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A
Macmillan Films Inc.

FILM STUDY EXTRACT

IVAN THE TERRIBLE

Part I

GLOBAL STRATEGY AND
ANASTASIA'S FUNERAL

NOTES AND ANALYSIS

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IVAN THE TERRIBLE

Part I

(U.S.S.R., 1944)

GLOBAL STRATEGY AND
ANASTASIA'S FUNERAL
16 min.

NOTES AND ANALYSIS
by Mary Peatman

CREDITS

Director .....Sergei Eisenstein
Screenplay .....Sergei Eisenstein
Photography .....Eduard Tisse (exteriors) and Andrei Moskvin (interiors)
Music .....Sergei Prokofiev
Editor .....Sergei Eisenstein

CAST

Ivan the Terrible .....Nikolai Cherkasov
Anastasia, his wife .....Ludmila Tselikovskaya
Efrosinia Staritsky, his aunt .....Serafima Birman
Prince Andrei Kurbsky .....Mikhail Nazvanov
Pimen .....Alexander Mgebrov
Malyuta Skuratov .....Mikhail Zharov
Alexei Basmanov .....Amvrosy Buchma
Feodor Basmanov, his son .....Mikhail Kusnetzov

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IVAN THE TERRIBLE, PART I: SYNOPSIS AND THEME

Plot Synopsis

Ivan the Terrible, Part I, opens at an important political moment: the seventeen year old Grand Prince of Moscow is having himself crowned first Tsar of all Russia. It becomes immediately evident that Ivan has enemies at the Muscovite court who do not like this act of arrogance. In particular, the aristocratic class, the boyars, feels its ancient traditional power threatened. Efrosinia Staritsky, a daughter of a high-ranking boyar family and Ivan's aunt, is this group's most striking representative. Standing with her retarded child, Vladimir, and the boyars, she mutters dark threats as the youth is being crowned. We know in this very first scene that she will be a force Ivan will have to contend with.

In his coronation speech, Ivan outlines his radical plan of action: the power of the boyars must end, a regular army is to be formed—to be maintained in part by the independently wealthy monasteries, and the Russian lands are to be gathered into a unified state for the good of all the people. While some foreign ambassadors are impressed with the Tsar's plans to redress the imbalance of power and wealth, the ecclesiastical representatives join the boyars in their anger and dismay.

Sedition sets in at once. Prince Kurbsky, a young nobleman whom Ivan clearly trusts (Ivan assigns him to attend himself and his bride, Anastasia, at their wedding feast, which follows the coronation scene), considers an ambassador's suggestion that he overthrow Ivan and crown himself Tsar; in a more active manner he also begins to pursue Ivan's wife, slyly putting himself "in her way" even at the wedding itself. Efrosinia, too, is clearly plotting means to undermine Ivan and take power out of his hands.

At first Ivan has no trouble: after he celebrates his marriage, he marches on the city of Kazan and captures it and the outlying territory. But success is short-lived. Returning to Moscow, he falls ill and the boyars, convinced he won't live, openly rebel and prepare to put Efrosinia's son on the throne instead of Ivan's

child Dmitry. Meanwhile, Kurbsky, thinking Ivan actually has died, forces his suit on Anastasia; when she retorts that Ivan still lives, however, he changes his strategy by ostensibly giving up his fight for her and taking an oath in the presence of the boyars to support Dmitry.

His act is well timed, for barely has he spoken when Ivan comes into the room, obviously still ill but convinced that he will recover. Ivan knows the treachery the boyars have perpetrated against himself and his family; what he doesn't realize is that Kurbsky is—and has been—meditating treachery as well. Overhearing the Prince's oath and convinced of his loyalty, Ivan gives him a highly strategic military responsibility: he is to lead an army against countries to the west of Russia that block her access to the Baltic Sea and so to international trade. He also makes a second appointment, assigning a man with no aristocratic connections, Alexei Basmanov, to the Crimean borders. This move is important, the first in a series of attempts by Ivan to devise a bodyguard composed only of the common people—people who have no landholdings or aristocratic ties to worry about and who can therefore devote their entire effort to serving the Tsar. Furious, the boyars, headed by Efrosinia, meet and consider ways to curb Ivan's excesses; Efrosinia states darkly that "we must separate Anastasia from Ivan" (he obviously loves her deeply).

