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Devin Fore

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Dziga Vertov's The Eleventh Year*

Kristin Romberg

*Labor Demonstrations: Aleksei Gan,
Dziga Vertov, and the
Rationalization of Artistic Labor*

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Memory: Diego Rivera's Moscow
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Diego Rivera

Moscow Sketchbook

Leah Dickerman

*Introduction to Jere Abbott's
Russian Diary, 1927–1928*

Jere Abbott

Russian Diary, 1927–1928

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Back cover: Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in 1930.

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The Metabiotic State: Dziga Vertov's *The Eleventh Year**

DEVIN FORE

One of the most important units within Dziga Vertov's conceptual system is the lexeme that means BOND. It recurs throughout his writings, most often appearing as the noun *sviaz'* although sometimes it also surfaces as the verb *sviazat'* ("to link"). Occasionally it is alloyed with a second lexeme to forge strange and unprecedented compounds, as in Vertov's definition of "kino-eye" as a "film-bond [*kino-sviaz'*] between the peoples of the USSR and those of the entire world."¹ Such insistence on film's status as a visual link, or copula, explains why Vertov, in contrast to contemporaries like Lev Kuleshov, looked askance at proposals to establish a formal ontology for the medium: Itself neither matter nor substance, cinema was instead a constructive means for connecting and binding substances, a means for catalyzing interactions between diverse and seemingly incommensurate objects.² Thus, for Vertov, cinema was less an art form with clearly defined generic contours than "a kind of central telephonic exchange,"³ a means of communication, a coefficient of political activity, or even, in its greatest compass, a "social movement" itself ("Metod kino-glaza," *Iz naslediia*, 2:142).

By connecting workers scattered around the globe, the bonds forged in cinema redressed capitalism's baleful fragmentation of experience and galvanized

* My gratitude to Michael Kunichika for his generous and exacting engagement with an earlier draft of this text. Thanks also to Boris Gasparov and Harsha Ram for helpful comments in response to the talk upon which it is based.

1. Dziga Vertov, "Kinokam iuga," in *Iz naslediia*, ed. A. S. Deriabin and D. V. Kruzhkova, 2 vols. (Moscow: Eizenshtein tsentr, 2008), 2:92. Hereinafter referenced in text as *Iz naslediia* followed by volume and page number.

2. It is true that in his earliest published statement on cinema, "WE. Variant of a Manifesto" from 1922, Vertov uses the neologism *kinochestvo* ("cinema specificity") to invoke the formal-ontological attributes of cinema, but within a year he has already abandoned this term, which will never again appear in his writings. "MY. Variant manifesta," *Iz naslediia*, 2:15.

3. I take this phrase from Henri Bergson's *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 1991), p. 30. As Gilles Deleuze points out, Bergson's system of "universal variation" and "universal interaction (*modulation*)" anticipates Vertov's "first assemblage": "The materialist Vertov realises the materialist programme of the first chapter of *Matter and Memory* through the cinema." And further: "The originality of the Vertovian theory of the interval is that it no longer marks a gap which is carved out, a distancing between two consecutive images but, on the contrary, a correlation between two images which are distant." *Cinema I. The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 81–82.

isolated individuals into a single perceptual collectivity that was no longer balkanized by nationalist ideology, regional identitarianisms, or (as was typical to claim about silent cinema in those years) the boundaries of linguistic community. Take one of Vertov's most famous statements about film from 1925, which celebrates the medium's ability to demonstrate incontrovertibly the worker's connection to other workers and, through this empirical proof, to transform the individual's experience of isolation and remoteness into one of mutuality and recognition:

The textile worker ought to see the factory worker while the latter is building the machine that is essential to the textile worker. The factory worker ought to see the miner who gives his factory its essential fuel, coal. The miner ought to see the peasant who produces the bread essential to him. All workers ought to see one another so that a close, indestructible bond [*sviaz*] can be established among them. ("Radio-glaz," *Iz nasledia*, 2:97)

The goal for Vertov was to produce through cinema what Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge later designated a "counter public-sphere," a coherent context of living in which those aspects of concrete, everyday existence that had been de-realized and rendered unintelligible under the rule of bourgeois rationalism could once again be made comprehensible and communicable, and, through this reconfiguration of empirical experience, to establish the foundation for "solidarity that can be grasped with the senses."⁴

For Vertov, the enterprise of linking together diverse peoples had a particular pertinence, if not urgency, within the Soviet Union, a massive multiethnic empire divided internally by extremes of sociocultural difference and by the seemingly insurmountable obstacles imposed by geography itself. In the film *One Sixth of the World* (1926), a "race" (*probeg*) to each of the corners of Russia, Vertov documented the traditional labor practices of the country's minority cultures, connecting the work performed in these distant, seemingly marginal locales to the factory sites of the industrial proletariat. All Soviet workers, irrespective of language, ethnicity, or social habitus, contribute to a single collectivity of production, the film insists. One of its promotional booklets, written for an urban audience, rhapsodized: "Was this not a miracle! You shave every other day, you go to the theater, you ride on a bus—you stand at the other end of the cultural ladder—and *One Sixth of the World* has somehow managed distinctly and indisputably to link [*sviazat*] you with these people eating raw meat in the North. It is almost like a phantasmagoria."⁵

4. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience. Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyi et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 38.

5. Izmail Urazov, "A Sixth Part of the World," in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian (Pordenone: Le Giornate del cinema muto, 2004), pp. 185–86.

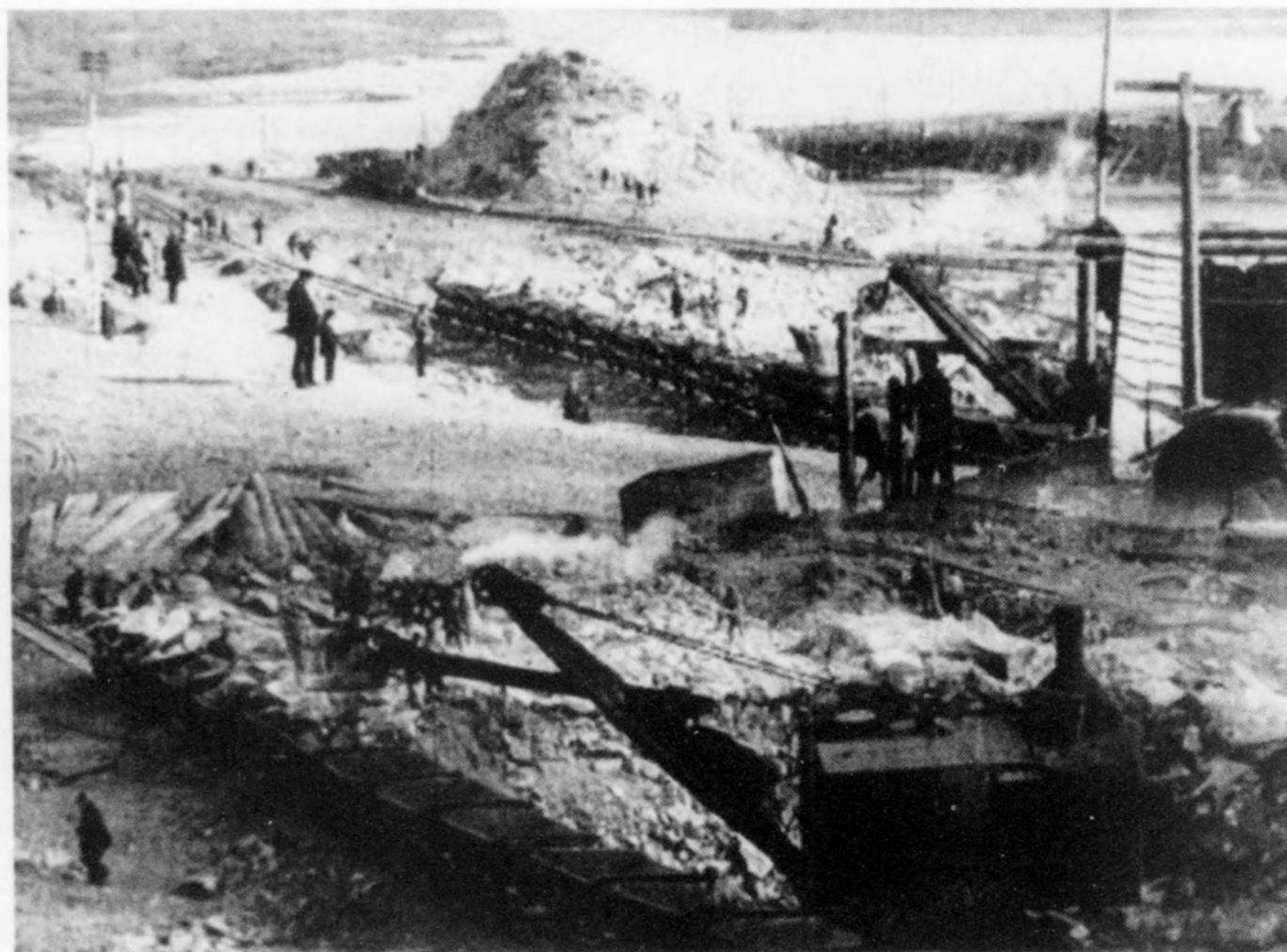
Ultimately, as *One Sixth* shows, these phantasmagoric couplings of near and far extend beyond even the boundaries of the Soviet Union. The film, which was contracted by the State Trade Commission (*Gostorg*) to advertise the Soviet Union to potential foreign-trade partners, begins and ends with sequences that embed the Soviet economy in the import-export cycles of international trade. Emerging out of an ever-expanding meshwork of economic bonds, the global trade system depicted in the film explodes the very condition of locality as such. Indeed, for all of the interest and attention that *One Sixth* shows towards the diverse lifestyles of Russia's minority peoples, in the end, the film utterly confounds the spectator's sense of ethnographic and geographic specificity. Rather than anchoring his film in any fixed location, Vertov instead vaults from location to location, tracing the vectors of movement in which commodities, materials, and capital circulate—on the backs of camels and in the hulls of ships, from the fur trade of the Somoeds to the exchange markets in Milan. Within this continuous—although hardly homogenous—economic network, there are no static positions or values.

With good reason, then, Vertov's exegetes have claimed that his films break apart the static grid of Euclidean space, freeing these coordinates for rearrangement into new sensory and perspectival configurations. Paul Virilio's influential reading in *War and Cinema*, for example, links Vertov's work to contemporaneous aerial photography and concludes that his films project an isometric field in which there is "no longer an above or below, no longer any visual polarity." Thrust into this "abstract zone" of perception, the spectator is left, Virilio writes, without any certain sense of the values of proximity and distance, without any fixed "sensory point of reference."⁶

Analyses such as Virilio's are entirely correct, of course. But in attending exclusively to the eccentric, and at times ecstatic, spatial construction of Vertov's work, they overlook a second, even more primary aspect of his films, namely, the importance that they place on time and succession. The 1925 statement about *Kino-Eye*, quoted above, is indicative. While the film-bond posited there indeed transcends space by connecting industrial workers at the urban centers with miners underground and farmers at the rural periphery, Vertov's example also follows the work-collective through a very specific sequence of operations: The peasant produces bread; this bread feeds the miner; the miner then produces coal; the coal, in turn, fuels the factory plant; and the worker in the factory plant builds the machine that is used, finally, by the textile worker to make fabrics. In this way, the visual bonds linking the textile worker to the peasant via the factory worker and the miner thus represent more than just a leap across space. They also provide a glance back in time that concatenates individual acts of labor in a kind of reverse-motion sequence.

Those signature flections of time for which Vertov's work is so famous—the arrested image, the analytic use of slow motion, the interpolation of the temporal

6. Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Verso, 1989), pp. 18, 15.

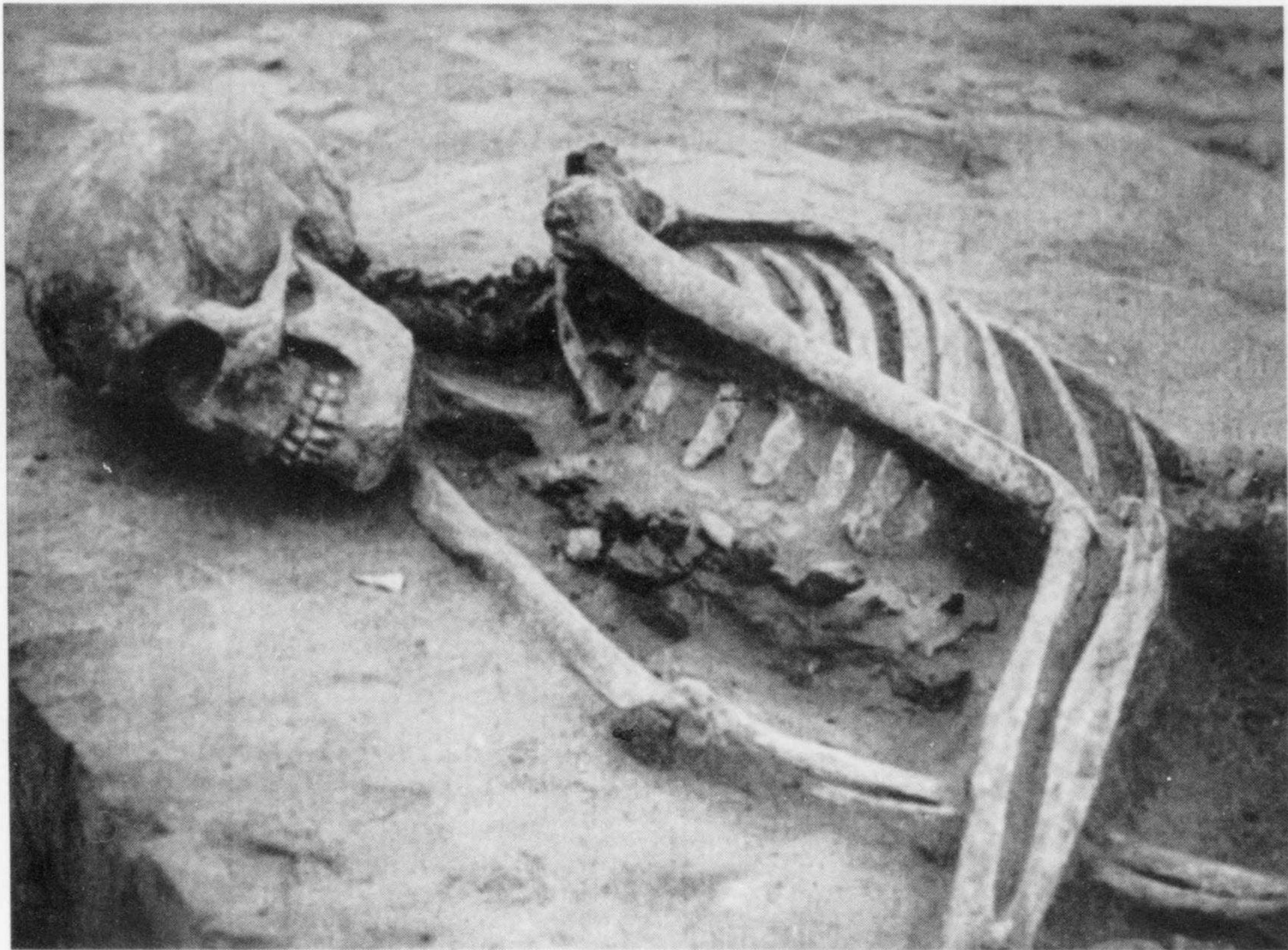


Dziga Vertov. The Eleventh Year. 1928.

interval, and the strategy of reverse motion that Annette Michelson has compared with the rhetorical device of *hysteron proteron*⁷—all seek to demonstrate that the dimension of time cannot be reduced to a simple linear scheme, but is instead a heterogeneous and fundamentally plastic field of investigation. This field was the explicit subject of the next work Vertov would make after *One Sixth of the World*, the film *The Eleventh Year* from 1928. The titles of these pendant works, the first of which refers to geographical units and the second to chronometric ones, announce the two respective modalities of human experience—space and time—which each film takes as its subject: If *One Sixth* is, in the words of one astute commentator, Vertov's "spatially most ambitious film,"⁸ then *The Eleventh Year* is certainly his temporally most ambitious one. An experiment in historical dialectics, *The Eleventh Year* brings together two seemingly unconnected and infinitely distant moments in time: On the one hand, the construction of the world's largest hydroelectric station on the Dniepr River in the Ukraine, and, on the other, the excavation of a pair of two-thousand-year-old Scythian skeletons recently discovered at the site of the industrial enterprise. Vertov's notes for the film describe a

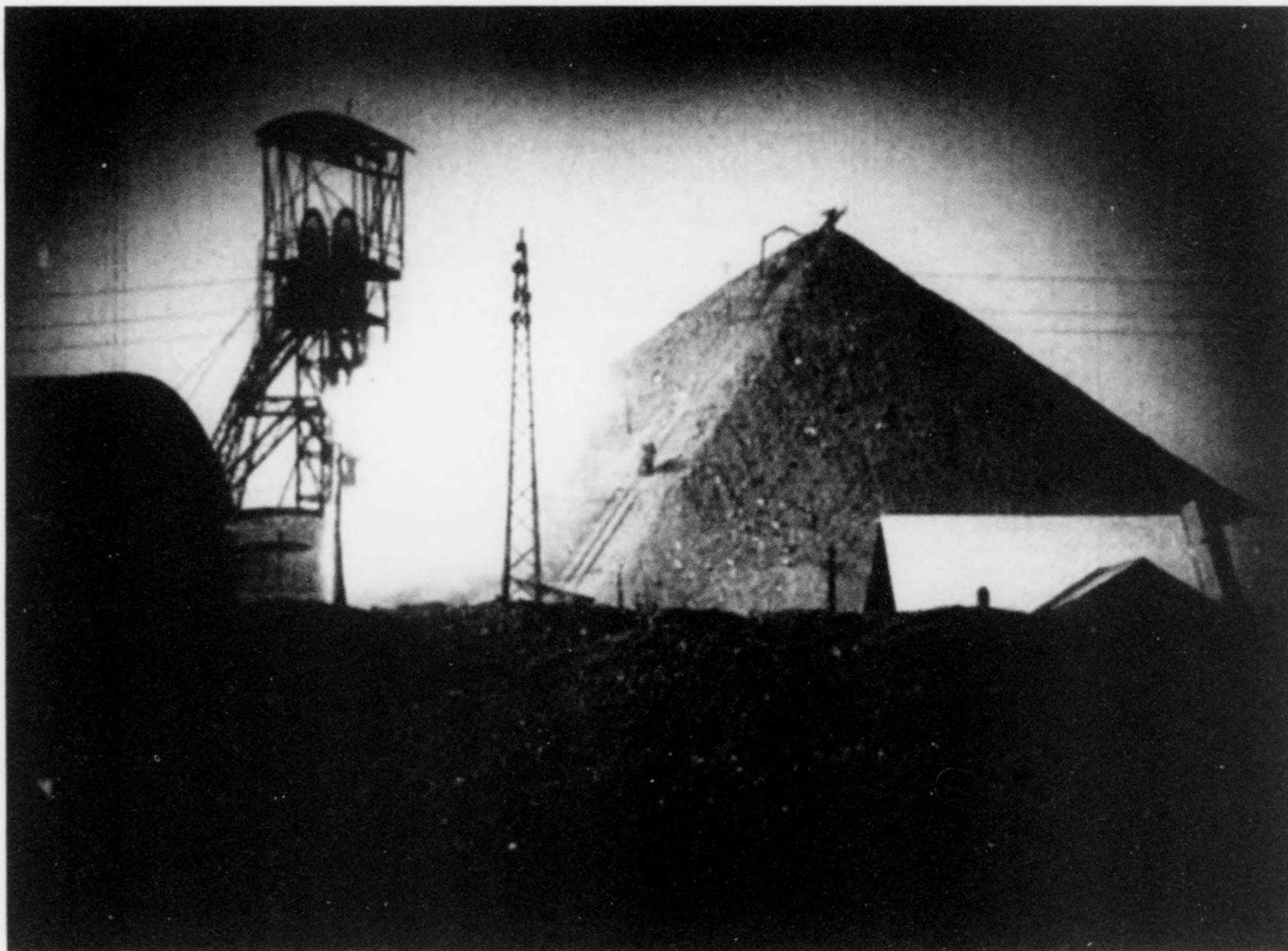
7. Annette Michelson, "From Magician to Epistemologist. Vertov's *The Man With a Movie Camera*," in *The Essential Cinema. Essays on Films in the Collection of Anthology Film Archives*, ed. P. Adams Sitney (New York: New York University Press, 1975), pp. 95–111.

