In *The Golden Mountains*, after the galloping horses are seen and the images cut between the horses and the workers, the music is then associated with the struggle of the Baku workers.

Shostakovich also wrote music to act as an acousmatic cue in the hallway scene. During the fade, another galop (Appendix I, Music F) begins and continues over images of Peter and the master entering the hallway, and Peter eventually interrupting the meeting of the strikers.\(^{86}\) Similar to the opening Baku scene, the music cues the scene before it is seen, in this case alluding to the worker’s strike. Yutkevich described this scene as a kind of counterpoint that echoes the principles set out by the “Statement on Sound,”

> It did not have illustration… This galop was used on the slowest part of the film when its hero the peasant Peter in painful meditation descends down the staircase: in this time the rapid repeat of the galop conveys the internal creation of the hero… S. Eisenstein, who, being in the U.S., presented *The Golden Mountains* to American viewers [and] said that the film, with his point of view, corresponded to the claim, which he wrote together with V. Pudovkin and G. Alexandrov: about the principle of new applications of sound and music in cinema, [should] not be naturalistic, outwardly emotional element, but a symphonic, contrapuntal correlation with the visual series.\(^{87}\)

According to Yutkevich, the galop was reused as a counterpoint to the image to signify a change in Peter, an early moment of his slow conversion.

Throughout *The Golden Mountains*, music exists both within and outside the diegesis. The accordion player in the beginning is entirely diegetic, as is the singing ensemble at the end of the tavern scene. The *chastushka* of the lavatory scene is both

---

\(^{86}\) This galop is taken from the first half of the “Transition to the Kitchen” from *Declared Dead* (1931). Riley noted this borrowing and also states that this music was also used for and his operetta, *The Great Lightening*. See Riley, “If I Only…,” 36.

\(^{87}\) Yutkevich, “Vspominaya Shostakovicha,” 23.
diegetic and non-diegetic, since the character sings, but is accompanied by the off-screen orchestra. Underscoring plays a significant role in association and meaning, in such instances as the boss walking through the factory and the scene of Vasily’s attack. There are other instances, however, where Shostakovich subtly played with the movement between diegetic and non-diegetic musical/visual space, such as the tavern scene with Peter and the master and the scene of Peter and the baby.

Similar to the “snoring” scene of Alone, Shostakovich has Peter singing a fragment from the waltz that is shortly thereafter picked up in the orchestra during his scene with the baby.88 Although not as elaborate as the “snoring” scene, the technique of having a character initiate a sound, or in Kozintsev’s words, “leading the image,” that is then taken up by the orchestra starts to become a common approach for Shostakovich.89 Notably, however, the fragment that Peter sings would not be familiar to him outside the context of the complete statement of the waltz that sounded from his watch. Peter therefore should not be familiar with this specific musical idea, regardless of its derivation from the waltz, since it is unfamiliar out of context. Peter thus has “insider” knowledge of a fragment that has only been used in off-screen underscoring. This breaking of the boundary between diegetic and non-diegetic sound reveals how this fragment has subtly permeated the diegetic world of the characters, only then to quickly disappear into underscoring.

88 See Chapter Four.
89 See Chapter Four. This technique is still used today in Hollywood films as well.
Borrowing and Sound Effects

Similar to his previous film scores, Shostakovich’s score for *The Golden Mountains* uses a significant amount of borrowed material. Uniquely, however, this score foregrounds the borrowed material. The focus on this material, which is mainly the two primary leitmotifs, lends both a sense of “symphonic” continuity and disintegrated fragmentation. When Egorova calls *The Golden Mountains* “symphonic,” that claim seemed to rest on her discussion of the leitmotifs in the film; while “symphonic” as used by others, including Shostakovich himself, meant that a score that was more developed and unified by material or methods other than leitmotifs.

The leitmotifs of *The Golden Mountains* seem to be more highlighted than in his previous scores because the leitmotifs appear more frequently and at crucial meaning-laden moments throughout the film (the gift of the watch, Peter’s dream in the tavern, Peter and the baby, and so forth). The other borrowed material, such as the allusion to Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s triplet motif from his Fourth Symphony in the musical underscoring that accompanies the son/engineer walking through the factory (Appendix H, Figure 44)\(^90\) and a subtle reference to *Alone* in the lavatory scene, appear in less memorable moments, yet still evoke some frame of reference depending on the foreknowledge and context of the viewer/listener.\(^91\) The potential reference to *Alone* is more subtle than the fairly clear allusion to the “fate” motive from Tchaikovsky’s Fourth Symphony. The ticking ostinato played in the *dombra* and the melody played in the *balalaika* is hauntingly similar to the

---

\(^90\) The “fate” motive is initially found in the opening bars (measures 1-5) of Tchaikovsky’s *Fourth Symphony*. See Pytor Tchaikovsky, *Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979), 5.

\(^91\) Riley suggests that there is a Tchaikovsky allusion as well. See John Riley, *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 17.
ticking ostinato accompanying oboe and flute in the opening shot of the Altai in *Alone*.

The question as to why *The Golden Mountains* was deemed more “symphonic” than previous scores that used music as the primary carrier of meaning is probably related more to the interaction of image, speech, and music than any of the three aspects alone. Unlike *Alone*, the music/image interaction in *The Golden Mountains* was fluid and continuous, that is, perfectly timed with speech entrances and exits, with no superfluous pauses and with the rhythm and timing of the editing, as indicated in the manuscripts. For the section of music for the attack of Vasily, for example, Shostakovich crossed out “2.30 sek,” (2 minutes, 33 seconds) indicating even more so than in previous scores, exact timings for parts of this scene.  

Although less of the music was repeated and written in a “number oriented” manner as in *Alone*, what Shostakovich and the sound designers achieved was presumably the most perfect union of music, speech, and sound effects in film to date. To discuss Shostakovich’s “symphonism” in the case of *The Golden Mountains* requires recognition of the fusion of image and music, rather than a discussion of a “pure” musical text essentially separated from the image. *The Golden Mountains* therefore marks a shift in the perception of Shostakovich’s film music, rather than the creation of it. This was primarily due to the change in the medium itself, which encouraged critics and scholars to hear the score as “symphonic.” It is the fluid and effective interaction of the music and image that may be the reason why this score may also be perceived as more leitmotivic and “borrowed” than previous scores.

---

92 See Fond 32, Inv. 104, N.6419, Glinka Museum Archive.
Music Reception

In discussion of his own work, Shostakovich considered the year that he written the scores for *The Golden Mountains* and *Counterplan* to be a turning point in his career. His work on *The Golden Mountains* was particularly significant, since he had to negotiate between speech, music, and sound effects. They were also noteworthy in their perceived “Soviet-ness,” as well as their ability to go beyond mere illustration. As he stated in reference to both films,

They were already real Soviet sound films. I stress “Soviet” bearing in mind the thematic and ideal tendencies and I therefore consider this work on these films important. I was lucky. At that time, many people still regarded music as an “illustration,” an accompaniment to the images, but the directors of these two films F. Ermler and S. Yutkevich proved to be musical and sensitively understanding of the role which music should play in sound cinema.93

The general film press found the sound and the music of *The Golden Mountains* to be a significant accomplishment, often stressing how the music engaged the images. Critics from major newspapers considered Shostakovich’s music to be “interesting, fresh, corresponding to the action of the film,” “clever, talented and inventive,” and “expressive and organic,” to such a point that the music “not amplifies the film, but subordinates it, controlling the hall.”94 Other film critics, however, solely focused on Shostakovich’s music, recognizing his vital importance to the development of role of the composer in sound film and his position as the one of the main composers of Soviet film music:

It is necessary to particularly mark the musical composition of the film. The music of the young composer D. Shostakovich has risen to the high symphonic level. The exceptional expressivity of the musical phrase, the harmonic unity of the musical form with plasticity, [and the] emotionally saturated musical episodes places Shostakovich among those distinguished composers of Soviet sound film. In the person of Shostakovich, the soviet cinematography beats the best examples of musical formulation in foreign sound films. The musical public opinion is obliged to analyze in detail the creative path of this talented composer.  

The majority of most of the critical evaluations of Shostakovich’s film score, often contrary to the general press, came from specialists in film music. Some writers praised the synthesis of the music and image. Cheremukhin considered the “counterpoint” of the images and the music to be effective, interconnecting the various characters and their role in the film through leitmotifs. Ioffe also begrudgingly praised the music/image relationship, stating that

In The Golden Mountains Shostakovich supplements not only dramatic visual shots, suggesting the relationship to the characters and acts, but also predicts movement, contents of the shots, preparing their occurrence.  

Here, Ioffe described Shostakovich’s foreshadowing of the strike in the use of his opening galop in the film and the parallelism of the underscoring to the action in the alleyway before the attack of Vasily. Ioffe considered both of these instances to be examples of synthesis of the music and image. In the overall scope of the film, however, Ioffe complained that the score was fragmented:

In place of continuous development under the silent frames, the music is interrupted, often giving way to dialogue. But the composer struggles against the isolated episodes, aspires to dramaturgical unity of the musical material. The means of this unity becomes a leitmotif which passes through the film, which appears in place with its characters and changing together with them.  

---

96 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 38.
97 Ibid., 37.
Although he cited the use of the leitmotif as the main unifying element, he still thought that this system failed in unifying the film score. He considered the lack of unity to be the result of the use of closed forms of music such as the fugue. Contrary to Egorova’s use of the word, Ioffe chastised Shostakovich’s use of such forms as “symphonic” and considered them useless for film music. Ioffe therefore received Shostakovich’s score as unsuccessful because of its implied connection to Western art forms such as the symphony or fugue.

The methods of leitmotifs and counterpoint were also received as positive elements of the score. In a 1939 paper about cinema music, the conductor Nikolay Rabinovich found that

> Principally, in respect to *The Golden Mountains* – this was the most interesting film in the use of music. In [the film], there already were fairly exact uses of the principle of sound, letimotivism, [and] attempts [at] original counterpoint between the image and sound.\(^98\)

Rabinovich had always been supportive of Shostakovich’s music from the time when he conducted the score for *Alone*. It is with this film that Rabinovich mentioned “leitmotivism” and praises the “counterpoint between the image and sound,” two issues that concerned Ioffe and Cheremukhin.

In contrast to Rabinovich, Pavina Ribakova found the songs that were used as leitmotifs to be an attempt at realism, a significant change from what she deems the “refined, warped-psychological lines of *The Nose* and foxtrotting rhythms of *The Golden

She condemned the way in which Shostakovich used the leitmotifs, however, stating that his treatment of the leitmotifs and their application to groups of characters in the film (the waltz for the owners and *The Golden Mountains* song for the workers) was “superficial” and “simplified.” Overall, she considered the score to be unsuccessful and asked the composer to “overcome [his] mistakes and incorrectness.”

Lastly, the section that attracted much criticism and made the film infamous for its “formalism,” is the fugue (Appendix H, Figure 45). Published in the suite form of the score and released in the first version of the film (but removed from the 1936 release), the fugue invited critics to condemn Shostakovich. In an earlier essay on *The Counterplan*, (1935) Arnshtam described the fugue from *The Golden Mountains*:

> the enormous fugue by Shostakovich for organ and the symphonic orchestra, connected our complicated and studied counterpoint with the strike of the Baku and Petersburg proletariat, perceived by the spectator, as the phenomenon natural and not demanding explanations – this was the true sign of our success.

In a later essay, “The Golden Mountains,” (1977) Arnshtam still considered the fugue a success, as part of the idea that “great symphonic forms” were successfully used in the film score:

> But Shostakovich was not afraid to bring into the cinema the most complex musical forms! And perhaps, principally, I consider his most significant success a fugue that he wrote for organ and large symphonic orchestra. Two parallel episodes developed in the film – a strike in Baku and a strike in Petersburg. [There were] about sixty diverse montage pieces. [It moved] from static, extremely slowed down...

---

100 Rībakova, “Muzïka Shostakovicha,” 40.  
101 Ibid., 41.  
102 Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 98.  
103 Ibid.
For Ioffe, however, the fugue was too literal. He considered the theme of the fugue to be too “abstract” (he suggests that a revolutionary tune should have been used) and “ready-made,” a complaint related to his previously cited discussion about the lack of unity and “organic synthesis” in the score. He considered the scene to be “constructivist” (i.e., modernist) because Shostakovich created a “formal analogy” between the fugue and the development of the strike:

Shostakovich tries to adapt for cinema ready musical forms, to interpret them [with] the shots. In the shots which [show] the strike expanding, including all the new masses and new convoys, he gives an organ fugue, the theme of which, passes to all new voices, spreading and growing, shows the development of the strike; the theme of a fugue does not use a revolutionary song, but [instead has a] dramatic abstract manner. To use a fugue in this case reveals the constructivist decision of the task of connecting the music with the plot, so as to have gone according to the line of formal analogy.

Cheremukhin also complained of the fugue as unsuccessful:

The fugue in film-music is encountered rarely. It is because it is difficult to execute. Truly, D. Shostakovich has written a wonderful fugue for the film The Golden Mountains, [but] it is not entirely used well in the film.106

In the suite version of the fugue, the instrumentation consists of organ and full orchestra. The organ begins the fugal statement, followed by answers from the orchestra (Appendix H, Figure 45).107 This also corresponds to the manuscripts, where the fugue begins with two lines in the organ, growing into five lines of music with the addition of the

---

104 Arnshtam, “Zlatïe gorï,” in Muzïka geroicheskogo, 63.
105 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 37-38.
106 M. Cheremukhin, Muzïka zvukovogo fil’ma, [Music of Sound Film] (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939), 60. “Well” can also be translated as “successfully.”
107 See also Number 3 in the published suite.
orchestra. The organ and the orchestra had been understood by Arnshtam and critics to represent the unification of each group of workers (in Baku or Petersburg) building into an analogous thick, interwoven musical texture. In this sense, the musical texture of the fugue acts as a cinematic signifier, specifically of the two groups coming together.

Although the concept of the fugue may reflect the idea of the proletarian, its “academicism” as an icon of Western art music and its potential to be more “audible” than other forms of music and more “difficult to execute” as Cheremukhin pointed out, goes against the proletarian idea, resulting in the negative reaction of critics such as Ioffe. This approach is contrary to the kind of visual/aural polyphony of the hut scene in *Alone*, where the shaman’s music, the hurdy-gurdy and various sound effects are interwoven to evoke the character’s state of mind. This layering and therefore modernist approach is eschewed in *The Golden Mountains* and replaced by a conventional polyphonic form nonetheless unacceptably Western and ultimately inappropriate. This parallel between musical lines/instruments/textures and the quick paced parallel montage of the images was therefore the hallmark of the film, yet proved to be a negative focal point for film critics.

Even after contemporaneous reviews, the use of a “symphonic” form such as the fugue was still considered to be a “formalist” mistake in the film’s score. In a 1936

---

108 See Number 3 in the published suite. The manuscript then shows a reduction of voices back down to three, then two before abruptly ending. See Fond 32, Inv. 104, N.6419, Glinka Museum Archive.
110 Lerner states that the relative audibility of the fugue adds to its sobriety, making it an effective tool in documentary films. Lerner, “Musical Texture as Cinematic Signifier,” 18.
article published just weeks after Pravda's well-known “Muddle Instead of Music,” Bugoslavsky claimed that the fugue was a “formalist” mistake in a long line of Shostakovich’s “errors” in film music. In an article from 1950 on music and the history of cinema, Tikhon Khrennikov listed The Golden Mountains as one of Shostakovich’s early “constructivist, formalist” film scores, together with The New Babylon and Alone. He went onto say, “In the films of this period we met the eclectic laugh of the grotesque, machine-like noises, the bourgeois, thieves’ intonations.”

Khrennikov then continued to address Shostakovich’s success listing The Counterplan as his recovery from his earlier films. It is possible that despite the cleverness of the metaphor of the fugue/strike, it was eventually removed from the re-release of the film in 1936 as a result of its generally poor reception by film music specialists. By 1950, the film was firmly established as a failure in comparison to his next film score, The Counterplan.

