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SERGEI M. EISENSTEIN

A Retrospective Festival

PRESENTED BY

THE CINEMA GUILD AND THE CENTER FOR RUSSIAN AND EASTERN EUROPEAN STUDIES

THE EISENSTEIN RETROSPECTIVE

Oct. 31, Nov. 1	OLD AND NEW
Nov. 2, 3	ALEXANDER NEVSKY
Nov. 4, 5	POTEMKIN
Nov. 7, 8	OCTOBER (TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD)
Nov. 9, 10	IVAN THE TERRIBLE, Part one
Nov. 11, 12	IVAN THE TERRIBLE, Part two
Cover Photo:	SERGEI EISENSTEIN WITH HIS PARENTS, 1900.





Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein was born in 1898 and grew up in a middle class home. His father was a good humored man and Jewish; his mother was a gentile and came from a once wealthy lineage. She abandoned the family when Sergei was small and would return after he had become famous to pester him for favors. The circus became his earliest love and drawing became his first creative outlet. An English maid remained through his childhood, teaching him the language and, as Tolstoy's servant, acquainting him with aspects of the common people. Even unto his American stay he would prefer to visit the Cicero dives of Al Capone, the Baptist churches of Southern Negroes.

Reaching adolescence, he became self-conscious of his clownish looks. He was short, had a large forehead, and would always feel ill at ease in society. By the age of nineteen he had not kissed a girl. In his early twenties he did fall in love with a beautiful actress; she married his best friend, Grisha Alexandrov. As a practical joke some of his fellow workers once sent a prostitute to await him in his room; Eisenstein threw her out. Marie Seton, his biographer, who came as close as anyone to knowing him intimately, says this of him:

He believed in the future of Soviet society, yet he was pathetically afraid of close contact with individuals. He had never dared to come close to more than a handful of people since he was a child and he had suffered from a personality which made it difficult for people to understand him or to feel affection for him. He had lived tragically alone, though always longing to find himself accepted as an ordinary human being.

Leonardo da Vinci became his hero, a constant source of steadfastness.

Eisenstein's intellectual interests account for the revolutionary nature of his film as well as the intensity of his vision. After the world-wide successes of Potemkin, in 1927 he toured Europe. At Cambridge University he loved to wander about the book-stalls and the grounds so conducive to study. His own room in Moscow was small and cramped, filled with books and periodicals in Russian, German, French, English. He read Pavlov, the haiku, and detective stories. Futurists, philologists, and anthropologists intoxicated him. Religion tormented him so that now he could be a vicious cynic, now a passionate believer in the burden of Christ. (Grisha Alexandrov, his assistant, said that during the filming of Bezhin Meadow Eisenstein was never without a copy of the Bible.) People accused him of being a homosexual, but he denied it; his studies taught him ".....that homosexuality is in all ways a retrogression--a going back to the

state where procreation came with the dividing of the cells. Its a dead end." From Freud he learned that sexual energy may be transformed into intellectual energy. In language his inspiration was the internal monologue of James Joyce's Ulysses. Music illuminated the difference between classic form and the modern world. In an article entitled "Synchronization of the senses" he quoted Rene Guilere, who claimed the reality of jazz was volume, that where classical music was arranged in geometric planes, jazz synthesizes all elements into the foreground. Eisenstein went on to say:

.... we have only to glance at a group of cubist paintings to convince ourselves that what takes place in these paintings has already been heard in jazz music.....Indeed, Roman squares and villas, Versailles' parks and terraces could be prototypes for the structure of classical music.

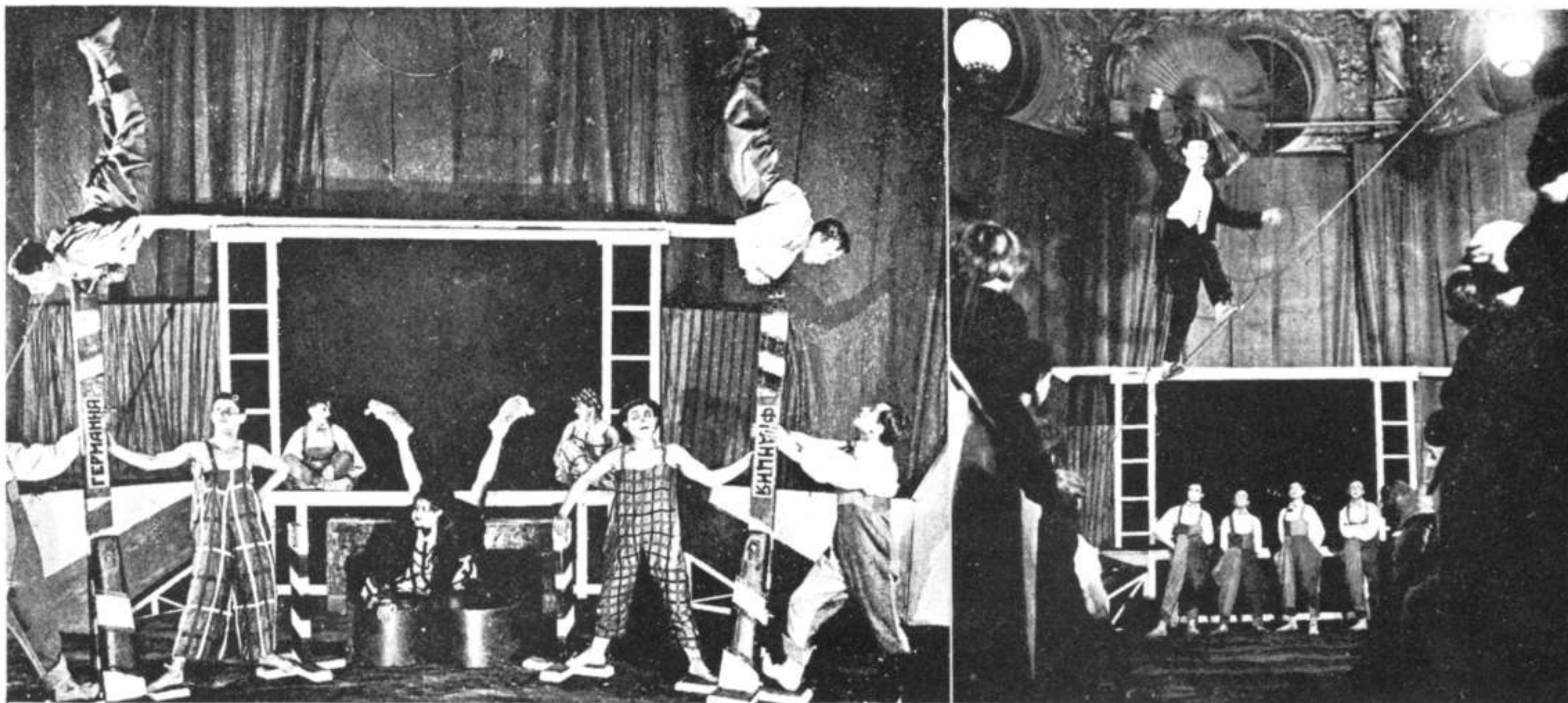
The modern urban scene, especially that of a large city at night, is clearly the plastic equivalent of jazz. Particularly noticeable here is that characteristic pointed out by Guillere, namely, the absence of perspective.