Some time later, we see Ivan in his throne room making plans for westward (ultimately "global") expansion (first extract), after which he goes to his wife's chambers. She is ill, watched over by the black-robed Efrosinia. As Ivan enters, his aunt stations herself below the balustrade at the entrance and waits, listening. News arrives that Kurbsky has been defeated at Reval; distressed, Anastasia falls back on her pillows with a cry. Ivan anxiously glances around for water to revive her; Efrosinia, seeing her chance, drops poison into a goblet she has been concealing and then slips it surreptitiously onto the balustrade. Ivan sees it and, ignorant of the nature of its contents, offers it to his wife, who innocently drinks.

Her funeral follows. Ivan, grief-stricken, mourns at her bier, but his privacy is disturbed: word is brought that Kurbsky has deserted to Poland. Ivan is momentarily overwhelmed, but then,

stung to wrath, he violently disrupts the service and makes swift plans with his henchman, Malyuta Skuratov (a commoner) along with Alexei Basmanov and his son Feodor, to bring his enemies to heel and to compel the people of Russia to proclaim their need of him as their protector.

We see his plan take clearer shape in the next scene. He has departed from Moscow in a mysterious manner, withdrawing to a private retreat some distance away. A messenger, one of his "new men," proclaims to a gathering in Moscow that Ivan is angry at the boyars—hence his refusal to execute his office—but adds that he "bears no malice against the citizens, shopkeepers and orthodox Christians of Moscow"[1]—in short, the common people. The messenger then calls on these same people to offer their services to the Tsar by joining Ivan's new bodyguard (the Oprichnina, as it is ultimately called).

In a final, exquisitely filmed sequence, we see Ivan at his retreat, going out to meet "the people," who have come, as he knew they would, to beg him to resume office. Composed but elated, he orders the horses saddled: "We are going back to Moscow to work for the future of the Great Russian State."[2]

The Theme

The main theme of the film is the existence of a dilemma within Ivan himself: he is a human being faced with inhuman responsibilities. As he gains experience in the role of Tsar, he learns, painfully, that to rule well, it is safer to be feared than loved; yet despite this growing understanding, he has difficulty shielding himself emotionally from his very human need to put his faith in others.

This dilemma takes several forms. In *Part I,* Ivan makes himself vulnerable through his devotion to Anastasia (by killing her, Efrosinia can strike at him) and his trust in the treacherous Kurbsky. The seeds of other betrayals are also planted in *Part I.* One example: Feodor Kolychev, a boyhood friend of the Tsar who elects to withdraw to a monastery, is called back to Moscow by Ivan when the latter is faced with Kurbsky's treachery. When, in *Part II,* the monk arrives, however, it becomes quite clear that he will not aid but rather thwart the Tsar in his political aims.

While these struggles may seem to point to "mere politics," they are important in the film because they are presented through Ivan's perception. He is dedicated to his duty as he sees it, but he also dreads his increasing loneliness. His subsequent uncompromising efforts to bring his "friends" to him on his own terms result not in a mere loss of friends, but in the gaining of bitter enemies. What Ivan wants is to centralize the country's government in Moscow rather than to perpetuate the independence of the various provinces. It is the power of the boyars on their estates and the ecclesiastics in their monasteries, both immune to land taxation and other restrictions, which he feels has sapped the country as a whole—and the common people in particular—of military defense and agricultural resources. His reforms, however, are naturally unwelcome to the powerful groups involved; hence, the various acts of treachery.

For all Ivan's shrewdness in matters of state, he is extraordinarily slow to accept the truth in this instance. Ivan's experiences force him, finally, to ask two major questions: (1) Can such treachery exist? and (2) Am I right in what I'm doing?

THE EXTRACTS

Plot Synopsis of the Extracts

(Global Strategy)

In a stormy mood, Ivan tells the boyars that he needs the Baltic towns of Riga, Reval, and Narva. He is upset because these "neighbors" are depriving him and his country of commercial trade privileges in western Europe as well as access to modern weapons and trained personnel. The boyars have been opposing Ivan in his efforts in this respect for the same reason they have been against him in so many others: they don't like to see him take power to himself and away from them. Their opposition to his attempts at westward expansion represent their reactionary and unhelpful efforts to weaken him. Furious, Ivan finally orders the group out; then he meets with Nepeya, the ambassador to Elizabeth, Queen of England.

The purpose of this meeting is two-fold: Ivan wishes to send his ally a gift—a chess set—and he also wants to set his conditions about the exclusive use by Russia and England of a newly discovered trade route which bypasses the Baltic and has its Russian entrance in the White Sea. Through the Queen, Ivan hopes to maintain a valuable European ally as well as to gain access to western Europe's goods.