Conclusions

The initial relative success of The Golden Mountains was attributed to its attempt at realism. This realism was mostly achieved by the synchronous sound and speech, as well as the integrative musical score fused together by Shostakovich and the sound designers. Shostakovich’s subtle underscoring and the use of popular songs as clear leitmotifs in closely fitted rhythm with the images and speech of the film led some critics to an initial positive reception of his score. Its topic also was an attempt to be appropriately “socialist.” To emphasize conversion and construction not only of the State

---

but of the individual was in keeping with the changing politics and themes in filmmaking of the early thirties. The references to twenties-era montage and Shostakovich’s use of Western “formalist” forms of music, however, led the film to eventual condemnation as a “formalist” excursion, especially after the enthusiastic reception of model socialist realist films such as The Counterplan and Chapayev. The Golden Mountains therefore was in its time the nearest example of the burgeoning socialist realist film and film score, only to be overpowered by the success of Shostakovich’s most famous film music from the thirties – The Counterplan.
CHAPTER 6

AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE SOCIALIST REALIST AESTHETIC, II:

THE COUNTERPLAN (1932)

The Counterplan

History and Production

*The Counterplan* was created in the midst of the highly propagandized rebuilding of industry and economy in 1932, culminating in the catchphrase “Let’s have a Counterplan” to the five-year plan.¹ In the context of this film, this meant that a new plan needed to be developed to finish the equivalent of five years work in four years. The story of the film was based on a real-life event, where workers at a Leningrad “Karl Marx” turbine factory succeeded in completing their work in a shorter time than needed – their counterplan – in 1929–1931.² The subsequent development of the theme for the film followed, influenced by the reorganization of various groups such as RAPP and RAPM into government controlled Unions in 23 April 1932.³

---


³ One of the scenarists, D. Del’ discusses this point. See “Kak pisalsya stsenarii ‘Vstrechnogo,’” [How the Scenario of *The Counterplan* was Written] in *Vstrechnyi, kak sozdavalsya fil’m [The Counterplan – How the Film was Created]* (Moscow: Kinofotoizdat, 1935), 20. So does Khentova, *Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo,* 1: 325-326.
after its release, the film was lavished with attention from the Party, local factories, and the film studio, particularly since it was the only film commissioned for the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution. It was adopted by every organization and community in Leningrad not just as an ordinary film project, but as representative of the building of new socialist society through art. In a speech about the film, S.M. Kirov stated “…the film *The Counterplan* is the same Party and Soviet business as any economic-political work.”

In January 1932, Rosfilm studios (i.e., Lenfilm studios) decided to commission a film for the anniversary of the October revolution. By February of that year, the studio persuaded Yutkevich and Ermler to make the film. Under orders from the studio, the directors were required to premiere the work on the October Revolution anniversary date, 7 November 1932. The directors began the script-writing process without any script or set of ideas from the studio.

According to several sources, there was considerable disagreement over the appropriate topic. Youngblood claims that Ermler was hesitant to do the project and felt that the theme of the film was generally uninteresting. Quoting Ermler, Youngblood writes, “The best Ermler could say about the picture was, ‘I had feeling for the themes. The idea of *Counterplan* didn’t excite me very much, but I understand that it was what...

---

4 Quoted from Khentova, *Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo*, 1: 327-328.
5 Lenfilm, as it is known today, was founded in 1926 and operated under the State organization for film, which changed its name several times over the course of the twenties and thirties. It was first known as Goskino (1922), Sovkino (1924), Soyuzkino (1930), then Rosfilm (1932).
we needed.” When writing the scenario, Ermler’s showed his anxiety and trouble over creating a scenario in several of his diary entries, including organizing and developing the story and finding good “anecdotes.” This resonates with the anxiety that many said the directors had early in the process. Shumyatsky, the head of Soyuzkino, also described a disagreement over the topic, but explained that it was an argument over appropriateness of topic and the need to create “entertaining” film, an issue that also received much attention in the press.

There are several different claims on how long it took to make the film. Sovetskiy Ekran wrote that it took five months, while other press reviews wrote that it took two and half months. Shumyatsky claimed that the crew only had three and half months to work on the film. Yutkevich stated that they began to make (or possibly shoot) the film in March and finished the film in October, in which time a third of the film had to be remade (or re-shot). “Work,” however, is unclear in all of these cases. It is unclear if the writers were distinguishing between the different phases of the process of making a film (e.g., script-writing, shooting, editing, and copying). I have therefore created my own timeline that has resulted from an evaluation of all of these sources.

For many months, the directors focused on creating a convincing and realistic plot about the development and growth of factory workers as they work towards the fulfillment of their counterplan. After having decided on the initial idea in the early months of 1932, Yutkevich and Ermler began researching the life and work of factory

---

9 See Shumyatsky, “Kak voznik i stavilsya ‘Vstrechnyi.’”
employees at the “Stalin” turbine factory to understand how to draw their characters. After several months of consulting the factory workers, the directors and scenarists (which included D. Del’ and Lev Arnshtam as well as Yutkevich and Ermler) handed a script to Shumyatsky for review in June. Shumyatsky described the problems of the script, primarily with the characterization of the workers and the relationships between the old and young factory workers. The scenario contained well developed characters that represent different figures at a factory. After several scenario changes, the directors finally settled the final title of the film as “The Counterplan.” With Shumyatsky’s suggested corrections, the directors began shooting after Shumyatsky was finished with the script, likely in July or August.

The film crew was left with less than half the time usually required for creating a film. The amount of time it took to complete *Alone*, for example, was almost two years. This short time frame forced them to work continually for days at a time. General editing of the film began on the 10 September and the crew began working on copying from negative to positive film on the 22 September. A month later, the film was premiered for the management of Soyuzkino and Glavrepetkom (Central Repertory Committee), who generally received the film well, but found problems with the film that

---

13 See Kolin, N. Kolin, “Materiali k istorii fil’ma o “Vstrechnom,”” [“Materials to the History of the Film about *The Counterplan*”] in *The Counterplan – How the Film was Created*. The directors used the input of factory workers for nearly every stage of the filmmaking process.
14 Previous titles had been the “Metallurgy Factory” and “Shame.”
15 See Kolin, “Materiali k istorii fil’ma o “Vstrechnom,”” 138. In an essay about the creation of the film, the author remarks that it usually takes five or six months to create a film outside of the script-writing, editing, and so forth.
required it to be re-edited.\textsuperscript{16} The directors re-edited accordingly and released it to the public on 7 November 1932.\textsuperscript{17}

Due to the filmmakers’ success in finishing the film in a short time frame, later discussions of the film elaborated on the mirroring of life and art, adding further weight to claims of the film’s “socialist” success. The boundary between the film’s creation and its main theme became blurred, contributing to the mythology of the counterplan of \textit{The Counterplan} and the overall success of the film.

\textbf{Plot Synopsis}

The central focus of the film’s plot is the change and growth of the older factory “master” Semyon Ivanovich Babchenko and his acceptance and successful execution of the counterplan that eventually saves the factory. The film’s scenario also includes supporting characters such as Vasya, the Party secretary; and Katya and Pavel who are a somewhat “bourgeois” young couple that eventually acts as the “young guard,” ultimately representing the Party’s goals. These characters also contribute to the film’s sub-plot, a love story that softens the “industrial” side of the film. Other supporting characters, such as the engineer Lazarev, are more neutral, but eventually convert to the cause. In keeping with the storyline trend of the early thirties that becomes the model

\textsuperscript{16} Youngblood suggests that the film was viewed twice, once on the 26 October and again on the 27 October, which showcased the revisions to the film suggested by the viewers of the first screening. Youngblood confirms that date of the 26 October. Shumyatsky suggests however, that the film was viewed on the 29 October, never mentioning a second viewing and suggesting that this was the first screening of the film. See Youngblood, “Cinema as Social Criticism: The Early Films of Fridrikh Ermler,” 82 and Shumyatsky, “Kak voznik i stavilsya ‘Vstrechnyi,’” 11. For more information on the film’s making see Kolin, “Materiali k istorii fil’ma o ‘Vstrechnom.’”

\textsuperscript{17} According to Kolin, the film consisted of 2 hours and 20 minutes. Kolin, , “Materiali k istorii fil’ma o ‘Vstrechnom,’” 148. The version I have viewed, however, is 1 hour and 47 minutes, suggesting that this may be a re-edited version of the original. I was able to view this film thanks to Irina Shostakovich and Ol’ga Dombrovskaya at Shostakovich Apartment Archive in Moscow.
plot for socialist realism, the character of the “wrecker” appears, depicted in the engineer Skortsev. The “wrecker’s” attempts to foil the plan are spoiled by the good work of the other characters, resulting in the expected happy socialist ending. This circle of characters therefore provides a sampling of the ideal population of a factory in the late twenties and early thirties that acts as a new kind of socialist typage.

The film opens with the establishment of the central characters of the film, each in different locations. The first shot shows the happy couple Pavel and Katya in their apartment, both of whom work for the same factory in town. While Katya walks around the apartment singing and playfully waking up Pavel, the couple is visited by their friend and secretary of the Party Committee, Vasya, who comes to discuss the state of the factory with them over breakfast. Cutting to Babchenko and his wife, we see the quiet morning rituals of the older couple, who hardly speak to each other, in contrast to the young workers. Cutting back to the young workers, a heated conversation between Pavel and Vasya shows that the potential difficulty at the factory has left Pavel generally unconcerned.

After a fade out and fade in, a common technique used between scenes/parts in the film, we see the inside of the factory, where the factory workers are celebrating the anticipated success of the turbine. After a public conversation between Babchenko and the secretary, Babchenko is “put in his place.” As the “master” of the factory in some sense, Babchenko is therefore humbled by the presence of the Party represented by Vasya. Later intertitles and scenes show Babchenko drinking heavily, followed by a confrontation between Katya and Babchenko over his lack of enthusiasm. These short scenes lead the viewer to conclude that Babchenko is not involved enough in his work.
The next major segment shows another gathering of the factory workers to check the work on the new turbine. After many congratulations to the master behind its creation, Babchenko (including enthusiastic hand-shaking and the gift of a cat), the turbine is tested. To their surprise, the machine fails the test, the first of several failures that lead to the development of the counterplan. Seeming disappointed, Babchenko sits alone with his new cat, depressed and staring at his empty bottle of liquor.

Another fade out and in again shows Babchenko and his wife at home eating breakfast. In slow editing between shots of the couple, the transformation of Babchenko begins with his rejection of his usual morning vodka. The locale shifts to the home of the engineer Skortsev through fading of the images, where a worker visits him to compile information of the factory’s project. Creatively shot in an almost “split screen” shooting effect, we see Skortsev sitting next to the young worker. The sense of space is disrupted when the engineer sits up and walks to the mirror where the worker’s image is reflected and gazes at himself. It is then the viewer recognizes that the left half of the shot was filled with a mirror image, while the right half was the “real” image of the engineer. This kind of creative shooting is the general hallmark of the film, moving away from the typical emphasis on editing seen in filmmaking of the twenties and towards the realist shooting that would typify the thirties.

The scene of Skortsev beginning to “wreck” the worker’s plans continues in a conversation with his mother and a monologue about Marxism, punctuated with singing and piano playing in the salon of their home. Long lingering shots on the engineer and his mother characterize the engineer as pre-revolutionary bourgeois and “wrecker” in contrast to the beginning of the transformation of Babchenko in the previous scene.
The following scene shows a meeting of the factory workers for a third time, to check the work of the turbine. With high hopes, Katya runs about speaking of her housewarming to be given later that night as the workers wait for the engineer’s results. Yet again, the machine fails and the crowd departs discouraged.

The next shot shows the apartment of Katya and Pavel, breaking up the factory images. Sitting on the couch singing a minor mode, slow tempo version of the “Song of the Counterplan,” Katya stares off while Vasya waits next to her. They both realize that no one is coming, as Vasya walks over to a table full of food and Katya picks up the guitar to accompany her singing. Pavel finally walks in and, although Katya only wants to speak about something else, Pavel and Vasya discuss the decisions made at the factory about the schedule for the turbine. Realizing that there was no more time to finish the turbine, they begin to concoct a counterplan to finish the turbine on schedule.

The next scene shows two separate events that bring together Babchenko and the other factory workers. It begins with montage reminiscent of twenties filmmaking, cutting between images of Babchenko, more drunk than ever, staring up at a flag that has on it the word “Pozor” (Shame) and the flag itself, the scene culminates in Babchenko’s taking of the flag and his interruption of the workers’ meeting. After destroying the flag in front of the workers, Babchenko is restrained and the meeting continues. Vasya continues discussing the need for a resolution to their problem. With images of the depressed workers, the scene fades out.

In response to his own behavior, Babchenko gets drunk and listens to old records. After a brief visit from the secretary, Vasya, the following scenes reveal Babchenko working on a counterplan to fix the turbine in the allotted time. As he and his team work,
the well-known scene of the “White Nights” follows where Katya and Vasya walk around the city. In this scene, soft-focus images of the couple discussing the factory and love in general are interspersed with images of the city at work and accompanied by full orchestral statements of the “Song of the Counterplan” and other underscoring. After stating firmly that she loves only Pavel, Katya leaves Vasya alone on a bridge.

Returning to the factory, the last scenes show the work on the turbine being checked by the other engineer, Lazarev, before continuing. With a small victory, the workers continue to meet their deadline. Meanwhile, Skortsev attempts to thwart the worker’s efforts and Lazarev collapses from exhaustion. After a scene that shows the worrying wives of the factory workers, the penultimate scene of film returns to the familiar setting of the factory floor, where everyone, including the factory’s boss, awaits the results of the inspection. After two attempts, the turbine runs at “50,000,” even greater than the original goal. As everyone celebrates, the engineer Skortsev cowers in the corner, at points clapping along. The last scene cuts to another locale showing Babchenko and everyone gathered at a dinner table. Babchenko gives a toast (“To the new Communist, Semyon Ivanovich Babchenko”) to their success and his own transformation.

Similar to The Golden Mountains, The Counterplan is about the development of socialist workers at a factory. But unlike previous films, The Counterplan provided a variety of characters that represented different strata of Soviet society. The character of Babchenko and his growth and socialist conversion mirrors Peter’s conversion in The Golden Mountains. The surrounding characters, Pavel, Katya, Vasya, Skortsev, and Lazarev, however, are given more attention and depth than the secondary characters of
previous films. The directors’ intent was to create a film that resonated with the need in 1932 for films about socialist (re)construction that would also appropriately accommodate the request for a “jubilee” film. They also continued to experiment with sound film as they had in *The Golden Mountains*.

**Film Reception and Analysis**

The continual codification of the ideal Soviet film and its score and the further development of the sound technology and the composer found its expression in the press and film scholarship. Similar to previous films, *The Counterplan* was both praised and critically debated in the press. The main difference, however, is that the reception of *The Counterplan* began to reveal the influence of the State on the press. The main foci of discussion in contemporaneous and future press was the development of the characters and the parts of society that they represent, the overall theme of the film (socialist construction), the solidity of the plot and the film’s construction, and the soundtrack.\(^{18}\)

Compared to earlier films, particularly of the twenties, *The Counterplan* was an enormous success primarily because of its perceived socialist realism. Almost every review began with a statement about the relevance or importance of this film to the “construction of socialist art” and included much of what was came to be expected as the usual rhetoric of socialist realism under Stalin.\(^{19}\) *Komsomol’skaya Pravda* considered the film to be of “Soviet quality,” while *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo* wrote of *The Counterplan* as a true “mass film.” Some reviews also stated that *The Counterplan* was the first “socialist

---

\(^{18}\) Some press from the 1970s and 1980s exists possibly as a response to a re-release of the film and/or to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the film.

