

University of Pittsburgh
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Russian 2638: Lumière to Lenin, Russian and Soviet Cinema 1896-1934
Spring Semester 2009
Wednesdays 2:30—6:25
CL 242

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Office Hours: Mondays 10:00—11:00, Tuesdays 11:00—12:00, Thursdays 10:00—11:00,
and by appointment

I. REQUIRED TEXTS:

Leyda, Jay. *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*. 3d ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1983.

Stites, Richard. *Russian popular culture: Entertainment and society since 1900*. NY: Cambridge UP, 1992.

Taylor, Richard and Ian Christie, eds. *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents, 1896-1939*. Trans. Richard Taylor. London and NY: Routledge, 1994.

Tsivian, Yuri. *Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception*. Trans. Alan Bodger with a Forward by Tom Gunning. Ed. Richard Taylor. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.

photocopies of articles by Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Vertov (to be distributed in class)

II. BIBLIOGRAPHY ON RUSSO-SOVIET CINEMA:

Bibliographic information (crudely divided by subject, time period, and specific cultural producer) on the history of Russo-Soviet cinema can be located on the web:

http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/cinema_biblio.html

The list requires up-dating, reformatting, and maintenance. All suggestions for additions/changes to the list are welcome. Please provide me with specific bibliographic information.

Many of the texts in the bibliography are available in the University of Pittsburgh's Hillman Library. All suggestions for adding materials to the collection are welcome. Please fill out a library order form and submit it to me for immediate processing. The library will try to expedite all orders.

In addition to checking PittCat for catalog numbers for videos and DVDs, students should consult the list of all Russian/NIS and Central and Eastern European Films available in Hillman Library at:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/>

III. READING, VIEWING, and WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

The Schedule of Assignments provides an itemization of reading, viewing, and writing assignments for the entire semester. All such assignments must be completed prior to the next scheduled meeting of the course. Since students will receive a number of grades for each meeting of the course (preparation, participation, and quality of written work), students are encouraged not to attend any session for which they have not thoroughly prepared.

Reading assignments: students are required to purchase the course texts listed above. Photocopies of articles will be distributed in class the week before the assigned reading is due. Any student not present in class when photocopied materials are distributed must obtain a copy of the materials from another student before the next scheduled meeting of the class.

Viewing assignments: students are required to view all assigned films prior to the next meeting of the class. Students should arrange a convenient time and location for the assigned viewings, and are encouraged to view the films as a group. Students are responsible for sharing all materials in a way that allows each student to view the assigned films. The instructor will provide video- or dvd-copies of the films assigned for out-of-class viewing. All videos and dvds must be returned to the instructor no later than the following meeting of the class.

Writing assignments: students must submit all writing assignments on the date due. All assignments (except for the final research paper) must be submitted in a sufficient number of copies for each member of the course. Double-sided printing is not acceptable for submission. With the exception of the final research paper (see below), all writing assignments should be limited to one or two printed pages maximum. There are three types of writing assignments for the course:

(i) continuity summary assignments: each meeting of the course will begin with a brief (maximum 15 minute) summary of the major points covered during the preceding session. Students will provide the continuity summary by rotation. A handout that itemizes and clarifies each of the major points must accompany the summaries. Students will receive separate grades for the continuity summary and the handout.

(ii) viewing assignment summary: immediately following the continuity summary, each meeting of the course will examine the film(s) assigned for viewing within the context of the social, historical, and cinematic matrices elaborated in class. This examination will take the form of a student presentation and a classroom discussion monitored by the student (approximately 30 minutes). Students assigned to handle the viewing assignment summary that week are required to prepare classroom handouts on the film(s): socio-historical data, information on production and reception, bio-filmographies, etc. Students will receive separate grades for the viewing assignment presentation and the handout.

(iii) research paper assignments: students must submit an abstract (maximum two printed paragraphs) of their proposed research paper on Wednesday 4 February to every member of the class. All students (as well as the instructor) must comment on and make suggestions concerning the abstract. Students must submit a revised version of the abstract together with a preliminary list of relevant works on Wednesday 25 February; an annotated bio-filmography on Wednesday 18 March; an outline of the research paper with a finalized list of relevant works on Wednesday 1 April; and a final research paper on Wednesday 15 April.