8. Oksana Sarkisova, "Across One Sixth of the World: Dziga Vertov, Travel Cinema, and Soviet Patriotism," *October* 121 (Summer 2007), p. 20.

Vertov. *The Eleventh Year*. 1928.

project driven conceptually and visually by the friction generated through the unlikely juxtaposition of these two moments, the tension between the silent “Scythian in the grave and the din made by the onset of the new life” (“‘Odinnadtsatyi’ (otryvki iz s’emochnogo dnevnika),” *Iz naslediiia*, 2:140). After a series of dynamite blasts liberate the skeletons from their static earthly tomb, ushering in the eventfulness of world history, time begins to course and circulate around these remains like the water that will soon flood the territory above the dam. In this case kino-eye now “means the conquest of time—a visual bond [*sviaz*] between phenomena that are temporally remote from one another” (“Chto takoe Kino-glaz,” *Iz naslediiia*, 2:160). The bonds of mutualism and interest posited by *The Eleventh Year* extend backward beyond the brief four-term labor sequence *textile worker* > *tool worker* > *miner* > *peasant* considered above, beyond the moment when the Bolsheviks seized tsarist Russia’s machine capital in 1917, beyond even the annals of written human record, reaching back into the deep time of the archaic and the mythical.

One possible reading of *The Eleventh Year* takes the film’s confrontation between the archaic remnants of the Scythians and Soviet industrial modernity as



Vertov. The Eleventh Year. 1928.

an occasion to stage the symbolic triumph of the latter over the former. From this perspective, the primitive nomads are exhumed by Vertov only in order to be put again to rest—definitively this time. Such an interpretation situates Vertov within a chorus of avant-garde voices whose enthusiasm for industrialization took the form of an aggressively liquidationist policy toward Russia's premodern past. Whereas after the French Revolution, the newly established bourgeois class began to dress in togas, build in a neoclassical idiom, and generally revive the cultural precedents of antiquity, the society inaugurated by the October Revolution was, by contrast, aggressively futurist in orientation. Seduced by the rhetoric of supersession and the vision of a Russia modernized according to the Western model, many of the revolutionaries took up their historical teleologies and, denouncing Russia's uneven development, proclaimed a radical break with the country's backward past.

And yet all too frequently *The Eleventh Year* contradicts this narrative of progress, instead suggesting that the past cannot ever be fully inhumed, indeed, that the path forward may at times even necessitate recursive maneuvers. As the film moves forward, the archaic and the modern, seemingly so distinct at its beginning, begin to reverse polarity and, in a physiognomic exchange of properties, come to resemble one another. By the film's midpoint, the Dniepr construction site, for example, has assumed the appearance of an ancient pyramid. Such visual



Vertov. The Eleventh Year. 1928.

allochronisms suggest that historical progress is not always as consistently linear and universal, and that the course of technological development not as uniformly remainderless, as the liquidationists might want to assume.

In addition to the dam-pyramid and other pseudomorphic likenesses that the film uses to connect “phenomena that are temporally remote from one another,” there are three specific devices, more sophisticated in their application, through which Vertov complicates the simple unidirectional scheme of history. First is superimposition, a visual strategy found in a number of Vertov’s films but deployed with particular philosophical acuity in *The Eleventh Year*. In this film Vertov layers incommensurate elements upon one another—peasant houses, igneous rock formations, a bust of Lenin—without attributing anteriority to any one of them. At once a reference both to a primordial, antediluvian state and to the flood that will soon inundate the basin after the dam’s construction, the recurring image of water, for example, indexes the region’s past and its future



*Vertov. The
Eleventh Year.
1928.*

simultaneously. Instead of serving as transitions to other sequences in the manner of a cinematic dissolve, these superimpositions often emerge and then disappear within a single shot, thereby eluding linear resolution. This visual device, writes Christian Metz, "resides in the (momentary, fleeting) co-presence of two images on screen, in the short instant when they become indistinguishable (see the 'collective figures' which Freud mentions apropos of condensation)." As a result of this convergence, the images presented in *The Eleventh Year* hover in a logically impossible state of simultaneity that more closely resembles the paratactic structure of the dream than the linear concatenations of causal thought. What is so striking about the figural condensations produced through such superimposition, Metz also notes, is that they have no origin, no punctual beginning, since their very point of departure is itself somehow already vestigial. "It appears as an incipient condensation, unusual in that the beginning is more like something residual, something which has always been residual."⁹ In the superimposition, inception is therefore paradoxically suffused with the remainder of what came before, with what was disavowed and left behind. The very antithesis of what Metz elsewhere calls cinematic "punctuation," these spectral images suggest that, even at the level of visual syntax, Vertov's film thwarts attempts to take apart any given sequence into its constituent elements. *The Eleventh Year* is organized around "movements and not 'units.'"¹⁰ Thus, in contrast to Eisenstein, whose understanding of cinematic signification, at least until *The General Line* (1929),¹¹ remained faithful to linguistic models of meaning that defined the shot as a discrete and semantically isolable element¹² and who consequently approached montage as a fundamentally linear and sequential process, Vertov, who preferred superimposition to supersession, dissolved the individual units into a single passage of movement, foreclosing

9. Christian Metz, "Crossings and Interweavings in Film: the Lap-Dissolve as an Example of Figuration," in *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, trans. Ben Brewster et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 276.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 275. John MacKay has pointed out that the visual syntax of *The Eleventh Year* is based not on the repetition of specific imagery but on the recurrence of the camera movements themselves. Through the patterned regularity of certain pans and contouring shots, Vertov organizes the film around a recognizable vocabulary of motion. Thus it is movement and process, rather than the contents of the shots themselves, that constitute the semantic backbone of Vertov's film. MacKay dubs this technique "energetic montage": "In one sequence in the film's final reel, two forward tracking shots of two women pushing a cart full of ore or coal are juxtaposed, first, with the image of a giant crane tracking forward (of its own will!) in rhyme with the women's motion, and then with a contrasting vertically constructed image of a worker climbing a ladder amid pounding factory machinery. Plainly enough, the logic of the sequence, which continues with the image of the crane as leitmotif, suggests that the disparate things represented in these images are part of a single circuit of energy . . ." "Film Energy: Process and Metanarrative in Dziga Vertov's *The Eleventh Year*," *October* 121 (Summer 2007), p. 65.

11. *The General Line* was the first film in which Eisenstein began to supercharge the shot to striking visual and semantic effect. Devin Fore, "Jenseits der Einstellung, hinter der Szene. Eisenstein's *Generallinie*," in *Synchronisierung der Künste*, ed. Robin Curtis, Gertrud Koch, and Marc Siegel (Munich: Fink, 2013), pp. 41-72.

12. See Peter Wollen's still unsurpassed study *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969).

the possibility of parsing the final result into distinct elements. The results are formally and semantically much messier, of course, since Vertov's images rarely denote as univocally as Eisenstein's ideograms. For base materialists like Vertov, as for documentarists in general, this ideological multivalence was a common political liability in the 1920s.

A second device used in *The Eleventh Year* to capture the compound temporality of the archaic-modern is the vertical articulation of the image into what Yuri Tsivian has designated "tiers of space."¹³ These layered images invoke the visual idiom of the stratigraph, a form of natural record familiar from geological display.¹⁴ In the deep cycles of time prospected by Vertov, in which human labor and natural history are interlocked in ceaseless metabolic exchange, the archaeology of industry merges indistinguishably with the archive of geological time that is inscribed in the earth's crust. Often, the layers in the striated arrangement presented by Vertov offer the same view, although, importantly, they capture this excerpt of space at different temporal moments. In this way, they present a cross-section of time and history. For example, in one image that is particularly supersaturated visually, a bustling crowd processes from left to right, with each band of figures moving at a different speed; in all three of the layers, however, a stationary group of Red Army soldiers remains a consistent anchor of reference, demonstrat-

13. Tsivian, *Lines of Resistance*, p. 312.

14. Vertov's stratification of the screen seemed also to stem in part from a personal aversion to shots of wide horizons: The "horizontal panorama" is "unacceptable" and "nauseating," he declared early on in his career. "O s'emke siuzhetov kinokhroniki," *Iz naslediiia*, 2:22.



Vertov. *The Eleventh Year*. 1928.



Vertov. The Eleventh Year. 1928.

ing to the spectator that the overwhelming visual chaos on the screen is in fact just a single event that has been refracted through two temporal dislocations. If the event appears to the viewer as multiple, if all he perceives is a random congeries of bodies, this is only because he has failed to discern the underlying continuity and order linking these moments together. Vertov thereby trains the spectator's eye upon the islands of identity, invariance, and continuity that endure within the Heraclitean river of history, a river whose currents had been gaining speed in Russia since 1917.

In addition to these two visual devices, Vertov's compositional method itself vexes notions of linear supersession through an archival poetics based on the preservation and reactivation of documents. The repetition of shots within his individual films, for example, confounds the distinction between beginning and conclusion. In a text on *Man With a Movie Camera*, Noël Burch observes that "often the logic of successive significations moves backwards, denying our usual sense of chronology, and even more often it will take us along an axis which is no longer syntagmatic, but paradigmatic of the film's very production (frozen frames, photograms, editing scenes,

shooting scenes, screening of the film before an audience).¹⁵ And if such violations of chronological exposition can be found within Vertov's individual films, these paradigmatic structures are even more evident at the level of his oeuvre generally. Although he never adhered as rigorously to the principle of compilation filmmaking as Esfir Shub, Vertov nonetheless insisted on using identical footage in a number of different works, establishing an intertextual axis of associations that cuts across the composition of each individual film. The snarling, taxidermied dog from *One Sixth of the World*, for example, reappears at the beginning of *Man with a Movie Camera*, where, situated now among an array of dormant commodities that will soon spring to life, it assumes a different, more volatile countenance. For Vertov, who began his career as an editor of newsreels, the task of a director was not to create title-bearing, feature-length, scenario-based pictures with a beginning, middle, and end: Even into the late 1930s, he would describe the essence of filmmaking as a "continuous editing process" and a "continuous production process" ("Ob organizatsii tvorcheskoi laboratorii. Predlozhenie avtora-rezhissera D. Vertova," *Iz naslediia*, 2:308, 310) that linked together an entire host of paradigmatically interconnected works. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, archival reconstruction suggests that *The Eleventh Year*, a film about the reanimation of cultural vestiges, was itself assembled out of the material remains of the two larger projects that flanked it chronologically, *One Sixth of the World* (1926) and *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929).¹⁶ What is more, *The Eleventh Year's* open chain of re-signification does not terminate even within Vertov's own body of work: Entire shot sequences from the film, including an ending that was until recently considered lost or destroyed, resurface in Albrecht Blum's appropriation, the compilation film entitled *In the Shadow of the Machine* (1928).¹⁷

Vertov's insistent pluralization of time in a film about Soviet modernization addresses the complex temporality of Russia's nonsynchronous development. As Lenin once observed, when the Bolsheviks seized power, there were, astonishingly, no fewer than five distinct and fully elaborated modes of production, ranging from the Asiatic and primitive communist to the feudal and advanced capitalist, all of which could be found operating simultaneously in the Russian economy. In contrast to the situation in Western Europe and America, where capitalism had largely succeeded in dissolving and integrating each region's specific cultural, social, and technical infrastructures, resulting in a single unified and frictionless plane of exchange, in Russia, premodern archaisms could still be found operating alongside state-of-the-art industrial technologies. Each of these distinctive modes of production was, moreover, underwritten at the level of subjective experience by a distinct noetic framework for understanding time and causality, for, as we know from the paleoanthropologist

15. Noël Burch, "Film's Institutional Mode of Representation and the Soviet Response," *October* 11 (Winter 1979), p. 94.

16. MacKay writes that *The Eleventh Year* "was an apparently 'secondary' project shot and produced amid the larger productions of *One Sixth of the World* and *Man with a Movie Camera*." "Film Energy," p. 42.

17. Adelheid Heftberger and Aleksandr Deriabin, "Auf den Spuren des Materials," in *Shestaia chast' mira / Odinnadtsatyi* (Vienna: Österreichisches Filmmuseum, 2009).

André Leroi-Gourhan¹⁸ and his commentators such as Bernard Stiegler,¹⁹ every technical mode produces not just a particular genus of material object (e.g., artisanal, industrial, etc.) but an entire mental architecture of time as well, an intuitive explanatory scheme that organizes the temporality of human endeavor and dictates the logic by which individual acts of productive labor are translated into collective history. After the Bolsheviks assumed power over the Russian economy, in other words, they were confronted by five distinct histories and five collective pasts that, despite their mutual incompatibility, coexisted alongside one another in paradoxical simultaneity. Capitalist countries in the West may have an unpredictable future, as the risk sociologists of modernity have claimed,²⁰ but Russia, to recall the adage, is by contrast a “country with an unpredictable past” (*strana s nepredskazuemym proshlym*). Given the crooked course of Russia’s uneven development and its resulting surfeit of histories, one can never be certain at any given moment which of these multifarious pasts, once activated, will capture and commandeer the country’s present.

Confronted by this paradoxical coincidence of archaic and modern modes of production, Leon Trotsky conceded that “the development of Russia is characterized first of all by backwardness.” But Trotsky also recognized that it would be a grave strategic mistake to measure this development against that of advanced capitalist countries, as if Russia were compelled to evolve through the same clear sequence of stages:

Historical backwardness does not, however, signify a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, with merely a delay of one or two centuries. It engenders an entirely new “combined” social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into the relations of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating a peculiar interrelationship of classes.²¹

Examples of such technical nonsynchronicities can be found throughout the history of Russia’s uneven development, whether in the twin-cylinder steam engine made of unassuming organic materials such as bark and leather that appeared in the Urals two full decades before the officially recognized invention of this machine by James Watt in the United Kingdom,²² or in the constructivist Karl Ioganson’s discovery of the engineering principle of tensegrity 25 years before the

18. See especially “Memory and Rhythms,” in André Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, trans. Anna Bostock Berger (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1993), pp. 219–68.

19. Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time*, trans. Richard Beardsworth, George Collins, and Stephen Barker, 3 vols. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998–2011), especially volume 1.

20. Anthony Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage, 1992).

21. Leon Trotsky, “Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution,” in *Writings of Leon Trotsky*, ed. Naomi Allen, 13 vols. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), 12:56.

22. Viktor Vasil’evich Danilevskii, *Ruskaia tekhnika* (Leningrad: Gazetno-zhurnal’noe i knizhnoe izd-vo, 1948), pp. 9–10. The appearance of the steam engine in Britain would, of course, trigger the Industrial Revolution in the West.

emergence of the physical materials that would allow for its practical application.²³ Such curious anachronic ensembles, which Russia turned out at a furious pace in the early twentieth century, exemplify what Bruno Latour has identified as the “polytemporality” of the quasi-object, an admixture of archaicism and modernity that explodes conceptions of universal time as an irreversible arrow.²⁴ Historical contexts in which the outmoded and the modern, the artisanal and the mechanical, are allowed to intermingle turn out to be the most generative and fecund laboratories for scientific invention and political revolution. For this reason, the persistence of the archaic within the industrial mode of production is not simply a symptom of historical delay or a developmental retardation to be overcome, since this “combined” formation, as Trotsky puts it, is “entirely new.” Phrased more axiomatically: Combined formation is *the very condition* for the emergence of the new. It constitutes what Trotsky called “the *privilege* of historic backwardness [*zapozdalosti*].”²⁵ Under the conditions of belatedness and nonsynchronicity such as were found in Russia, it in fact “becomes easier for critical thought to find revolutionary expression,” he wrote.²⁶ For similar reasons, Étienne Balibar would conclude from his analysis of the Bolshevik experiment that “periods of [revolutionary] transition are therefore characterized by the *coexistence* of several modes of production, as well as by . . . forms of non-correspondence.”²⁷

23. Maria Gough, “In the Laboratory of Constructivism,” in *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 61–100.