\(^{19}\) Many articles would talk about the “glory” that the film and its song brought to the country and its socialist art.
realist” film of their time, clearly using a term that officially became doctrine two years later. The author of a review in Sovetskoe Iskusstvo stated that lately “we have talked a lot about socialist realism in art,” and further states that The Counterplan was built on “cinematographic realism.” The author went on to say,

We see as this realism principle the rich combining of the elements of healthy romanticism, happy comedy, light grotesque irony, spelled out in the practice of soviet cinematography. Not only [should there be] arguments about the creative method, but also the practical one. And we see how this principle is used to ensure the correctness and lucidity of the film.

The realism, or socialist realism, described here includes aspects that were typically anti-Soviet such as irony and the grotesque. Here, however, these potentially anti-Soviet aspects have been recognized as “practical” means to a socialist end. This successful realism is notable, particularly since Alone also attempted this same “realism” and was received instead as modernist.

A review of the film from 1982 reinforces the perceived socialist realism, calling The Counterplan the “first sign of socialist realism in cinematography,” showing how the film had been canonized after Stalin’s death. The use of the terms “socialism” and “realism” independently or in combination commonly appeared in the press after the film’s release, showing that this work appeared to fulfill the State’s need for a true Soviet film.

Other reviews emphasized the film’s socialism and realism by discussing its rejection of formalism. P.A. Blyakhin, the deputy chairman of Glavrepetkom, commented that the “director-Communists”

---

21 Ibid.
22 Moldavsky, “Vstrechnyi.”
refuse to have elements or vestiges of intelligent aesthetics and formalism, which were still visible in *The Golden Mountains* (Yutkevich) and in *Fragment of an Empire* (the last work of Ermler). It is also a remarkable fact, that in despite of the noticeable difference in the styles of the directors, their combined work on one film gives genuine unity.”

*Kino* also alluded to the film’s lack of formalism by stating that the film was not “experimental,” but instead “emotional” and “victorious.” *Pravda*, considered the input of real-life workers as a key to the film’s authenticity, realism, and ultimately its success. Words such as “lyricism,” “organicism,” and “authenticity” were also used to allude to the film’s successful application of realism in the film.

Avoiding stereotypes was also part of the “socialism” and “realism” that reviewers wanted to see in *The Counterplan*. Reviewers praised the lack of stereotyping in the film as a sign of its realism. *Sovetskiy Ekran* praised its realistic portrayal of individualism, while *Pravda* stated that the “overcoming” of stereotypes was one of the film’s major successes. *Komsomol’skaya Pravda* also wrote that the film understood its characters, avoiding stereotypes altogether.

In contrast to realism, many reviewers saw influence of the theater, particularly in the roles of Babchenko and his wife. The slow and articulated speech and exaggerated

---

24 A. Fevral’sky, “Zametki o ‘Vstrechnom,’” [*Notes on The Counterplan*] *Kino*, 24 December 1932 (59): 3. I noticed that throughout various reviews, terms like “emotional,” lyricism,” and “organicism” were used to describe the film overall, which I have concluded allude to the film’s success attempt at creating realism.
25 L. Ginzburg, “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm,” [*Film About People, the Building of Socialism*] *Pravda*, 327 (22 November 1932): 4.
27 Ginzburg, “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm” and Moldavsky, , “Vstrechnyi,” *Sovetskiy Ekran*.
28 Ginzburg, “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm” and Bachelis, “Vstechnyi,” 4.
facial expressions of the actors were received as an influence from the theater. The
reviewer from *Kino* praised the “synthesis” of the theater and film, while other reviewers
found it to be a significant fault.

There was also concern that such a “socialist” film would lack the entertainment
qualities of more popular films.29 At this time, foreign films were still considered
entertaining and many film workers were discussing how Soviet films could be just as
entertaining. *Pravda* recognized that films could easily be “khaltura” when occupied by
a theme such as socialist construction and found that *The Counterplan* had overcome that
problem.30 A pessimistic reviewer, claiming that no socialist realist film could ever be
truly entertaining, begrudgingly accepted *The Counterplan* as the closest example of a
balance between socialism and entertainment.31 The reviewer from *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*,
however, implied that successful and entertaining realism combines elements that were
considered foreign to the socialist aesthetic by other reviewers (romance, comedy, and so
forth).32 The argument as to whether or not the film was successfully entertaining as
socialist realism was an argument that would continue into the thirties.

Despite its success, the press and in the film review committees criticized the plot,
the general construction of the film, the character development, and so-called
“bourgeois” mistakes. Both Blyakhin and the reviewer from *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*
considered the plot to be generally disconnected and not understandable.33 Other
directors and film critics, including Grigory Kozintsev and Viktor Shklovsky, considered

---

29 Later in the thirties, Soviet comedies became, in part, an answer to this dilemma.
30 Ginzburg, “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm.”
32 “Vstrechnyi,” *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*.
33 Blyakhin, “Vstrechnyi,” and “Vstrechnyi,” *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*. 344
the overall construction of the film lacking in clarity and “dramaturgically careless.”

Other critics agreed, finding the character development, one of the strengths according to some critics, to be poor. The critics were split on the issue of plot.

When the film was initially viewed in October, both Shumyatsky and another film critic Yu. Liss found that the characters needed more development and asked the directors to consider this point when revising the film for release.35 Another critic, Bela Balázs, found that the film focused too much on the individual, stating that films needed to move beyond the individual as representation of the mass. Balázs wanted a representation of “not the person in the mass, but the mass in the person.”36 M. Bleiman, a contemporaneous critic, commented that the film was built on “ornamentation” only, claiming that the characters lacked depth and the inner psychology necessary to understanding their growth.37 Bleiman stated that the scene where the secretary joins Babchenko, who is crying and drunk, focuses too much on the bottle of vodka and the character’s drunkenness, becoming “ornamental.” Yutkevich openly contested this interpretation, stating that Bleiman missed the point of the scene.38 The images of the drunken Babchenko and his bottle of vodka were meant to show his alliance with the old, “non-party” ways, while the arrival of the secretary, who joins him in a drink, was meant

to show how the youth of the Party assists the older workers to grow into their new roles in socialist society. Although it seems that the intention of the director is clear, the “ornamental” bottle was perceived as potentially anti-Soviet.

Other critics also negatively received the omnipresent bottle of vodka. In an article from *Rabochaya Moskva*, where factory workers reviewed the film, some reviewers complained that in addition to being unrealistic, the images of the vodka in association with the Party (Vasya’s visit to Babchenko) and the perceived comfort of the young couple’s apartment was too “bourgeois.” Another negative review from a worker complained of the presence of “bourgeois ideologies.” It seems that even though *The Counterplan* was praised for many “correct” socialist characteristics and was the most successful and truly socialist realist film to date, it may not have been truly popular with Soviet audiences because of aspects of its plot, character development, and “bourgeois” qualities that were still not effective or as “intelligible” to every one of the millions.

---


40 Ibid., “Ne agitka, a khudozhhestvennaya kartina,” [Not Agitka, but Artistic Film]. This article was found in “Vstrechnyi,” ed. khr. No. 400, Gosfil’mofond.

41 Youngblood states that the film was “supposedly popular with viewers.” See Youngblood, “Cinema as Social Criticism: The Early Films of Fridrikh Ermler,” 82.
Music to the Film

Production and Process

In 1950, Shostakovich stated that he wrote the scores to both *The Golden Mountains* and *The Counterplan* in 1931. For *The Golden Mountains* this date is appropriate. For *The Counterplan*, however, it seems impossible since *The Counterplan* was not developed as a film idea until the first few months of 1932. It is possible, especially as seen from descriptions of Shostakovich’s process, that the composer began writing music to the film when the crew began shooting the film in the late summer of 1932. Khentova supports this claim, placing the creation of the score in October 1932. Evidently, like everyone else working on the film, Shostakovich had to work quickly to complete the score in time for its first reviews for the film studio in late October. According to some, Shostakovich worked on the set gathering information for underscoring the film. Khentova explains his process, in part based on information from some members of the film collective:

The method of the composer’s work in the film was dictated by the short terms of its production that demanded simultaneous shock efforts of the entire film-making collective. Shostakovich observed during the shootings as they were going on or having watched a scene straight through, immediately composing music underneath - in these cases there was usually illustrative music...But more often music was written in parallel to shootings, under the script, and the composer on his basis followed own visual, psychological representations, creating the generalized sound pictures with independent semantic function.

---

44 Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 533.
45 Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 328. See also “Vspominaya Shostakovicha” and Garin, Vospominaniya, 96.
46 The Russian word for shock here is *udarnyi*.
47 Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 328.
Yutkevich confirmed some of Khentova’s statements about Shostakovich’s approach to underscoring in an interview published in 1995. He stated, “We calculated time for music in film, according to the second, and he composed as much as was needed, absolutely exactly.”

It is always a question as to how much a composer works with sound operators on a film project, particularly since information on such relationships is rarely available. With this film however, there was more information on the processes of creating music and sound. According to Yutkevich and Arnshtam, the creation of factory sound, for example, was created by the sound designer, Arnshtam, the sound operator, Volk and the composer, Shostakovich. These three creators of sound worked together to create factory sounds out of orchestral instruments to create the ambient soundscape of a metallurgy factory. This approach is unique, differing from the earlier “noise” montage. With *The Counterplan*, orchestral instruments were used instead of actual factory sounds to effectively emulate a factory soundscape. Taking most of the credit, Arnshtam discussed the approach to the film’s sound design:

> I had a very interesting experience with making the sounds of a factory in *The Counterplan*. I am in principle opposed to any naturalistic “film-noise,” which usually physiologically tires the listener with its disorganization and intolerable roar. This “film-noise” is usually intended for musical half-deaf directors and for deaf spectators.

> I used my own thought up “factory” in *The Counterplan*. I had an original orchestra working for me, which consisted of several bassoons, clarinets, several violins, four-contrabasses, a trumpet and a flute. I had this orchestra at my disposal on all shoots and used their improvisation, and never went the way of the imitation natural noise of a factory.

> I used the musical instruments only as timbral color, distributed on the elementary rhythmic design. In these timbres, it was necessary to enter the buzz of the lighting devices,

---

49 Arnshtam claims that it was he and Volk that did the sound design entirely, but Yutkevich states that Shostakovich worked with Arnshtam on the design of factory sounds in the film. See Lev Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” [Sound Design in *The Counterplan*] *Vstrechnyi, kak sozdavalsya fil’m* [*The Counterplan – How the Film was Created*] (Moscow: Kinofotoizdat, 1935), 99-100 and Yutkevich, “Vspominaya Shostakovicha,” 23-24.
which worked in all force of the 16 thousand of ampere. I tried to use the original orchestra with loudness not greater than mezzo forte on Hawaiian guitar. I think that the listener is grateful for it.\textsuperscript{50}

Arnshtam’s orchestral factory soundscape is completely opposed to the found-sound or modernistic “film noise” of films of directors such as Dziga Vertov, who he indirectly references in his description. He was interested instead in creating realism in sound for which he used “timbral color,” such as the high range of the flute as “metallic” sounds of the factory or low, grumbling ranges of instruments such as string bass and bassoon, all kept at a very low volume (“not greater than a mezzo-forte on Hawaiian guitar.”)\textsuperscript{51} Arnshtam also accommodated the buzzing of the lighting devices (and possibly the cameras that Volk described) into the general soundscape as well.\textsuperscript{52} The result is effectively realistic – there is a trace of factory-like sounds throughout that blend in the imagined sound of a factory.

Although a very detailed and useful description of sound design in the film, Arnshtam was suspiciously silent in his discussion of Shostakovich’s music or musical involvement on *The Counterplan* in his essay specifically about *The Counterplan*. He instead spent much of his time talking about Shostakovich’s score to *The Golden Mountains* or about his work on *The Counterplan*. In his essay on *The Counterplan*, he went as far as to state that

> Cinematographers and film critics usually think that music in the “factory” is composed by Shostakovich. Some reviews of Shostakovich even praised him for this music. To me it is

\textsuperscript{50} Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 99-100.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} In the scene of Babchenko and his wife eating at home, one can hear a hum in the background, possibly produced by the film equipment. In his description of *The Counterplan* Riley implies that this might have been intentional. See Riley, 20.
flattering that my pure cinematographic craft and technical work has been accepted as music by such a remarkable composer as Shostakovich. Shostakovich does not take offense, and for that thank you!\textsuperscript{53}

It is unusual that Arnshtam denied Shostakovich any credit, especially since he appeared to be at ease praising Shostakovich in most of his writings about \textit{The Golden Mountains} and \textit{The Counterplan}, when Shostakovich was responsible for the music. This particular “orchestral” approach to the creation of factory sound, however, would probably have required Shostakovich’s assistance, as Yutkevich has claimed. Although the authorship is unclear, this detailed description shows a concern for realism executed in the unique approaches to ambient, non-underscored sound in \textit{The Counterplan}.

\textbf{Sound Technology}

As with \textit{The Golden Mountains}, the score of \textit{The Counterplan} contained natural and fabricated sounds and human speech. In \textit{The Counterplan}, however, there is a far greater focus on the use of speech, including more dialogue and a greater use of ambient sound, which contributed to a more “natural” soundscape. Arnshtam’s creation of an orchestral factory soundscape is one example. Dialogue and conversation in \textit{The Counterplan} played an even more important role, possibly as a result of directorial choice, than in \textit{The Golden Mountains}. Arnshtam commented that “With the growth of sound cinematography sound more increasingly yielded to dramatic art,” explaining further that speech, that is, the “word,” held greater prominence over music.\textsuperscript{54} The focus on speech, however, may also be the result of the available technology. In an article about sound and \textit{The Counterplan}, Ilya Volk commented that the equipment used for

\textsuperscript{53} Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 100.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 95.
film, provided and supported by the studio of the engineer A. Shorin at Rosfilm, was different than that used for previous films. The advantage of using completely different recorder and condenser microphones was its increased sensitivity and quality of timbre.\textsuperscript{55} They also had the opportunity to shoot on the pavilions of the studio, where the filmmakers were able to synchronously record speech and sound. Unlike \textit{Alone}, where the directors were unable to record the sound of whistling tea kettles, Volk and Arnshtam could record quieter sounds, including the “sound of the water poured in a glass, quiet conversation, the song of Red Army men sounding in a distance, and so forth.”\textsuperscript{56} Volk also attested that they were able to quiet most of the sound of the film cameras.\textsuperscript{57} As a result, the soundscape of \textit{The Counterplan} sounds more “natural” and sophisticated than its predecessors.

\textbf{Sources}

Of the sound and music that Yutkevich and Arnshtam speak of, very little seems to have survived outside of the phonogram, i.e., the soundtrack, of the film. In volume 41 of the \textit{Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes} of Shostakovich, Manashir Yakubov has published fragments from Shostakovich’s film score that correspond with some of the underscoring to the film.\textsuperscript{58} The “Song of the Counterplan” itself has existed in various

\textsuperscript{55} See Volk, “The Sound Techniques of \textit{The Counterplan},” 103-104 for information on the types of systems used in the film such as Shorin’s SH6 and MV2.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 103.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 104.
\textsuperscript{58} Yakubov, \textit{Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom} 41. In this edition of film music Yakubov provides three fragments (under the title “Three Excerpts”) and three other fragments two of which are from the Glinka Museum of Musical Culture archive (\textit{Scherzo} and three sketches from the “Song of the Counterplan”) and a section of the film \textit{Michurin}, which also has a version of the “Song of the Counterplan.”
published formats since its premiere.\textsuperscript{59} Other sketches and scores of the songs, orchestral
and choral parts of the film are also extant, although no complete manuscript of the score
has been found or has been published. Sketches of the song are currently held at the
Glinka Museum Archive and the manuscript of the three fragments published in
Yakubov’s edition are in the Russian Institute for Art History in St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{60} Given
the limited material available, the foundation of my discussion of the film’s music rests
on the published fragments, observations from some sketches and scores, and the
phonogram of the film itself.\textsuperscript{61}

Music Analysis

Similar to its immediate predecessor, \textit{The Golden Mountains}, \textit{The Counterplan} was a true speaking film that sought to incorporate and integrate ambient noise, speech, and musical underscoring. Shostakovich’s score to \textit{The Counterplan} also continued the experiments of \textit{The Golden Mountains} in his approach to musical form. Shostakovich employed leitmotifs, which are based on newly composed as well as borrowed songs, to organize and unify the score. In contrast to \textit{The Golden Mountains}, relatively little underscoring is present and the leitmotivic songs are the predominant music heard throughout the film.