All sense of perspective and of realistic depth is washed away by a nocturnal sea of electric advertising. Far and near, small (in the foreground) and large (in the background), soaring aloft and dying away, racing and circling, bursting and vanishing--these lights tend to abolish all sense of real space, finally melting into a single plane of colored light points and neon lines moving over a surface of black velvet sky.

Headlights on speeding cars, highlights on receding rails, shimmering reflections on the wet pavements--all mirrored in puddles that destroy our sense of direction (which is top? which is bottom?), supplementing the mirage above with a mirage beneath us, and rushing between these two worlds of electric signs, we see then no longer on a single plane, but as a system of theater wings, suspended in the air, through which the night flood of traffic lights is streaming.

Contemporary chaos for Eisenstein, however, was the context in his more pressing search for underlying order. His biggest inspiration, therefore, was his discovery of the Japanese hieroglyphic. On a train ride during the civil war an old man showed him its visual rather than phonetic nature, how combining two signs like mouth and bird produces a totally new image, that is, to sing. Eisenstein saw the essential similarities between the juxtapositions of modern life and several thousand feet of unedited film; he, as artist-scientist, would resolve these juxtapositions by the possibilities of picture writing, to be expressed in his work and his theory of montage.





"Had it not been for Leonardo, Marx, Lenin, Freud and the movies,
I would in all probability have become another Oscar Wilde."---

S. M. Eisenstein

Sergei Eisenstein was nineteen years old in 1917. During the Revolution he was less interested in what was happening around him than in his own intellectual pursuits--Freud, Wilde, Beardsley, Ibsen, and Schopenhauer. His father had sent him to study engineering and architecture at the University in St. Petersburg. One day when he arrived his fellow students had halted classes. While his father was propertyed and joined the Mensheviks, Eisenstein followed his classmates and the Bolsheviks. He later wrote: "The revolutionary tempest...freed me from the inertia of the course I had marked out.... From the front I returned not to Petrograd to complete studies begun but to Moscow to start something entirely new."

In Moscow Eisenstein studied Japanese. His drawing talent and restlessness led him to become a stage designer and assistant director for the Revolutionary Proletcult Workshop. In 1922 he joined Vseleвод Meyerhold's radical "bio-mechanical theater." Eisenstein had long been inspired by Leonardo's application of scientific principles to the ordering of style and it was with Meyerhold that Sergei Mikhailovich first found his own means to a new style, a totally unnatural aesthetic. In direct opposition to emotional and psychological roleplaying by an actor, the bio-mechanical theater "considered the actor as a complex machine composed of many interlocking parts." Meyerhold's theater created no illusion of reality. Acting became a science, the audience became the subject (rather than the viewer), and "plays" became a matter of almost Pavlovian stimulus and response. The bio-mechanical theater eventually became the acrobatic theater in which circus tricks, body contortions, tightropes and trapezes were no less important than verbal communication to the audience. Eisenstein's thoughts consistently moved towards "destroying the hated naturalism of the old Theater."

While working with Meyerhold Eisenstein met Grigori Alexandrov, who became Eisenstein's closest collaborator for Potemkin, October, Old and New and the unfinished Que Viva Mexico!

In 1923, after breaking away from the dictatorial Meyerhold, Eisenstein directed and designed his first major play, The Wise Man. Taken from Ostrovsky's Enough Simplicity in Every Wise Man, Eisenstein's version was a theatrical revolution.

On entering the 'theater' the spectator found himself in what was once a large elaborately decorated ballroom....[The] stage took the form of a small circus arena edged with a red barrier. The audience surrounded three-fourths of the arena....Attached to the ceiling was the high trapeze. Scattered about for easy use were rings, horizontal poles, vaulting horses, slack wire and other instruments used as the contiguous extension of a stage gesture. Thus, the actors, commencing a line of dialogue with relative dramatic formality, ended with a gymnastic twist.