After Nepeya leaves, Ivan broods alone for a few moments and then leaves to see his wife, who we gather is ill.

(Anastasia's Funeral)

As an off-screen chorus intones a mournful hymn, Ivan keeps sorrowful vigil at his wife's bier (while the audience knows she has been poisoned, he does not; hence his grief-stricken rather than angry mien). A priest (Pimen) is reading from Psalm Sixty-nine.

Caught between moods of blank despair and troubled thoughts, Ivan asks, "Am I right in this great struggle of mine?" The only answer seems to lie in the sad intonations of the chorus, the desolate words of the Psalm, and in Anastasia's dead face. In the shadows behind the Tsar we see Alexei Basmanov (with his son) approach Malyuta and whisper something in his ear.[3] Malyuta silences him and, waiting tactfully, finally steps forward and informs Ivan in a low voice that Kurbsky has fled to Poland. Ivan reels beneath this new blow, but Malyuta urges him to act. Meanwhile, Pimen reads: "I sought consolation but found none . . ."

Suddenly Ivan flares up. Shouting furiously, "You lie!" he hurls down two of the great candlesticks that stand at the foot of the bier and then yells again, driving Pimen from his lectern and sending Efrosinia scuffling through a low archway. Completely changed, Ivan feverishly orders that Feodor Kolychev be brought back to Moscow; then, on the advice of Alexei Basmanov, he further decides to form an iron ring of men who have sprung from the people about him, withdraw to his retreat at Alexandrov, and then remain there until the people themselves request that he return.

Plot Construction of the Extracts

The first extract raises no striking issues in terms of plot construction until the end. Then, as Ivan sits back and reflects, Eisenstein cuts away to the object of his thoughts, the ailing Anastasia. (At this point, it's not clear what is wrong with her. We see only that she is in bed, tossing uncomfortably, and that Efrosinia is there with her). Eisenstein then cuts back to Ivan as he rises to go to his wife.

The remarkable fact about the construction of the second extract is its polyphonic nature: the various threads of sound, dialogue, music and visuals all working together to convey Ivan's state of mind. While the sequence itself falls basically into two parts (the second beginning with Ivan's "You lie!"), the Tsar actually undergoes several changes of mood, some of which are conveyed to us not by him, but rather through other elements in the scene, such as the words of the Psalm or, later, the orchestral music, which vacillates at the very end of the sequence between expressions of strength and of suffering or pain (see further, "Commentative Music").

A Note on the Style

"Expressionism" is a term frequently used to describe the style of the film, so a word should be said about it. Expressionism as a conscious movement in film was pretty much limited to the German cinema of the post World War I years. Long after the movement had died out, however, certain characteristics associated with it appeared in other films, and *Ivan* is a case in point. The acting style of Cherkasov in the role of Ivan, for example, is clearly expressionistic in the contorted and occasionally jerky motions of his body, the sometimes strained angle of his head, and above all, the restless shifting of his eyes. Eisenstein's frequent use of shadows is also highly expressionistic.

Quite apart from such specific borrowings from the German Expressionist Movement, the style of *Ivan* is distinctly non-naturalistic, and it serves to project the Tsar's sufferings, doubts and torments. While the camera never singles out obvious points

of view (thus making it easy to determine whose mind we're "into" at any one time), one might say that on occasion, and *at a certain metaphorical level of interpretation,* we are seeing and hearing Ivan's inner mind. Two scenes are especially open to this interpretation: that of the funeral in *Part I* (the second extract), and the famous banquet (the color sequence) toward the end of *Part II*. In the bier sequence, the lines that Pimen reads are in a sense words that Ivan initially applies to himself (the fact that the Psalm is in the first person contributes to this) —or, put another way, the words "emanate" from Ivan's thoughts; Pimen is simply a mouthpiece. (I say initially; later, of course, Ivan rejects what Pimen says).