\textsuperscript{59} Shostakovich Fond 2048, 1, 60, RGALI (Russian State Archive for Literature and Art), Moscow, Russia, has a French publication from 1949. There was also Harold Rome’s version published in 1942. For information on the various incarnations of this song see Laurel Fay, \textit{Shostakovich: A Life} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 72 and Tatiana Egorova, \textit{Soviet Film Music: A Historical Survey}, trans. Tatiana A. Ganf and Natalia A. Egunova (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), 34.

\textsuperscript{60} Fond 32, Inv. 260, N. 6517, Gosudarstvenny tsentral’ny musey muzïkal’noy kulturi imeni M. I. Glinki [The Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture], Moscow, Russia. Fond No.94, opis’ No.1, ed. khr. No.2, Rosslyskiy institute istorii iskusstv, kabinet rukopisey, (Russian Institute for Art History in St. Petersburg, Office of Manuscripts), St. Petersburg, Russia. I worked with a copy of the fragments from Russian Institute for Art History in St. Petersburg in the Shostakovich Apartment Archive in Moscow.

\textsuperscript{61} It may be that there was not much of the musical score that existed in the first place, hence the small number of fragments available today.
Leitmotif, Meaning, Form, and Unity

The two predominant leitmotifs in the film are Shostakovich’s original song, “The Song of the Counterplan” and a romance by Aleksandr Dargomîzhsky entitled, “Mne grustno” (“I Am Sad”) (Appendix J, Figures 47 and 48). Shostakovich’s song, the first song in Russian film music history to fly off the screen and into the daily soundscape of Soviet life, is the most common leitmotif throughout the film, appearing almost ten times in full chorus and orchestra or simply as orchestral variation. Composing the song was a significant challenge for the composer. As Shostakovich commented,

I settled in detail upon this song because it organically goes through all of the music in the film. It is sensed in the overture to the film, in the finale and in good parts. Its theme is felt everywhere. In this was the complexity of the work.
I would like music to a film to play an independent role in order that it not bear traces of an accompanying character, [and] it not appear [as] an additional effect to this or that shot. Besides this, I would like the music in a film to be completely realistic and fulfill its auxiliary function.62

Shostakovich has shown that he continued to regard his musical scoring for film as something other than merely accompanimental. He instead wanted his music to play an “independent role” and considered his song, “The Song of the Counterplan,” to be organic and “felt everywhere.” He also emphasized the idea of realism and the need to fulfill an “official function,” likely hinting at socialist realist function of his music in this film, and specifically, the “Song of the Counterplan.” These statements therefore reveal how, in retrospect, Shostakovich continued to perpetuate his principles from his earlier films and contribute to the socialist realist film music aesthetic.

As Shostakovich described it, the “Song of the Counterplan” first appears at the beginning of the film over the credits in full chorus with orchestral accompaniment. It

continues past the credits and into the film acting as a kind of musical continuity or segue. Similar to an overture in an opera, using the song over the credits presents the film’s basic theme. This overture quality of the first appearance of the song was noticed by scholars such as Khentova, Ioffe, and Egorova who discussed Shostakovich’s use of an overture at the beginning of the film as a break away from the musical introductions of previous films and as a reference to operatic organizational structure. The “overture” heard over the credits introduces the main theme of the film and foreshadows both the musical and cinematic meaning of the film, becoming “organic” as Shostakovich suggested, much as an opera overture introduces the main musical and dramaturgical theme of the work.

This song-leitmotif is not associated with just one character or idea, but it associated with the general idea, having a multipurpose use in various moments throughout the film. Egorova refers to it as a kind of “thesis” for the main theme of the film. Khentova also claims that the song was intended not to be “attached” to a specific character of the film, but to represent the “message” of the film. And Cheremukhin stated,

---

63 According to Khentova, Ermler seems to have been the one to suggest that the song play over the credits. See Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 330. Having an “overture” to film in this manner became a common technique in Hollywood filmmaking of the thirties, as it did in the Soviet Union.


66 Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 31.

Not being associated with any concrete image or character from film *The Counterplan*, it [*The Song of the Counterplan*] perfectly answered the general idea of its contents - energy, youth, vivacity.\(^{68}\)

The second appearance of the “Song of the Counterplan” is in the first scene, where Katya, one of the main characters, sings it a cappella, finishing her rendition before she harasses her husband to get out of bed. She sings the first verse and the refrain, repeating the last two lines of the refrain that refers to the glory of the country at the beginning of the day (“Vstayot strana so slavuyu/Na vstrechu dnya”). This is the second time that all of the words of the first stanza and refrain are heard, although it is clearer than the choral singing of the first appearance. The third appearance of the song is also in diegesis, at the housewarming. Throughout this scene, Katya sings the song at three different times, in different ways. The first time she is seen singing the fourth verse of the song in minor mode and slowly, mirroring her melancholic state as she sits on the sofa. Instead of singing in the standard duple meter of the song, she sings in triple meter, using a rhythm commonly used in the melodic line of a guitar/vocal piece: quarter note – dotted quarter – eighth note, before she fades out, leaving the verse unfinished. This kind of rhythm is oddly “bourgeois” for a song that is associated with socialism, because it resembles the urban romance, which was a genre that was generally understood to be “formalist” by 1932. As Vasya walks over the table, Katya picks up the guitar nearby and continues with the sixth verse of the song in minor mode with accompaniment. The style that she sings in resembles that of vocal/guitar salon music that uses the aforementioned rhythm in the melodic line, accompanied by strummed chords in the

guitar on beats one and two. The “Song of the Counterplan” has thus become transformed into a chamber piece that reflects the mood of the characters, in this case, the boredom of Katya and Vasya as they wait for Pavel. Just after Pavel finally arrives, Katya bounces around the apartment singing the song again, this time without lyrics, a cappella, and in its usual major mode and moderate tempo. After the three characters settle down, Katya begins to play the guitar and sing the sixth verse of song one last time, in major mode with a more active finger style as opposed to strumming still resembling an urban folk style, before she is hushed by Vasya. In this scene overall, Shostakovich demonstrates to the viewer/listener how he can vary and alter the song depending on the mood of the characters and their situations, even within a short time frame, thus becoming an “organic” part of the film.

Notably, Katya is the only character in the film that knows this song and sings it diegetically. It is strongly associated with her and changes according to her mood and the mood of the scene. She is the only musically talented person in the film and often serves as the sensitive character who enthusiastically supports the men of the factory. Instead of using an ironic song to comment on a scene, as with “How good life will be” in *Alone*, Shostakovich used a sensitive, musical character as his diegetic musical voice. This may be the kind of organicism and realism about which he wrote when referring to “Song of the Counterplan.” It is possible that Shostakovich used Katya as the one diegetic entity to reflect and “realistically” musicalize the idea of the film from the composer’s perspective, therefore strengthening the socialist realist meaning of the song.

The song’s next appearance is at the very beginning and very end of the “White Nights” scene. It moves between both diegetic and non-diegetic space throughout the
scene. The scene is initiated by a siren, which segues into the “Song of the Counterplan” sung by people in a passing boat on the Neva River. The song is sung informally with guitar accompaniment and fades as the boat floats away. After the song is heard diegetically, the music shifts to underscored galop just as Vasya and Katya are nearly run over by a group of bicyclists. Timed to the exact second, this first instance of underscoring in this scene initiates a new section that acts in parallel to the activity of the bicyclists (Appendix J, Figure 50). As Yutkevich related,

He [Shostakovich] loved to watch pieces of film and suggest something. For example in The Counterplan bicyclists rode along the embankment. He watched and asked: “In which second do they ride by?”

With cuts to steamrollers and images of Petersburg beginning its morning work, the music shifts to a full orchestral texture with full strings (over images of steamrollers), then to a quasi-grotesque section for solo xylophone (over images of workers) (Appendix J, Figures 51 and 52). As the camera returns to the couple, the instrumentation is reduced to winds (mostly clarinets and flutes) and strings and the volume is lowered to accommodate a quiet solo in the violin that accompanies their conversation about love (Appendix J, Figures 53 and 54). As in the score of The Golden Mountains, Shostakovich precisely scores the music to coexist with the speech, being careful to lower the volume or finish the music altogether before a character speaks. As a siren interrupts Vasya’s speech, it swells louder and the violin solo slows its tempo and changes its volume to accompany it (Appendix J, Figure 54). Note the constant shifts in texture, as

---

69 In her book, Shostakovich, Life and Works, volume 1, 328, Khentova states, “So, having watched a scene where on the quay there were bicycles, [Shostakovich] asked S. I. Yutkevich on what second they arise in the frame (shot), and the partitura included a witty find - the sounds similar to sounds on a bicycle.”

seen in Appendix J, Figure 54. The siren enters around rehearsal 3 in this excerpt. The constant crescendi and diminuendi reveal Shostakovich’s sensitivity to the different volumes and texture in the soundscape of this moment of the film.

After the siren disappears, the music continues along a normal tempo and changes to a new instrumental color of horns before segueing into strings again and lastly, a slow segue into the “Song of the Counterplan,” which accompanies Vasya’s cheerful acceptance of Katya’s love for Pavel (Appendix J, Figure 55). This is a carefully timed, musically “episodic” scene where the instrumentation, tempo, and texture are the primary cues that act in parallel to support the meaning of each shot. Taken together, the leitmotif variation of the “Song of the Counterplan” and the underscoring add to the ethereal scene that evokes the White Nights of Petersburg as it supports the sub-plot of the film.71

The “Song of the Counterplan” continues in its orchestral form as Katya leaves Vasya alone on the embankment and becomes louder over the intertitles and into the next scene where Babchenko works and Lazarev checks his work. The orchestral version of the song ends with a firm cadence, as opposed to fading out, implying a closed form to the song. This is a moment that is similar to The Golden Mountains, in that the song variation, which began at the end of the “White Nights” scene, has a closed form containing symmetrical and clear variations of the song phrases with closed cadences.72 The song comes to a cadence just before Lazarev speaks (“good work”), carefully timed to the exact second, contributing to the sense of a closed form. The White Nights scene and following scenes represent the film as a whole, in its exactness of the timing between

71 The “Song of the Counterplan” also serves as a segue over the fade out of the “White Nights” scene and fade in of the next factory scene. These fades happen just before rehearsal 6 in the fragment Number 3 of the Collected Works.
72 See Appendix J, Figure 47 for an example of the song that is used in this scene.
the music and image. This probably resulted from the relative lack of dead space and sound between shots, which earlier scores such as *Alone* were unable to provide. This concern with timing contributes to overall desire for greater realism in the film’s sound design. *The Counterplan* therefore continued the attempts of sound realism of *The Golden Mountains* and its careful attention to timing.

The last appearance of song is at the very end of the film. After the engineers find that the turbine is in working order and the kopek that Babchenko balances on the turbine stands on its own, the blasts of the trumpet segue into another orchestral version of sixth verse of the “Song of the Counterplan.” This version, similar to the other orchestral versions of the song, continues over images of happy workers, Babchenko giving kittens to Vasya and Katya, and into the next scene where Babchenko stands at a dinner table, preparing a toast. It is appropriate to use the last stanza of the song to end the film, just as Katya’s singing of the first stanza of the song was used to open the film. The song here not only celebrates the conclusion of the film, but it also operates as musical continuity, linking scenes as they cut from one locale to a different one, as it also connects the entire film from beginning to end. In the overture and in the “White Nights” scene, the song also acts as a kind of glue, playing over cuts (fades in and out) between different locales or ideas in the film. The song’s flexibility as a general “thesis” of the film, as opposed to a specifically semantically fixed leitmotif, allows it to be used as a method of musical continuity by the composer.

Compared to Shostakovich’s earlier film scores, the “Song of the Counterplan” is continually more prominent than the general underscoring. Its careful placement throughout the film contributes to the “organic” quality that Shostakovich described,
leading to the commonly held notion of this film was a song-based score.\textsuperscript{73} As with \textit{The Golden Mountains}, this leitmotif unifies the film and what would normally be perceived as fragmented episodes. The leitmotif appears at moments to punctuate the action and often serves a link between disparate locales. The song generally stands for the main theme of the film, but its transformations, particularly in the housewarming scene, show that it can relate more personally to the characters and their moods, ideas, and actions. Each time the leitmotif appears it takes on another meaning. It builds into a representation of the general idea of the counterplan by the end of the film, paralleling the growth and enthusiasm of all of the workers. The song’s “catchiness” also lends itself to being remembered easily, thus reinforcing the leitmotivic system that Shostakovich uses throughout the film.

Some scholars have theorized that the “Song of the Counterplan” had been so successful because it emulated certain song styles or borrowed from past music, leading to charges of plagiarism. In her analysis, Egorova claimed that the tune is a combination of proletarian/post-revolutionary song and lyric song and uses the golden mean (Appendix J, Figure 47).\textsuperscript{74} She also states that its symmetry, the rising fourths, and melodic structure allow this song to be an amalgamation of the above song styles that would speak to a contemporaneous listener. Citing L. Mazel, Khentova related that the song’s “singability” in terms of intervallic construction and meter and its clear melodic

\textsuperscript{73} Several recent scholars have claimed this, including Riley, \textit{Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film}, 21 and Egorova, \textit{Soviet Film Music}, 31.

\textsuperscript{74} See Egorova, \textit{Soviet Film Music}, 33-34. The golden mean is a ratio that had been used by some twentieth-century composers. Its ratio is $1:1.618$, meaning that the ratio of the larger part to the smaller part is the same as the ratio of the larger part to the whole. See Ruth Tatlow: “Golden Number [golden section],” Grove Music Online ed. L. Macy (Accessed 10 October 2006), \url{http://www.grovemusic.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu} for further discussion of the golden mean in music.
construction contributes to the song’s popularity and effectiveness in the film.\textsuperscript{75}

Khentova related that scholars thought that Shostakovich’s song resembled some melodies from Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas and popular songs by A. Chernyavsky and A. Vertinsky that might have led to the few charges of plagiarism that were leveled against him.\textsuperscript{76} All of these descriptions are vague and interpretative. No one, including the composer, has written about the intended style of this song. Regardless of any possible influences, there is no evidence to suggest that Shostakovich plagiarized the song.

Undoubtedly, this song was the most popular aspect of the score. As a result, many people have tried to claim it as their own. Yutkevich claimed that the song resulted from his “initiative.”\textsuperscript{77} Khentova states that Ermler thought of it and Arnshtam helped in revising the song.\textsuperscript{78} After Khentova’s publication and Yutkevich’s interview, Egorova also wrote that Ermler suggested the song.\textsuperscript{79} The existing sketches of the song do suggest that Shostakovich went through many different variations and revisions, probably in consultation with the lyricist before it was finished.

It has been commonly related that the “Song of the Counterplan” underwent several transformations before it was completed.\textsuperscript{80} Shostakovich commented, “I worked a lot on it [The Song of the Counterplan], making ten variants, and only the eleventh

\textsuperscript{75} Khentova, \textit{Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo}, 1: 337-338.
\textsuperscript{76} She only stated that in N. Teffi’s words, a Vertinsky song, “Tri pazha” (Three Pages) was very close to Shostakovich’s song. Also according to Khentova, Chernyavsky tried to claim to Shostakovich’s song because he claimed it resembled some of his songs. See Khentova, \textit{Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo}, 1: 336-337. See Riley, \textit{Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film}, 19, who also cited Khentova for information about plagiarism.
\textsuperscript{77} Yutkevich, “Vspominaya Shostakovicha,” 23.
\textsuperscript{78} Khentova, \textit{Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo}, 1: 329 and 336.
\textsuperscript{79} Egorova, \textit{Soviet Film Music}, 31.
\textsuperscript{80} Khentova, \textit{Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo}, 1: 332-336. Two of the fragments she cites are also in Yakubov, \textit{Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroko dvuh tomakh, tom 41} (part of Number 3 and the second sketch of the three provided on page 476).
satisfied me.”81 In her analysis of the song, Khentova shows nine variants of the song, from the beginning of the process to the final product. Her discussion highlights how Shostakovich started with a small idea that was worked and re-worked until finished. Her fragments come from both Glinka and RGALI (via Arnshtam) as related at the time of the book’s publication.82 Some sketches from the archive of the Glinka Museum of Musical Culture, which are the ones with which Khentova also worked, show that Shostakovich did edit the song considerably. Shostakovich changed between the keys of E-flat major, C major, and F major, eventually settling on F major. He also experimented with the contour of the melody, mostly trying to decide whether to begin with an ascent or descent. Some of sketches, probably the middle part of his process, showed Shostakovich trying to fit the syllables of the certain stanzas of the lyrics to the pitches.83 Overall, the process shows that Shostakovich began working with the melody, eventually including the lyrics as part of his final sketching of the song.