The essence of Eisenstein's theater was obviously its unreality, its anti-naturalism. As in his more famous Gas Masks play of 1923 (which was actually staged in a factory), The Wise Man made no attempt to create an illusion of reality. Actors were objects, not people. The setting was an environment, not a scene. Eisenstein's attitude was "anti-natural, at the opposite pole of the contemporary Dziga-Vertov theory of the kino-eye. Dziga Vertov's idea was that the artist should interfere as little as possible with



Eisenstein's walk-on role in Potemkin

the natural process and use the camera only to observe."

Eisenstein, on the other hand, saw the artist's duty as one of complete control over every element within his work. Naturalistic settings or realistic acting were only two of the tools available to the director. If he chose not to use them (as Eisenstein did) he had available to him the whole world of stylization and artifice.

POTEMKIN

Stylization, then, is the hallmark of all of Eisenstein's films. The most well-known element of his style is his theory of montage, and the most exciting use of montage occurs in his second feature film, Potemkin (1925). Montage means, simply, the manner in which the director orders his shots, the principle that guides him in placing

one shot after another, and in having one scene precede the next. In his first film, Strike (1924) the basis of the montage is shock. Eisenstein juxtaposed the slaughter of a bull with the slaughter of 1,500 workers. While the bull and the workers are not related naturally, their juxtaposition causes the viewer to relate the two shots and to synthesize. Eisenstein's montage theory, derived from the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic, treats two shots as thesis and antithesis. Their interrelationship on the screen creates a synthesis.

Potemkin extended the use of montage into aesthetic complexities much more involved than simple shock treatment. In fact, Eisenstein's development of complex montage technique was due in great part to his interest in the highly conventionalized Japanese calligraphy which he studied when he first went to Moscow. In 1928 he wrote, "the copulation of two hieroglyphs... is to be regarded not as their sum, but as their product... I take photographs of reality and cut them up so as to produce emotions." In Potemkin the varieties of cinematic copulation are almost endless. Potemkin features montage sequences based on shape, composition, and, most importantly, movement. The essential function of the montage is to temporarily destroy "reality" and to replace it with--scientific mythology--art. Time and space are hence distorted at will (as in the unnaturally long Odessa steps scene) and the viewer is taken on a journey that, while it is apparently unreal and unnatural, cannot help but to alter his perception of what is real.

In fact, in 1925 the success of the film was frightening. Marie Seton recalls: "Fearful and frightened film censors cringed before the power of Potemkin, imagining it as the match to set ablaze a world revolution."

The film was originally intended to be only one of eight episodes in a larger project, 1905, which was commissioned to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the 1905 revolution. It instead grew into a feature film. It competed with Vsevolod Pudovkin's Mother, which was commissioned for the same occasion, and the competition was fierce. Eisenstein hated Pudovkin and Pudovkin hated Eisenstein. Eisenstein wrote, "[Pudovkin] loudly defends an understanding of montage as a linkage of pieces.... I confronted him with my viewpoint on montage as collision." Eisenstein's pet dog was named Pudovkin. Pudovkin's was named Eisenstein.

Potemkin opened to unanimous critical acclaim in New York in 1926. Brought to the United States upon the insistence of Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford, who saw it in Moscow, Potemkin appeared to American critics as the herald of a golden age of cinema. The American premier at the Biltmore theater featured seats at five dollars apiece.



OCTOBER

Eisenstein interrupted work on his third film (The General Line) in order to work on a film commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Revolution. He was given the colossal sum of 500,000 rubles to make October (also called Ten Days that Shook the World, after John Reed's book). At the same time and for the same occasion his rival, Pudovkin, was given the commission to make The End of St. Petersburg. Pudovkin later remarked:

I bombarded the Winter Palace from the Aurora while Eisenstein bombarded it from the fortress of St. Peter and Paul. One night I knocked away part of the balustrading of the roof, and was scared I might get into trouble, but luckily enough, that same night Sergei Mikhailovich (Eisenstein) broke 200 windows in private bedrooms.