24. For Latour, cases of “backward” peoples combining techno-industrial constructions with pre-modern artifacts are not an exception to, but the very exemplification of, the practice of scientific invention. Such assemblages “are seen as mixing up different periods, ontologies or genres. . . . Instead of a fine laminary flow, we will most often get a turbulent flow of whirlpools and rapids. Time becomes reversible instead of irreversible.” *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 73. “Let us suppose,” he continues, “that we are going to regroup the contemporary elements along a spiral rather than a line. We do have a future and a past, but the future takes the form of a circle expanding in all directions, and the past is not surpassed but revisited, repeated, surrounded, protected, recombined, reinterpreted and reshuffled. . . . Such a temporality does not oblige us to use the labels ‘archaic’ or ‘advanced,’ since every cohort of contemporary elements may bring together elements from all times. In such a framework, our actions are recognized at last as polytemporal” (75). Within this condition of polytemporality, Latour concludes, the moderns’ fantasy of the revolution as a radical break with the past is theoretically untenable, if not politically regressive.

25. Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, trans. Max Eastman (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2008), p. 4; italics added. He continues: “The laws of history have nothing in common with a pedantic schematism. . . . From the universal law of unevenness thus derives another law which, for want of a better name, we may call the law of *combined development*—by which we mean a drawing together of the different stages of the journey, a combining of separate steps, an amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forms” (5).

26. Leon Trotsky, “For the Internationalist Perspective,” in *Leon Trotsky Speaks* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), p. 242.

27. Étienne Balibar, “Elements for a Theory of Transition,” in *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 2009), pp. 343–44. Balibar’s analysis of technical nonsynchronicity within the mode of production also provides a useful framework through which to address the avant-garde’s dialectic of de- and re-skilling, a process that causes the recrudescence of artisanal craft practices within the very methods of industrial manufacture: “Thus manufacture is not only a continuation of handicrafts from the point of view of the nature of its productive forces, it also presupposes the persistence of handicrafts in certain branches of production and even causes handicrafts to develop alongside itself.”

Based on the Russian case, Trotsky's analysis thus anticipates an intractable historical reality that would trouble Marxist thought repeatedly over the course of the twentieth century: The fact that, contrary to the deterministic narrative about the inevitability of revolutionary transition in the most advanced industrial countries, socialist movements have, at least initially, been most successful in precisely those countries where mixed modes of production prevailed, where backwardness and "combined" social systems could be harnessed as resources for revolutionary transformation. Accordingly it would be a strategic error to dismiss Russia's uneven development as a delay or setback to revolutionary activity, since archaicism and the multiplicity of pasts are not obstacles to social transformation but its very agents. It turns out, then, that the revenant cultural and ethnotechnical practices that Lenin once designated as "survivals" offer a preview, an "anticipation," of what is to come. Far from jeopardizing the revolutionary project, Althusser observes, such archaicisms actually secure its future: "The new society produced by the revolution may *ensure the survival, that is the reactivation of older elements* through both the forms of its new superstructures and specific (national and international) 'circumstances.'"²⁸

The convergence in *The Eleventh Year* of archaicism and futurity spawns a whole series of interpretive paradoxes that cannot be easily resolved, resulting in a work that is profoundly *overdetermined* in the psychoanalytic sense. This term was defined by Freud as the lamination, within a single image, of a number of thoughts or meanings that are often irreconcilable, and even antagonistic, with one another. More recently, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have argued that overdetermination is the very hermeneutic mode of the nonsynchronous, of historical unevenness: "The ability of the work of art to hold incompatible models in suspension without deciding is the key to art's anachronic quality," they write.²⁹ Such incompatible models proliferate within *The Eleventh Year*—pyramid and hydroelectric dam, Scythian and proletariat, necropolis and factory, hieroglyph and cinema—adulterating linear universal history with the anachronic time of Russia's combined development.³⁰ The

28. Louis Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination," in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1990), p. 116. "Just as at the dawn of Human History the first stammerings of the Oriental Spirit . . . already betrayed the unconscious presage of the future achievements of the Absolute Spirit, so in each instant of Time the past survives in the form of a memory of what it has been; that is, as the whispered promise of its present. That is why *the past is never opaque or an obstacle*" (115). On the "survival" as "anticipation," Althusser writes: "The term 'survival' is constantly invoked [by Lenin], but it is still virtually uninvestigated, not in *its name* (it has one!), but in *its concept*. The concept it deserves (and has fairly won) must be more than a vague Hegelianism such as 'supersession'—the *maintenance-of-what-has-been-negated-in-its-very-negation* (that is, the negation of the negation). If we return to Hegel for a second we see that the survival of the past as a 'superseded' (*aufgehoben*) is simply reduced to the modality of a *memory*, which, furthermore, is merely the inverse of (that is, the same thing as) an *anticipation*" (114).

29. Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2010), p. 18. My thanks to Hal Foster for emphasizing the importance of this book for any understanding of revolutionary obstinacy.

30. The centrality that Althusserians have given to the phenomenon of overdetermination grew out of the insight that this surfeit of meaning, this hermeneutic surplus, itself reflected the revolutionary condition of nonsynchronicity that, for Vertov as for Lenin and Trotsky, distinguished Russia's staggered path of modernization: "The overdetermination of a contradiction is the reflection in it of its conditions of existence within the complex whole, that is, of the other contradictions in the complex whole, in other words its uneven development." Ben Brewster, "Overdetermination," in *Reading Capital*, p. 353.

visual devices of superimposition and stratification and the poetological program of re-signification were, again, three means for Vertov to achieve this semantic supersaturation in his films. The only way to begin to decipher the impossibly dense and overdetermined network of meanings that results, Burch counsels, is to watch the film multiple times.³¹ And even then, multiple viewings will never secure any definitive or exhaustive interpretation; to the contrary, they will instead uncover even more axes of interpretive determination.

The semantic overdetermination of *The Eleventh Year* reflects a defining hermeneutic characteristic of early Soviet culture. Against the prevailing tendency today to view revolutionary art as culturally univocal, institutionally monolithic, and semantically stable—in other words: to view it as simple propaganda—*The Eleventh Year* suggests that the exact opposite was the case, that the work produced at this historical moment cannot be reduced to any single ideological scheme. It is symptomatic that when Viktor Shklovsky sat down in 1923 to compose the preface to his book *Knight's Move*, an anthology of occasional criticism written during the civil war, he found it impossible to summarize the diverse contents of the volume he had himself just written. In this case, though, the problem was not his inconsistency as a thinker, as one might suspect of this notoriously idiosyncratic writer. Rather, as he argued in the preface, the dynamic culture of the revolutionary period could not be reconciled with a single perspective or reduced to a common principle:

Some say—in Russia people are dying in the street; in Russia people are eating, or are capable of eating, human flesh . . .

Others say—in Russia the universities are functioning; in Russia the theaters are full.

You choose for yourself what to believe.

But why choose? It's all true.

—In Russia there's also something else [*est i to drugoe*]

—In Russia everything is so contradictory [*protivorechivo*] that we have all become sharp-witted against our wills and desires [*ostroumny ne po svoei voli i zhelaniiu*].³²

At the beginning of the passage, it seems that Shklovsky is referencing the

31. Noel Burch, "Film's Institutional Mode of Representation," p. 94. Burch observes about *Man with a Movie Camera*: "One may safely say that there is not a single shot in this entire film whose place in the editing scheme is not overdetermined by a whole set of intertwined chains of signification" (94).

32. Viktor Shklovsky, *Khod konia. Sbornik statei* (Berlin: Gelikon, 1923), p. 10. *Knight's Move*, trans. Richard Sheldon (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005), p. 4. Translation modified.

ineluctable fact of material necessity during the civil war and struggling to understand the place of culture during this desperate historical moment. And yet, by the end, it is clear that his subject is instead a certain hermeneutic paradox that faces the critic in periods of revolutionary transition: How does one summarize the culture of a country that, on the one hand, has devolved into an apocalyptic landscape peopled by cannibals, but that is, at the same time, politically the most advanced civilization on the earth? Was this barbarism or utopia? "It's all true," he replies. This is the condition of overdetermination writ large. Contradiction and sharp-wittedness, meaning in excess of authorial intentionality, become unavoidable facts at historical moments of radical social upheaval, Shklovsky points out: Whatever is said, there is inevitably always "something else" contained within the utterance, an additional set of meanings that express a second version of reality that is equally valid. Thus, even when sincerity is desired in interpersonal relations, at moments of cultural overdetermination it is necessarily irony that comes out of one's mouth; likewise, political action may demand resolution and univocity, but in times of revolutionary transition it is instead amphiboly that becomes the rule.³³

This quality of contradiction, exemplified in the work of Vertov, is a feature that distinguishes the production of the early Soviet avant-garde from contemporaneous artistic formations in the West, where industrial modernization and mass culture had uniformly distributed a standard repertoire of artistic strategies ranging from the readymade to the monochrome, and where the critical distinction between progressive and regressive aesthetic practices was, consequently, unambiguous. In Russia, by contrast, where one finds virtually all modes of production working simultaneously, the demarcation of anticipation from survival and of progress from regress was hardly as clear. There are numerous examples beyond the work of Vertov, of course: Take the sculpture of Tatlin, which is deeply archaic, even Aristotelian, in its elementarist approach to what he called the "culture of material,"³⁴ but which is at the same time uncompromisingly modern in its functionalist understanding of technical construction; or Malevich's remorselessly rationalist demystification of the painterly support in *Black Square*, where rigorous adherence to the principle of the deductive structure results in an autotelic visual tautology—albeit a tautology that the artist chose to exhibit in the place reserved

33. It is hardly surprising, then, that this period, with its heightened sensitivity to semantic contradiction and internal otherness of language, would eventually produce such philosophically and linguistically nuanced theories of heteroglossia: see Valentin Voloshinov's discussion of *chuzhaia rech'* ("alien speech" or "speech of the other") in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); and Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259–422.

34. For Tatlin, the use of each specific artistic material followed a fixed repertoire of forms: just as wood always appears as a geometric plane, metal always assumes the shape of cylinder or cone, while glass, in turn, constitutes a transition between inner and outer space. Margit Rowell, "Vladimir Tatlin: Form/Faktura," *October* 7 (Winter 1978), pp. 93–94.

for sacred Orthodox icons and that he expounded theoretically using the language of metaphysical transcendence. Like Tatlin's elementarist functionalism and Malevich's immanentist metaphysics, Vertov's archaic modernism reflects a certain hermeneutic excess within revolutionary society that outstrips the capacity of critics to circumscribe the cultural object within clearly defined theoretical categories.³⁵ Witness today the plurality of different, and often mutually incompatible, scholarly narratives about the art and literature of this period. Far from indicating a laxity of thought or the ambivalence of the fellow-traveler, this duplexity of revolutionary culture is, to the contrary, the very essence of what George Herbert Mead in 1930 called "sociality," a condition of overdetermination that he deemed necessary for the historical emergence of the new: "The social character of the universe we find in the situation in which the novel event is in both the old order and the new which its advent heralds. Sociality is the capacity of being several things at once."³⁶ It is a capacity, Mead also notes, that increases at moments of accelerated historical evolution and revolutionary transition, when the individual is called upon to navigate and simultaneously inhabit multiple and often conflicting identities defined by social systems ranging from culture to economy, polity to ecosystem, labor collective to family.³⁷

All of this would change with Stalinization, of course. By 1927, when Vertov was at work on *The Eleventh Year*, the systematic refeudalization of Soviet society was already under way, its overdetermined culture subjected to the violence of monologization (a process soon to be consecrated in the Socialist Realist tenet of *ideinost'*, or ideological univocity) and its mode of production, once multiplex and uneven, flattened in favor of heavy industrial manufacture (Stalin's assumed name being taken from the Russian word for steel, *stal'*). Whereas in the years of the New Economic Policy the Bolsheviks had promoted a compound mode of production under the rubric of an "alliance" (*smychka*) between the proletariat and the peasantry, beginning in 1928, the Party began forcing the peasant class to submit to the first Five-Year Plan's one-sided apotheosis of industrial labor. This abrogation of the "alliance" was a direct corollary to Stalin's policy of Socialism in One

35. T. J. Clark has likewise stated that aesthetic modernism, in its most powerful instantiations, sought to achieve an explosive condition of overdetermination through a kind of "forcing" of opposites—a "continual extremism" that collapses together contrasting terms such as structure and infantilism, transparency and sensuous immediacy, uniformity and randomness, order and contingency: the "point is that modernism was always on the lookout for the moment, or practice, to which both descriptions apply." "Modernism, Postmodernism and Steam," *October* 100 (Spring 2002), p. 165.

36. George Herbert Mead, "The Social Nature of the Present," in *The Philosophy of the Present* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2002), p. 75.

37. "The point is that a body belonging to a system, and having its nature determined by its relations to members of that system, when it passes into a new systematic order will carry over into its process of readjustment in the new system something of the nature of all members of the old. So in the history of a community, the members carry over from an old order their characters as determined by social relations into the readjustments of social change. The old system is found in each member and in a revolution becomes the structure upon which the new order is established. So Rousseau had to find both sovereign and subject in the citizen, and Kant had to find both the giver of the moral law and subject of the law in the rational being." *Ibid.*, p. 77.

Country, a strategy that historians have likened to a form of "internal colonialism": As Stalin smothered the voices championing internationalism and as a siege mentality took root within the party, the leadership began to steer its energies away from external initiatives to internal targets within its borders, substituting "internal colonialism for external revolutionary imperialism [and] domestic violence for foreign violence."³⁸ The domestic target of this redirected violence was the peasantry, now contemned as backwards, archaic, and premodern.

Although the intertitles of *One Sixth of the World* are based on the speech at the XIV Party Congress where Stalin first introduced Socialism in One Country,³⁹ Vertov's film in fact systematically dismantles this policy, point by misguided point. Vertov invokes Stalin's words only to turn them on their head: Where Stalin valorized industrial labor exclusively, *One Sixth* lionizes the diverse forms and temporalities of labor performed by the Soviet peasantry and national minorities, ranging from reindeer husbandry to traditional agriculture; and while Socialism in One Country maintained that socialism could succeed only within a state cut off from all external ties, *One Sixth* depicts a remarkably porous Soviet economy whose very existence depends on exchange with the remaining five sixths of the world. In his notes for the project Vertov even invokes Stalin's theory of "two worlds" that are separate and distinct, one capitalist and one socialist, only to unravel this fixed political binarism by showing that the Soviet Union is not a state with bounded contours but an open "juncture" or "hub" (*uzel*) within the international trade cycle "America–Europe–USSR–The East" ("Predvaritel'naia skhema rabot po kartine Gostorga," *Iz naslediia*, 1:107). The result is a complex geopolitical model that more closely resembles Immanuel Wallerstein's theory of world-systems than the high-contrast Manichaeism of Stalin's Socialism in One Country.⁴⁰

If *One Sixth of the World* punctured the fantasy of economic autonomy and industrial domination that motivated the policy of Socialism in One Country, Vertov's next film, *The Eleventh Year*, in turn, took aim at the other great pillar of Stalinist economy strategy, the Great Break, or *velikii perelom* (a phrase typically translated as "Great Change," although it literally means "Great Fracture," like the fracture of a bone). As a corollary to the geopolitical sequestration proposed by Socialism in One Country,

38. Alvin W. Gouldner, "Stalinism: A Study of Internal Colonialism," *Telos* 34 (1977), pp. 25–26. The Party had been transformed into "an urban-centered power elite that had set out to dominate a largely rural society to which they related as an alien colonial power; it was an internal colonialism mobilizing its state power against colonial tributaries in rural territories" (13). Gouldner further observes that the strategy of internal colonialism "links state socialism with the capitalism it had promised to transcend and sees the peasants as the Soviets' Indians and the Soviet countryside as a continental reservation" (41). More recently, see Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011).

39. Jeremy Hicks, *Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), p. 46.

40. In a discussion of Wallerstein and Second World modernism, Fredric Jameson dismisses the categorical distinction between the capitalist and socialist systems as an ideological construct of the Cold War: "Actually existing socialism was not and could never have been an alternative system, since at any given moment only one world system can hold sway; the various socialisms, rather, were antisystemic movements within the force field of a capitalist world system itself." "Utopia, Modernism, and Death," in *The Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 76.

this policy, proclaimed by Stalin in his article "The Year of the Great Break," pursued *temporal* sequestration, as it were, a radical rupture with all that had come before.⁴¹ The Great Break marked the definitive supersession of Russia's premodern past, a revolution consummated. After the ruin of the civil war and the chaotic mixed economy of NEP, after the transitional years of backbreaking reconstruction, after the semantically overdetermined and ideologically contested cultural production of the avant-garde, Russia was at last poised for a massive leap forward into a post-historical condition, Stalin proclaimed. By erecting barricades "that were supposed to protect the country from the flood of historical change," writes Boris Groys, "the Stalinist project to escape from world history" sought, like Hitler's Thousand Year Reich, "to conquer time and enter into eternity."⁴² Marx himself had recognized that the emergence of a new society also necessitates the disappearance of that which—and those who—preceded it: The "present generation," he wrote, "must not only conquer a new world, it must also perish in order to make room for people who will be equal to a new world."⁴³ But only Stalin was so monstrous as to literalize this line of Marx, consummating the Great Break with the past through the murder of an entire generation of revolutionaries. From this perspective, the brutal purges of the late 1930s should be seen as the direct elaboration of a policy inaugurated a decade before, when Stalin began systematically to bury the past.

Against this rhetoric of rupture and supersession, the open and unfinished temporality of *The Eleventh Year* forges bonds of sociality and solidarity between people situated at different moments in time, people inhabiting different moments in a given labor sequence (e.g., *textile worker—tool worker—miner—peasant*) or at disjoined

41. I. V. Stalin, "God velikogo pereloma: K XII godovshchine Oktiabria," *Sochineniia*, 18 vols. (Moscow: Gos. izd-vo politicheskoi literatury, 1949), 12:118–35. Although published in 1929, the text is written about the previous year, 1928, the year of the Great Break.

42. Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, trans. Charles Rougle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 75, 109, 72. Stalinist culture compensates for this oversimplified caricature of history, this chiliastic flattening of time to a single homogenous plane, through the complexification of the experience of space, which becomes increasingly nuanced and internally diverse starting in the late 1920s. Thus Katerina Clark writes that "the defining features of the Soviet regime and its ideological underpinnings were presented through the discourse of space and architecture." "Socialist Realism and the Sacralizing of Space," in *The Landscape of Stalinism. The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space*, ed. Evgenii Dobrenko and Eric Naiman (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), p. 16. Clark's analysis describes a condition in which space has swallowed up time, as it were: "The division into two orders of space [one sacred and one profane] that lies at the heart of socialist realist practice implies a parallel division into two orders of time—or, more accurately, there is a division into two orders of spacetime. The temporal dimension, however, is largely implicit; Stalinist culture put extraordinary emphasis on space" (9). Also significant for our analysis here is the contrast, within the visual iconography of the period, between the dynamism of Lenin and the post-historical stasis of Stalin. Writing about Socialist Realist painting, Clark observes that "Lenin and the people are in a state of *becoming*," while "Stalin is in a state of *being*" (12). It is as if each leader presides respectively over one of the two modalities of human experience, time and space.