The finished song has the rising fourths and symmetry and is in the key of F major, the key which Shostakovich decided upon for the final version of the song (Appendix J, Figure 56).84 The song was simply written, with clear antecedent-consequent phrases. The predominant interval is a fourth, found often at the beginnings and endings of the phrases. Another prominent and powerful trait is the octave leap in the last half of the second phrase, in some ways referencing the urban song tradition and lyrical Russian village music that Egorova mentions. The overall contour of the line –

82 Two of the fragments she cites are also in Yakubov, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41 (part of Number 3 and the second sketch of the three provided on page 476).
83 Yakubov reproduces this sketch in Yakubov, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, 476.
84 See Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 332-336 for her description and presentation of the musical examples of the song.
stepwise descent followed by a stepwise ascent that fills out the octave, with leaps of a fourth at either end of the phrase – in some ways does correspond to various song traditions, including urban song (Appendix J, Figure 47). The duple meter and the strong emphasis on the first beat of every measure also lend the song a march-like quality reminiscent of revolutionary song. It is possible that the claim that the song was built on previous song traditions and its clear harmonic and melodic structure may explain the success of this song and its positive contemporaneous reception.

**Borrowed Music**

As with his earlier film scores, Shostakovich borrowed songs to act as a parallel illustration or commentary on certain scenes. With *The New Babylon*, he used Tchaikovsky and Offenbach, for *Alone* he used traditional songs, and for *The Golden Mountains*, urban songs. For *The Counterplan*, he also borrowed tunes from both the popular and art music repertory, most notably, the Dargomîzhsky romance “I Am Sad” (1848). Though not a leitmotif, this song appears in fragments as diegetic music. Its first appearance is during the scene of the “wrecker” Skortsev and his mother, where he joins in as she plays the romance on the piano and sings. His singing of this well-known romance acts as a commentary on his disappointment that the factory is fulfilling its plan. It also acts as reference to Skortsev’s social class and his “bourgeois,” anti-Soviet qualities. The final lines of song, from Mikhail Lermontov’s poem of the same name, “I am sad because you are happy,” summarize the singer-poet’s sadness in knowing that the object of his affections will eventually be punished by Fate for her fleeting happiness. It

---

85 See Mikhail Druskin, *Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya*, [Russian Revolutionary Song] (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye muzikal’noye izdatel’stvo, 1959) for examples of revolutionary song.
also can be read as a reflection of Skortsev’s state of mind. Read intertextually, these lyrics serve the film’s purpose in showing Skortsev’s unhappiness with the factory’s success and perhaps also his confidence that the factory could fail in their plans. Emilya Frid found this appropriation and use of the song to be ineffective precisely because the use of song in this “parodic-satirical” manner fails to recognize the context of the song itself. Even though she realized that the song was intended as a commentary of the character’s state of mind, she felt that the composer failed to see the “emotional and aesthetic essence” of the original music, implying that the use of a pre-revolutionary was inappropriate despite its intended meaning in the film’s context. What Frid fails to understand is that this redefinition of the song and its “word games” is likely what the composer intended for the impact of this scene. It sufficiently characterizes Skortsev as the bourgeois “wrecker,” with the words and the music in the context in the salon room of his home.

The other instance in which “I Am Sad” appears is when Skortsev sings after Chutochkin runs to him about the “numbers” for the turbine. In response to Chutochkin, Skortsev simply starts singing. At that Skortsev seems to be in another world, dreamily ignoring everything else around, as if this nineteenth-century “bourgeois” romance serves as an escape from the momentary “socialist” environment. Overall, it appears that this tune is a musical complement to the “wrecker” Skortsev and his non-Party allegiances and evokes a sense of escapism to a pre-revolutionary past that does not serve the factory’s counterplan.

87 Ibid.
There are two other instances in the film where borrowed songs are used as commentary or backdrop to a scene, particularly in regard to the socialist or anti-Soviet nature of the characters. In the scene where Babchenko gets drunk alone in his apartment, a record of a “gipsy romance” plays on the stereo next to him. This tune diegetically accompanies the various shots of Babchenko, his bottle, and later his cat. The music in this scene acts as a reinforcement, or parallelism, to the images of Babchenko’s indulgence of self-pity. The playing of a gipsy romance that in the thirties would have been considered ideologically foreign to what socialist music should be also acts as a reinforcement of the idea that Babchenko is not a Party worker, but a worker who is still tied to the old non-Party ways.

The last instance of borrowed song used as commentary appears at the end of the housewarming scene. As Pavel and Vasya finish their conversation and Pavel walks over to the table staring thoughtfully, a revolutionary song slowly fades into the underscoring. This song, often referred to as the “Partisan’s Song,” is still performed by the Red Army choir as a standard revolutionary song. Mikhail Druskin has noted that this song has a history of multiple rewritings of the text that eventually came to be known as the “Partizanskaya” (Partisan’s Song). According to Druskin, it was first created in 1920 and became very popular in the thirties, particularly because the Red Army Choir performed it. As for the melody, little is known of its origins, but has generally been described as a “folk” melody. The song repeats a total of three times, continuing until the end of scene, fading out with the image. The most prominent part of the phrase is the second

88 This song can be found in recent recordings, such as Red Army Choir, The Best of the Red Army Choir, compact disc, Silva America, 25 June 2002.
89 See Mikhail Druskin, Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya, 51-52.
half of the song, as seen in Druskin’s example (Appendix J, Figure 57). The “Partisan’s Song” was therefore an appropriate choice for the closing of the scene, providing a commentary about the revolutionary and politically progressive notion of the decision to devise a counterplan. This song is used as a contrast to the use of the Dargomïzhsky romance and the gipsy song. While latter songs are pre-revolutionary and associated with the “bourgeois” past, the “Partisan’s Song” is associated with contemporary socialist realist ideas. Using these songs with these signifiers also shows that Shostakovich understood that these songs could be interpreted as pro- or anti-Soviet by its audience and reviewers. Lastly, the usage of song in this instance and others contributes further to the idea that The Counterplan is a song-oriented film.

**Underscoring, Form, and Unity**

Similar to his previous film scores such as *Alone* and *The Golden Mountains*, Shostakovich used music that would be perceived as opposites to characterize different characters or groups in *The Counterplan*. The “Song of the Counterplan,” particularly its appearance in the White Nights scene symbolizes the factory workers, while the Dargomïzhsky romance typified the “wrecker.” The song leitmotifs, though prominent and well-placed throughout the film, were not the only means to represent characters. Underscoring, specifically Shostakovich’s parallelism and his musical commentary, or his “principle of the shot” and the “principle of contrast,” were also a means for musical characterization.\(^90\) There are several instances of parallelism and anempathetic, i.e.,

---

\(^90\) See Chapter Three for a full discussion of Shostakovich’s “principles.”
ironic, commentary in his score. 91 The multiple scenes with the evaluations of the turbine, the “White Nights” scene, and the scene with Babchenko and the flag can be read as instances where the music generally acts in parallel to the images. The most significant of these scenes is associated with Babchenko and his musical characterization. The musical depiction of Babchenko, particularly the scene of Babchenko’s lunch at the factory, often borders on the modernist, which led reviewers to generally disapprove of the underscoring or an aspect of film technique.

During Babchenko’s lunch scene, which finishes with his consumption of his daily bottle of vodka, we hear a self-contained episode of music that is highly repetitive and militaristic in mood largely due to the brass and wind instrumentation and sharp angular rhythms (Appendix J, Figure 49). 92 The main rhythmic idea is similar to that of the watch scene in The Golden Mountains – a dotted quarter note followed by triplet sixteenth notes (Appendix J, Figure 49, first staff). The music to this scene is predominantly through-composed with one section of repetition. I label the form as “Introduction (measures 1-8) – A (measures 9-16) – A – B (measures 17-36) (Appendix J, Figure 49).” 93 The choice of brass instrumentation also appeared to be a conscious decision since Shostakovich indicated what instruments would be used in the earlier draft

---

91 See Chapter Two for a brief description of Chion’s idea of the anempathetic. Arnshtam also discusses how music can act in parallel or in contrast to the images. He outlines a basic set of formulae that he feels most film music follows, which is somewhat reminiscent of Shostakovich’s discussion of The New Babylon. See Arnshtam, “Zvukovoye oformleniye ‘Vstrechnogo,’” 96-97.
92 The sketch of this scene exists in the Glinka archive Fond 32, Inv. 260, N. 6517 in a folder on various sketches, including those of the “Song of the Counterplan.” Yakubov has also published this page in Sobranie Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, 475, entitled as it is the sketch “Scherzo,” as seen in Appendix J, Figure 49.
93 See also Yakubov, Sobranie Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, 475 for the music that correlates with these measure numbers.
of this scene, i.e., the piano score. Such active militaristic music seems to be inappropriate for a scene of a man eating his lunch. This music appears again, however, when the workers and Babchenko are trouble-shooting the turbine’s problems, working overtime to solve them. It simply accompanies images of the workers before the speech between them enters the soundscape. The music could therefore be read in light of his future transformation, operating here as ironic and in later appearances as a literal, sincere meaning, similar to the use of the “How good life will be” song in Alone. One reviewer, Frid, considered the music to this scene to be parodic, mischievous, and didactic. She read the music and image together as an ironic commentary that connects Babchenko’s binge drinking with the first failure of the turbine, thus explaining why the music appears so grotesque and vigorous for a common, everyday scene. It is possible therefore that this music was designed by Shostakovich as an ironic commentary along the lines of his “principle of contrast” that is associated with Babchenko and his eventual character transformation.

Parallelism appears during the scene where the turbine is rejected for the first time. Disappointed, Babchenko sits and takes out a bottle, while a variation of song “Ural’skaya Ryabinushka” (Ural Rowan Tree) plays on the solo oboe with sparse orchestral accompaniment (Appendix J, Figure 58). Frid also identified this song and argued that it has a counterpart in the image. As Babchenko sits and looks at his bottle, which in close-up shows the viewer/listener its label – “Ryabinovka” (rowanberry-

---

94 Shostakovich often notated instrumentation in either a second or third draft of his piano scores, as seen in sketches of his earlier film scores as well.
95 Frid, Muzïka v sovetskom kino, 88.
flavored vodka).\textsuperscript{96} Using a piece of music with the same title or idea as an image in the film is a technique used by silent film accompanists and by Shostakovich, as seen in \textit{Alone} with the “Marsh budyonnongo” (March of Budyonni).\textsuperscript{97} Frid criticized Shostakovich for his inappropriate reference to an outdated “intellectual” silent-film-style aural reference of a visual object (a “triple” play on word-image-sound), claiming that the scene lacks any emotional impact.\textsuperscript{98} What Frid neglects to mention is that this song quotation appears a second time, when the turbine is yet again rejected. Almost a leitmotif in the way that the music confirms and builds upon the meaning of the images, it follows Babchenko and appears a second time to signify his repeated failure as a result of too much alcohol. Notably, however, this “folk” song acts as a negative, anti-Soviet signifier. The “folk” here does not tie into socialist realist ideas, whereas revolutionary songs like “Marsh budyonnongo” or “Partizanskaya” would. By 1932, village “folk” music had come to signify something dangerous and “anti-Soviet.”\textsuperscript{99} This song is therefore connected to the anti-Soviet nature of a character who begins the film as an example of a “pre-Soviet” personality.

Shostakovich’s music also acts in parallel to the images in the scene with Babchenko and the “Pozor” banner. This scene involves a montage of images which cut between Babchenko and the banner. The music generally connects to the overall idea of

\textsuperscript{96} Frid, \textit{Muzïka v sovetskom kino}, 89. In the copy of the film that I have viewed, I did not see the label of the bottle, but it was certainly a vodka bottle.

\textsuperscript{97} See Chapters Two and Four.

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid. When referring to “intellectual” cinema, she specifically cites Eisenstein’s \textit{October} and his comparison of Kerensky with a bust of Napoleon. Also, in the version of \textit{The Counterplan} that I have seen, I did not see a close-up of the bottle as Frid explains. It might be since that the shorter version that I saw lacked that specific shot. There is an indication in some of the documents at Gosfilmofond that show that there was consideration in re-editing and releasing the film again in 1936 and 1937. See Gosfilmofond, “Vstrechnyi,” ed. xp. No. 400.

\textsuperscript{99} Neil Edmunds, \textit{The Soviet Proletarian Music Movement} (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2000), 18
the scene, Babchenko and his shame for having failed. Shostakovich therefore is using his “principle of the shot,” by capturing the overall emotion and state of mind of the character. Scholars and critics nevertheless found fault with this scene, sometimes describing it as unrealistic and “inhumane,” a word later used to describe music that was not socialist realist. Ioffe wrote that even though Shostakovich is more human(e) and less grotesque overall in the underscoring (presumably than in his previous films), he lacked the ability to illustrate individual human characteristics, i.e., realism. Frid found the scene to lack the humanity to which Ioffe alluded, negatively emphasizing that Shostakovich represented the scene with a “wild and grotesque march.” This grotesquerie was apparently effective, since she also described the scene as “memorable.”

Although Shostakovich’s music may have revealed the mood of the scene, it was still too abstract and not realist enough to be appropriate for a socialist film.

Without characterizing Shostakovich as either “humane” or “grotesque,” Khentova discusses this same scene, attempting to explain the composer’s approach.

She quotes V. R. Gardin, the actor who played in the role of Babchenko, who wrote,

“Procession with a Banner” subsequently sounded the very good music of the composer D. D. Shostakovich. But I have heard this music after the episode with a banner was played, and the composer saw the episode on the screen after music had been written to it... If I knew this music before I had started to shoot, undoubtedly, I would have performed “Procession with a banner” a little differently. I think, that if D. D. Shostakovich had seen the episode on the screen before he began to write music, possibly, he would write it a little differently, too...

\[100\] Frid, *Muzïka v sovetskom kino*, 88.

\[101\] Note that these are some of the same terms that are used later in the thirties to distinguish between “good” music and “bad” music, as with *Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk District*. Shostakovich himself noted this in his article on *Lady MacBeth* from 1935, where he says that people were recognizing that he finally composed “humane” music. He states, “I can recall: the musicians who had heard *Lady MacBeth*, spoke out in the following way: look, finally, they said, Shostakovich has shown depth and humanity. When I asked where do you see the humanity, most of them answered that I had spoken for the first time with serious language about serious tragic events.” See Dmitry Shostakovich, “God posle ‘Ledi Makbet,’” [The Year After Lady Macbeth] *Krasnaya Gazeta* (1935).
Khentova goes on to explain that Shostakovich needed to compose an “abstract” musical representation of the scene because of its short production time and the usual demands of composing for film.\(^{103}\) Regardless of the each of their stances on the inhumane or grotesque qualities of the scene and whether or not it was appropriate for the film, Ioffe, Frid, and Khentova agreed on the point that the music captured the psychological intensity of the scene in the most general sense.