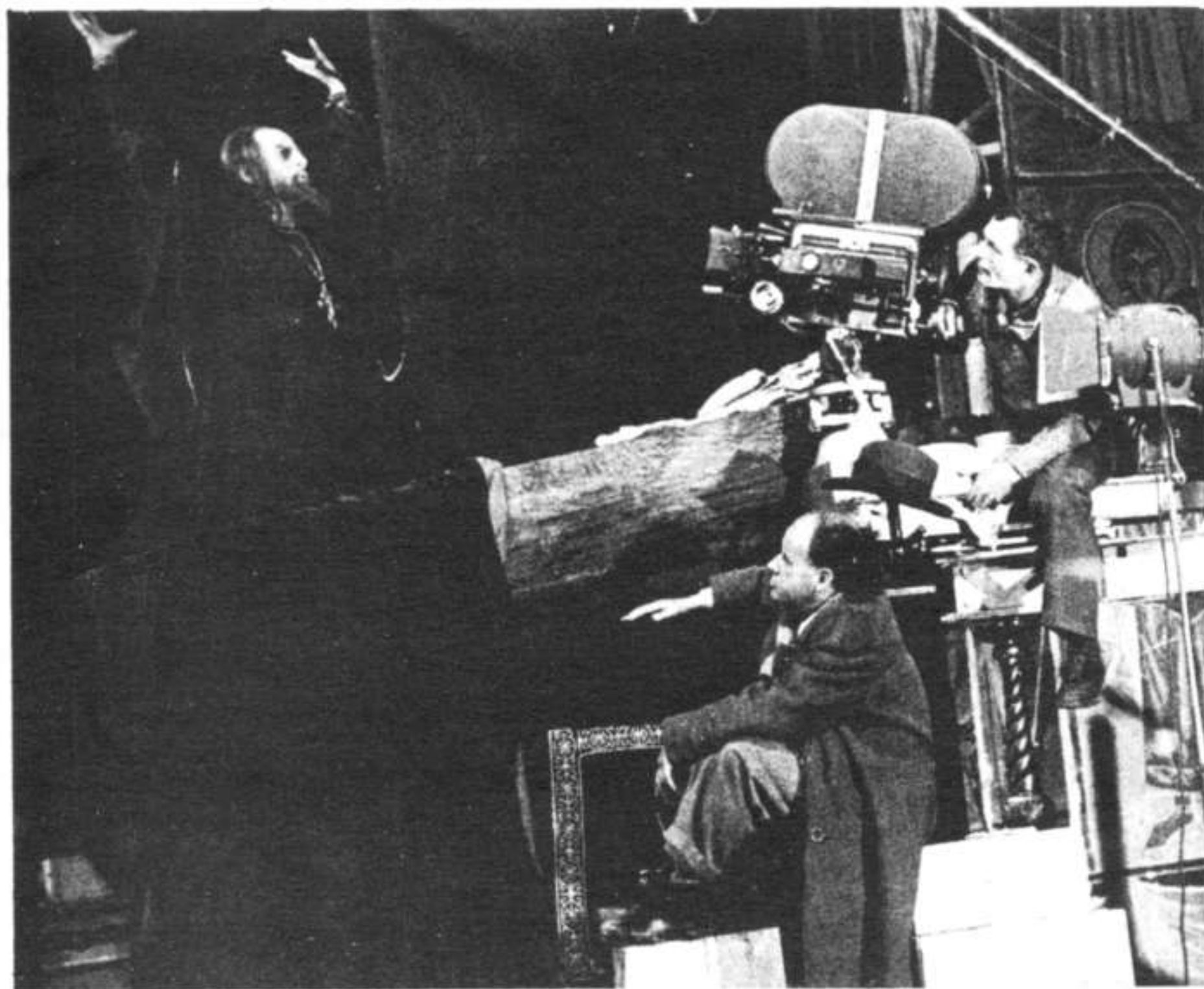
With all of Leningrad at his disposal, Eisenstein rushed through production of October in order to prepare it in time for the gala anniversary celebration. Far more ambitious and broad in scope than Potemkin, October reveals an extension of Eisenstein's early montage theories. While the montage of Potemkin is based on visual principles such as movement or shape, October often employs "associational montage," in which connections between shots are made intellectually by the viewer. Whereas in Potemkin ideas arose directly from the film's visual artifice, the montage of October grafts images onto Eisenstein's preconceived ideas. The contrast of the Odessa steps scene of Potemkin and the scene of Kerensky ascending the steps in October illustrates the shift in Eisenstein's technique from emotional and visual to essentially intellectual montage.

Although October was ready for release in time for the Revolutionary festivities of 1927, it was not actually seen until the next year. After the film was first finished, Trotsky was denounced and Eisenstein had to spend five months editing out shots that

glorified the deposed hero. Pudovkin's The End of St. Petersburg took its place as the cinematic glorification of the revolution.

OLD AND NEW

After the release of October Eisenstein again began work on The General Line. Renamed Old and New the film features the same "associational montage" used in October. Eisenstein considered his new project a great step forward in cinema technique. In fact, the film does contain the seeds of ideas that were to blossom



fully in his later masterpieces, Alexander Nevsky and Ivan the Terrible. For the first time Eisenstein concerned himself with a personality, the peasant, Marfa Lapfina. (Eisenstein, normally interested in the "mass" as hero, would choose his characters off the street as they corresponded to the type he wanted. Hence a street cleaner played the famous ship captain in Potemkin and the director himself played the priest -- Marfa Lapfina was chosen out of 500 others.) The religious procession in Old and New illustrates a theme with which Eisenstein was obsessed and which reappears, in a far more congenial context, in Ivan the Terrible and Alexander Nevsky. It is the theme of religious ecstasy, of mystical exultation, of ceremony and richly bejeweled stylization. His biographer, Marie Seton, says:



As he proceeded with the editing, his state of mind grew more and more receptive to the content of his images until his conscious mind seemed to be overwhelmed by deeper layers of his consciousness. In this stage he seemed to 'hear' and 'feel' the emotional quality of each piece with great intensity so that in effect he edited them in what seemingly amounted to a sensual trance akin to the religious ecstasy portrayed in the sequences.

The "cream separator" sequence in Old and New also demonstrates Eisenstein's concern with creative ecstasy. This section, however, is far more sexual than it is religious--or, at least, the difference is a matter of controversy.

Released in 1929, Old and New was banned in much of Europe. In Russia it was received coolly with the complaint that, unlike Potemkin or even October, it was simply too intellectual. The masses could not understand Eisenstein's highly refined associational or overtone montage. The New York Times said that the film was "a trifle tedious."