43. Karl Marx, "Class Struggles in France," in *Selected Works*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), 1:193. Georg Lukács comments: "In order to achieve the social preconditions necessary for real freedom, battles must be fought in the course of which present-day society will disappear, together with the race of men it has produced." "Towards a Methodology of the Problem of Organization," in *History and Class Consciousness. Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1994), p. 315.

phases of ethnotechnical evolution (e.g. *proletarian—farmer—nomadic Scythian*). To borrow a term from the great anatomist of time Velimir Khlebnikov, these non-synchronous bonds can be designated as *metabiotic*. This concept was highlighted by Khlebnikov in an early text on forms of interdependence in the animal kingdom, where he described two axes of biological mutualism. The first bond that exists between organisms, he observed, is the relationship in which two organisms coexist “in one and the same place” to mutual benefit; this is the relationship of symbiosis, examples of which in nature are numerous and obvious, and thus, for Khlebnikov, require no elaboration. Far more important and intriguing for him, however, is the second axis of mutualism, which, although still under-researched by scientists, he considers to be of equal importance. This is metabiosis, in which “the relation between the two organisms connects two successive intervals of time.” One instance of metabiotic mutualism cited by Khlebnikov is the “soil-altering bacteria” that decompose dead organic matter, feeding themselves at the same time that they facilitate the renewal of forest vegetation. These phytonutrient sources provide food for animal life that will, in turn, die and nourish the bacteria. Unlike organisms connected through symbiotic relations, which encounter each other face-to-face at the same moment in time, organisms linked together in a metabiotic system are thus not contemporaries, but instead follow upon each other in a chain of transformation (here: *dead animal > bacteria > plant > living animal*). But because such metastable mechanisms take place on an ecological order of existence that is higher than that of simple symbiosis, their compound mechanism is harder to discern in its totality. The presentist prejudices of modern science, in particular, make it difficult to model and track such biological relations over time and to recognize the breadth of their mechanism. As Khlebnikov also explains at the end of his essay, the laws of metabiosis can be observed not just in biological relations among organisms but in social relations among humans as well, such as those connecting “generations of people within a nation.” One specific example he offers is the “metabiosis between the Slavic and the German worlds,” two worlds that, through a kind of cultural crop rotation carried out over centuries upon the soil of Central and Eastern Europe, have enriched and cross-fertilized each other through the exchange of custom, technology, and ideas.⁴⁴

Vertov explores forms of metabiotic mutualism at both of the levels proposed by Khlebnikov, that of ecology and of society. Shortly before starting work on *The Eleventh Year*, Vertov had in fact composed a short scenario for an educational film in which microorganisms and worms decompose buried human bodies into their chemical components, causing grasses to shoot up from the nitrogen-

44. Velimir Khlebnikov, “Opyt postroeniia odnogo estestvennonauchnogo poniatia,” in *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3 vols. (Saint Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2001), 3:140–143; “An Attempt to Formulate a Concept in the Natural Sciences,” in *Collected Works of Velimir Khlebnikov*, ed. Charlotte Douglas, trans. Paul Schmidt, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987–1997), 1:222–224.

45. The scenario, dated June 21, 1925, is translated in MacKay, “Film Energy,” p. 59. Original document in RGALI f. 2091, op. 2, d. 235, ll. 3–4.

enriched soil and fueling life “in various parts of the USSR”⁴⁵; likewise, in direct illustration of Khlebnikov’s example of Germano-Slavic exchange, the region that is to be powered in *The Eleventh Year* by the construction of the hydroelectric dam on the Dniepr, although now in the Soviet Ukraine, was at an earlier time a German colony. Through these cinematic archaeologies, Vertov depicts a Soviet Union that is more than just a spatial entity, defined by its borders to Europe in the west and to Asia in the east. For the young Soviet Union, founded in 1922, was also an event, a further cycle, in the metabiotic conversion of nature into the artifacts of human culture and history. In this way, Vertov reveals the “Soviet Union” to be both a set of geographical coordinates as well as a temporal process—both a physical territory and a metabiotic state. If, as we saw earlier, a distinction can be drawn between *One Sixth of the World* and *The Eleventh Year* regarding their two orientations towards space and time, respectively, these two axes are also reflected in the kinds of social bonds that Vertov explores in each of these projects: Whereas *One Sixth* explores a nexus of horizontal, symbiotic mutualism that, reaching across a vast territorial expanse, links distant fur trappers in the east to manufacturing in the west, *The Eleventh Year* prospects downward into the earth like a cinematic stratigraph, uncovering the metabiotic interactions that connect the present civilization to a deep, prehistorical time. Like bacteria that prepare the forest floor for rejuvenation, the Scythian skeletons buried deep in the soil below the construction site prepare the earth for a revolutionary future.⁴⁶

In this regard, *The Eleventh Year* aligns with Trotsky’s credo of permanent revolution. As Trotsky explained, “The revolution does not come to an end after this or that political conquest . . . [for] we continually and constantly advance it. . . . This applies to the conquests of the revolution inside a country as well as to its extension over the international arena.”⁴⁷ According to Trotsky, the policy of permanent revolution corresponded to Russia’s peculiar historical position in 1917: Instead of a single, pervasive mode of production, Russia, as we have seen, had five of them; and instead of the single political revolution that faced communist movements in the capitalist countries of the West, after October, Russia had to undertake at least two political transitions at once—a bourgeois revolt against the tsarist government and, in a further simultaneous involution within this struggle, a proletarian revolution against this same bourgeoisie. Thus, in a brief and compressed period of time, Russia was experiencing multiple economic, technical,

46. For Deleuze, this anachronic temporality is already anticipated in *One Sixth of the World*, a film in which the cinematic apparatus operates as “that which unites the man of tomorrow with the world before man, communist man with the material universe of interactions defined as ‘community’ (reciprocal action between the agent and the patient). *A Sixth of the World* shows the interaction at a distance, within the USSR, between the most varied peoples, herds of animals, industries, cultures, exchanges of all kinds in the process of conquering time.” *Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 82.

47. Leon Trotsky, *The Challenge of the Left Opposition*, ed. Naomi Allen, 3 vols. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1975–1981), 1:113. On Trotsky’s sources in Marx, see *Witnesses to Permanent Revolution. The Documentary Record*, ed. and trans. Richard B. Day and Daniel Gaido (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

cultural, and political revolutions, some failed, some partial—but none complete, as Stalin wanted to claim. The latter's "bureaucratic reaction against October," Trotsky observed from exile, had denied the "incomplete, limited, and partial character" of the Bolshevik revolution.⁴⁸

The conflict between the policy of the Great Break and that of permanent revolution leads beyond the realm of socialist strategy, ultimately broaching questions of a more philosophical nature. At issue is whether the revolution should be understood as a discrete threshold or as a set of conditions that continue to unfold in the present. Is the revolution an event or a transition, a punctual episode or a movement of becoming? For one observer of Soviet Russia in 1931, it all boiled down to a conflict between "revolution" and "evolution."⁴⁹ Where Marx and Engels stood on the matter was apparent from the definition of communism proposed in *The German Ideology*: "Communism is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence."⁵⁰ Given this definition, one historian of Soviet state institutions has recently concluded that, within the framework of Marxist thought, "a final revolutionary victory over time appears impossible."⁵¹

The paradigm of permanent revolution informs many of the aspects of *The Eleventh Year* that have already been considered here, whether at the level of theme (the encounter between Scythian nomads and industrial modernity), device (the visual preference for superimposition over supersession), or composition (the understanding of the compilation film as "continuous editing process"). On each of these registers the film undermines the myth of originarity and, in turn, the blueprint of linear history as the sure guarantor of progress. But a series of questions immediately arise in response: Without the framework of universal history as the prognostic and measure for development, against what standard can political projects chart their success? How, at the moments when history doubles back on itself, can progress and decline be effectively distinguished from one another? If, as Ernst Bloch wrote about National Socialism in 1932, there is "nothing more dangerous than this power of being at once . . . contradictory and non-contemporaneous," how is it then possible to distinguish revolutionary archaicism from the Fascist reaction?⁵² Moreover: Does Vertov's skepticism towards teleological thought condemn him to a cyclical model of

48. Trotsky, "Three Conceptions," p. 73.

49. This is the question posed by Michael Farbmann in *Piatiletka. Der Fünfjahresplan. Die neue Offensive des Bolschewismus* (Berlin: Fischer, 1931).

50. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998), pp. 56–57. This privileging of Becoming over Being reappears in Marx's anthropology as well, which defined man as an unfinished, historical animal that incessantly produces itself through acts labor that transform its own body and the surrounding environment alike.

51. Stephen E. Hanson, *Time and Revolution. Marxism and the Design of Soviet Institutions* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 55.

52. Ernst Bloch, *Heritage of Our Times*, trans. Neville and Stephen Plaice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 97.

history, a conservative Spenglerian morphology in which cultures are constantly recycling the forms of the past?

The Eleventh Year provides no simple answer to these questions. Their insolubility is inscribed upon the very form of the film itself: As John MacKay has shown in his remarkable analysis of *The Eleventh Year*, there is an underlying conflict in the film between, on the one hand, the circular model of time evident in the film's depiction of natural processes such as electrical conversion and, on the other, the cumulative linear narrative about the momentous achievements of communism.⁵³ And while it is true that neither of these two patterns of time—cyclical myth and linear history—ever prevails definitively over the other in the film, Vertov does not simply leave this contradiction unmediated. Instead he relieves the tension between the geometries of the circle and the line through the introduction of a third figure, the spiral. This was a shape that Vertov associated in his writings with the special course of Russia's uneven development: "our socialist national economy," he once wrote, "will grow like a continuous spiral," amassing, transforming, and exporting capital in constant metabolic exchange with the outside world. From the "abundance" of Russia's natural resources to the output of its industrial factories via international trade and the acquisition of foreign machines—"our country industrializes through an entire series of such spirals" ("Predvaritel'naia skhema rabot po kartine Gostorga," *Iz naslediiia*, 2:107). On this point Vertov turns out to have been an astute reader of Marx, who, after Sismondi, taught that the course of economic aggregation and reproduction unfolds in the shape not of a line or a circle but of a spiral. The construction of *The Eleventh Year* itself follows this same compositional principle, advancing recursively, as it were, with each mounting revolution in the ascending spiral of cinematic signification. Given this compound structure, it is not surprising that Vertov's contemporaries complained after screenings that the montage of *The Eleventh Year*, which had seemed so straightforward at the beginning of the film, became far too complex, too involuted, for them to understand the later reels of the film.⁵⁴

This helical logic gives rise to a certain conceptual loop identified in Vertov's writings as "the theme of 'machines that produce machines.'"⁵⁵ In a key sequence from *The Eleventh Year* celebrating Russia's industrial capacity, the film's intertitles

53. Because "there is nothing inherently 'progressive' or even particularly 'meaningful' about energy flow," Vertov "risks the loss, across long stretches of his film, of that chain of meaningful relations linking each event to the larger project under way, to the metanarrative of Communism." MacKay, "Film Energy," pp. 50, 75.

54. Unfazed by these critics, Vertov responded that "the first part is obviously situated at a level that is easier for the spectator's perception. The fourth and fifth parts have a more complicated construction: there is far more inventiveness in their montage than in the first two parts; they look farther into the future of cinematography than the second and third parts. We could say that the fourth and fifth parts are related to the first parts like *higher education is related to primary school*. It is natural that the more complicated montage forces the spectator to greater exertion and that its embodied perception demands greater attention." "Vystuplenie na diskussii v ARRK o fil'me *Odinnadtsatyi*," *Iz naslediiia*, 2:137-138.

55. Vertov discusses the theme of "machines that produce machines" in a journal entry dated April 12, 1926. *Stat'i, dnevniki, zamysli*, ed. S. Drobashenko (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1966), p. 165.

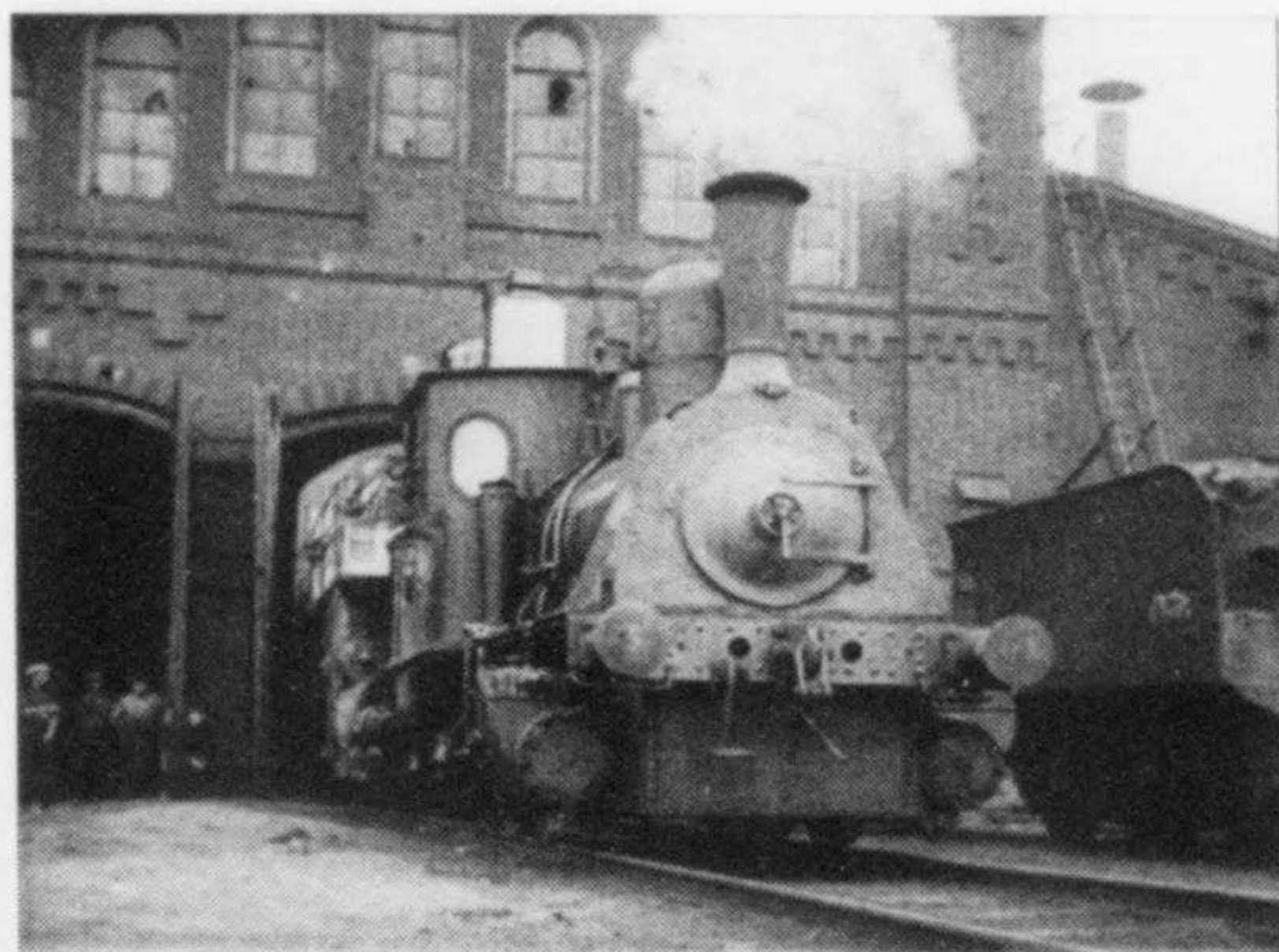
proclaim, "We turn out one locomotive after another," "one workbench after another," and "one factory shop after another." Each of these declarations is followed by a thetic shot of the named object that provides incontrovertible evidence of the existence of the phenomenon heralded by the words on the screen. Behold the productivity of Soviet factories, the intertitles thereby proclaim. But these words also convey more than just the inexhaustible fecundity of Russian industry, for, as the intertitles progress, moving farther and farther away from the initial verb "we turn out," a certain semantic drift begins to take hold of them, enabling the other meaning of the Russian preposition *za*—"behind." This second meaning is accentuated by the grammatical inversion used by Vertov, who writes *za stankom—stanok* instead of the more common *stanok za stankom*.⁵⁶ In this way the intertitles declare that "behind each workbench is another workbench" and "behind each factory shop is another factory shop." Thus, at the same time that this sequence pays tribute to the future industrial production of the Soviet Union ("one thing after another"), the spiraling mise-en-abyme of factory capital also reveals the ontological groundlessness of this very industry ("one thing behind the other"). Borrowing a term from Derrida, we could say that this passage in the film observes an "obsequent" logic, in which a kind of semantic reverse thrust internal to the film drives meaning backward as the reel moves forward.⁵⁷ Diegesis and semiosis point in opposite directions here. And so, in the same way that, as we saw above, Vertov sought to demonstrate that each act of human labor was always necessarily based upon a previous act of labor (behind the textile worker was the machine worker, behind the machine worker was the coal miner, and so on), *The Eleventh Year* discovers the same structure of infinite regress in Russia's objectivated forces of production as well. A single law regulates both forms of capital, flexible and constant, living and dead.