Although a mix of unifying song-leitmotifs and symphonic underscoring, the score to *The Counterplan* is more reliant on songs to unify the film than *The Golden Mountains*. The variation of the “Song of the Counterplan,” within and outside the diegesis, unified the work at strategic dramaturgical points throughout the film. Its associations with the socialist characters of the film as well as its socialist message contributed to its sense of realism. Other borrowed music, such as the Dargomîzhsky song, the recorded gipsy romance, the “Partisan’s Song,” and the allusion to “Ryabinushka” all show how the composer uses intertextual references to simultaneously comment upon the overall theme of the film and the pro- or anti-Soviet nature of individual characters. The non-song music, including the repeated music from the turbine check scenes, the flag scene, and the music to the “White Nights” episode never developed in the way that the “Song of the Counterplan” did. Instead, they were generally closed musical forms, often remaining through-composed, or if repeated, they were repeated wholesale with little or no variation. The predominance of a variety of the

---

\(^{102}\) Gardin *Vospominaniya*, 2: 96 quoted in Khentova, *Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo*, 1: 328. Gardin also states that having the actor act and the composer compose after the fact was a mistake on the part of the directors – a sentence that Khentova leaves out in book.

\(^{103}\) Ibid., 2: 96.
quoted songs, the strong and well-articulated presence of the film’s main song-leitmotif, and the relative lack of “symphonic” development of the underscoring (in the sense of *The Golden Mountains*) and its concise and economic use, all of which were precisely timed, therefore contributed to the characterization that *The Counterplan* was the first true “song score” that would become the standard for many Soviet films in the thirties.

**Music Reception**

As with *The Golden Mountains*, Shostakovich considered *The Counterplan* to be a turning point in his film music career most likely because these were his first sound film scores and among the first to be successful.\(^{104}\) He continued the experiment of layering speech, sound, and music throughout the entire film score. Unlike *The Golden Mountains*, however, *The Counterplan* was considered to be an overwhelming success, particularly in terms of sound design. Many of the reviews implied that the film was ideologically correct in its approach to realism, that is, appropriately socialist realist. The press was supportive of Shostakovich’s music, never citing a single modernist moment in the score. The reception had shown that the main focus of the film’s score was its famous “Song of the Counterplan.” Critics only generally discussed other sound elements of the score, including speech, symphonic underscoring, or ambient factory sounds. They did, however, often compare *The Counterplan* to previous films, considering it the greatest success of Soviet sound film to date.

The press mostly agreed that *The Counterplan* was the best socialist film in terms of sound and dramaturgical construction, especially compared to earlier films such as the

---

\(^{104}\) Shostakovich, “Kino kak shkola kompozitora,” 355.
Golden Mountains and in Men and Jobs.\textsuperscript{105} Although rarely providing detail as to what was particularly good about the soundtrack, other newspapers agreed that the speech, music, and sound effects were integrally well-connected with the images in the film.

At times, aspects of the sounds design were considered as equally important as Shostakovich’s music.\textsuperscript{106} One critic from Kino specifically mentioned and praised Arnshtam and Volk along with Shostakovich for the high quality of the sound:

The famous composer D. Shostakovich wrote interesting music. Especially successful were the moments of powerful dramaturgical sound and soft lyrics, which penetrate some scenes (the morning, white nights). The quality of the sound in this film exceeds all that has been achieved in this regard to soviet cinematography. And here one needs to give credit to the magnificent work of the sound designer L. Arnshtam and sound designer Volk.\textsuperscript{107}

Shostakovich’s music was still well-noted, despite the sometimes equal attention granted to all aspects of the sound design. Isvestiya, who wrote that “it is impossible not to note the good music of Shostakovich and the splendid quality of the sound,” agreed with this assessment of The Counterplan as better model for sound film in regard to its score and dialogue.\textsuperscript{108} Vechernyaya Moskva briefly described Shostakovich’s music and the sounds of the factory as effective and of “great artistic taste.”\textsuperscript{109} Sovetskoye Iskusstvo went as far as to suggest that Shostakovich’s music was an “organic” part of the film:

\textsuperscript{105}“Vstrechnyi,” krupnaya tvrcheskaya pobeda sovetskoi kinematografii, beseda s predsedatelem pravleniya Soyuzkino t. B.Z. Shuyatskim [The Counterplan, A major creative victory of Soviet cinematography, Interview with the head of Soyuzkino t. B.Z. Shumyatsky], unidentified newspaper, 255 (3 November 1932).

\textsuperscript{106} In a later article, Bogdanov-Berezovsky also states that Shostakovich’s music is effective for film, but one should not underestimate the role of the directors and specifically Arnshtam in both The Golden Mountains and The Counterplan. See Bogdanov-Berezovsky, “Slushaya zvukovoi fil’m,” [Listening to a Soundtrack Film] Rabochiy i teatr, 24 (August 1933): 14-15.


\textsuperscript{108} Blyakhin, “Vstrechnyi.”

The music of Shostakovich is organic inclusion in the general artistic system and construction of the film. Its role not only escorts, accompanies. The music in The Counterplan not only talentedly [talantlivо] accentuates the situation – it is together with the other forms of art, united in sound film, to help in revealing these situations; it analyzes the separate episodes and imparts appropriate ideological-semantic sound which alternates [with] events. The wonderful sound of this film should be noted in the exemplary film theater “Udarnik.”

Not only did this reviewer consider Shostakovich’s music integral to the sound design, but ideologically appropriate, that is, effectively socialist realist. Notably, there is no mentioning of any formalism or shortcomings in any aspect of the overall sound design, including Shostakovich’s music.

Even the commonly critical film music scholar Ioffe found Shostakovich’s music to be effective, focusing on how the score provided the appropriate expression needed for the images:

In The Counterplan Shostakovich enriches graphic means of music with musical processing of noise and sounds, transforming the last in emotional-expressive musical elements. There are knocks and a roar of the factory which is carrying out a counter plan, noise and knocks of a factory on break. Here Shostakovich not only gives a sound life of a factory which is not present in Golden Mountains, but also saturates music of machines emotionally, making it express the experiences of the people working at a factory. It is the same way in the episode of the “White Night,” [where] the clatter of masons turns into the cheerful playing of xylophones... He has moved considerably from technologism and grotesque music to human, social experiences.

Ioffe has changed his usually negative tone in this review. He compares The Counterplan to failed endeavor of The Golden Mountains, implying that The Counterplan is more realistic. Instead of hearing the “cheerful playing of the xylophones” as grotesque, which could be one reasonable interpretation, he congratulates Shostakovich in being more “human” in his musical expression, a quality that was preferable to any

110 “Vstrechnyi,” Sovetskoye Iskusstvo. L. Ginzberg, a reviewer for Pravda, barely mentioned Shostakovich, but a states that speech “appeared to be an organic part of the film,” again showing the prevalence of the use of the word “organic” to emphasize realism. See L. Ginzberg, “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm.”

111 Ioffe, Muzïka sovetskogo kino, 39-40.
modernist, “grotesque” experimentation with sound. This idea of Shostakovich becoming more “humane” and less “grotesque” implies a shift in perception of modernist and socialist realist traits.

In contrast, Arnshtam felt the score was less symphonic and more song-oriented. He expressed that the “symphonic” experience gained from working on The Golden Mountains was not applied

for the dramaturgic form The Counterplan did not demand any sort of careful study from us. We have only constructed the symphonic [quality] in whole [closed] sections. This is all clear in the “white nights” [scene].

Arnshtam stated that the score to The Counterplan was only partially “symphonic,” citing the “White Nights” scene as the only potentially “symphonic” example. His statement implies that he considered the predominance of the “Song of the Counterplan” in diegetic space, as opposed to the rare appearances of underscoring in general, as a failure to be “symphonic” in the musical score. The “symphonic” quality in Shostakovich’s music is what had received negative reviews in regard to past film scores. I suggest that the smaller amount of underscoring compared to previous films allowed The Counterplan greater realism, since the reviews seemed to focus more on the song’s presence than the general non-song related underscoring. This has led scholars, including Egorova, to consider this a “song” score, as opposed to the “symphonic” score of The Golden Mountains. Although this score may have lacked the “symphonic” quality that Arnshtam wanted, the song-leitmotif and the “White Nights” scene in particular were

113 Ibid.
114 See Chapter Five.
115 Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 31.
popular with critics and reviewed as acceptably realist. It appears, therefore, that the sound, speech, and music outside of the “Song of the Counterplan” were received as successful and realist, as was the film’s signature song.

Shostakovich’s score and his “Song of the Counterplan” and its various incarnations were the best received part of the soundtrack. Many newspapers, scholars, and film music history texts gushed about the Soviet-ness of the song and its timely and effective representation of socialist ideals. Vecherniy Leningrad wrote in praise of the “Song of the Counterplan” and quotes some of its text, while Komsomol’skaya Pravda provided the text from the song and a full reproduction of the music in the column to the right of the article (Appendix J, Figure 56).116 Every history text, including those of Egorova, Frid, the Composers of Soviet Cinema, to mention a few, all discussed The Counterplan as having had a major impact because of its “Song of the Counterplan.”117 By 1935, Arnshtam commented,

Truly, in The Counterplan there was greater success. This success was the little song, which is sung now by millions of workers in the Soviet Union.118

The song “flew” off the screen, as reviewers have noted, and was used in festivals, demonstrations, and played on the Moscow radio, becoming well-known by millions of people.119 It also became popular in various countries for at least ten years after its

117 Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 34; Frid, Muzïka v sovetskom kino, 87; and Kompozitory sovetskogo kino [Composers of Soviet Cinema] (Moscow: Soyuzinformkino, 1983), 13.
119 Borodovsky, “Strana vstaet so slavoyu” and Moldavsky, “Vstrechnyi.”
release.120 Shostakovich prided himself in his description of the success of the song, claiming that it even became a wedding song in Switzerland.121 This song was credited as the primary reason The Counterplan became the model for future sound films and the greatest success of its time. The socialist realist success of the film, however, also stemmed from the lack of underscoring, the placement of the song in both diegetic and non-diegetic space, and the lack of musical content in the underscoring that could be deemed formalist. The approach to song as an “organic” element of the film was therefore part of what made it so popular.

Conclusions

The Counterplan, indeed, was a turning point in Shostakovich’s “film life.” The film was remarkably and unpredictably successful for its time, partly because of its well-known “Song of the Counterplan.” Part of its success was also due to its ideology. This film generally eschews modernist traits, although some aspects of the filmmaking could be interpreted as modernist in terms of editing and shooting (the “mirror” scene with Skortsev and the flag scene with Babchenko.) Some of the music could have also been interpreted as grotesque or modernist, yet it was instead regarded as a modernist means to a socialist end or perceived as “humane.” However, some of the borrowed songs and the newly composed “Song of the Counterplan,” were sincere, ideologically one-dimensional, and therefore clearly socialist in terms of dramaturgical meaning. Shostakovich used familiar songs with strong semiotic signification and semantic import that appeared to “make sense” to film’s viewers/listeners. The underscoring was also so

120 See Egorova, Soviet Film Music, 34; Khentova, Shostakovich, Zhizn’ i tvorchestvo, 1: 341; and Fay, Shostakovich: A Life, 72.
well planned and executed that it sounded as “seamless” as Hollywood editing looked in
the thirties. Largely due to the improvement in sound technology and Shostakovich’s
increased sensitivity to scoring-under voices and sounds, the underscoring became almost
“imperceptible.” Those writing about the music at the time, including scholars such as
Ioffe, did not find the music to be necessarily grotesque or claim any inappropriate use of
the music and images. And, the “Song of the Counterplan” itself dominated the film to
such a degree that other music that could have been deemed “modernist” or “formalist”
for rhetorical reasons was otherwise overshadowed.

Although The Counterplan contained potential modernist or bourgeois traits, it
was advertised and touted to be as quintessentially socialist realist as a film and its score
could have been at that time. The overwhelmingly positive reception, which resulted
from the failure to recognize potentially “formalist” problems in The Counterplan,
reveals the beginning of State-controlled reception that continued under Stalinism.
Even at the All-Union Conference on Thematic Planning in 1933, The Counterplan was
demed “the leading model for entertainment film.”122 The theme of the film and its
adherence to what was considered realism at the time (the “authentic” input of the factory
workers, the mythology of the counterplan in life and art) fit in with what would later be
demed “socialist realist.” The music, particularly the “Song of the Counterplan,”
seemed to resonate with the imaginations of at least some film critics and film music
scholars of the time and in the future. This may have been because the song’s style

Richard Taylor and D.W. Spring (London: Routledge, 1993), 44. This report was made by Boris
Shumyatsky. In that the same report from which this quote came, Shumyatsky states, “By the
entertainment value of a film we mean the considerable emotional effect it exerts and the simple artistry
that rapidly and easily communicates its ideological content and its plot to the mass audience.”
seemed inexplicably familiar to listeners and the film was well-supported by the State and resonated well with State politics, especially after the reorganization of 23 April 1932. The ideology that this film encapsulated and the ability for the “Song of the Counterplan” to live beyond the screen allowed *The Counterplan* to become the model for many Soviet films of the thirties. It finally firmly and positively established Shostakovich’s career as a true film composer in the eyes of the government and the public.

The song-oriented, quotation-styled score of *The Counterplan* essentially freed Shostakovich from his past “failures” (as viewed from 1932 and forward) and became canonized as Shostakovich’s first major film score success. It also became the approach to scoring that he used in his following films, primarily including *The Maxim Trilogy*. Because *The Counterplan* was a song-based score with separate, episodic yet well-placed independent fragments, it became the norm for the thirties, when scores became less “symphonic” in Arnshtam’s sense of the term. This could have resulted not only from the influence of *The Counterplan*, but also from the collective experience that other new film composers may have learned from their dealing with realist film. It may be, therefore, that underscored music in realist film, as it was in Hollywood in the thirties, was destined to be “imperceptible” because music that was too complex and therefore too easily heard may be deemed as inappropriate, or in the language of Soviet times, “formalist.”123 Shostakovich’s score, resulting from his experience with modernism and his growth into a film composer who became able to adapt to the socialist realist aesthetic (along with directors Kozintsev, Trauberg, Ermler, Yutkevich and Arnshtam) became the

---

123 This topic could be better served with research into the other films scores of the late twenties and early thirties by composers such as Gavriil Popov, Vladimir Deshevov, and Vissarion Shebalin.
foundation for Soviet film scoring in the thirties. Despite the need to create film music that would be “intelligible to millions,” Shostakovich still managed to maintain the imprint of his personal musical style, such as the creative thematic transformation of the “Song of the Counterplan,” without being regarded as “grotesque” or “inhuman.”

Both *The Golden Mountains* and *The Counterplan* were created in a year that saw significant changes in the role of film and film music that called for topics of socialist reconstruction and growth. Each of these films fulfilled that requirement. *The Counterplan*, however, was far more successful because of its politics, its realism, and its omnipresent theme song. *The Golden Mountains* was received as “formalist” because of the occasional twenties-style editing, perceived character typage, poorer quality of sound equipment, a greater emphasis on songs that were not affiliated with the socialist cause, a greater amount of underscoring that was “perceptible,” and the lack of an original theme song. The borrowed music used in *The Golden Mountains* was often associated with a specific character, limiting its pervasiveness and ability to stand as a general theme of the film. Perhaps too subtle for contemporaneous tastes, the score to *The Golden Mountains* became canonized as a “formalist” failure, as noted by Sergey Bugoslavsky in 1936 and Tikhon Khrennikov in 1950. Bugoslavsky felt that Shostakovich’s use of the fugue, “the most abstract form of music,” in *The Golden Mountains* was a sign of formalism. Yet, Bugoslavsky listed *The Counterplan* as the first instance in which Shostakovich “forgot” how to be “intricate and original,” and his true talent shined through. Khrennikov’s assessment of Shostakovich also agrees with Bugoslavsky’s declaration fourteen years earlier, where he listed Shostakovich’s *The New Babylon, Alone*, and *The

---

Golden Mountains as formalist excursions, while praising his “Song of the Counterplan” as a brilliant and appropriately Soviet example of his work. As a result of the political timing, hype, and perceived realism in the music The Golden Mountains was forgotten, while The Counterplan became the model for many Soviet films and film scores of the thirties.
CONCLUSIONS

Dmitry Shostakovich was a prolific, innovative, and eclectic composer in many genres, including film music. From *The New Babylon* through *The Counterplan*, he negotiated his compositional persona and role as film composer in the midst of constantly changing contemporaneous art politics. Shostakovich was well-situated in the modernist, agit-prop film culture of the 1920s, which contributed to his experience in shaping the role of the film composer in the Soviet Union as film became progressively more central to Soviet culture into the 1930s. Shostakovich’s writings on film also illustrate how the composer participated in the creation of this role and treated film music as a serious endeavor with artistic intent, not just as a monetary opportunity. Shostakovich was an eclectic who developed his unique compositional voice within the context of the trends of modernism and socialism, which some have presumed to be opposed, and moved between these trends because of his varied and multiple interests in many genres and styles of music.