Such a style permits the inclusion of images, situations, or "commentary" that wouldn't make sense on a naturalistic level. Examples: (1) Malyuta is present in Anastasia's bedroom when she is poisoned. Given the construction of the room and the location of Ivan and Efrosinia relative to Malyuta, one would think, if one were reasoning "logically," that he could see what Efrosinia was up to and that he would try to stop her; or, failing in that, that he would at least tell Ivan the truth after the event. In fact, he does nothing as far as we know. Indirectly, the information gets out in *Part II,* but that's a long delay, and even then Malyuta isn't the informant. Then why is he there? Either he sees the act and *knows* (again, through unnatural means) that the time isn't ripe for the Tsar to be told; or he doesn't see it, in which case he, as Ivan's "eye," isn't perfect (we know Ivan has "blind" spots). Whether or not either supposition is correct, however, the point is not to press for a naturalistic (logical) explanation. (2) When Malyuta's huge shadow precedes him down a flight of stairs and a mysterious voice sounds out, "The eye of the Sovereign: Malyuta," we're not meant to look for the source of the voice or attempt to identify it with anyone we know in the cast. It is mysterious, disembodied, haunting Ivan's enemies as does Malyuta himself. (3) Occasionally Eisenstein supplies commentary of his own, apart from anything Ivan might be saying or thinking. In the funeral sequence, shortly before Ivan shouts out his defiance, a shot occurs that shows Efrosinia standing next to a fresco portraying a human figure (clearly not a

saint or otherwise "holy" person) inverted on its head. While the shot is brief, it is nevertheless intrusive—the screen is shared equally by Efrosinia on the right and the figure on the left. As always, there is room for more than one interpretation, but the one I would suggest here is that Eisenstein is simply foreshadowing in his own way the explosion about to come: things (including candlesticks) will be "overturned" almost at once, and ultimately (in *Part II*) Efrosinia herself will be overthrown.

ANALYSIS OF FILM ELEMENTS IN THE EXTRACTS

SYMBOLISM

(First Extract)

The Chessboard

Concerned about maintaining good relations with the Queen of England, and equally anxious to gain an important advantage for his own country through these relations, Ivan elects to send as a gift an ornate chessboard. This choice enables him to accomplish two things: (1) He can endow the gift with an appropriate personal touch—a message which will inform Elizabeth that she is the queen whom he wishes to rule his "board"—the ruler who, as an ally with Russia, will have the use of the northern route, hence exclusive trading privileges; (2) he is also able to demonstrate *how* she is to gain this strategic position: by "moving her English boats" to the White Sea and so to Russia (and as he says this he picks up the queen and moves it on the chessboard).

The image of the chessboard functions on several levels. (1) It is a game—but it is also a game about the capture of kings, queens, and countries. (2) Strategy is involved. While only certain moves are allowed, much can be accomplished by them that cannot be achieved by more forthright means—cleverness and cunning serve to deceive and confuse the enemy. (3) The board itself presents a graphic pattern of black and white squares, presenting a clear-cut map of complex political moves.

It is very much like Eisenstein to employ visual imagery to convey ideas. His equation of Kerensky with a peacock in *Ten Days that Shook the World* and his use of the three stone lions to suggest the metaphor of "the very stones roar" in *Potemkin* serve the same function that the chessboard does here. Several times Ivan plays deadly strategic games, the most obvious case apart from this one being his "mock coronation" of Vladimir in *Part II*. The chessboard itself makes an important second appearance: when Kurbsky arrives at the court of Poland (Russia's enemy) in *Part II,* we find that the throne room floor looks like a chessboard, and the overdressed figures in the room become pieces being manipulated by Ivan.

While the object of chess is to mate the opposing king, the most powerful and hence threatening piece is the adversary's highly mobile queen. If one considers this fact in the light of *Ivan,* striking points emerge. There is no king in England, but there is a queen, and Ivan needs her naval mobility to help him. Strictly speaking, Ivan isn't a king either, but in respect to trading routes at least (which he wants desperately), he is dependent on Elizabeth the way a king on a chessboard is dependent on his queen. Locked in the heart of his own country—Moscow—Ivan doesn't possess the same flexibility that Queen Elizabeth has. On the other hand (to speak briefly of *Part II* again), at the Polish court there is a king on a chessboard, and in addition to being the traditionally helpless figure (he is both effeminate and thoroughly ineffectual), he is further incapacitated by his lack of a queen.

The Astrolabe

Even as he uses the chessboard, so Ivan also uses his astrolabe in this first extract as a means of demonstrating visually what his plans for England involve. The need to penetrate the Baltic blockade to the west is vital, but his efforts have been in vain. Now, however, with the discovery by the English of a new route into Russia via the White Sea, Ivan nurses hopes that if the Baltic barricade cannot be penetrated, it can be circumvented, thus permitting trade at least with England.