EISENSTEIN'S VISIT TO AMERICA

The most tragic and disappointing event of Eisenstein's life was probably his 1930 visit to the United States. Although Sergei Mikhailovich signed a contract with Paramount studios, he never made a film in America. His first problem was publicity. Paramount made him into "the man who has taken Europe by storm and whose pictures today are the subject of world discussion." The man who lived in a small flat in Moscow



**Nikolai Cherkassov as IVAN IV,
Czar of Russia**

was suddenly a "modern genius in the modern world." Eisenstein reacted strongly against the bourgeois adulation he felt thrust upon him and at his exclusive premier press conference in New York he appeared in a rumpled suit and a three day stubble of beard in order to show the press that he was not a modern genius in the modern world, but a Russian. Eisenstein's greatest problem in the United States, however, was Major Frank Pease, an American patriot who made it his personal business to deport the "Bolshevik murderer and robber...sadist and monster." Pease circulated a twenty-four page document throughout the country entitled "Eisenstein, Hollywood's messenger from Hell," describing Sergei Mikhailovich as a "Jewish-Bolshevik vermin." Pease's campaign brought the House Fish Committee (fore-runner of HUAC) to Hollywood and Paramount began to shudder. Under pressure from the Fish Committee, Paramount rejected all of Eisenstein's film ideas, including a screenplay of Dreiser's An American Tragedy. (Just as James Joyce had talked favorably with him about filming *Ulysses*, Dreiser preferred Eisenstein's plans for his own novel over Paramount's thirst for another who-dunit.) Hollywood was happy to see Eisenstein leave for Mexico.

The second most tragic and disappointing event in Eisenstein's life arose out of his visit to Mexico. With the promise of financial support from socialist and Mrs. Upton Sinclair, Eisenstein began 1931. The film was his attempt to depict "the Eter-death." Living close to the he felt, was to be the most of his life. During a period over 200,000 feet of film but the most lavish production on the project. Upton Sinclair-Eisenstein proceeded. He director was simply using and was not seriously present Sinclair the footage and, grew, Sinclair refused to gave the footage to Sol Les- who edited it into a film called Thunder over Mexico (which Sinclair would use to raise money for his own political ambitions) and a short subject entitled Death Day. Later, Sinclair claimed that, "All of his associates were Trotskyites, and all homos...Men of that sort stick together....I had come to realize that Eisenstein was a man without faith or honor...." Sinclair sent a rather shy and well-mannered Southern gentleman to go to Mexico to oversee the director at work; Eisenstein, one of the world's great practical jokers, some of his crew, and local natives dressed as bandits to hold up the train and give Sinclair's man the scare of his life. As Sinclair publicly denounced Eisenstein and as Eisenstein retaliated by addressing packages filled with obscene drawings to Sinclair (which Sinclair had to personally claim at the customs office) Que Viva Mexico died. Eisenstein planned to edit the film when he returned to the Soviet Union, but Sinclair refused to send him the footage, most of which Sergei Mikhailovich himself had never been able to see. From the footage available in the United States, Marie Seton, Eisenstein's close friend and biographer produced Time in the Sun in 1939,



a film much closer to Eisenstein's original concept than Sinclair's spurious Thunder over Mexico.

Of his return to Russia Marie Seton said he "had come to America a young man full of enthusiasm.....but two years had added ten to his appearance."

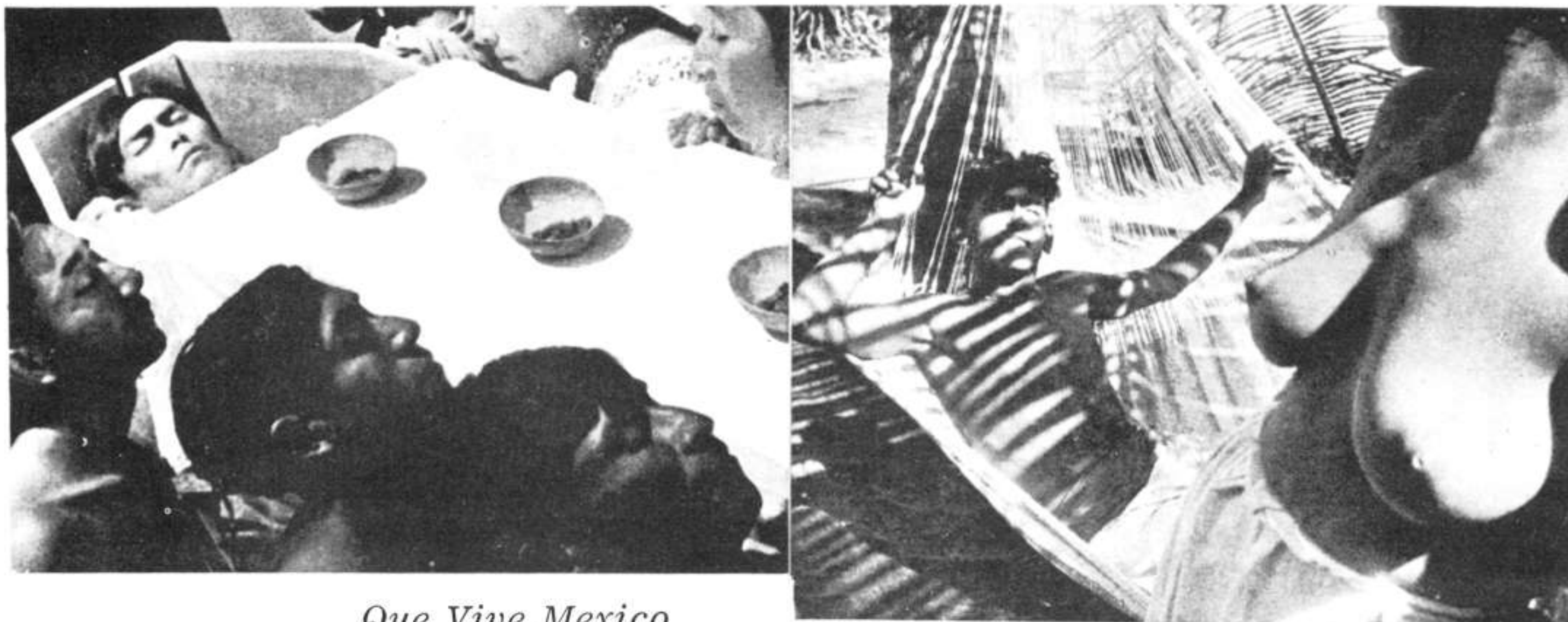
When he returned to the Soviet Union in 1932, Eisenstein found his contemporaries building a new society. He assumed a position teaching at the Moscow Film Institute, continued his personal studies. Soviet officials were anxious for their great director to return to making film, to help celebrate the New Man. Sergei Mikhailovich planned a film that was archetypal from his fondest studies. His scenario called for the study of successive generations of a Moscow family over a four hundred year period.