Through "the theme of 'machines that produce machines,'" *The Eleventh Year* thus demands that the spectator engage in genealogical thinking while at the same time denying her recourse to the historico-philosophical category of origin that could anchor this inquiry. One conspicuous symptom of this groundlessness, evident at the level of Vertov's rhetoric, is a tendency in his writing to lapse into tautology when discussing linkages and bonds. Rather than issuing causally from a single defining event in the past, bonds between people are always defined by Vertov through

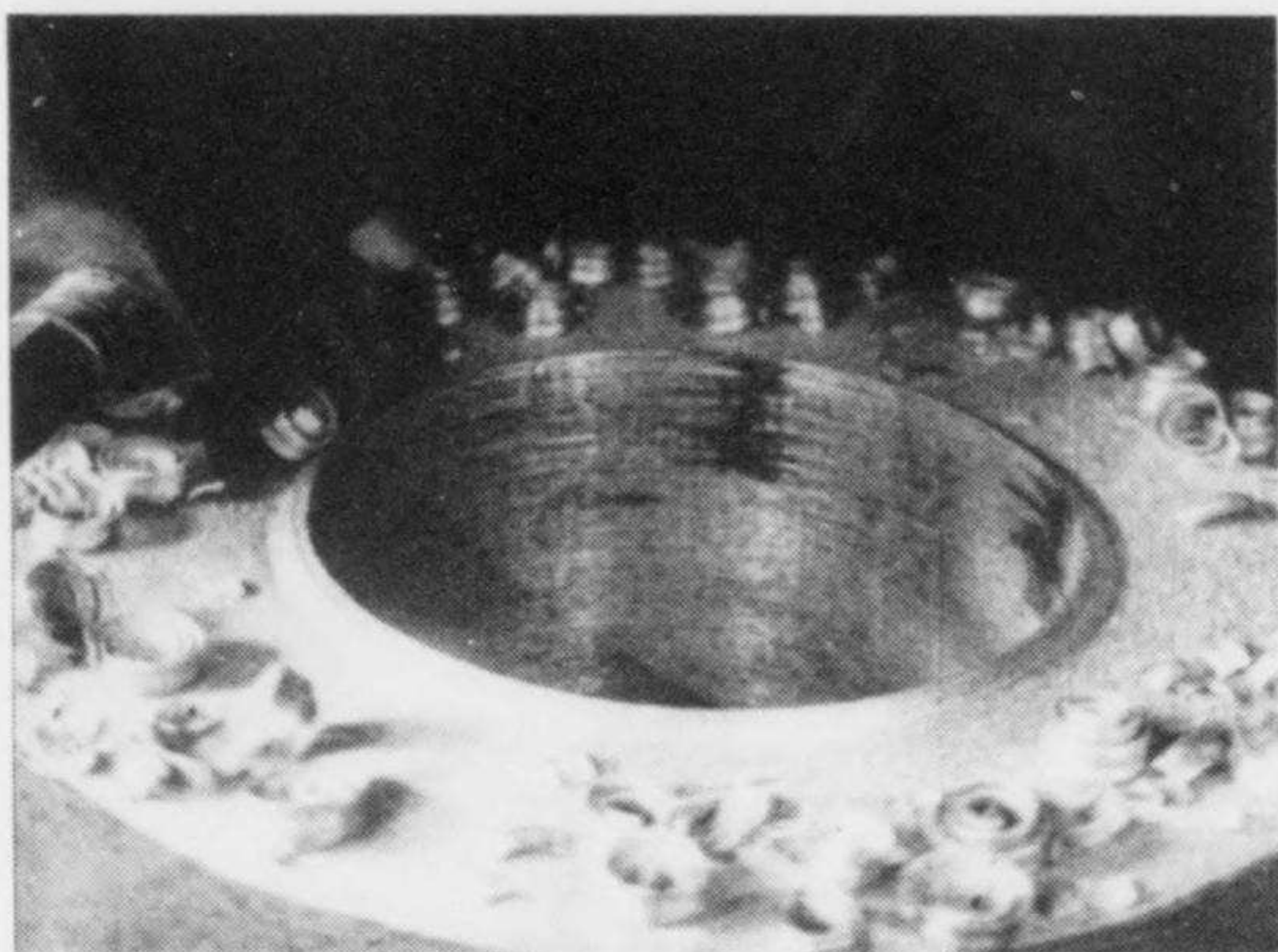
56. This construction would normally require the auxiliary verb *est'*, which in Russian performs the function of positing or asserting existence, but in this sequence from *The Eleventh Year* such positing is superfluous, since the shot of the object that follows immediately upon each of the intertitles operates itself to establish the material actuality of the object.

57. "Obsequent" describes the flow of a stream that runs against the direction of other streams in the area that follow the original slope of the Earth's surface. "Living On," in *Deconstruction and Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1979), p. 129. Significantly, Derrida's remarks on obsequent signification occur in his analysis of a case of photographic superimposition in Blanchot's *Death Sentence*. It seems that the device of photographic superimposition is particularly well suited to express this logical paradox, since, as Metz notes, the lap-dissolve "tends . . . to create a pre-existing relationship after the event." "Crossings and Interweavings in Film," p. 279.

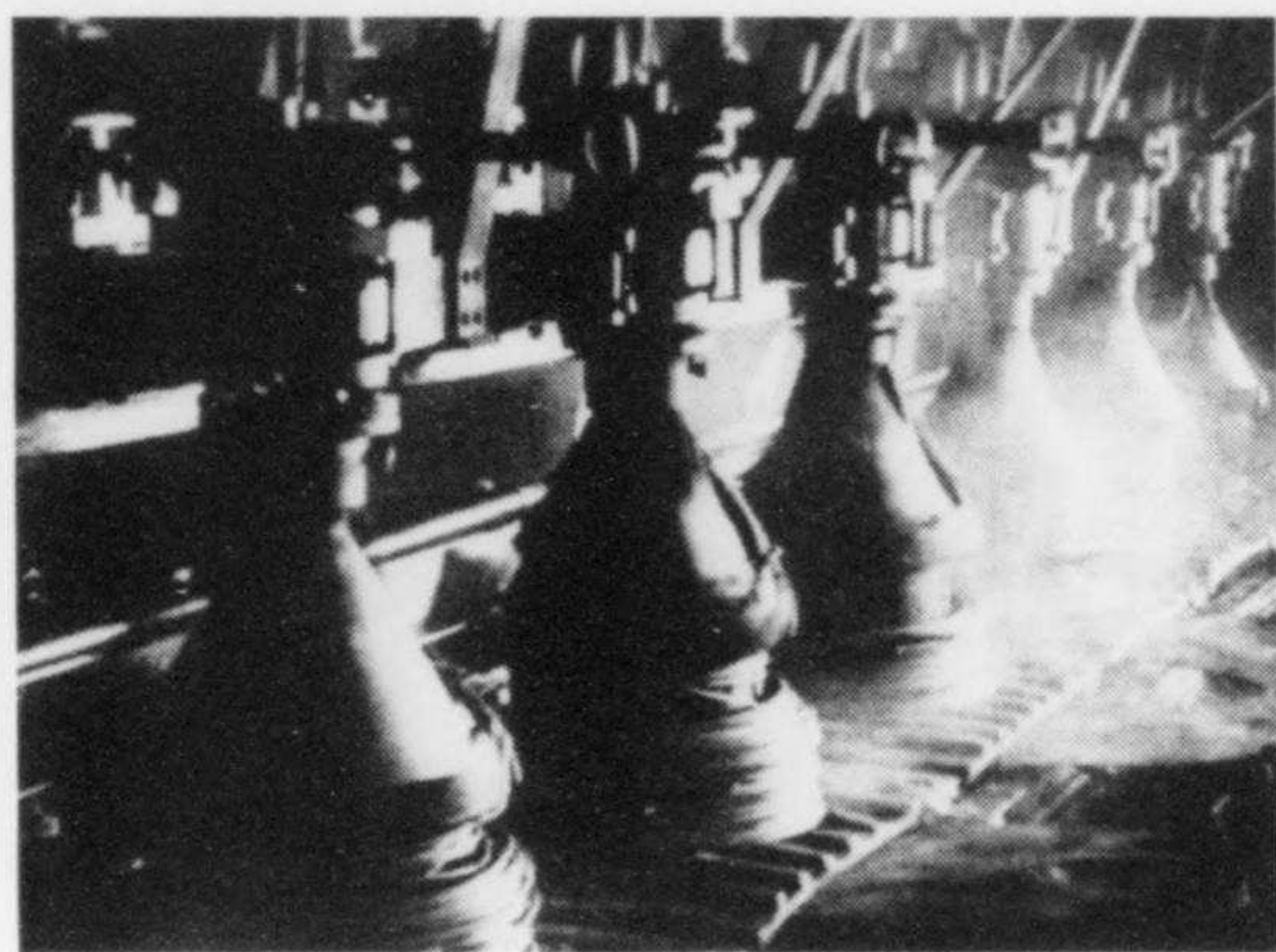
выпускаем за паровозом
паровоз



за станком—станок



за цехом—цех



Vertov. The Eleventh Year. 1928.

their relation to other bonds, with the entire system of interconnections—society itself—being sustained not through reference to any transcendental term or natural law but through sheer voluntarism. Bonds always double back on other bonds, the resulting social structure held in place only by the force of will: “Kino-Eye must bind [*sviazat*] together all of the workers scattered around the entire world through a single bond [*sviaz'iu*], through a single collective will, and must help to reveal to each individual oppressed person and to the entire proletariat as a whole the secret of capital . . .” (“Kino-Glaz' i vidimyi mir,” *Iz naslediia*, 2:64). For Vertov, the obscured truth about capital, referenced in this last phrase, is the willfulness and arbitrariness of the socioeconomic edifice that it generates, the fact that this system of relations has no historical origin but instead relies on a tautological ruse for its ideological justification. Indeed, the “secret of capital” to which Vertov refers here is nothing other than what is identified in the last book of *Capital* as “The Secret of Primitive Accumulation.” According to Marx, the logic of primitive or originary accumulation (*ursprüngliche Akkumulation*) functions as the foundational myth of capital: Like the fable of original sin, which, for Christians, serves to justify humanity’s mortality, penury, and creaturely servitude vis-à-vis God, the legend of primitive accumulation grounds capitalism’s social order ontologically by connecting the current relations of production to an infinitely remote, phantasmic moment in the past.⁵⁸ As Marx points out, this legendary zero hour of capitalist accumulation is pure fiction, a legend designed to compensate ideologically for the reality that capital in fact does not at all observe the laws of genealogical descent and that the process of expropriation is, to the contrary, constant and ongoing. Here “the Marxist theory of the history of production (and therefore society)” exhibits an avowedly nonlinear, even “radically anti-evolutionist” character.⁵⁹ The appearance of capitalist social relations is not an isolable historical event, but rather a “conjuncture” or “encounter” (*ein Gegenübertreten*, Marx calls it) between the owners of the means of production and the workers who sell their labor power—a conjuncture that, once established, “reproduces itself on a constantly extending scale.”⁶⁰ The purpose of the myth of primitive accumulation, Marx observes, is to deny and conceal the arbitrariness of this self-perpetuating tautological structure:

58. The myth of primitive accumulation, writes Marx, “plays approximately the same role in political economy as original sin does in theology. . . . Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote about the past. Long, long ago there were two sorts of people; one, the diligent, intelligent and above all frugal elite; the other, lay rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. . . . Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defense of property.” *Capital*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1992), pp. 873–74.

59. Balibar, “The Elements of the Structure and their History,” in *Reading Capital*, p. 252. Structuralist Marxism believed that philosophy must intervene here to relieve historicist thinking, which is limited by its dogged adherence to a notion of the event as point of origin. According to Balibar, the historian “perpetuates two kinds of difficulties: those relating to the notion of the historical *event*, which is assessed according to the single criteria [*sic*] of *brevity* (suddenness) and is therefore almost of necessity confined to the sphere of political events; and those relating to the impossibility of making *clean breaks*” (230).

60. Marx, *Capital*, p. 874.

The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn around in a never-ending circle, which we can only get out of by assuming a primitive accumulation (the "previous accumulation" of Adam Smith) which precedes capitalist accumulation; an accumulation which is not the result of the capitalist mode of production but its point of departure.⁶¹

Given the fact that an entire book of *Capital* is dedicated to dismantling the ideologeme of primitive accumulation—Marx's "refusal of the Robinsonade," as Foucault called it⁶²—it is surprising, then, to observe the rehabilitation of this myth in the Soviet Union in the mid-1920s, at the moment when Vertov was at work on *One Sixth of the World* and *The Eleventh Year*. In 1924 the influential economist Evgenii Preobrazhensky proposed a policy of "primitive socialist accumulation," a strategy designed to drive Russian farmers from the land and extract economic surplus from the agricultural sector in the hopes of accelerating the transition from a feudal mode of production to a modern industrial one.⁶³ Initially the tactic was of course rejected by Soviet Marxists, who rightly pointed out that it was effectively indistinguishable from familiar methods of capitalist exploitation. After all, the strategy replicated almost exactly the one used to expropriate the British peasantry at the turn of the sixteenth century. However, just four years after its contentious appearance in 1924, "primitive socialist accumulation" was embraced by Stalin and established as the official strategy for developing the state's industrial sector.⁶⁴ "The Year of the Great Break" declared that the fundamental "problem of accumulation" (*problema nakopleniia*) along with that of Russia's "indigenous backwardness" had at last been solved, detailing a tactic to overcome these problems that recapitulated precisely Preobrazhensky's plan for industrialization. Within the parameters of Socialism in One Country, primitive accumulation—now sacral-

61. Ibid., p. 873. Balibar famously characterized primitive accumulation as a case of "ahistorical historicism": "Marx's critical recognition (against political economy) of the historicity of capitalism—the fact that capitalist relations are neither natural nor eternal but rather the product of conditions with a determined genesis—is balanced by an incapacity to think about and analyze the very history of capitalism." "The Notion of Class Politics in Marx," trans. Dominique Parent-Ruccio and Frank R. Annunziato, *Rethinking Marxism*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1988), p. 49.

62. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Freud, Marx," in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 3 vols. (New York: The New Press, 1997–2001), 2:274. In this essay Foucault relates Marx's "refusal of beginning" to the "always-incomplete character of the regressive . . . process in Freud." With Freud and Marx, interpretation "has at last become an infinite task," Foucault concludes.

63. Preobrazhensky first proposed the idea in a paper from August 1924 entitled "The Fundamental Law of Socialist Accumulation," which was subsequently elaborated in his *Novaia ekonomika: opyt teoreticheskogo analiza sovetskogo khoziaistva* (Moscow: Izd-vo Kommunisticheskoi akademii, 1926). Preobrazhensky was himself aware that this was a violent process, for he used words like "expropriation" and "exploitation" to characterize its mechanism.

64. "No other viewpoint developed during these years [of debate about industrialization] was so violently repudiated at the beginning only to be implemented ultimately, on a scale surpassing anything its author had ever thought possible." Alexander Erlich, "Preobrazhenski and the Economics of Soviet Industrialization," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 64, no. 1 (February 1950), p. 58. See also James R. Millar, "A Note on Primitive Accumulation in Marx and Preobrazhensky," *Soviet Studies* 30, no. 3 (July 1978), pp. 384–93.

ized through addition of the word "socialist"—redirected the violent forces of imperialist expansion toward domestic targets in accordance with the logic of internal colonialism. For Stalin, 1928 marked a new cosmogony. This primitive accumulation, established in the eleventh revolutionary year, the year of the Great Break, would serve as the source point, or deposit, around which all subsequent Soviet history would accrete. Stalin's Robinsonade could begin.

One consequence of Vertov's insight, against the originary myth of primitive accumulation, that capital's composition follows a continuous spiral of labor is a pronounced hesitation in his films around the integrity or identity of objects. It is as if, for Vertov, things have no particular quiddity of their own. This is because objects produced by the hands of men are first and foremost quantities of labor that have been transfigured and enciphered. Marx suggested as much in his famous definition of the commodity-object as "coagulated labor time" (*geronnene Arbeitszeit*),⁶⁵ a phrase whose haematic imagery evokes the transitional phase at which the liquid energy of blood assumes the fixed characteristics of a static substance, and life force is given concrete material form. It is only through the ontological mystification of commodity fetishism that this process of becoming is mistaken for a state of being. For commodities are not made of hard and fast matter, but are instead pseudo-objectifications in an ongoing process of transformative labor, nodes in an endless chain of production. As *The Eleventh Year* shows, behind every factory workbench and locomotive is always another instantiation of fixed capital that, at an earlier time, was itself the product of human endeavor. Through such demonstrations, Vertov liquefies the static and inert commodity, dissolving it into a social diagram. Even a thing as seemingly factual and self-evident as a loaf of bread is revealed in the celebrated reverse sequence from *Kino-Eye*, for example, to be a condensation of collective endeavor—an endeavor that ultimately yields an object that, for all its professed innocence, has a distinct ideological valence. There is communist bread and there is capitalist bread, Vertov concludes.

Whereas capitalist fetishism, in its systematic disavowal of the body of the worker, seeks to erase all traces of human labor and indications of social provenance from the commodity, Vertov reinstates the body denied through this mystification. After all, the commodity, as Marx proposed, is nothing but a condensed "hieroglyph" of human relations. Much of Vertov's work aims to recognize and decipher this social hieroglyph, an enterprise that necessitates abandoning the superficial anthropomorphism of bourgeois humanism, with its strict epistemological division between person and thing, subject and object. A curious but instructive psychological corollary to this program is Vertov's intense cathexis of objects, which seem to beckon him with the arms of a lover. While filming a fac-

65. Marx, *Capital*, p. 130; translation modified. On the products of labor, Marx writes that "there is nothing left of them in each case but the same phantom-like objectivity; they are merely coagulated quantities of homogenous human labor" (128).

tory for *The Eleventh Year*, for example, he struggled in his notebooks to come to terms with the attachment he felt to this colossal industrial body: "I hesitate to use the word 'love' when speaking of my relationship to this factory. And yet I do really feel as though I want to press myself against it and caress those gigantic smokestacks and black gas tanks . . ."66 While the tenderness of these lines may recall the fetishist's devotion to the inorganic, there is the crucial difference that Vertov never naturalizes the commodity form, never obscures its social origins; in this regard, the kind of perverse cathexis of machine forms to which Vertov here gives voice is in fact not fetishism at all, for it is an erotic attachment to the very aspect of the object—its human and social complexion—that fetishism seeks to disavow. Indeed, for Vertov, it is precisely because objects are the products of human labor and because they are media of social intercourse that he loves them with such devotion and intensity. One encounters this same structure of erotic investment again and again in Soviet culture during the 1920s: Take the treatises of Sergei Tret'iakov, the Futurist who pioneered the genre of the "biography of the thing" and who wrote in 1924 that "untouched nature" is "repellant," while "everything that bears the trace of the organizing human hand is beautiful"67; or Rodchenko's 1925 Workers' Club in Paris, which triggered a veritable haptic orgy among its working-class visitors.68 If machine capital is nothing but the exteriorized organon of man, examples such as these suggest that such organs are not without a sensuous aspect and a corresponding corporeal appeal. In the socialist thing-culture of this decade, the object continues to bear the traces of the laboring hands that fashioned it. It retains the warmth of their coagulating blood. This is the warmth that draws Vertov to the smokestacks of the Dzerzhinsky plant and solicits from him a corresponding caress.