Through the use of artfully cast shadows, Eisenstein presents Ivan demonstrating his argument to the English ambassador by pointing, his arm above the astrolabe, to a spot high on the globe (Fig. 1). This gesture says two things: it literally indicates the northern entrance to Russia (from the White Sea down to the city of Archangel, which is still on the map today), and it also suggests his intention to "embrace"—i.e. dominate—the world (his other hand, encircling the lower part of the astrolabe, completes this arc). Diagonal tension is created by the shadow of Ivan—upper left—facing that of the ambassador—lower right—with the shadow of the astrolabe between them: Ivan's shadow, much bigger than Nepeya's, dominates the frame, and his arms reach across almost two-thirds of the picture. Again, Eisenstein is using non-naturalistic visual imagery to convey simply but dramatically both what Ivan wants and what he is in fact capable of achieving (at the end of *Part I* we learn that the English ships have indeed arrived in the White Sea). This effect is accomplished through highly artificial methods: the light sources are placed with no regard for realism in order to produce highly symbolic shadows.

Why these shadows? (1) Eisenstein is able to distort the relative stature of the two men while keeping them together in the same shot; and (2) he is able to demonstrate Ivan's mind at work in visible terms—the same thing he does with the chessboard. The Tsar's plans are literally "far-reaching" and can be best conveyed to Nepeya (and us) through unrealistic, bigger-than-life representations.

The function of the astrolabe doesn't end here, however. Having sent Nepeya out, Ivan, now alone, adjusts his coat about him and sits back in his chair, thus putting himself *below* the shadow of the globe. At first viewing, this moment does not convey its full meaning, but as the scene progresses, we begin to understand the anxieties that burden Ivan about his wife. When he actually rises, this reversed image becomes much more pronounced: his figure, now shrunken and bent with weariness, falls again under the shadow of the towering globe (Fig. 2). A tired Atlas, Ivan stoops through a low, thick archway and disappears into the engulfing shadows.

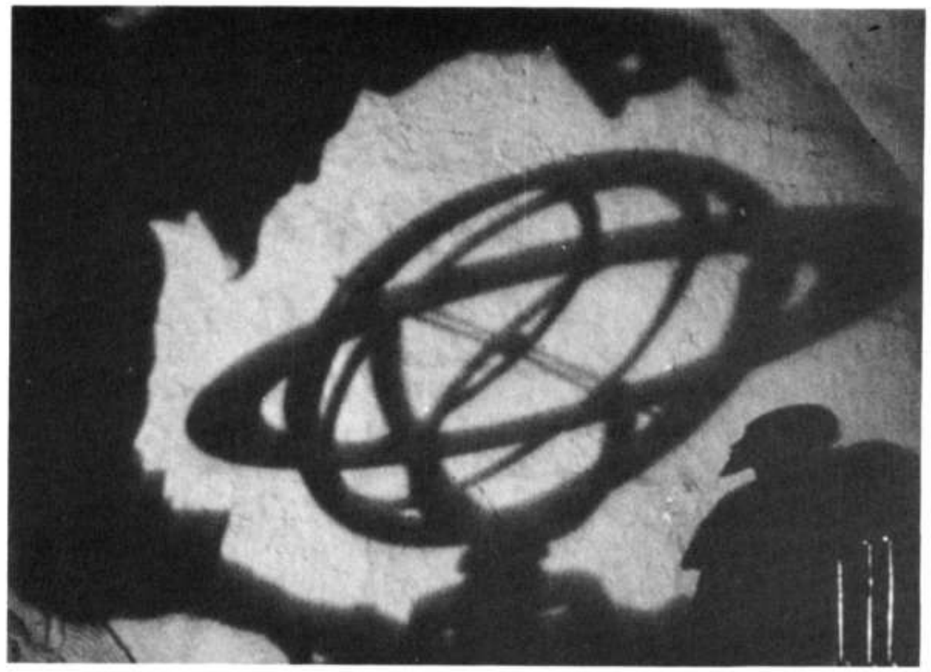

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

PHOTOGRAPHY
(Second Extract)

Composition (Framing, Angles)

One of the most noteworthy elements in *Ivan* is its exaggerated, expressionistic style. While much of this effect is captured through the mannerisms of the actors (see "A Note on the Style"), camera angles and framing contribute to this impression as well. We see this particularly in the first half of the funeral sequence, during moments that convey Ivan's weariness, grief or shock.