Titled Moscow, it was rejected.

On January 8, 1935, Sergei Eisenstein was presiding over the convention celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the Soviet film industry. With Strike, Potemkin, October, and Old and New he had personally created a revolution in film history. Now the subject was the master himself. Dovzhenko (Earth, Arsenal) appealed to him, "...for me your production, Sergei Mikhailovich, is a thousand times dearer than all your theories." Pudovkin (Mother, End of St. Petersburg, Storm over Asia) ridiculed his attempt to



It was in Mexico that Eisenstein realized the suspicions which had grown out of the Japanese hieroglyphic and into his revolutionary theory of montage. In directing Que Viva Mexico! he had three peons bury themselves in sand up to their necks. In so doing they unconsciously created a triangular composition. Eisenstein was amazed. Marie Seton recounts how he "no longer felt that his recurring use of the triangular compositional form was his work, his idea; instead he felt himself to be merely the instrumentality of a supernormal consciousness."



Que Vive Mexico

unify scientific thought with myth and fable. Vasiliev urged him to leave his study and participate. Others, Kuleshov, Lebedov, defended him but the consensus was that Eisenstein had become too engrossed with theory, too far removed from the currents of Soviet life.

Eisenstein planned another film, Bezhin Meadow. In it he would, contrary to personal distaste, employ professional actors, celebrate heroes on the collective farm. After the state had spent two million rubles, Boris Shumayatsky, head of the film industry, again called a halt, declaring in Pravda: "Among the personages of the film we find not images of collective farmers, but Biblical and mythological types."

That same year, in late 1935, his fellow and lesser film makers received the Order of Lenin in his presence. Ignored, Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein was held up to world embarrassment.

In 1937, during the purge trials, he was sent to a rest home.

Shumayatsky was right when he accused Eisenstein of creating mythological characters. Sergei Mikhailovich realized that Moscow and Bezhin Meadow grew out of his excessive intellectual interests and were too esoteric for the immediacy of the times. He wrote an apology for his "introspection and isolation" and in 1939 went on to create Alexander Nevsky, for which Stalin is said to have slapped him on the back, saying, "Sergei Mikhailovich, you're a good Bolshevik after all!"

ALEXANDER NEVSKY

Alexander Nevsky was made under the strictest government supervision. Unlike his earlier films, it features professional actors, with Nikolai Cherkassov, Russia's most prominent actor, playing the role of Alexander Nevsky. The harshly anti-German tone of the film is, of course, due to the fact that it was made in 1939 as an effort to rally the Russian people against their traditional Teutonic enemies. Stalin, buying time, had just signed a pact with Hitler. It was Eisenstein's first completed film since Old and New of 1929. In one decade Eisenstein had made the leap from a formalistic intellectual film to a spectacular pageant-opera. Of course, much of this change was due to the government pressure applied during the filming of Alexander Nevsky. Nonetheless, this spectacular is all Eisenstein. Pressured into making a film sure to be a popular success, Eisenstein was still free to use the heavy stylization that seemed so

out of place in a film about collective farming (Old and New). Since Alexander Nevsky is a film about a legend and since it involves monumental historical events, Eisenstein's richly constructed "anti-naturalism" was perfectly suited to the task. In Old and New the theme was commonplace and the heavy style, therefore, seemed out of place. In Alexander Nevsky the pageant-like construction of the film serves to enrich and embroider the legendary subject. It is often argued that Alexander Nevsky, like the later Ivan the Terrible was a sell-out, a submission to the government and a disavowal of Eisenstein's cinematic principles. Such an argument, however, judges the circumstances rather than the film itself.

His first sound film, Alexander Nevsky was a spectacular success in the Soviet Union, earning for Eisenstein the Order of Lenin in 1939. The success of the film was due in no small measure to the musical score, written by Sergei Prokofieff in the closest frame by frame collaboration with Eisenstein. Sound was one more element Eisenstein found useful in the heavy stylization of nearly every scene. The burning of Pskov and the battle on the ice indicate the central importance of Prokofieff's music:

"Prokofieff," Eisenstein wrote, "is a man of the screen in that special sense which makes it possible for the screen to reveal not only the appearances and subjects of objects, but also, and particularly, their special inner structure.... Having grasped this structural secret of all phenomena, he clothes it in the tonal camera-angles of instrumentation, compelling it to gleam with shifts in timbre, and forces the whole inflexible structure to blossom into the emotional fullness of orchestration."

The battle on the ice scene, in which the Teutonic Knights are driven across the cracking ice, is, as the Odessa steps scene in Potemkin, Eisenstein at the height of





*Receiving the Order of Lenin. February, 1939
Eisenstein is second from left, bottom row*

his cinematic brilliance. Filmed on a hot day in July, this "winter scene" features 30,000 square meters of fake ice made from asphalt, water glass, white sand and chalk. The spectacular power of the scene, Eisenstein claimed, was inspired by Milton and the "audio-visual distribution of images in his sound montage.... Paradise Lost itself is a first rate school in which to study montage and audio-visual relationships." And, in fact, aren't the Teutonic Knights simply a paranoiac Russian view of "the banded Powers of Satan hasting on/ With furious expedition."