Shostakovich’s first endeavor in film, *The New Babylon*, revealed the complexity of the filmmaking and compositional processes which were indicative of the changes in film, music, and politics at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. It was also the first film to actively define the role of the film composer. Modernist in musical and cinematic style, this film was socialist in intent, similar to other agit-prop films of the time. Even
with a rather negative reception, which was partly because of poor performances of the score, *The New Babylon* paved a new path for composers interested in writing scores specifically tailored for individual films.

While *The New Babylon* was a continuation of modernist filmmaking and the redefinition of the film score, *Alone* was a radical shift towards realism. Partly a modernist film in terms of irony and the grotesque, *Alone* also anticipated socialist realist film with musical and cinematic “folk” references. Unlike *The New Babylon*, *Alone* was sincerely intended to be realist and socialist. My analysis has shown, however, that the result was perceived by contemporaneous viewers as a modernist means to a socialist realist end.

Shostakovich’s third film work, the score for *The Golden Mountains*, was his first true sound film. By 1931, sound technology was advanced enough to allow synchronized speech to have an active role in the film. Presented with these new challenges, Shostakovich continued building on his previous experiments in film scoring, creating a score that was song-based, leitmotivic, and yet perceived to be modernist. Although the reception was initially positive, aspects of the score that eventually were upheld as modernist mistakes, such as his fugue for the striking Baku and St. Petersburg workers, encouraged this film and its score to be considered a formalist excursion.

Unlike Shostakovich’s first three film scores, *The Counterplan* was canonized as one of the first model socialist realist films. This had as much to do with the politics surrounding the film, i.e., the blurred boundary between real life and the film, as it did with the film and its score. The film was intended to be realist and was generally received as such. What might have been construed as modernist elements, such as the
potentially ironic scene of Babchenko’s lunch or the grotesque montagist “Pozor” scene, were instead overlooked by critics who considered most of the music to be serving a realist end. The leitmotivic “Song of the Counterplan” became a utopian icon that represented Soviet reality and played a significant role in the mythology building of the film and its theme of the counterplan. The song itself, however, was only part of the mythology building. It was also the presentation of the song throughout, especially in the White Nights scene where it moved seamlessly between diegetic and non-diegetic space, which was perceived as effectively socialist realist. The remarkable success of the film and its theme song garnered Shostakovich worldwide fame as a film composer.

Because these films share traits from so-called modernism and socialist realism over the course of the Cultural Revolution, Shostakovich does not easily fit into the tidy categories of modernism and socialist realism or the narrative of the two trends. It seems, therefore, that the dichotomous version of this modernism/socialist realism narrative has outlived its usefulness. A shift in cultural politics and in terminology, to the phrase “socialist realism” in 1932, and greater power seized by the State may have been why scholars of the past wrote of such a clear-cut transition. The idea of the movement from one monolithic trend to another, however, is too simplistic because elements of both modernism and socialist politics existed in the arts in the 1920s and earlier. These elements, even the modernistic ones, continued into the early 1930s, becoming absorbed into the aesthetic of socialist realism. Secondly, Shostakovich was part of a progressive artistic culture and actively participated in experimental and civic-minded affairs. Although some composers or critics may have belonged to one or another end of the musico-political spectrum, Shostakovich discriminately chose aspects of trends that
suited his compositional approach for the project at hand. At this point in his career, his eclecticism and his interest in politically and musically progressive culture allowed him to adapt to the socialist realist aesthetic without being a victim of State politics. He willingly took his first four film music commissions and participated in the shaping of the aesthetic of socialist realism, while experimenting with music to define its role in film.

Redefining Shostakovich’s role as a composer who wrote in many styles and genres that bridged the “high” and “low,” including film, can shed light on the “Other” facet of his compositional persona discussed in the Introduction. This may contribute to recent discussions of film music in musicology, adding a Russian/Soviet composer primarily known for his “high” art music to a canon currently dominated by American film music. It also adds a unique perspective to the subfield of Russian music studies of a composer who was extremely influential in the development of film music, yet has been and still is regarded as a legendary composer of mainly symphonies, quartets, and other concert music. Such musical-cinematic contextualized analyses as the ones presented in this dissertation show that film music, specifically the scores of a composer of great renown such as Shostakovich, is a serious endeavor that requires a bridge between the disciplines of musicology and film studies.

Film music studies is a relatively new subdiscipline of musicology and requires a new methodology, i.e., an approach to analysis that recognizes film as an integrated art form that requires a collaborative approach to the film score that can equally involve the director, composer, and sound designer. The intricacies of both disciplines, as
Shostakovich himself has written, should therefore be familiar to scholars in each discipline. It is my hope that the methodology used in my dissertation contributes to this kind of approach to film music.

There is far more to be learned about film music in general and Shostakovich’s film music output as well. The composer wrote scores for 37 films. Throughout the course of the twentieth century, some of his instrumental music were used for numerous other films. My analyses of the first four film scores have shown the complexity and nuance of each score in relation to the film and its immediate cultural context. Analyses of the remaining film scores would probably illuminate much of Shostakovich’s compositional processes, not just for film scores, but for all of his music. Sketch studies of his film music, for example, would be fascinating since his sketches for film scores show in detail how he conceptualized music for image. As I have shown in earlier chapters, Shostakovich was concerned with cinematic/musical issues such as timing, character entrance, and instrumentation. In-depth discussion focused only on his sketches that have not been published could reveal much about his compositional process for film scoring. His preoccupation with timing, concision, and expression in film music, which he discussed at length in “The Cinema as the Composer’s School,” has the potential to change the understanding of his non-film music. His symphonies, string quartets, and concerti may benefit from refocused analyses of timing, form, and potential narrative.

Shostakovich collaborated with film directors throughout his life. His creative work with directors, such as Kozintsev, Yutkevich, Arnshtam, Sergey Gerasimov and others examined in this dissertation has revealed the nature of his collaborations on film
and the creation of his scores. In most situations, film composers follow the directive of the directors, collaborating to find a useful language that would allow music to be especially fitted to the film. Shostakovich and Kozintsev, for example, were well-matched because of their common interests, which resulted in a unique understanding between them. The usual difficulty that composers and directors face in finding a common language was therefore not present between Kozintsev and Shostakovich. As Kozintsev remarked, “For many years I have already repeated: when I hear your music, I hear my ideas.”

Further work with Shostakovich’s film scores could also illuminate the kinds of collaborations that existed between the composer and film directors. Such discussion could aid in understanding Shostakovich’s continued relationship with other facets of artistic culture and his development as a nationally known film composer.

Lastly, an in-depth discussion of his film music could also reveal how the composer dealt with Soviet politics and the ebb and flow of the socialist realist aesthetic until 1971. Shostakovich was particularly strategic in his ability to adapt to his political surroundings, maintain success, and obtain material necessities. Recent research by Leonid Maximenkov shows that Shostakovich had a talent for negotiating his material wealth with the high members of the State, including Stalin. The manner in which he dealt with his early film scores, creating music that would support the socialist realist aesthetic and using his achievements in film scoring, such as his The Counterplan, to bolster his career, demonstrates that Shostakovich knew well how to have his music

---

1 Grigory Kozintsev, *Perepiska G. M. Kozintseva* [The Correspondence of G. M. Kozintsev] (Moscow: Artist, Rezhissyor, Teatr: 1998), 83. See also Chapter Four, footnote 111.

2 This information was presented by Leonid Maximenkov in his paper “Dmitri Shostakovich in 1940s: the Making of an ‘Artist-Citizen’” at the *Shostakovich 2006: International Centenary Conference* at the University of Bristol, 29 September – 1 October 2006.
successfully function as socialist realist. Certainly, Shostakovich’s perceptions of what was successfully socialist realist changed in accordance with his film music over the course of his career. This dissertation is a stepping stone for research that should closely examine how Shostakovich altered his film music style to adapt to political developments, particularly changes in the socialist realist aesthetic. Examinations of narrative content, editing, musical representation of characters, and the issue of the leitmotivic system in his later film music; and their potential relationship to his non-film music, especially music that has been categorized as modernist or socialist realist could reveal new perspectives for analyses of all of Shostakovich’s music.

Chapter One discussed Shostakovich’s first three symphonies and his Piano Concerto in relationship to modernism, socialist realism, and to some degree, film. As his first four film scores and his Piano Concerto show, Shostakovich continually negotiated his individual style between the modernist aesthetics and the socialist rhetoric in the arts. His multi-faceted musical persona and the variety of his interests gave him great maneuverability within the constantly changing politics of music and film. His first film scores demonstrated how he developed his individual film compositional voice as he learned to negotiate with directors and the increasing need for the socialist realist aesthetic. This “Other” Shostakovich, one who successfully negotiated between styles and genres that were presumed to be opposed and was one of Russia’s first film composers, is a facet of the composer’s persona that deserves further serious attention. Rather than accepting portrayals of Shostakovich as a disillusioned or covert modernist which can lead to a privileging of modernist traits over other trends, my work therefore resituates Shostakovich as an emerging film composer who willingly negotiated between
modernism and early forms of socialist realism. It is my hope that this “Other” Shostakovich will become integrated in a whole understanding of the composer as scholars begin to consider his significant and worthwhile contribution to Soviet film music.
APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES FROM SYMPHONY NO.1 AND SYMPHONY NO.2

SYMPHONY NO.1

Figure 1: Fragments from the Third movement (measure 1-3, oboes) and Finale (measures 236-241, violincellos) show the reference to the third movement in the Finale. Although not an exact quote, the contour is similar, with a change in the direction the melody. From Yakubov, ed., Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobranie Sochineniya tom 1, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” [The New Collected Works, Symphony No. 1, Op.10] (Moscow: DSCH, 2005), 69 and 119.
Figure 2: (a) The fanfare motive returns at measure 224, (b) the fragment from the introduction of the third movement at measure 249, and (c) a fragment of the second theme of the Finale at 256. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” 118 (measures 224-228), 120 (measures 256-258), and 123 (measures 247-249).
Figure 3: The beginning of the coda in the finale (measures 259-263), continues to develop the chromatic run developed from the theme 2 fragment (measures 259-260), eliding into the fragment of the introductory theme from the third movement (261-262). From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” 124.
Figure 4: At measure 273, the coda shifts rhythm. This rhythm is reminiscent of the fragment of theme 2 of the finale, as the chromatic movement upward is reminiscent of the fanfare theme. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No.1, Soch. 10,” 127 (measures 273-278).
APPENDIX B

EXAMPLES FROM SYMPHONY NO.3

Figure 7: (a) Theme 2, in the trumpet, measures 41-44. (b) The opening measure of his theme returns transformed in measure 497. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” 9 (measures 39-44) and 75 (measures 495-501).
Figure 8: An example of the surface ornamentation, i.e., grace notes. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” (measures 288-295), 60.
Figure 9: A variation of theme two. From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” (measures 190-196), 37.
Figure 10: Beginning of the tonal climax (measure 655). From Yakubov, “Simfoniya No. 3, Soch. 20,” (measures 650-663), 113.
### APPENDIX C

**DIAGRAM FOR PART ONE OF THE NEW BABYLON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPISODE (as written in the score)*</th>
<th>MEASURE NOS.</th>
<th>GENRE</th>
<th>METER</th>
<th>TEMPO</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTATION</th>
<th>KEY AREA**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>War. Death to the Prussians. (Train station)</td>
<td>1-150</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Allegro non troppo</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>C major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat the Hell out of them in Berlin!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Allegro (m. 12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War. All the tickets have been sold.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat the hell of them in Berlin!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death to the Prussians!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War. The prices have gone up.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Babylon Department Store and its customers</td>
<td>151-191</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>B-flat major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andantino. Manager</td>
<td>192-225</td>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>Solo violin w/strings</td>
<td>A, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegro (New Babylon Department Store and its customers)</td>
<td>226-274</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>B-flat major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11: Diagram for Part One of The New Babylon** (Continued)
### Figure 11: Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Orchestra</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A piece of brocade costs only 12 francs</td>
<td>275-343</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet solo Winds &amp; low strings</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saleswoman (Louise)</td>
<td>344-368</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Triplet figures; 3/4 (at m.348)</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>369-372</td>
<td>Waltz-like rhythm</td>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For dessert.</td>
<td>373-377</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the Board of Directors. Dismissal Payment. The Board of Directors gives you a Ticket to the Evening Ball</td>
<td>378-403</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C, E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>404-409</td>
<td>Triplet figures</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>B-flat major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(The New Babylon Store and its customers)</td>
<td>410-468</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strings, then Flexatone (m.481)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andante</td>
<td>469-490</td>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Andante</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat the Hell out of them in Berlin! (at m.507) (Train Station)</td>
<td>491-528</td>
<td>Galop</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>C major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Parenthetical descriptions indicate a description of the shot in the film, not a written cue in the published score.*
** For Key Area, the key and its mode are given when it was clear. Otherwise, a key center is provided. Spaces left blank indicate a modulatory and/or unstable key area.

NI = not indicated in the score

NA = not applicable

APPENDIX D

THE APPEARANCE OF THE MARSEILLAISE THROUGHOUT THE SCORE

Figure 12: “La Marseillaise Anticléricale” (1881) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, *Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La IIIe République de 1871 à 1918, Volume 8* (Gallimard, 1961), 59.

The excerpt and variation of the *Marseillaise* continues until measure 197, with the dotted-note figure becoming material for the subsequent variation.

Figure 14: In Part Four, a brief allusion to the *Marseillaise* in measures 36-37 in the strings, as the soldiers drag the cannons (as indicated in the score), referencing war. From Yakubov, *“Novyi Vavilon,”* 224 (measures 35-39).
Figure 15: In Part Five, a full, tonal statement of the *Marseillaise* begins at measures 261ff. as shown here. This statement continues until 286 and then is layered over a quotation of Offenbach’s Cancan. A fragment of the *Marseillaise* returns again at measures 317-321, with a change in scene. From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon*,” 343 (measures 261-263).
Figure 16: Continuation of *Marseillaise* quotation from Part Five. At this point, the *Marseillaise* is layered over a statement of Offenbach’s *Cancan*. From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 349 (measures 286-289).
Figure 17: In Part Six, a brief allusion to the *Marseillaise* in the winds beginning in measure 148 in augmentation, which continues until around measure 182. From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon*,” 391 (measures 148-152).
Figure 18: In Part Six, the layering of the Marseillaise (in the horns and trombone) and the Carmagnole (in the trumpets) in measures 215-217. From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 399 (measures 214-217).
Figure 19: In Part Seven, the *Marseillaise* appears in the winds with support in the strings and brass in measure 150 and continues until measure 165, and eventually blends into the orchestral fabric through subtle variation. From Yakubov, “Novyi Vavilon,” 488 (measures 150-152).
APPENDIX E

APPEARANCES OF ÇA IRA AND THE CARMAGNOLE THROUGHOUT THE SCORE

Figure 20: “Ça Ira” (1790) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La Révolution,, Volume 4 (Gallimard, 1957), 79.
Figure 21: In Part Four, beginning in measure 114, Ça Ira appears in the clarinet to signal a temporary truce between the workers and the soldiers. This allusion continues until measure 118, after which it becomes material for variation. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy volume 122, “Novyi Vavilon ,” Muzika k nemomu kinofilm’mu, op.18 [The New Collected Works, The New Babylon, Music to the Silent Film, Op.18] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 234 (measures 114-117).
Figure 22: “La Carmagnole” (1899) from Pierre Barbier and France Vernillat, *Histoire De France Par Les Chansons: La Révolution, Volume 4* (Gallimard, 1957), 100-101.