His grief is captured at once by a long, slow crane shot (the only camera movement in the sequence), focusing high above the bier on Anastasia, then gradually moving down to the foot of the coffin to reveal an anguished, overwhelmed Ivan. The shot suggests the heavy weight that crushes him at this moment. From this point on, Ivan's grief is imparted through a fixed frame that Ivan either drags himself into or collapses out of. For example, in an early shot in the sequence[4] we see the bier in closeup slightly from above, Ivan's arm visible on the edge. As we watch, the rest of his upper body and his head slowly rear into the frame, creating the obvious illusion that he has dragged himself up bodily by his arm. The angle is high enough, furthermore, to give the sense that, when he raises his head and looks at the camera, he has raised his gaze heavenward. It is then that, apparently addressing God, he asks, "Am I right in this great struggle of mine?"

The second phase, comprising Ivan's stunned reaction to the news that Kurbsky has fled the country, is conveyed most of all through Cherkasov's bodily and facial movements, but the camera, relentlessly pinning him up against the side of the bier and to the right of the frame, restricts him considerably, thus making him appear to writhe. (Cherkasov complained bitterly about the lack of room Eisenstein permitted him in this sequence; his literal discomfort is translated into the agony of the Tsar through close, sometimes tight framing—the only directions he can move in are slightly to the sides and backwards—

into the coffin itself.) The low, close angle intensifies the pain, specifically at the moment when Ivan casts his head back against the bier.

In the second half of the sequence, framing serves to demonstrate shifting relationships between Ivan and his henchmen, Malyuta and the Basmanovs. As Alexei Basmanov dedicates his son to Ivan, we see the three of them together, and when Feodor is thrown to his knees, Ivan moves closer to the two, thus tightening the composition and suggesting a kind of trinity, united in willingness and intent. But this is short-lived: Ivan, preoccupied with his own ideas, turns away from them and is framed alone when he states his intention to withdraw to Alexandrov. Malyuta, exuberant but mistaken, enters the frame from the right with the words "And then you'll march back to Moscow," and Alexei Basmanov, equally in error, comes in from the left: "You'll return a conqueror." Again a three-shot is created, but this time Ivan is visibly pulling back from the other two, not liking what he hears. He is framed alone a second time as he gives his intention to await the summons of the people. When the three are shown together yet a third time (as both Malyuta and Basmanov attempt to dissuade Ivan from trusting the "rabble"), the end result is the exit of the two men simultaneously out of the frame, Malyuta directly to the right and Basmanov to the left. Thus Ivan is alone yet a third time as he continues outlining his plans. When he looks off-screen to Malyuta and Alexei Basmanov in turn in order to get their reactions, each man, now framed separately, turns his back to him. Interestingly enough, it is a twosome that finally comes to an agreement: Ivan, glaring down at Feodor, demands *his* opinion; then, in a shot that captures them together, Feodor gives the answer Ivan has been waiting for, "You're right."

The movements in and out of the frame are carefully choreographed. The framing is not "naturalistic"; rather, it is accurately timed to heighten the ebb and flow of tension.

Lighting

The basic lighting in the funeral sequence is best described as *chiaroscuro* (Italian for "light/dark")—a word that accurately connotes the dim, murky grays and half-tones that permeate the depths of the cathedral. People seem to blend in with or materialize out of deep shadows: for example, Malyuta, when he steps forward to tell Ivan of Kurbsky's treachery. Most of the costumes enhance this dark or ghostly impression: Ivan, Malyuta, Pimen and Efrosinia are all robed in funeral black; the Basmanovs are in dull chain mail.

There are pinpoints of light that stand out in this gloom, however. Candles flicker at various points throughout the cathedral, and occasionally torches are seen as well (both seem to be a feeble and ineffective protest against the engulfing shadows). The most striking contrast, however, is found in the white satin of Anastasia's dress and the halo-like crown about her head, both strongly lit from above. Her dress always stands out, but it is particularly noticeable in a shot toward the end of the sequence that shows Ivan to the left of the bier, his "new men" miraculously surrounding him in their black robes.

It should be mentioned again that Eisenstein is quite willing to sacrifice "naturalism" in order to gain a desired effect. The shadows of Ivan, Nepeya and the astrolabe in the first sequence are created through very contrived lighting methods and, in one shot showing *only* shadows,[5] the relative positions of the two men were undoubtedly changed in order to attain the desired effect. In the funeral sequence, too, Eisenstein reinstates the two toppled candlesticks in order to retain the desired compositional organization in the final shots.