In Vertov's work, the line that divides man from his technical organon must not be confused with the one that divides the organic from the inorganic, biology from mechanics. For him, the distinction between human and object instead boils down to the relative—not categorical—difference between the two temporalities that they inhabit: the time of the living and that of the dead. After all, capital, according to Marx, is nothing other than "past objectivated dead labor" (*vergangene vergegenständlichte tote Arbeit*), an inorganic condensation of the toil, skill, intellect, aspiration, and desire of previous generations that endures into the present. Every act of production, every interaction with fixed capital, can therefore be understood as a kind of resuscitation of the dead forebears whose spirits are

66. Vertov, *Stat'i, dnevniki, zamysli*, p. 172.

67. Sergei Tret'iakov, "Otkuda i kuda (perspektivy futurizma)," *Lef*, no. 1 (1923), p. 201; "From Where to Where?," in *Russian Futurism through Its Manifestoes, 1912–1928*, ed. and trans. Anna Lawton and Herbert Eagle (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 214; translation modified.

68. A review of Rodchenko's Workers' Club in Paris described how one worker who visited the pavilion "lovingly stroked the case for the wall newspaper with his hand." Further, "almost every worker...was drawn precisely to stroke one or another of the things in the club, and to stroke it lovingly." N. Neznamov, "Na parizhskoi vystavke," *Rabochii klub*, no. 8–9 (1925), p. 82. Quoted in Christina Kiaer, *Imagine No Possessions. The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism* (Cambridge, Mass.: the MIT Press, 2005), p. 240.

housed in the factory's machinery. From this perspective, industrial labor resembles intercourse with a machine "as if its body were by love possessed," writes Marx, quoting *Faust*.⁶⁹ It is a form of necrophilia. As Vertov rewinds the flow of production, reanimating the human labor that once engendered the now seemingly inert thing, so too does he unspool the boundary between the current generation and those who came before. If, by the middle of *The Eleventh Year*, the construction site on the Dniepr has been transformed into an ancient pyramid, later sequences of the film then take the viewer deep into the heart of the factory-necropolis where human and machine—labor in its living and objectivated formats—interact against explosions of molten metal and machine constructions.⁷⁰ Thus, despite what seems to be a gross thematic disparity between the film's archaeological beginning and its industrial end, the final sequences depicting a concert of factory labor are thus directly connected to the archaic Scythians excavated at the start of the film. While some of the ghosts, like the Scythian skeletons, have retained their mortal frame in the afterlife, the majority of them, having been transformed by the hand of time into fixed capital, continue to haunt the living in the guise of things.⁷¹

The logic of Vertov's film thus exposes one of the glaring ideological inconsistencies of Stalin's turbo-modernization, a program whose ambition to break with the labors of preceding generations obscured the fact that it is the most advanced industrial technologies that contain the vastest accumulations of dead, objectivated labor. Such compound technical assemblages—machines produced by machines—reach much farther back in time than simpler, more primitive modes of production, which instead remain grounded in an immediate, anthropic scene of work. Unlike the so-called primitive cultures that have been derided by the moderns for their spiritism and animism, it is therefore the industrialized West that, despite claims to ideological enlightenment, still remains in practice not just haunted but even determined by the past generations who influence the present through the technical artifacts they have left behind. The more complex the technology, the more dead labor it contains. This law of posthumous influence pertains not just to machine capital, of course, but also to the technical media and written records that have

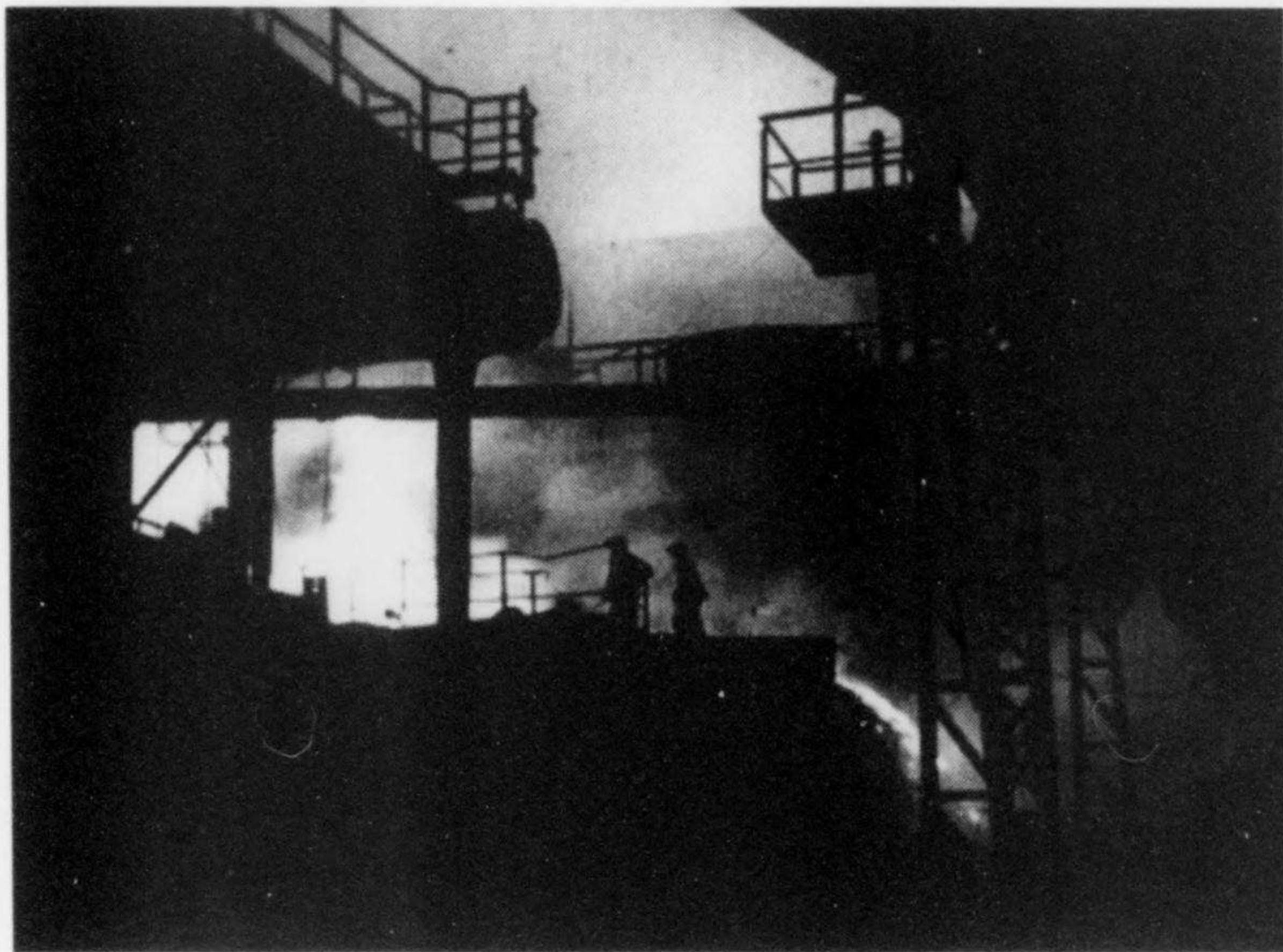
69. Marx, *Capital*, p. 302; translation modified. Marx describes the process of objectivation as follows: "During the labour process, the worker's labour constantly undergoes a transformation, from the form of unrest [*Unruhe*] into that of being [*Sein*], from the form of motion [*Bewegung*] into that of objectivity [*Gegenständlichkeit*]" (296).

70. Fedor Gladkov's classic of Socialist Realism, *Cement*, likewise describes factory production as a process of necromancy. The text characterizes the factory as a "dead planet" and the protagonist, in turn, as a revenant ghost, as dead labor restored to life. *Cement: A Novel*, trans. A. S. Arthur and C. Ashleigh (New York: Ungar, 1980), p. 14.

71. Vertov's materialist necromancy was recognized by the East German playwright Heiner Müller. Müller's 1974 production play about the recovery of revolutionary remains forgotten in the soil, *Traktor*, quotes verbatim Vertov's declaration that the textile worker ought to see the worker in the factory, the worker in the factory ought to see the miner, etc., and then brings this metabiotic reverse sequence to its logical culmination: the play concludes with an apocatastasis of objectivated labor in which the graves open and "the liberation of the dead takes place in slow motion." *Traktor*, in *Werke*, ed. Frank Hörnigk, 13 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998–2011), 4:493–494, 502.

exploded in the modern era: "The realm of the dead is as extensive as the storage and transmission capabilities of a given culture," observed Friedrich Kittler.⁷² In other words, as these storage and transmission capabilities are extended through media such as cinema, so too expands the realm of the dead.

And yet presentist liquidationists such as Stalin would seek to deny the agency of these past generations. Just one year after the revolution, a dismayed Mikhail Bakhtin, for example, observed that "socialism showed no concern at all [*ne zabolit-*



Vertov. The
Eleventh Year.
1928.

sia] for the dead" and predicted that "with time the people would not forgive it for this."⁷³ This disregard for the past, apparent to Bakhtin already in 1918, would culminate a decade later with the proclamation of the Great Break. The word used by Bakhtin to designate the proper ethical relationship to the dead—"concern" (*zabota*)—reappeared the following year in a text by Lenin, a text that was itself almost certainly a source for Vertov's later meditation on Soviet affect, the film *Enthusiasm*.⁷⁴ In the 1919 text "A Great Start," Lenin contradicts Bakhtin's claim that socialism shows no such "concern": To the contrary, there Lenin describes a new community of "concern" just now beginning to emerge in the revolutionary era, a community not limited to "one's neighbors" (*blizhnye*) but one that encompassed "the farthest ones" (*dal'nye*) as well.⁷⁵ Tellingly, the word used by both Lenin and Bakhtin to

72. Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 13.

73. As recounted by a local correspondent in Nevel who attended a debate in November 1918 on "God and socialism" at which Bakhtin spoke. Quoted in K. Nevel'skaia, "M. M. Bakhtin and M. I. Kagan (Po materialam semeinogo arkhiva)," *Pamiat'*, vol. 4 (1979), p. 274.

74. Considering that *Enthusiasm* culminates in a celebration of *subbotnik* labor, it is safe to conclude that Vertov knew Lenin's 1919 brochure "A Great Start," considered to be the most important canonical analysis of the *subbotnik* movement.

75. Vladimir Lenin, "Velikii pochin," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 55 vols. (Moscow: Gos. izd-vo politicheskoi lit-ry, 1958–1965), 39:22.

describe this distal eros—"concern"—is also the Russian equivalent of the German *Sorge*, a word that Heidegger used to designate a kind of directed and purposive care, or solicitude, that, importantly, gathers together the three temporal modes of past (*Schon-sein-in-der-Welt*), present (*Sich-vorweg-sein*), and future (*Sein-bei*) into a single horizon of existence. The bond of "concern" is, according to Heidegger, unique among emotional attachments in that it explodes the confinement of affect to the immediate environs of the perceiving subject, extending this connection to those situated at other historical moments.

Zabota, concern, Sorge. All of these words identify the emotional valence of the metabiotic bond that Vertov's films establish between peoples. For Lenin, this inter-epochal axis of intimacy was the very cornerstone of revolutionary communist affect, which, unlike the more limited affective architectures of, say, the nuclear family or the tribe, extends to include those he calls "the farthest ones." Lenin's source here was of course not Bakhtin or Heidegger, neither of whom the Bolshevik leader ever read, but Nietzsche, whose *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* could be espied in his personal library in the Kremlin.⁷⁶ In that book, Nietzsche cajoled the reader:

You crowd around your neighbor and you have pretty words for it. But I say to you: your love of the neighbor [*liubov' k blizhnemu*] is your bad love of yourselves.

[...]

Do I recommend love of the neighbor to you? I prefer instead to recommend flight from the neighbor and love of the farthest!

Higher than love of the neighbor is love of the farthest and the future [*liubov' k dal'nemu i budushchemu*]; higher still than love of human beings is love of things and ghosts.⁷⁷

The terminology used by Lenin to characterize the ideal of communist affect in 1919, when he elevates concern for "the farthest ones" (*dal'nye*) over concern for "one's neighbors" (*blizhnye*), is taken directly from these lines from the Russian translation of *Zarathustra*.⁷⁸ Echoing Nietzsche and Lenin, in turn, Vertov's kino-eye, as

76. Robert Service, *Lenin. A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 2000), p. 203.

77. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ed. Robert Pippin, trans. Adrian del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 44. Russian translation as *Tak govoril Zaratustra*, trans. V. Izraztsov (St. Petersburg: Probuzhdenie, 1913).

78. Similar words also surface around the same time in the work of leftist thinkers such as Andrei Platonov. Thomas Seifrid, for example, has pointed out that the first notebook kept by Platonov when he began writing in 1921 opened with a quotation from *Zarathustra*: see *A Companion to Andrei Platonov's The Foundation Pit* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2008), p. 36. Hans Günther has similarly noted that the second chapter of *Happy Moscow* is titled "Liubov' k dal'nemu," or "Love of the Farthest Ones," with explicit reference to Nietzsche: see "Andrei Platonov und das sozialistisch-realistische Normensystem der 30er Jahre," *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, vol. 9 (1982), pp. 165–86. In

we saw, similarly connects "all of the workers scattered around the entire world through a single bond." It is a bond that transcends the humanist and presentist bias of neighbor-love, extending its embrace to "things and phantoms," to smokestacks and Scythians.

It is ultimately fitting, then, that Lenin, the architect of communist concern for "the farthest ones," would himself eventually become Vertov's most celebrated and beloved phantom. If *The Eleventh Year* analyzed the cognitive and epistemological riddles presented by metabiotic mutualism—unraveling, for example, the paradox of primitive accumulation—the hagiographic *Three Songs of Lenin* (1934) in turn explored the affective dimensions of these metabiotic bonds. The film examines an aspect of subjective experience that is utterly central to modern media societies: the capacity for intersubjectivity and intimacy without co-presence or simultaneity. In this regard, it is indicative that *Three Songs* systematically excludes the perspectives of those who were close to him. For Vertov is not interested in the testimony of Lenin's contemporaries—the *blizhnye*, or "neighbors," who knew him personally. Nadezhda Krupskaya appears fleetingly in the film, for example, but is never even identified as Lenin's widow. Vertov instead focuses on the new populations now coming to maturity a full decade after Lenin's death, subjects who never had any firsthand encounter with him. The young women in Baku, for example, lament that "we never once saw him" and "we never heard his voice." From the very outset of the film, Lenin is already lost to them, already a specter. But through cinema, photography, and phonography, it becomes possible for them to see and hear the absent leader, who elicits song, poetry, and declarations of love from these very women who never even met him. Lenin is restored to these latecomers through a vast orphic archive in celluloid.

Vertov's film exploits every possible technical strategy to re-spectralize the Bolshevik phantom and subvert the spectator's fantasy of co-presence. In this regard, the veneration of Lenin in *Three Songs* must be sharply distinguished from the pseudo-intimacy of Hollywood's celebrity system, which seeks continuously to simulate the sensation of proximity and immediacy. Lenin could not be more remote in this film. Again and again Vertov presents the archival film and photo stock of Lenin in ways that foreground its status as a secondhand, mediatized image. Thus the picture of the bench near Lenin's house shown at the film's beginning is flagged as a snapshot by the intertitle "Here is the bench made famous in a photograph": Enframed in this way, it is rigorously isolated diegetically from the Now of the women in Baku. Likewise, throughout the film Vertov flagrantly manipulates the footage of Lenin at political rallies, changing its speed

Platonov's novels, this "love of the farthest" coalesces around the theme of orphanhood and the potential that the rupture of traditional bloodlines holds for reconceiving social bonds (e.g., Nastya in *The Foundation Pit* or Moscow in *Happy Moscow*). To be sure, in Platonov's novels, the loss of the parent-child relationship is bound up with a deep melancholia, but this rupture also enables a recovery of relations obscured by the restricted kinship systems of bourgeois society.

and looping it, first forward and then backward, to remind the spectator insistently that she is looking not at the living man but at a mechanical reproduction that has been subjected to postproduction alteration. Finally, towards the end of the second song, when the thunder of the cannons at Lenin's burial ushers in a moment of silence, Vertov stages the motionlessness that follows through two entirely different means: While the cinematic footage from the 1924 funeral procession is, at that moment, literally arrested in a series of uncanny still frames, these frozen images are intercut with close-ups shot a decade later of motionless peasants in distant lands, although the latter are frozen not like the photographs from 1924 but instead stand still, blinking and unsteady, as the camera continues to roll; and then, to further underscore the historical remoteness of Lenin, this funeral sequence concludes with a group shot of Azerbaijani women sitting down all at once in the seats of a theater, reminding the audience that these women "never once saw him" and that they, like the audience, had in fact been sitting in a movie house the entire time.

To be sure, Vertov was hardly the first to exploit the media as catalysts for distal cathexis. As is well known, the medium of print, for example, had forged a robust alliance with a pair of newly emerging social apparatuses in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, establishing the two primary vectors of ideological indoctrination that would come to define the modern subject as we know it: the nuclear family as the orthopedic of psychic individuation⁷⁹ and the nation-state as the framework of socio-linguistic identity.⁸⁰ Media, in other words, have always produced "imagined communities." But what distinguishes the collectivity posited by Vertov is its fierce repudiation of the presentist bias found in the other social configurations that have dominated in modernity. Unlike the "neighbor love" of the nuclear family, it extends community to "the farthest ones"; unlike the nation-state, it does not rely on the conceit of the revolution as a point of legendary origin. It is apt, then, that Vertov's interrogation of the category of contemporaneity is precisely what makes his work so actual today, six decades after the filmmaker's death: at a moment when capitalism is promoting a myth about the frictionless synchronization of existence around the world and is marketing under the slogan of instantaneity a reactionary phenomenology of co-presence, Vertov returns to reveal a different ecology of history, one responsive to the metabiotic relations between people across time and the political exigency of the nonsynchronous. With the collapse of the two-world system of the Cold War and the resulting diversification of global temporalities, Vertov's work has acquired new importance and

79. Friedrich Kittler explores the collusion between literary Romanticism, the nuclear family, and the German bureaucratic state apparatus in *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), esp. pp. 3-173.

80. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

currency. In this regard, parallels can again be seen between the fortunes of Vertov and those of Trotsky, whose theorization of structural nonsynchronicity and technical heterogeneity has become an important resource once again for critics of globalization seeking to understand a world system in which uneven development turns out increasingly to be the rule rather than the exception.⁸¹ Under such conditions, instead of the presentist rhetoric of eventhood and of messianic rupture proposed by neo-Stalinist currents within radical philosophy today, what is needed are strategies of persistence and obstinacy, a social attunement toward metabiotic relations, and a renewed commitment to permanent revolution.