When Alexander Nevsky was released in the United States in April, 1939, reactions to the propagandistic nature of the film beclouded most reviewers' minds and numbed them to the best aspects of the film. Frank Hoellering in The Nation said "Alexander Nevsky is primitive patriotic propaganda - we are good, the enemy is bad." While it is, of course, true that Alexander Nevsky oversimplifies the issues to the point of unreality, it is not true that moral oversimplifications makes it a bad movie. Othello is certainly no worse a play because Iago is totally (and unrealistically) evil. Eisenstein's oversimplification of character and morality in Alexander Nevsky (and later in Ivan the Terrible) is a means of stylization perfectly suited to the depiction of an historical-mythological legend. Made "realistically" or "naturally" Alexander Nevsky would have been the story of a man. Stylized, conventionalized, made into something much heavier and more ceremonial than real life, Alexander Nevsky became the story of a legend. It is as unreal as Homer's Odysseus. Eisenstein's words about Ivan the Terrible are equally true for Alexander Nevsky:

In him we wished chiefly to convey a sense of majesty, and this led us to adopt majestic forms. Frequently the dialogue is accompanied by music and choral singing intermingles with it.... Irrelevant details in the characters of other personages are ignored, while their principle features are drawn in bold relief. Because of this.... some of the characters may seem one-sided. But they must be taken together as a whole in their general relationship to the cause for which Ivan [or Alexander Nevsky] stands.

They cannot be taken separately, just as the part of one instrument cannot be singled out in judging a whole complex orchestrated score.

IVAN THE TERRIBLE

Ivan the Terrible, Eisenstein's most monumental film project, was made during the second world war, when Russia was in desperate need of domestic propaganda. It was filmed at the Mosfilm studios in Alma-Ata because of the Nazi approach to Moscow. In addition to Nikolai Cherkassov as Ivan, the film features, in the part of Nikolai the Great Simpleton, Vselvod Pudovkin. Originally planned as two films, the movie was broken into three parts when "The Boyars' Plot," originally just a single episode in Part two, grew to feature length. The filming of the first two parts overlapped and, in fact, much of the Prologue in Part two (Ivan's childhood) was originally at the beginning of Part one. Eisenstein died before completing Part three.

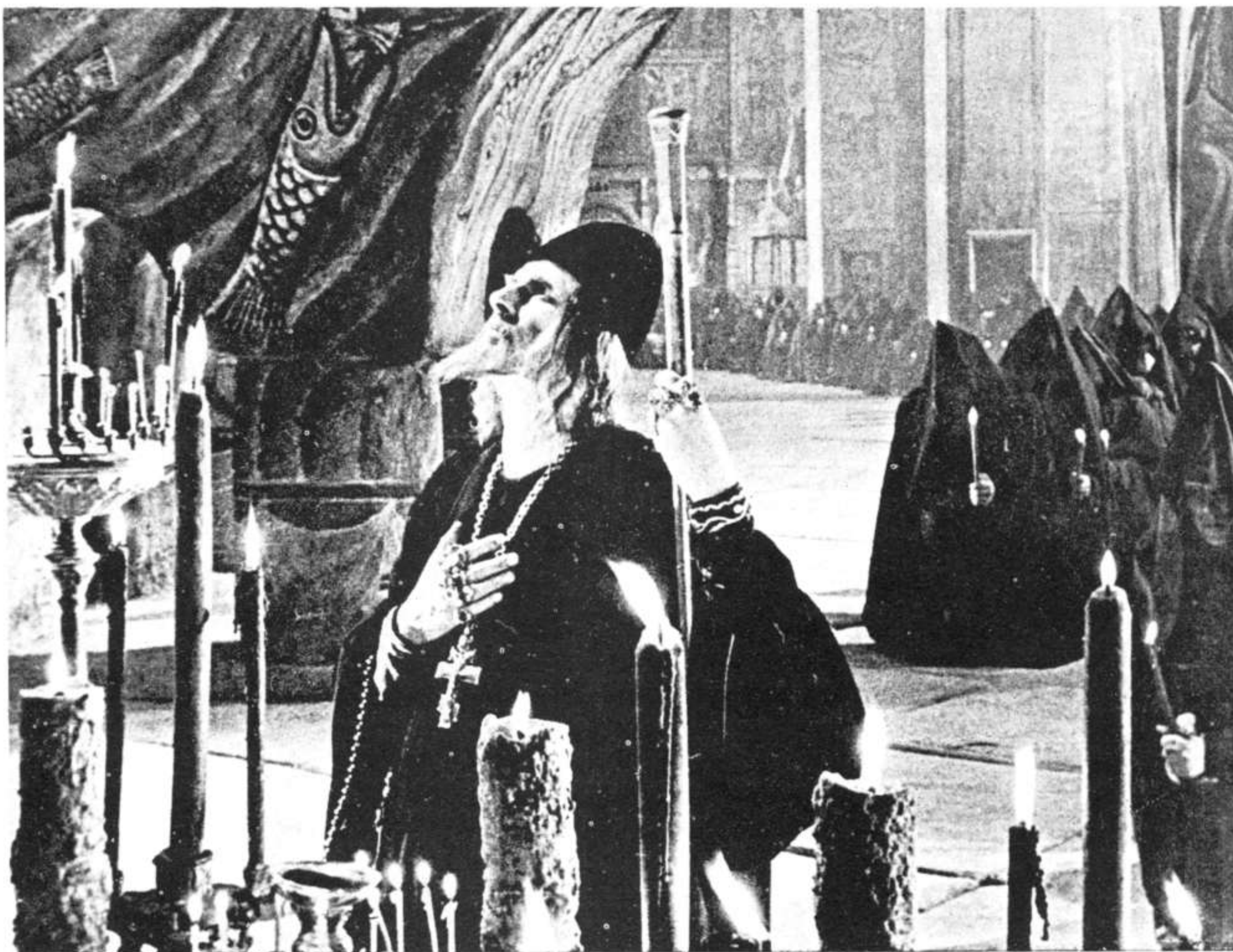
Eisenstein spent over five years working on Ivan the Terrible, after which he died of a heart attack and his star, Nikolai Cherkassov suffered a temporary mental and physical breakdown. Just as Eisenstein and Cherkassov worked excruciatingly hard creating Ivan the Terrible, it is an excruciating movie to watch. Every composition, every gesture, every word and note of music contains the awesome tension of a huge spring about to snap shut. The synchronized awkwardness of gesture and forced unnaturalness of speech that gives Ivan the Terrible such a heavily perverse air seems to have brought Eisenstein back full circle to the bio-mechanical theater of his youth. The characters in Ivan the Terrible are human machines rather than human beings. Expression comes through body contortions and archaic speech, through shadows and bizarre sounds, through decoration, artifice and exquisite ceremony. The awesomeness of Ivan the Terrible results from its totally externalized and hence almost inhuman expression. Psychological "understanding" or internal comprehension and its consequent naturalism, so hateful to the young Eisenstein of the 1920's, had been purged almost completely from his last film.