SOUND
(Second Extract)

Actual Music

Actual music—to expand Karel Reisz's definition of actual sound—is music "whose source is visible on the screen or whose source is implied to be present by the action of the film."[6] The off-screen chorus in the funeral sequence, singing a typical Russian Orthodox liturgical hymn of mourning, serves as an example of actual off-screen music. Swelling and receding in volume as it diffuses throughout the cathedral, it continues until Ivan, having disrupted Pimen's reading with his defiant "You lie!" commands that Feodor Kolychev be brought to Moscow. At this point it unobtrusively resolves itself on a soft cadence and ends.

Commentative Music

The first instance of commentative music in this sequence—music written, in this instance by Sergei Prokofiev, to add to or comment on the action—occurs only after Ivan, having fallen out in disagreement with his henchmen, states his own goal: "I will be coronated anew (by the people) and will undertake great tasks." At this point a sharp phrase is heard in the strings, a motif that has already been linked with the poisoning of Anastasia.[7] A motif, properly used, adds to a given moment a special significance of its own, not merely serving as a reinforcing agent. By the time the poisoning motif occurs in this sequence, we are presumably capable of recognizing it and what it stands for. Why, then, is it here? It would seem that Ivan has overcome his anguish over the loss of his wife and is ready to proceed. That he is ready to proceed remains evident, but what we realize at this point is that Efrosinia has caused him deeper hurt than he realizes; he has been rendered more vulnerable than he knows.

As Ivan proclaims his will to "accomplish great things," however, the motif of "Ivan the Terrible," first heard at the opening of the picture, sounds out assertively. His new men

stream in and surround him as the music continues. But in the final moment of the sequence, Ivan sinks down over the body of his wife, and the music plunges into the bass in a series of diminished seventh arpeggios—an unmitigated statement of the pain he has endured.

The Spoken Word

Speech is used in two ways. Pimen's reading of Psalm Sixty-nine comprises a monologue of sorts. The Psalm is in the first person, and in its expression of despair and loneliness, it seems to be an accurate projection of the mood Ivan suffers at first. In addition, there is the actual dialogue involving Ivan, Malyuta, and the Basmanovs.

The Contrapuntal Use of Sound

The effect of the sound elements can only be appreciated fully if one considers how they work as a whole in the context of this scene. Professor Yon Barna has expressed this effect very well:

> In *Ivan* three 'voice' lines are interwoven into a polyphonic tapestry of sound and image: the line of Ivan's consciously voiced thoughts (and his outward actions); his 'interior monologue,' voiced by the monk intoning the psalm; and the line of worldly affairs spoken by Malyuta (and the Basmanovs).[8]

If one considers the various threads of sound—and visuals as well—as emanations of the conflicting feelings within Ivan himself, the sequence as a whole takes on a new and deeper significance.[9]

APPENDIX

Notes

1. Sergei Eisenstein, *Ivan the Terrible* [cutting continuity], trans. A. E. Ellis (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), p. 118, shot 772. Any further quotations from the film will either be taken from this translation or from the translation as given in the print of the extracts.

2. The position of this film in contemporary politics is complex but important, reminding us as it does of the repressive control the government maintains over artistic creation in the Soviet Union. Stalin liked the relatively assertive nature of *Part I,* specifically its ending; the assumption is that he saw himself mirrored favorably in this portrait of one of his country's greatest heroes (Ivan is looked upon as a very progressive leader by the Soviets). In any event, *Part I* was awarded the Stalin Prize (the second highest award for film) on several counts. *Part II,* however, was another matter altogether. An official Soviet statement about it condemned it as containing "a careless and arbitrary treatment of historical themes . . . [Eisenstein] displayed his ignorance of historical facts by portraying . . . Ivan, a man of strong will and character, as a man of no will and little character, something like Hamlet." (*Sovietskoye Iskusstvo,* 16 Aug. 1946; in Jay Leyda's *Kino* [London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960], pp. 390-91). As one *London Times* reviewer put it: "Ivan [does not convey] at all the calm, wise, paternal image that Stalin would like to have evoked." (17 Nov. 1958, p. 17, col. 1). Consequently, the second part was suppressed until after Stalin's death, and the third part was never finished.

3. A segment missing from this print of the film showed Malyuta informing Ivan, earlier in this sequence, of various boyars who had fled the country; in this context, the news of Kurbsky's act becomes "the last straw." For those with access to the Simon and Schuster cutting continuity, the missing shots are nos. 705-716, pp. 103-104.

4. In the Simon and Schuster cutting continuity, shot no. 720, p. 105.

5. In the Simon and Schuster cutting continuity, shot no. 650, p. 97.

6. Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar, *The Technique of Film Editing* (New York: Hastings House, 1972), p. 397.

7. The mention of musical motifs (or leitmotifs, as they are sometimes called) raises the issue of Richard Wagner's influence on Eisenstein. While extensive discussion of this matter is impossible here, it might be said that Eisenstein was very concerned during the making of *Ivan* with

exploring the composer's theory of "the total work of art" (the *Gesamtkunstwerk*) in the medium of film. (Actually, the use of musical motifs is only a small part of this concern.) In 1940, Eisenstein staged a production of *Die Walküre* at the Bolshoi; and in an essay written the previous year ("Achievement," reproduced in English in *Film Form*), he spoke of cinema as the "highest stage of embodiment for the potentialities and aspirations of each of the arts." For an examination of this issue relative to *Ivan,* see my dissertation (*Sergei Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible as a Cinematic Realization of the Concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk,* Indiana Univ.), Chapter II. See also Eisenstein's article, "The Embodiment of a Myth," in *Film Essays with a Lecture* (ed. Jay Leyda; pub. Dobson Books, Ltd., 1968) for his remarks about the *Walküre* experience.

8. Yon Barna, *Eisenstein,* trans. Lise Hunter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 242.

9. See again "A Note on the Style."

Suggested Extracts for Comparison and Contrast

THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI (*Abduction of Jane*)

Most impressive about *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* is its expressionistic quality: the use of exaggerated sets, make-up and acting to convey a state of insanity. *Ivan* presents a character's state of inner turmoil and anxiety through similar means. This can be especially well demonstrated in the second extract discussed here: Ivan at his wife's bier. As in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,* body movements are contorted (although Ivan's movements are more abrupt than Caligari's or Cesare's), and the mood is dark and sombre in both films.

THE BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN (*The Odessa Steps*)

A comparison between *Potemkin* and *Ivan* (both by Eisenstein, but made at different periods in his career) should provide stimulating discussion, certainly of clear-cut differences between the two films, but also of less obvious similarities. Consideration of the documentary and "epic" approach in *Potemkin* on the one hand, and the dramatic and personal concerns of *Ivan* on the other, might serve as a starting point.

Recommended Reading

The cutting continuity of the released parts of the film (*I* and *II*), plus the scenario for *Part III,* can be obtained in paperback through the Simon and Schuster Classic Film Scripts series (*Ivan the Terrible,* trans. A. E. Ellis, 1970). Simon and Schuster also published Eisenstein's complete scenario in hardback in 1962 (this book, entitled *Ivan the Terrible: A Screenplay,* is now out of print). In addition to supplying Eisenstein's own script for the film (it is poetic and stands well by itself), the book also contains a prefatory essay by Ivor Montagu. (The Simon and Schuster continuity script also contains some information of interest.)

English translations of some of Eisenstein's comments on *Ivan* include "Appendix B: Notes from a Director's Laboratory" from *Film Form,* trans. Jay Leyda (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1949); "One Path to Color," in Lewis Jacob's *The Movie as Medium* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1970); "Ivan Grozny" (*VOKS Bulletin,* 7-8 [1942], pp. 60-62;) and "About the Film *Ivan Grozny,*" in Marie Seton's book, *Sergei M. Eisenstein: A Biography* (New York: A. A. Wyn, 1952).

In the area of criticism, Yon Barna has written the most perceptive commentary on *Ivan* known to this writer. His book, entitled *Eisenstein* (Indiana Univ. Press, 1973), sets the film in the context of Eisenstein's other creativity around that time as well as supplying a fine analysis. Grounded in thorough research, his writing bears the stamp of authority and intelligence; the book should not be overlooked.

Jay Leyda's *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960) contains useful facts and some helpful commentary.

Other critical material is available in newspapers, magazines and journals in various countries, especially from the years of the release of the two parts (1945 and 1958). One of the most helpful articles in English is R. J. Garlick's discussion of *Part II* (*Film Journal* [Australia], 14 [Nov. 1959], pp. 22-26). Peter

Wollen's *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1969) also contains some remarks in his section on Eisenstein.

Finally, my own forthcoming dissertation, *Sergei Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible as a Cinematic Realization of the Concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk* (Indiana Univ., due for completion early 1976), contains three chapters of analysis of the film, plus an extensive bibliography.

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