IV. Absence and Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Absence due to personal illness, as well as illness or death in the family, must be documented. Absent students are required to obtain all in-class handouts and class notes for the session they missed from another student in the class; all missing assignments must be made up. All unexcused absences will receive a grade of "UA" for that session. Three such unexcused absences will result in an "F" for the course.

V. Quizzes:

There will be a number of unannounced quizzes during the semester on assigned readings, screenings, and material covered in the course. No quizzes will be re-scheduled and no make-up quizzes will be given.

VI. Research Paper:

All students must submit a final research paper (20-30 pages) on Wednesday, 15 April 2009. Topics for the research paper must be discussed with the instructor before beginning work on the project. Since the first writing assignment is due on Wednesday 4 February, students are encouraged to begin work immediately in choosing and researching a topic. All research papers must conform in layout, documentation, and works cited to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition).

VII. Evaluation and Grades:

Grades will be calculated using the following percentages: final research paper (30%), preparation and participation (15%), continuity summary assignments (10% and 5%), viewing assignment summaries (20% and 5%), and research paper assignments (15%). Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor periodically to review their grades and progress in the course.

VIII. Schedule of Assignments:

week 1: Wednesday 7 January 2009:

Moving Images and Movable Capital (1896-1908)

Introduction, syllabus, and schedule of assignments

screenings: (Lumière Cinématographe): *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat* (1896)
(Lumière Cinématographe): Coronation footage of Tsar Nikolai II (1896)
(Lumière Cinématographe): *Tverskaia Street* (1897)
(Lumière Cinématographe): *Oil Wells of Baku: Close-Up* (1897)
(Pathé Frères): *Moscow Clad in Snow* (1908)
(Pathé Frères): *A Fish Factory in Astrakhan. Picturesque Russia* (1908)
Vladimir Romashkov: *Sten'ka Razin* (1908)

reading assignments for week 2: Wednesday 14 January:

Leyda 17-53; Stites 9-36; Taylor 19-31; Tsivian 1-48.

viewing assignments:

Vladimir Siversen: *Drama in a Gypsy Camp* (1908)
Vasilii Goncharov: *Rusalka* (1910)
Kai Hansen and André Maître: *Princess Tarakanova* (1910)

week 2: Wednesday 14 January 2009:

The Rise of Studios: The Domestic Market and Foreign Investment (1909-1914)

screenings: Vasilii Goncharov: *A 16th Century Russian Wedding* (1909)
Petr Chardynin: *The Queen of Spades* (1910)
Iakov Protazanov: *The Departure of a Great Old Man* (1912)
Wladislaw Starewicz: *The Ant and the Grasshopper* (1912)
Wladislaw Starewicz: *The Cameraman's Revenge* (1912)
Evgenii Bauer: *A Child of the Big City* (1913)

reading assignments for week 3: Wednesday 21 January:

Leyda 55-110; Taylor 33-43; Tsivian 49-65.

viewing assignments:

Evgenii Bauer: *Twilight of a Woman's Soul* (1913)
Evgenii Bauer: *A Life for a Life* (1916)

week 3: Wednesday 21 January 2009:

The Collapse of Empire and the Rise of Melodrama (1914-1917)

screenings: Iakov Protazanov: *The Queen of Spades* (1916)
Evgenii Bauer: *For Luck* (1917)

reading assignments for week 4: Wednesday 28 January:

Leyda 111-154; Taylor 45-49; Tsivian 78-121.

viewing assignments:

Iakov Protazanov: *Father Sergius* (1917)
Galina Dolmatovskaia: *Ivan Mosjoukine, or the Carnival Child* (1999)

week 4: Wednesday 28 January 2009:

The Search for a Russian Hollywood and the Exodus of the Film Industry (1917-1919)

screenings: Evgenii Bauer: *The Revolutionary* (1917)
Georgii Azagarov (?) and Aleksandr Volkov (?): *Behind the Screen* (1917)
The Funeral of Vera Kholodnaia (1919)

reading assignments for week 5: Wednesday 4 February:

Leyda 155-169; Taylor 50-79; Tsivian 125-161.

viewing assignment:

Lev Kuleshov: *By the Law* (1926)

week 5: Wednesday 4 February 2009:

War Communism, the New Economic Policy, and the Search for a Film Language (1919-1924)

screenings: Lev Kuleshov: *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924)

reading assignments for week 6: Wednesday 11 February:

Leyda 170-191; Stites 37-63; Taylor 81-120; Tsivian 162-213.

writing assignment:

One-page abstract of research paper.

viewing assignment:

Iakov Protazanov: *Aelita* (1924)

week 6: Wednesday 11 February 2009:

Lenin's Death and the Return of the Bourgeois Social Comedy (1924)

screenings: Iurii Zheliabuzhskii: *The Cigarette Girl from MOSSELPROM*, 1924.

reading assignments for week 7: Wednesday 18 February:

Eisenstein handout; Leyda 193-221; Taylor 121-156.

viewing assignments:

Sergei Eisenstein: *Battleship Potemkin* (1925/1926)

Sergei Eisenstein: *October* (1928)

[Sergei Eisenstein: *The Old and the New* (1929)]

week 7: Wednesday 18 February 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: The Implementation of a Soviet Montage Theory (1925-1926)

screenings: Sergei Eisenstein: *Strike* (1925)

reading assignments for week 8: Wednesday 25 February:

Pudovkin handout; Leyda 222-244; Taylor 157-190.

viewing assignments:

Vsevolod Pudovkin and Nikolai Shpikovskii: *Chess Fever* (1925)

Vsevolod Pudovkin: *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927)

Vsevolod Pudovkin: *Storm Over Asia* [*The Heir of Genghis Khan*] (1929)

week 8: Wednesday 25 February 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: Plasticity of Shape and Meaning (1926-1927)

screenings: Vsevolod Pudovkin: *Mother* (1926)

reading assignments for week 9: Wednesday 4 March:

Stites 64-97.

writing assignment:

Revised abstract of research paper and list of works.

viewing assignments:

Boris Barnet: *Girl With a Hat-Box* (1927)

Sergei Komarov: *Mary Pickford's Kiss* (1927)

week 9: Wednesday 4 March 2009:

Bourgeois Comedy and Social Satire: The Retreat from the Present (1927)

screenings: Abram Room: *Bed and Sofa* (1927)

reading assignments for week 10: Wednesday 18 March:

Taylor 191-246.

viewing assignment:

Dziga Vertov: *Kino-Eye* (1924)

Monday 9 March — Sunday 15 March 2009: **SPRING BREAK**

week 10: Wednesday 18 March 2009:

Let History Speak: The Documentary and Compilation Film (1927-1929)

screenings: Esfir Shub: *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* (1927)

reading assignments for week 11: Wednesday 25 March:

Leyda 245-276; Taylor 247-282.

writing assignment:

Annotated filmography for research paper.

viewing assignment:

Grigorii Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg: *SVD* (1927)

[Grigorii Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg: *Alone* (1931)]

week 11: Wednesday 25 March 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: The Return to the *Balagan* (1929)

screenings: Grigorii Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg: *New Babylon* (1929)

reading assignments for week 12: Wednesday 1 April:

Vertov handout.

viewing assignments:

Dziga Vertov: *Enthusiasm* (1930)

Mikhail Kalatozov: *Salt for Svanetia* (1930)

week 12: Wednesday 1 April 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: The Infallible Eye (1929-1930)

screenings: Dziga Vertov: *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929)

reading assignments for week 13: Wednesday 8 April:

Leyda 277-300; Taylor 283-313.

writing assignment:

Two-page outline of research paper and revised list of works.

viewing assignments:

Aleksandr Dovzhenko: *Zvenigora* (1928)

Aleksandr Dovzhenko: *Arsenal* (1929)

week 13: Wednesday 8 April 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: Pantheistic Mechanics (1930)

screenings: Aleksandr Dovzhenko: *Earth* (1930)

reading assignments for week 14: Wednesday 15 April:

Leyda 301-340; Taylor 315-325.

week 14: Wednesday 15 April 2009:

Soviet Expressive Realism: Sound Montage and the Rise of the Talkie (1931-1933)

screenings: Boris Barnet: *Outskirts* (1933)

writing assignment:

Research paper due.

viewing assignment for week 15: Wednesday 22 April:

Nikolai Ekk: *The Road to Life* (1931)

week 15: Wednesday 22 April 2009:

The Emergence of the Cult of Stalin: Soviet Socialist Realism (1934)

screenings: Sergei and Georgii Vasil'ev: *Chapaev* (1934)