Of course, such an approach to films had to be misunderstood. Since bad acting and highly stylized acting have so much in common (they are both unnatural), they are often viewed as interchangeable. Shirley O'Hara of the New Republic wrote in 1947, "Why Eisenstein chose to have his many good characterizations ruined by demoded primitive acting that combines the weighty drama of early opera with the first rushes of The Great Train Robbery is hard to understand." It is hard to understand only if good acting must be naturalistic acting, or if good



art must be naturalistic art. Eisenstein's films, from Strike to Ivan the Terrible are the record of a director who believed that the essence of art was style, not "reality."

Eisenstein imposed his own aesthetic order upon life, creating out of chaos a stylistic order and balance. At its worst, such an aesthetic seems an interesting but rather irrelevant intellectual exercise. At its best, Eisenstein's anti-natural stylization blossoms into a world of ornament and ceremony, heavy with incense and dazzling in its awesome splendor. Eisenstein's art is a journey from "life" into another world, the ordered world of style and artifice.



AN EISENSTEIN FILMOGRAPHY

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1924 | STRIKE Scenario by Valeri Pletnyov, Eisenstein and the Proletcult workshop.
Photographed by E. Tisse. Directed by Eisenstein. |
| 1925 | POTEMKIN Scenario by Eisenstein. Photographed by E. Tisse. Directed by
Eisenstein, assisted by G. Alexandrov. |
| 1928 | OCTOBER Scenario by Eisenstein and G. Alexandrov. Photography by E. Tisse.
Directed by Eisenstein. |
| 1929 | OLD AND NEW Scenario and direction by Eisenstein and G. Alexandrov.
Photographed by E. Tissee. |
| 1938 | ALEXANDER NEVSKY Scenario by Eisenstein and Piotry Pavlenko. Directed
by Eisenstein. Photographed by E. Tisse. Music by Sergei Prokofieff. Lyrics
by V. Lugovsky. Settings and costumes from Eisenstein's sketches.

The Stars: Prince Alexander Yaroslavich Nevsky Nikolai Cherkassov
Vasili Buslai Nikolai Oklopkov
Gavrilo Olexich Alexander Abrikosov
Olga Vera Ivasheva
Von Balk, Grand Master of the
Livonian Order Vladimir Yershov
The Bishop Lev Fenin |
| 1944 | IVAN THE TERRIBLE, part 1 Scenario and direction by Eisenstein. Photo-
graphed by E. Tisse and A. Moskvina. Music by Sergei Prokofieff. Lyrics by
V. Lugovsky. Settings and costumes from Eisenstein's sketches.

The Stars: Ivan IV Nikolai Cherkassov
Anastasia Ludmila Tzelikovskaya
Boyarina Staritzkaya Seraphima Birman
Vladimir Andreyevich Piotr Kadochnikov
Prince Andrei Kurbsky M. Nazvanov
Prince Fyodor Kolychov Alexander Abrikosov
Archbishop Pimen. A. Mgebrov
Nikola, the fanatic Vselevod Pudovkin
Malyuta Skuratov Mikhail Zharov
Alexei Basmanov Alexei Buchma
Fyodor, his son Mikhail Kuznetsov |
| 1948 | IVAN THE TERRIBLE, part 2 (see credits for part 1) |



	SHOT I		SHOT II		SHOT III		SHOT IV		SHOT V		SHOT VI		SHOT VII		SHOT VIII	
PICTURE FRAMES																
MUSIC PHRASES	A		B		A		B		C		A ₁		B ₁			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
MUSIC																
LENGTH (in measures)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7/8	1/8	1	3/4	3/4	1/2	7/8	1/8	1/2
	2		2		2		1 7/8		1 1/8		1 1/2		1 3/8		1 1/8	
DIAGRAM OF PICTORIAL COMPOSITION																
DIAGRAM OF MOVEMENT																

Alexander Nevsky

Compiled by
Michael Stern and
Phil Balla