Figure 23: In Part Four, an allusion to the *Carmagnole* begins in measure 272, continuing in the horns and brass through measure 288, after which fragments of the tune are developed. This allusion appears just as the operetta fails (noted in the score as “Shame! The operetta has flunked,”) and just before the bourgeoisie head to Versailles (noted in the score as, “To the Town Hall!”). From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon,*” 267 (measures 272-275).
Figure 24: In Part Five, another allusion to the *Carmagnole* begins in measure 77 in the strings and continues until measure 93. From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon,*” 308 (measures 77-79).
Figure 25: In Part Six, the *Carmagnole* appears just after the Communards received the news that the army had broken through the barricade (measure 59ff). From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon*,” 379 (measures 59-66).
Figure 26: Part Six, the layering of the *Marseillaise* (in the horns and trombone) and the *Carmagnole* (in the trumpets) in measures 215-217. From Yakubov, “*Novyi Vavilon*,” 399 (measures 214-217).
Figure 27: In Part Eight, two bars after the score indication, “We will meet again,” uttered by Louise, a full statement of Shostakovich’s version of the *Carmagnole* appears in measure 142 and continues until the end of the manuscript (measure 157), which also passes by the score indication, “Vive la commune!” From Yakubov, *Novyi Vavilon,* 526 (measures 141-144).
## APPENDIX F

### TABLE OF MOTIFS IN *ALONE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif/Idea</th>
<th>Motif type</th>
<th>Number(s)*</th>
<th>Reel(s)</th>
<th>Association(s)**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kakaya khoroshaya budyet zhizn’</td>
<td>Leitmotif</td>
<td>6, 14, 25</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>Kuz’mina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Konchen, konchen tekhnikum”</td>
<td>Non-recurring</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bourgeois life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurdy-gurdy</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>3, 13, 18 (reh.3), 19</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Urban/bourgeois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March A</td>
<td>Motif</td>
<td>4, 7, 12</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>Kuz’mina’s attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March B</td>
<td>Non-recurring</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>Girl in hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian lot</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>20, 24, 40</td>
<td>4, 7</td>
<td>Altai/people of Altai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s music</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>21, 42</td>
<td>4, 7</td>
<td>Teaching children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bai</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>17, 22, 30</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Bai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village advisor (snoring)</td>
<td>Reminiscence</td>
<td>26, 33 (reh.5), 43</td>
<td>4, 5, 7</td>
<td>Village advisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These numbers correspond to the numbers in the recent version of *Alone* in the *New Collected Works* of Shostakovich. See Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitry Shostakovich: Novoye Sobraniye Sochineniy, Tom 123*, “Muzïka k kinofil’mam ‘Odna’,” [Dmitry Shostakovich: New Collected Works, Volume 123, Music the Film *Alone*, Op.26] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004). Numbers that are missing (for example, “1”) are not motifs, but underscoring.

**Association can be of a character, place, or idea.
Figure 29: The opening of Number 6, the “How good life will be” episode. The overall form of the section is: *Instrumental (Intro-A-A-B-Intro) – Song (C-C-D-D’-D) – Instrumental coda (E-E-F)*, of which this page shows the beginning of the “A” section. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitry Shostakovich, Novoye Sobraniye Sochenyi* [The New Collected Works], tom 123, “Muzika k kinofil’mu ‘Odna’,” [Dmitry Shostakovich: New Collected Works, Volume 123, Music to the Film *Alone, Op.26*] (Moscow: DSCH, 2004), 28 (measures 7-18).
Figure 30: From Number 6, the beginning of the song “How good life will be” (section C). From Yakubov, “Odna,” 35 (measures 89-100).
Figure 31: From Number 6, the beginning of the instrumental coda (section E). From Yakubov, “Odna,” 45 (measures 185-193).
Figure 32: The beginning of Number 14, an exact repetition of the song part of Number 6. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 70 (measures 1-13).
Figure 33: Number 15, music for the Altai region. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 73 (measures 1-17).
**Figure 34:** Number 16, music for the Altai region, continued from Number 15. From Yakubov, “*Odna,*” 73 (measures 1-10).
Figure 35: The leitmotif of the bai’s “rattling” voice. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 100 (measures 1-9).
Figure 36: The reminiscence motif/section of the “snoring” scene. This leitmotif reappears in Numbers 33 and 43, both in the same key, but without trombone glissandi in Number 33. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 112-113 (measures 1-18).
Figure 37: The second statement of the “Russian Lot” leitmotif, with text. The first appearance is in Number 20, in piccolo (as above), over images of the Altai. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 105 (measures 1-36).
Figure 38: (a) from the scene of Kuz’mina and the children dancing in the cold. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 131, (measures 44-47). Compare Shostakovich’s score with the original (b) from Mikhail Druskin, Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya [Russian Revolutionary Song] (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye muzykal’noye izdatel’stvo, 1959), 46.
Figure 39: The leitmotif of Kuz’mina’s dreams as a teacher. This leitmotif reappears in Number 42 (Kuz’mina’s deathbed) in a different key. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 97 (measures 1-21).
Figure 40: The hurdy-gurdy leitmotif as it appears in the first reel (Number 3 in the score) in full orchestration. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 16 (measures 1-36).
Figure 41: The hurdy-gurdy leitmotif in hand organ (Number 13 in the score). This leitmotif reappears in Numbers 18 and 19, where Kuz’mina is in the hut and the sounds of the shaman and hammering layer over the tune. From Yakubov, “Odna,” 68 (measures 1-31).
APPENDIX H

EXAMPLES FROM THE GOLDEN MOUNTAINS

Figure 42: (a) My transcription of the main melody of the song, “If I Only Had Mountains of Gold,” as played in E-flat major in the horns in the overture to the film, sounding over the introductory credits. (b) A version of the song “Zlatie gori,” for piano and voice, as it appears in a published edition, measures 6-23. See B. Zharov, Lyubimye russkiye narodnye pesni [Favorite Russian Folk Songs] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1985), 56-58 for the entire score for this song.
Figure 43: (a) The Waldteufel waltz, “Les Violettes,” upon which Shostakovich based his music. From Emile Waldteufel, *Die schönsten Walzer*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Henry Litolff’s Verlag), 4 (measures 1-17 of Number 1). (b) The waltz as it appears in the suite version of the film score. In the scene of the gift of the watch, the waltz appears as seen here in the suite. The main theme is played by Hawaiian guitar, with orchestral accompaniment. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., *Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobrantiye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41 “Muzika k kinofilmam, partitura.”* [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, volume 41, Music to the films, orchestral score] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 122 (measures 1-22).
Figure 44: The Introduction ("Vstuplenie") from the suite of The Golden Mountains. This is the beginning of the A section (of ABA) that corresponds to the transition of scenes from the son at the piano to the factory. From Yakubov, “Muzika k kinofil’man, partitura,” (Moscow: Muzika, 1987), 117 (measures 1-6).
Figure 45: The beginning of the fugue that corresponds to the images of the strike of the Baku and Petersburg workers. From Yakubov, "Muzïka k kinofil’mam, partitura," (Moscow: Muzïka, 1987), 145 (measures 1-28).
### Table of Music/Film Interaction in *The Golden Mountains* (in order of appearance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Idea</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Position of appearance (if recurring)</th>
<th>Event/Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golden Mountains song</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Opening credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – A (galop 1, with percussion solo)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Opening scene of Baku workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Mountains song</td>
<td>Leitmotif, diegetic</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Accordion player and girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bortyansky concerto fragment</td>
<td>Non-recurring, diegetic</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Diegetic choir sings concerto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Religious scene/factory gala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme – B (string duo)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Opening of lavatory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – C (Chastushka)</td>
<td>Non-recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Lavatory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Mountains song</td>
<td>Leitmotif, diegetic</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Lavatory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme – B (string duo)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>(First)</td>
<td>Lavatory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>End of lavatory scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, diegetic</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Son/engineer at the piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – D (ABA’ music)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Transition between son at piano to factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, diegetic then underscoring</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Peter receives the watch; shows it to workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 46: Table of Music/Film Interaction in *The Golden Mountains* (in order of appearance)
**Figure 46: Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music – D (BA’ music)</th>
<th>Recurring, underscoring</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>The workers disperse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golden Mountains song</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring – diegetic – underscoring</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Camera tracks into tavern; Peter sings the tune; return to underscoring (during dream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – E (song in tavern)</td>
<td>Non-recurring, diegetic</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>After Peters awakes, in tavern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – F (galop 2)</td>
<td>Non-recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Peter in hallway, barges into meeting of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – A (galop 1)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Meeting of the workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – G</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Opening of scene and Vasily’s attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Vasily’s legs go limp, cut to master in tavern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – G</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Robbing of the unconscious Vasily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, diegetic, underscoring</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Whistled by man entering home; sung by Peter; then moves into underscoring; then appears in watch again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Police take Vasily away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – H (galop 3)</td>
<td>Non-recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Peter runs out of Vasily’s home and to the home of the “boss”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td>Leitmotif, underscoring</td>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Meeting the “boss”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme – B (string duo)</td>
<td>Recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Peter wandering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – I</td>
<td>Non-recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Peter begins riot and strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – J (finale)</td>
<td>Non-recurring, underscoring</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Finale of film; images of workers gathering, marching; Peter marching with them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NA refers to music that does not recur*
Figure 47: Excerpt from a Fragment Number 10 the “Song of the Counterplan” from the music to the film Michurin. This fragment shows the song sung by full chorus with orchestral accompaniment, much in the manner as it appears in the opening credits of The Counterplan. From Manashir Yakubov, ed., Dmitry Shostakovich, Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, “Muzika k kinofil’man, partitura,” [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, volume 41, Music to the Films, Orchestral Score] (Moscow: Muzika, 1987), 477 (measures 1-6).
Figure 48: “Mne grustno” (“I Am Sad) in its original form here is used as a leitmotif throughout the film. From A. Dargomyzhsky, Izbrannye romans i pesni [Selected Romances and Songs] (Moscow: Muzïka, 1981), 42.
Figure 49: Entitled “Scherzo” in the sketches and in the Collected Works, this section accompanies Babchenko’s lunch. From Yakubov, “Muzika k kinofil’mam, partitura,” 475 (measures 1-36).
Figure 50: First page of Fragment Number 1 of the Collected Works. This is where Shostakovich begins in the White Nights, with the entry of the bicyclists on the embankment. From Yakubov, “Muzîka k kinofil’ mam, partitura,” 193 (measures 1-18).
Figure 51: From Fragment Number 1, where the strings enter at rehearsal 4, indicating a shift in texture, initiating the montage of St. Petersburg. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’ mam, partitura,” 194 (measures 19-37).
Figure 52: From Fragment Number 1, where the xylophones enter, over images of workers. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’mam, partitura,” 196 (measures 53-65).
Figure 53: The beginning of a shift in texture from xylophone to winds and strings, from Fragment Number 1. From Yakubov, "Muzika k kinofil’mam, partitura," 199 (measures 108-120).
Figure 54: The shift to the violin solo is the beginning of Fragment Number 2 in the Collected Works, corresponding with the couple’s conversation about love. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’mam, partitura,” 206 (measure 1-30).
Figure 55: Excerpt from Fragment Number 3 of the Collected Works. This fragment is a continuation of fragment No. 2, which moves away from the violin solo. It begins with a low volume wind introduction that segues into a delicate wind and harp version of The Song of the Counterplan, beginning at rehearsal 4. From Yakubov, “Muzïka k kinofil’'mam, partitura,” 208 (measures 1-29).
Figure 56: The “Song of the Counterplan” as it appears in the newspaper Komsomol’skaya Pravda, 11 November 1932. The song appears here in the same key and meter as it does in the manuscripts and in the published excerpt in the Collected Works (see Figure 47 above).
Figure 57: “The Partisan’s Song” from Mikhail Druskin, Russkaya revolyutsionnaya pesnya, [Russian Revolutionary Song] (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye muzykal’noye izdatel’stvo, 1959), 51. The second phrase begins with the F-natural leap in the second staff.
Figure 58: “Uralskaya Ryabinushka.” From Yu. G. Ivanov, *Nam nel’zya bez pesen* [We are Never Without Song] (Smolensk: Rusich: 2004) as cited online at http://a-pesni.naord.ru/drugije/uralriabin.htm.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Sources (Books, Essays, and Articles in Russian and English)


450


453


**Film and Film Music Sources**


Agranovksy, A. “Pobeda zvukovogo kino” [A Victory of Sound Film]. Pravda, 325 (26 November 1931).


Akhushkov, Sh. ed. Vstrechnyi, kak sozdavalsya fil’m [The Counterplan – How the Film was Created] Moscow: Kinofotoizdat, 1935.


Cheremukhin, M. *Muzïka zvukovogo fil'ma* [Music of Sound Film]. Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939.


Fel’dman, K. “Ha pereput’i” [At the Crossroads]. Kino 62 (16 November 1931): 2.


Gartsman, M. “Ne plokho, no i ne sovsem yeshchyo khorosho” [Not Bad, but not yet Entirely Good] Sovetskiy ekran 15 (9 April 1929).


Ginzburg, L. “Fil’m o lyudyakh, stroyashchikh sotsializm” [Film About People, the Building of Socialism]. Pravda 327 (22 November 1932): 4.


Gornitskaia, Nina ed. *Iz istorii Lenfil’ma, Stati, vospominaniya, dokumenti, 1930-e gody* [From the History of Lenfil’m Studios: Articles, Reminiscences, and Documents of the 1930s]. Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1975.


462


Sokolov, I. V. *Istoriya sovetskogo kinoiskusstva zvukovogo perioda, chast’ II* (1934-1944) [The History of Soviet Film Art of the Sound Period, Part II (1930-1941)]. Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1946.


Yutkevich, S. “Vstupitel’noye slovo k diskussii (Stenogramma vystupleniya na diskussii o fil’me ‘Zlatïe gorï,’ v moskovskii ARRK),” [Introductory Words to Discussion (stenogram of a speech on the discussion about the film The Golden Mountains in the Moscow ARRK)]. Proletarskoe kino 1 (1932): 5-9.


**Writings by Shostakovich**


Shostakovich, Dmitry. “Pis’ma v redaktsiyu” [Letter to the Editor]. Rabochiy i teatr 16 (14 April 1929).


**Discography**


**Filmography**

*The New Babylon*. VHS. Directed by Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg. 1929; Facets Multimedia.


*Vstrechnyi* [The Counterplan]. VHS. Directed by Sergey Yutkevich and Fridrikh Ermler. Leningrad: Lenfil’m Studios, 1932.

*Zlatïe gorï* [Golden Mountains]. VHS. Directed by Sergey Yutkevich and Fridrikh Ermler. 1931; Belye Stolbye: Gosfil’mofond, 1936.
Manuscripts and Archival Documents

“Novyi Vavilon” [The New Babylon]. Sectsia No.1, Fond No.2, Opis’ No.1, Ed. khr. No.597. Gosfil’mofond [State Film Archive], Belye Stolbye, Russia.


“Odna” [Alone]. Shostakovich Apartment Archive. Moscow, Russia.


“Pesnya o vstrechnom” [Song of the Counterplan]. Shostakovich Fond 2048, Opis’ No.1, 60. RGALI [Russian State Archive for Literature and Art]. Moscow, Russia.


Scores


469
Shostakovich, Dmitry. *Sobraniye Sochineniy v soroka dvukh tomakh, tom 41, “Muzïka k
kinofil’ma, partitura”* [The Collected Works in Forty-Two Volumes, Volume 41,
Music to Film, Orchestral Score]. Edited by Manashir Yakubov. Moscow: