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Author(s)	Sonia Volochova
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Cast: Pyotr Sobolevsky (Vanya Shorin, Red Navy sailor); Ludmilla Semyonova (Valya); Sergei Gerasimov (magician "Chelovek-vopros"); Emil Gal (Koko, variety performer); A. Tserep (tavernkeeper); N. Gorodnichev (house manager); V. Lande (dancer in cafe); S. Martinson (orchestra conductor); E. Kumeiko, I. Berezin (hooligans); Ya. Zheimo (girl gangster); A. Kostrichkin (member of the band); V. Plotnikov (one of the rescuers); A. Kostomolotsky (fence for antiques); A. Arnold (editor).

Synopsis (based on single viewing of incomplete print and material in Soviet Fiction Films).

The slums of Leningrad are defaced by rows of crumbling, windowless houses, lifeless remnants of the Civil War. They are the habitat of the gangster bands, the khazas, which prey upon the city.

Not far away is one of Leningrad's attractions for the unwary, the amusement park known as The Peoples' House. Here the gangsters ply their trade. Among them, in the guise of a magician, self-named "Chelovek-Vopros," (Question-Man) is the leader of one of the bands.

The myriad of delights promised by the Peoples' House entices Vanya, a sailor from the Aurora, and his mates to spend their shore leave there. Valya, a young girl from the slums, also longs for the pleasures of the amusement park, and evades the watchful eye of her authoritarian father to go there. Admired the raptures of roller-coasters, giant swings, devil's wheels, squeaking hurdy-gurdies, and glaring fireworks the two meet and fall in love.

That love has dire results. Because Valya pleads for one last ride on the devil's wheel Vanya overstays his leave. His comrades look for him in vain. He has become an involuntary deserter, a homeless outcast on the run. Valya, too, is homeless. She is cast out by her father, who suspects the worst. In their predicament, the two young people become easy prey for "Chelovek-Vopros," who tricks them into joining his band. Eventually, however, Vanya musters the courage to break with the gang, return to his ship, and submit to judgment by his mates. His testimony enables the militia to surround the gangsters' den. In the ensuing shootout "Chelovek-Vopros" is killed. It is the end of the khaza.

—Sonia Volochova

S.V.D. 1927. Released August 23, 1927. Historical drama. 6 reels. Sovkino (Leningrad). Russian intertitles. Incomplete. Running time of complete print: ca 80 minutes; of incomplete print: ca 50 minutes.

Alternate English titles: CLUB OF THE BIG DEED; ASSOCIATION OF THE BIG DEED; CLUB OF THE GREAT DEED; THE UNION OF (FOR) THE GREAT CAUSE; BLOODY SNOWS; THE BROTHERHOOD OF DEATH.

Alternate Russian title: SOYUZ VELIKOVO DELA (ASSOCIATION OF THE GREAT DEED).
 Scenario: Yuri Tinyanov, Yuri Oxman. Direction: Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg.
 Photography: Andrei Moskvina. Design: Yevgeni Enei. Assistant director: B. Shpis.
 Cast: Sergei Gerasimov (Medox); Andrei Kostrichkin (his servant); Pyotr Sobolevsky (Lieutenant Sukhanov); K. Khokhlov (General Vishnevsky); Sophie Magarill (his wife); Ya. Zheimo (girl in circus); M. Mishel (General Veismar); Bronshtein (drummer); V. Fedosiev (officer); L. Semyonova, N. Michurin.

Synopsis (based on single viewing of incomplete print and material in Soviet Fiction Films).

Period: 1825. Locale: Chernigov, a garrison city in the Ukraine.

The reactionary Medox, adventurer, cardsharp, blackmailer, wins a ring bearing the initials S.V.D. Having learned of the planned revolt, being organized by the secret societies of progressive-minded officers, he schemes to denounce the conspirators. To win their trust, he exploits the S.V.D. initials as proof of his membership in the secret society known as "Soyuz Dela" (Association of the

Great Deed).

Lieutenant Sukhanov is one of the conspirators. As he stands guard at the border under strict orders to let no one pass without identification papers, he is accosted by a mysterious masked woman who besieges him to let her through even though she cannot, dare not, reveal her identity. When the lieutenant refuses to do so, she tries to drown herself. Appaled, he lets her pass. The woman is the wife of one of the generals, and her plight is occasioned by some indiscreet letters she once wrote to Medox with which he's blackmailing her. The price he exacts for the return of the letters is an introduction to local society, needed by him to gain his ends.

Medox's true identity is about to be exposed when the lieutenant recognizes him as the cheat and scoundrel who was once a member of his regiment. He is saved by the S.V.D. ring. Because of that ring the lieutenant believes his protestations that he has reformed and shares his former comrade's progressive beliefs. However, Medox's machinations to denounce the conspirators are defeated by the premature, spontaneous uprising of the Chernigov regiment. The regiment is routed, the officers arrested, the lieutenant wounded. With difficulty, he manages to make his way to the inn. There he's almost killed by Medox but is saved by the general's wife.

Still plotting, Medox, together, with General Veismar, schemesto kill the imprisoned officers, once again with the help of the S.V.D. ring. By chance, the lieutenant overhears the plot and manages to save his comrades. Infuriated by the failure of his scheme, the general exposes Medox and arrests him.

-Sonia Volochova

THE CLOAK, or THE OVERCOAT (SHINEL) 1926. Released May 10, 1926. Adaptation of two stories by Nikolai Gogol: "Nevsky Prospect" and "The Cloak." 7 reels. Leningradkino. English and Russian intertitles. ca 75 minutes.

Scenario: Yuri Tinyanov; Direction: Grigori Kozintzev, Leonid Trauberg; Photography: Andrei Moskvin, Yevgeni Mikhailov; Design: Yevgeni Enel; Assistant director: Yuri Shpis; Director's assistants: Sergei Shklyarevsky, Vladimir Petrov, Dmitri Fishov.

Cast: Andrei Kostrichkin (Akaki Akakievich Bashmachkin); Antonina Yeremeyeva (the "celestial creature"); S. Gerasimov (swindler); A. Kapler ("insignificant personage"; also "significant personage"); Yanina Zheimo (tailor's apprentice); E. Gal (tailor); V. Plotnikov (policeman); P. Sobolevsky (official).

The version of THE CLOAK we are showing, from the Film Department's Archives, is a composite of two prints. The first, which relates the story of "Nevsky Prospect" and serves as a kind of prologue to the film's second half, is a 35mm tinted nitrate print with Russian intertitles. The second, which takes up the story of "The Cloak," is a 16mm black-and-white print with English intertitles. Due to the vagaries of film preservation this two-part version gives the impression of two separate, unconnected stories. It is an erroneous impression occasioned, no doubt, by the loss of a connecting link, on the order of an intertitle between the two parts stating that years have passed. At some point in the film's career, when the second part was severed from the first to create an autonomous English-titled version of the second part, this connecting link must have been cut. Note, for instance, that in Part I the pitiful clerk is young and the all-important cloak still new. In Part II he's old, and his cloak threadbare.

Both a synopsis of Part I and a translation of the intertitles are given below.

Synopsis of Part I

To Bashmachkin, a lowly civil-service clerk, St. Petersburg's Nevsky Prospect represents glamour, excitement, a world he dares not aspire to. There one