81. It is telling that, since Stalin's death in 1953, nearly all of the revolutionary leaders, from Bukharin to Zinoviev, have been rehabilitated with a single glaring exception: Trotsky. Like Vertov, Trotsky never found a place with the two-world system of the Cold War. His idea of permanent revolution was "anathema equally to apologists of capitalism and to those of 'actually existing socialism.'" Hugo Radice and Bill Dunn, "Permanent Revolution: Results and Prospects 100 Years On," in *100 Years of Permanent Revolution*, ed. Dunn and Radice (London: Pluto Press, 2006), p. 2. Given the challenges faced by the left in the post-Cold War global order, Žižek suggests that "perhaps the signifier 'Trotsky' is the most appropriate designation of that which is worth redeeming in the Leninist legacy." "Lenin's Choice," in V. I. Lenin, *Revolution at the Gates: A Selection of Writings from February to October 1917*, ed. Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 2002), p. 306.



*Aleksandr Rodchenko. Model Workers' Club, Soviet pavilion
at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et
Industriels in Paris. 1925. © Estate of Alexander
Rodchenko/RAO, Moscow/VAGA, New York.*

Labor Demonstrations:
Aleksei Gan's *Island of the Young
Pioneers*, Dziga Vertov's *Kino-Eye*,
and the Rationalization of
Artistic Labor*

KRISTIN ROMBERG

Of Russian Constructivism's manifold demonstration pieces, the model workers' club that Aleksandr Rodchenko exhibited in Paris in 1925 is one of the best. Its economy of materials and transparent structural logic exemplify Constructivism's rationalist bid for a socialist aesthetics, while its function as a club models the ideal of enlightened recreation as the partner to unalienated labor.¹ Visible in the well-known photograph of the club are posters for the two films that are the subject of this essay. Both were conceived as demonstration pieces in their own right. The poster in the center, also designed by Rodchenko, is for Dziga Vertov's first feature-length film, *Kino-Eye*. The one to the right, with the pared-down typographic layout, advertises Aleksei Gan's *Island of the Young Pioneers*.² Both films were made in 1924 and featured the Young Pioneers, the Soviet youth organization for children ages ten to fifteen founded in 1922 on the model of the Boy Scouts. Both were produced as examples of a new approach to filmmaking called "the demonstration of everyday life." But while *Kino-Eye* has gone on to be celebrated as the closest thing to Constructivism in cinema,³ *Island* has only been mentioned in passing, and even then as a complete disaster.⁴

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1. On the workers' club, see Christina Kiaer, *Imagine No Possessions: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), pp. 198–240.

2. It is unclear why the poster omits "Island" from the title. The large "7" dominating the composition may refer to the seventh reel, the most successful segment of the film, according to G. M. Boltianskii, "Iunye pionery," *Kino-Nedelia* 35 (September 30, 1924), p. 7.

3. Important treatments of Vertov in terms of Constructivism include Annette Michelson, "Man with the Movie Camera: From Magician to Epistemologist," *Artforum* 10, no. 7 (March 1972), pp. 60–72, and Vlada Petric, *Constructivism in Film: The Man with a Movie Camera: A Cinematic Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Yuri Tsivian parses the differences in "Turning Objects, Toppled Pictures: Give and Take between Vertov's Films and Constructivist Art," *October* 121 (2007), pp. 92–110.

4. For example, Yuri Tsivian, "Dziga Vertov and His Time," in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian, trans. Julian Graffy (Gemonia: Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 2004), p. 2. The film is only briefly noted in the scant literature on Gan: Aleksandr Lavrentiev, "Zagadki Alekseia Gana," *Da* 2–3 (1995), p. 3; Aleksandr Lavrentiev, *Aleksei Gan* (Moscow: Russkii avangard, 2010), p. 117.

We have no way of judging whether Gan's film was any good in an autonomous sense; all that remains are nine partial frames (or possibly still photos of production) published in magazines when the film was released and a list of intertitles in the archive of Proletkino, the company that distributed the film.⁵ What we do have is ample evidence that the film touched some important nerves, Vertov's not least among them. Formerly one of Gan's closest allies, he stopped speaking to Gan because of the film. Contemporary reviews were no warmer, ranging from merely dismissive to mercilessly derisive. As for the Pioneers, multiple papers printed statements of disapproval under the headline "Pioneers Against Film about Them."⁶ These responses can be taken as evidence of the film's failure, but they also provide a means of reconstructing the film through its reflection, or from the outside in. Thus, the starting point and backbone of this investigation will be the circumstances surrounding its production, and in particular the break with Vertov. How could two films with so much in common, embarked upon by close allies, manifest such radically different understandings of "the demonstration of everyday life"?

5. Anna Konopleva refers to fragments preserved at Gosfilmofond in 1986, but it was not there in 2006. Anna Konopleva, "Aleksei Mikhailovich Gan," *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* 49 (2000), p. 214.

6. *Rabochii zritel'* 24 (October 26, 1924), p. 21, and *Kino-Gazeta* 61 (November 4, 1924), p. 2.

Прозв. Пролеткино



„ОСТРОВ ЮНЫХ ПИОНЕРОВ“

*Aleksei Gan. Images from
Island of the Young
Pioneers, as seen in
Cinema Week. 1924.*

„ОСТРОВ ЮНЫХ ПИОНЕРОВ“

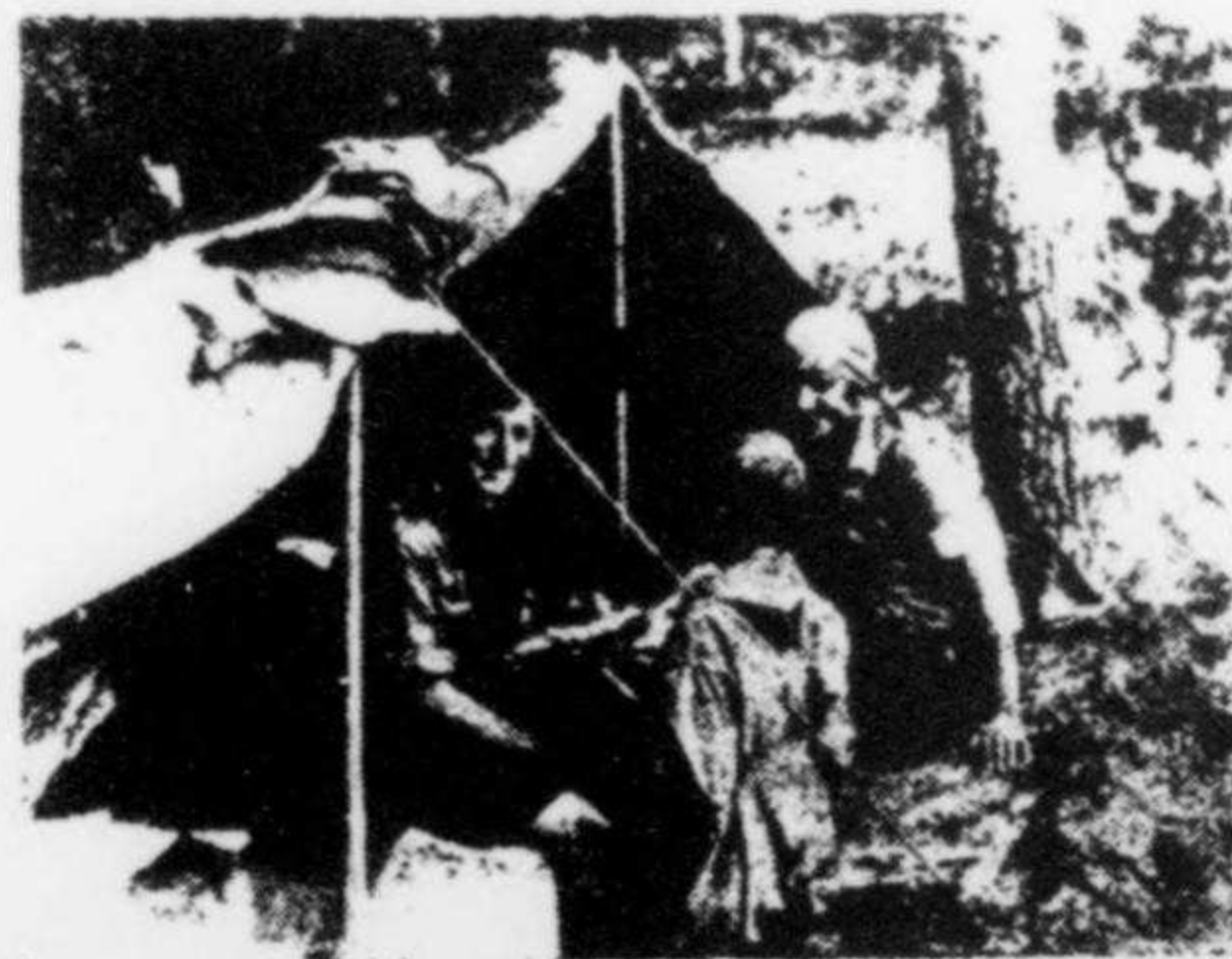
(Производство Пролеткино)



Юный барабанщик.]

„Остров юных пионеров“

(Прозв. Пролеткино)



В паре

„ОСТРОВ ЮНЫХ ПИОНЕРОВ“.



**П
Р
О
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О**

упреждаю — это не сказка,
) действительность — ибо такой

ную забаву и идейную подкладку последние
отвергают, памятуя пословицу — «яйца ку

*Gen. Montage of images from Island of the
Young Pioneers as seen in Proletkino. 1924.*



Gan. Island of the Young Pioneers. 1924.

Opportunities for visual analysis are obviously limited, but if we place one of the extant images from Gan's *Island*—the one of Pioneers in a field—side-by-side with a similar shot from *Kino-Eye*, tentative contours of their differences begin to emerge. The striking formal geometry generated by Vertov's receding line of Pioneers as they carve their way through the wheat contrasts with the hammy sense of suspense created by Gan's, who crouch in the tall grass like highway robbers. Vertov's viewer is encouraged to fall in line behind the Pioneers and march off into the endless expanse opened up by the camera's frame; Gan's Pioneers instead peer out at us in a scattershot horizontal, like a chorus line holding their final pose, or a circle for the viewer to complete. Both images have a constructed quality and military overtones appropriate to the Pioneers' mission—like the Boy Scouts, the Pioneer organization was founded to prepare the next generation for military service—but *Kino-Eye* expresses that mission through regimentation, while *Island* has the children pose as a rough-and-tumble band of brothers.



Dziga Vertov. Kino-Eye. 1924.

The sense of discipline and precision in Vertov's image is consonant with other aspects of his filmmaking practice: the way that he shunned subjective artistry, ceding agency to the camera; his understanding of himself and his *kinoks* as mere camera operators and cobblers of footage⁷—art workers on the cinematic assembly line; and most of all, his faith in the objectivity of the mechanism, its ability to uncover life's contradictions without bias. Only the impartial perspective of the camera's eye—the “kino-eye”—could “catch life unawares,” as he put it, producing a *kino-pravda*, or cinema truth, “a communist decoding of . . . life as it is.”⁸ As Rodchenko has understood in his poster, the parallel between the kino-eye and the Pioneers was a primary theme of *Kino-Eye*. The Pioneers' very youth lent them a viewpoint that, like the camera's, was unprejudiced by experience. In the film, Vertov has his Pioneers express the camera's mechanical objectivity in numerous ways: the organization of the field

7. The group of filmmakers gathered around Vertov called themselves the *kinoks*, a portmanteau combining *kino*, or “cinema,” and *oculus*, or “eyelike.”

8. “Life caught unawares” is the subtitle to *Kino-Eye*. Vertov talks about communist decoding in “Kino-Eye,” in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, ed. Annette Michelson, trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley: University of California, 1984), p. 66.



Vertov. Kino-Eye. 1924.

scene is one, as is the way that they nearly always walk in lockstep. The mechanical rhythm of their synchronized strides—somewhat natural in marching scenes but conspicuous in more casual situations—aptly mimics the steady advance of celluloid and the drop of the shutter as the kino-eye clicks along, taking its measurements at regular intervals.

In the case of *Gan's Island*, the evidence is still far too meager for extensive extrapolation, but the staginess of the field scene, which is also present in the other extant images, is enough to suggest a contradiction between Gan's project and Vertov's cinema-truth. In the following pages, this gap will widen into a chasm between two competing understandings of what a socialist art, and life, should be. Rodchenko's inclusion of both posters in his club in 1925 shows that words used to describe Constructivism's aesthetics—such as "rationality," "economy," and "logic"—describe contested, shifting, and normatively constituted concepts as much as objective givens. In this respect, the club is an even better demonstration piece than we knew.

The Rationalization of Artistic Labor

What makes the break between Gan and Vertov especially intriguing is how closely they had associated in the two years leading up to the films' production. Indeed, the two films appear to have been produced together as part of a common project. Understanding how the joint endeavor turned into an irreconcilable fissure requires a somewhat roundabout preface contextualizing the films within contemporary discussions surrounding the rationalization of artistic labor.

Although Gan is best known for co-founding the First Working Group of Constructivists in 1921, his primary experience was as a political organizer. He worked with the anarchist movement until midway through 1918, when he joined the Communist Party and a series of Bolshevik cultural and political enlightenment organizations in whose employ he remained until 1924.⁹ The slogan-based rhetoric for which he is known (e.g., "Constructivism declares uncompromising war on art!") stems from this training.¹⁰ When Gan and Vertov became acquainted in the spring of 1922, Vertov and his *kinoks* had just begun releasing their newsreel-derived *Kino-Pravda* series of films composed of candid footage. Gan promoted the series as the kernel of new socialist direction in cinema that he called "the demonstration of everyday life." He gave Vertov space in *Kino-Fot*, the magazine he edited and designed in 1922 and 1923,¹¹ and published an agitational booklet in 1923 entitled *Long Live the Demonstration of Everyday Life!* (hereafter referred to as *Long Live*), in which he analyzed *Kino-Pravda* as an evolving experiment in the new film form. He also argued from Vertov's corner in a string of polemical public debates and discussional screenings.¹² A photograph of 1923 allows for speculation about the relationship: Gan, in his military uniform on the right, holds forth after dinner; Vertov and his wife and fellow *kinok*, Elizaveta

9. See Catherine Cooke, "Sources of a Radical Mission in the Early Soviet Profession: Aleksei Gan and the Moscow Anarchists," in *Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary Perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Neil Leach (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 13–37; and Kristin Romberg, "Aleksei Gan's Constructivism, 1918–1928" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2010).

10. Aleksei Gan, *Konstruktivizm* (Tver': Tverskoe izdatel'stvo, 1922), pp. 3, 21, 70.

11. Apparently the magazine was co-produced by a loose group of which Vertov was a part, although Gan was officially listed as the editor and publisher and the editorial office was in his apartment. Esfir' Shub, "O sebe," in *Zhizn' moia—kinematograf* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1972), p. 244.

12. Gan has been well represented in the literature through his participation in cinematic



Dziga Vertov (left), Elizaveta Svilova, and Aleksei Gan. Circa 1923. State Archive of Literature and Art, Moscow.

Svilova, listen politely, although it seems they may have heard his shtick before. There were undoubtedly power dynamics at play. Nonetheless, by the summer of 1924, Vertov considered Gan his greatest champion.¹³

New evidence suggests that the decision to make two films with the Pioneers in 1924 may have been motivated by a plan to cultivate new cadres of worker-filmmakers sponsored by the Society of Builders of Proletarian Cinema, or the OSPK (*Obshchestvo stroitel'ei proletarskogo kino*).¹⁴ A typescript preserved in Proletkino's archive includes Gan's and Vertov's names in the roster of committee members before delineating the campaign's three phases. The first stage was the organization of public debates and publication of agitational literature, much as Gan and Vertov had done in 1922 and 1923. The second was drawing working-class participants into Proletkino's projects "as actors [*naturshchiki*], scriptwriters, and so on." Finally, they would train interested parties in specialized areas of film production.¹⁵ The second phase provides a simple explanation for why they might have drafted the Pioneers into their films. A letter from Vertov to Gan's partner, the filmmaker Esfir' Shub, further suggests that Vertov proposed they produce the pair of films sometime in the spring or summer of 1924, donating a part of his own Goskino budget and offering the services of his brother, the cameraman Mikhail Kaufman, to Gan.¹⁶

The first step in unraveling the ensuing misunderstanding is to recognize that Gan and Vertov's common ground in pre-1924 debates was largely defined by a common enemy. They both positioned themselves against what was then called "played" (*igrovoi*) film—studio films produced with scripts, sets, directors, and actors—arguing instead for "non-played" (*neigrovoi*) film, those made of candid footage such as *Kino-Pravda*. Although awkward in English, the terminology evokes a straightforward set of associations in Russian. The Russian word *igra* means both theatrical "acting" and "play" in the sense of children's play, but unlike the English "acting" it has no relationship to words for performing an action in real life, such as *deistvo* (action), *deistvovat'* (to act), or *deistvitel'nost'* (actuality, or reality). Gan in particular enjoyed exploiting the punning potential therein, lambasting theater and cinema professionals for "rushing off to endlessly play and play [or 'playact and playact' (*igrat' i igrat'*)] further and further from reality (*deistvitel'nosti*)." ¹⁷ One rationale for valuing action (*deistvo*) over playacting (*igra*) was the cinema-truth angle espoused by Vertov. From this

debates. For example, in Tsivian's *Lines of Resistance*, and in *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896–1939*, ed. Ian Christie and Richard Taylor, trans. Richard Taylor (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

13. Dziga Vertov, "On *Kino-Pravda*," in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, p. 43.

14. The OSPK was founded by Proletkino with the purpose of agitating for socialist forms of cinema. It was conceived in July 1923, and preliminary meetings began in October.

15. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11, l. 177. Although undated, the document was likely produced between the OSPK's conception in July 1923 and sometime shortly after it began official meetings in March 1924.

16. RGALI f. 2091, op. 2, d. 305, l. 1. For reasons that remain unclear, Kaufman did not actually work on Gan's film, which was filmed by Mikhail Vladimirkii.

17. Aleksei Gan, "Nasha bor'ba," *Vestnik teatra* 67 (September 7, 1920), p. 2; republished in Aleksei Gan, "Bor'ba za 'massovoe deistvo'," *O teatre* (Tver: Tverskoe izdatel'stvo, 1922), p. 72.

point of view, the opposition between the played and the unplayed mapped onto the difference between fantasy and reality, or fiction and truth. These are the terms that have generally structured scholarly debate. Gan's rhetoric suggests something else, however: a mapping of action and playacting onto working and shirking. These terms are less at home in the literature on cinema than in discussions surrounding the rationalization of labor.

It is only a small simplification to say that the question of rationalizing labor was the one that most defined the Soviet 1920s. The combination of material poverty and the threat of a second world war motivated a succession of proposals on how to increase industrial production, from Taylorist ideas for shaving seconds off each stop in the assembly line to the enthusiasm for labor of the First Five-Year Plan. Like the Pioneer organization, labor-rationalization campaigns were often justified in terms of the collective goal of military preparedness. As labor-organization enthusiast Platon Kerzhentsev noted in 1923, minutes wasted added up to "airplanes of our air force" lost.¹⁸ Yet Taylorism's promise of more airplanes per hour was tricky to rationalize in an ideological sense. Lenin had written about Taylorism prior to the Revolution as a capitalist technology for exploiting workers. Only in the most dire of economic straits in 1918 did he suggest they at least "raise the question" of "what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system," "try it out," and possibly "adapt it to [their] own ends."¹⁹

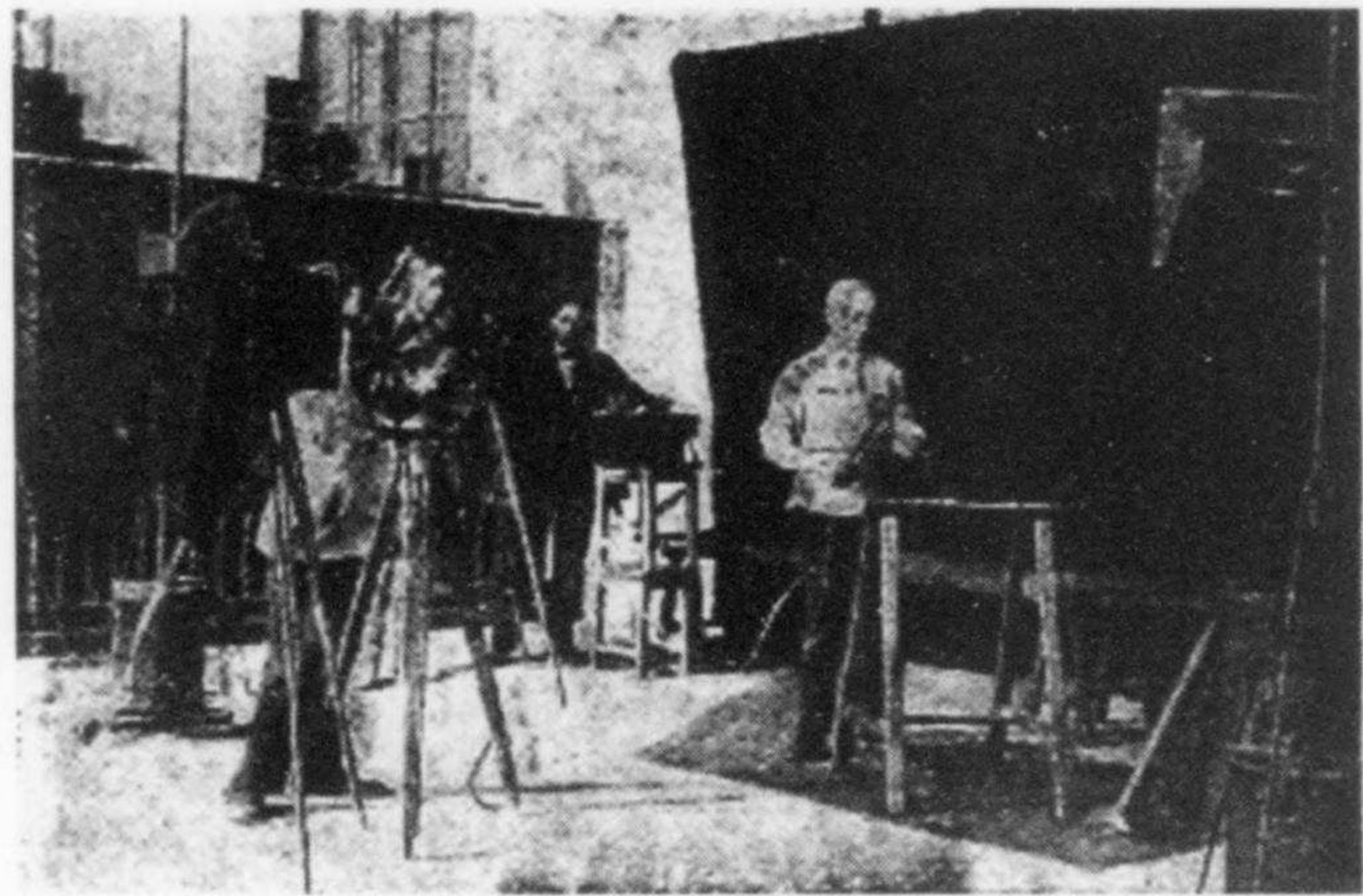
This spawned several years of debate on the socialist adaptation of Taylorist techniques. The most prominent voices were Aleksei Gastev, a worker-poet and union organizer, and Aleksandr Bogdanov, the polymath founder of Proletkul't.²⁰ Gastev argued that a strategic implementation of Taylorism would flatten the hierarchy in existing factories by eliminating both the most highly skilled jobs and the brute heavy lifting, so that nearly everyone's job would involve the execution of a standardized routine. These routines could be optimized by labor scientists to increase production efficiency, while also producing truly proletarian subjects who understood themselves not as bourgeois individuals but as parts of a larger system, or, in Gastev's words, "cogs in a giant machine."²¹ The creation of these cog-subjects relied on the simultaneous creation of labor scientists. To this end, in 1920 Gastev founded a Central Institute for Labor, or TsIT, to analyze workers' movements and develop new working routines. Bogdanov, for his part, rejected Gastev's new hierarchy of specialist and cog as both un-communist and short-sighted, arguing instead that modernization would increasingly automate routine tasks, creating a demand not for cogs but for more creative skilled workers. These

18. Platon Kerzhentsev, "Vremia Stroit Aeroplany," *Bor'ba za Vremia* (Moscow: Krasnaia Nov', 1924), p. 3.

19. Vladimir Lenin, "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," in Lenin, *Collected Works*, trans. Clemens Dutt, 4th ed. (Moscow: Progress, 1965), 27:257-59.

20. Kendall Bailes provides an excellent overview in "Aleksei Gastev and the Controversy over Taylorism, 1918-1924," *Soviet Studies* 29:3 (1977), pp. 373-94.

21. Aleksei Gastev, "O tendentsiakh proletarskoi kul'tury," *Proletarskaia kultura* 9-10 (June-July 1919), pp. 35-46.



TsIT scientists filming a worker in "Photo-Cinema Laboratory #1." Circa 1922.

workers, he contended, would be capable of switching roles, able both to organize tasks and execute them in a spirit of "comradely cooperation."²² In the end, Gastev's approach won out. Proletkul't was shut down late in 1920 and TsIT was granted state funding for its laboratory research on metal-cutting techniques the following summer.

Gan was involved in a corresponding campaign for the rationalization of artistic labor during these years. It is no coincidence that the First Working Group of Constructivists developed its frugal aesthetic of "nothing accidental, nothing unaccounted for" in the spring of 1921.²³ But how exactly did Gan position Constructivism in relation to the positions on offer? He certainly spoke about the First Working Group as an effort to circumvent relegation to cog status: "We did not want to play the dummy who just blindly does what he is told," he stated at a meeting between Gastev and LEF in 1925.²⁴ Concepts like laboratory work and the artist-engineer, fundamental to important interpretations of Constructivism,²⁵ also suggest aspirations to join the upper tier of Gastev's cog-specialist model. There were artists who went that route; most prominently, Vsevolod Meierkhold's application of Taylorist ideas in his biomechanical actor training relied on a similarly two-tiered hierarchy.²⁶ Indeed, Gan criticized Meierkhold on this point.²⁷ Gan himself seems to have intended a more Bogdanovian solution.²⁸ That is, in the quote above, his "we" applied to everyone.

22. Aleksandr Bogdanov, "O tendentsiakh proletarskoi kul'tury (Otvét A. Gastevu)," *Proletarskaia kul'tura* 9–10 (June–July 1919), p. 51.

23. This was Rodchenko's phrase, cited in Gan, *Konstruktivizm*, p. 65.

24. RGALI f. 2852, op. 1, d. 115, l. 37.

25. Most foundationally in Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven: Yale, 1989). The concepts are complicated in Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

26. On biomechanics, see Alma Law and Mel Gordon, *Meyerhold, Eisenstein, and Biomechanics: Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1996).

27. Aleksei Gan, "V poriadke ideologicheskoi bor'by . . . 'Smert' Tarelkina," *Zrelischa* 16 (December 12–18, 1922), p. 10.

28. Gan drew heavily on Bogdanov's thinking. Although he did not often make the link explicit for political reasons, he quoted from Bogdanov extensively in his *Konstruktivizm* of 1922.

Gan's position emerges most clearly in the longer passage about action and playacting briefly quoted earlier. First published in the fall of 1920 with regard to theater, the text responds to those advocating for the restoration of "professional theater," which is to say, traditional theatrical forms and the jobs that went with them. He writes,

For [professional theater's supporters] the routine tasks of our revolutionary day seem to be somebody else's problem. In one way or another they still accept an ideal of communism, or communism in the ideal, but whatever is heavy and dirty in the struggle for communism makes them shiver, and they rush off to endlessly play[act] and play[act] further and further from reality.

We don't want to play[act]. We are working seriously on those tasks that advance the conditions of the present moment.

The path of freed labor! That is real living happiness.

It is the free will [*volia*] of the communist, . . . of labor that has triumphed.

To not understand these practical truths is to not understand the real properties of the proletarian revolution.²⁹

Gan's "practical truths" may be oblique in an aesthetic context, but they are straightforward in most others. For Gan, communism *was* the triumph of labor (as a class and an activity). It meant labor freed from hierarchies of power. The liquidation of bourgeois forms of freedom and happiness, contingent on positions of privilege carved out at the expense of others, was simply one corollary. In Gan's view, play-acting and art-work were false compounds that masked privilege; they had no place in a communist rationalization of labor.

Gan carried these practical truths into similar debates in the fledgling cinema industry in 1922–23. At the time, there was a push to revive a studio-based industry. Would-be fiction filmmakers were particularly encouraged in the beginning of 1923, when Lenin's Directive on Cinema was made public. It not only declared cinema to be the most important art, but also suggested that "a certain proportion" of film programs be entertaining, not just enlightening.³⁰ Surveying the situation in the fall, Gan wrote,

It is difficult to predict how objective conditions . . . will shape up.

29. Gan, "Nasha bor'ba," p. 2.

30. Vladimir Lenin, "Directive on Cinema Affairs," in *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896–1939*, ed. Ian Christie and Richard Taylor, trans. Richard Taylor (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 56. Lenin issued the Directive to the Deputy People's Commissar for Enlightenment E. A. Litkens in January 1922, but it only became public in 1923.

For now I only fear that efforts are not directed beneficially. Here's why:

The cinema business is extremely complicated, with a whole set of industrial, technical, and chemical processes.

We are desperately impoverished in this sense. All our hopes are abroad.

Furthermore, until now, a huge role has been played in the film industry by those essentially unproductive elements called artistic personnel.

When it comes to cinema production in the technical sense, our people still only talk, think, and dream . . .

The general frame of mind is to make one's own "high-art" film, a revolutionary-art film, an agitational-art film, a united, indivisible, and, yet again, an art film, a film artistic to the point of oblivion, and an art film against all odds.

But how? By what means? With what materials?

Who knows! (*Neizvestno!*)

We don't want to know! That's how we get art film of no repute (*neizvestno-khudozhestvennaia kinematografiia*).

Isn't it time to seriously think about . . . the things that actually really need to be developed in Soviet cinema?

And isn't it time to activate live human nature, the heroes of our real everyday life?³¹

Gan points again to the shortsightedness and narrow self-interest of those angling for the old kind of artistic freedom, although his argument has shifted away from communism's essential truths toward a simple coming to grips with economic facts. Given that there was no money for actors, directors, and sets, they might reconsider the *value*, or savings, inherent in the "demonstration of everyday life." As he put it, candid footage was not only "unique" but "cheap."³² All one needed was a man with a movie camera.

31. Aleksei Gan, "Nakanune kino sezona," *Zrelishcha* 54 (September 26, 1923), p. 12.

32. Aleksei Gan, "Kino avangard," *Kino-Fot* 2 (September 8-15, 1922), p. 1.

Needless to say, this attitude did not win Gan many friends among those struggling to make their art films, and these politics motivated considerable ridicule in the press: Gan's demonstration of everyday life was redubbed "the demonstration of stupidity";³³ the man appearing at public debates was not Gan but a "hooli-Gan" (*khuli-Gan*); and the *kinoks* for whom he advocated were a *kinococcus*—that is, a cinema-bacteria plaguing the industry.³⁴ Vertov and his *kinoks* were the very few who stood to gain from Gan's rationalization efforts—which only deepens the mystery surrounding the question of what could have possibly been so offensive about *Island* that Vertov would turn on Gan.

The Script

According to contemporary reviews, the crux of the controversy was that Gan had based *Island* on a script. That is, after all his talk about the demonstration of everyday life and rants against playacting, he had essentially employed Young Pioneers as actors in a dramatized version of their own everyday life. As one reviewer eagerly noted, the film also had a director, who was none other than the "uncompromising" Gan himself.³⁵ The reviewers' impression validates our initial perception of a stagy quality in *Island's* extant frames. The intertitles further affirm it. The second one plainly announces a script by Vladimir Verevkin and direction by Aleksei Gan:

A film [*kino-kartina*] from the everyday life of young Leninists. In episodes with performances [*s igrami*]. The episodes are from the life of the Pioneers of the Bauman neighborhood. The performances [*igry*] are from a script by Vladimir Verevkin. Directed [*stavil*] by Aleksei Gan. Filmed by Mikhail Vladimirkii.³⁶

The word choices in this introductory intertitle are striking considering Gan's earlier rhetoric. He uses *kino-kartina*, or "moving picture," with the latter word connoting traditional tableau forms like painting, rather than the more scientific-sounding *fil'm*; and after all of the insults he had hurled at *igra*, he described *Island* as a series of performances, or "episodes with *igrami*."

It certainly seemed that, given the opportunity to make his own Pioneer art film, Gan had sold out. Yet he persisted in defending the film as part of the same project he had been pursuing all along. "In *Island of the Pioneers*," he wrote, "I uncompromisingly carried out the fundamental tasks of Constructivism: the prac-

33. "Obzor pechati," *Kino-Gazeta* 3 (September 25, 1923), p. 2; and V. E., "Demonstratsiia gluposti," *Kino-Gazeta* 3 (September 25, 1923), p. 2.

34. Aleksandr Anoshchenko, "Kinokoki," in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian, trans. Julian Graffy (Gemonia: Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 2004), pp. 90–92.

35. V. E., "Ostrov iunikh pionerov," *Kino-Gazeta* 56 (September 30, 1924), p. 2.

36. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11, ll. 8–9.

tical realization of forms of rationalized artistic labor in cinema." When he elaborated on what that meant—"there is not a whiff in any of my work . . . of professional acting"³⁷—the qualifying adjective clarifies that his rationalization plan did not exclude acting per se, just paid professional actors. Promotional materials echoed his claim that no professionals had been employed. Only amateurs—Pioneers, Komsomol members, and workers—had participated.³⁸ He had proved that a film with "a certain proportion" of fiction could be made on a shoestring if labor was free. He had also blurred the line between reality and fiction that Vertov considered sacrosanct.

Vertov began distancing himself from his former colleague in an article of October 21. He started by affirming the terms that Gan had laid down in 1920—"the very term 'art' is counter-revolutionary in essence, since it shelters a whole caste of privileged people"—before moving on to separate himself from Gan's more recent endeavors:

In destroying . . . the term "art," we should not, of course, bring it back in another form, let's say under the sauce of "artistic labor." We must instead finally establish that *there is no border between artistic and non-artistic labor.*

What is Aleksei Gan's mistake?

The fundamental mistake made by the official opponent of art, Aleksei Gan, is that, in turning away from the "professional spirit of almighty acting," he forces Pioneers to be actors under the slogan of "the rationalization of artistic labor."

Gan's fundamental mistake is that, in overcoming the bureaucratic formalism (?) of criticism, he "draws" [*vovlekaet*] the perfectly innocent Young Pioneers into art, allowing himself to do so for the triumph "of *artistic labor* within the cinema sphere."

We, of course, would prefer dry newsreel to the interference of a script into daily life and into the work of the people living on our planet . . .

We do not prevent anyone else from living.

We only film facts. . . . We consider our chief task to be explaining the world as it is.³⁹

37. Aleksei Gan, "Da zdravstvuet demonstratsiia byta," *Proletkino* 4-5 (August 1924), p. 18.

38. "Pionery na ekrane," *Vecherniaia Moskva* 217 (September 22, 1924), p. 3; and Nikolai Iudin, "Proizvodstvo Proletkino. Ostrov iunikh pionerov," *Proletkino* 4-5 (August 1924), pp. 17-18.

39. Dziga Vertov, "An Answer to Five Questions," in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian, trans. Julian Graffy (Gemonia: Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 2004), pp. 92-95. I have altered the translation in consultation with the original text: Dziga Vertov, "Otvét na piat voprosov," *Kino-Gazeta* 43 (October 21, 1924), p. 2.

While for most of the industry Gan's mistake was replacing a lot of good jobs with unpaid volunteers, for Vertov it was that he had tainted the perfectly artless Pioneers by drawing them into art. Either way, Vertov and the cinema industry were now the ones united by a common enemy (Gan).

The near hysterical level of ridicule expressed in Vertov's article, with its abundant scare quotes and parenthetical question mark, suggests that his rebuke was motivated by something more than principle. Given the timing of publication—a full month after the premiere of *Island* but only ten days before *Kino-Eye's*—Vertov was likely anxious that *Kino-Eye* might be sucked into the *Island* debacle. The shared Pioneer theme and close association in debates were obvious reasons for concern. Further, as reviewers eventually pointed out, many of *Kino-Eye's* scenes also appear staged. For example, in the sequence where the Pioneers enter a café and confront its patrons about the hazards to society represented by drinking and smoking—apparently they spread tuberculosis—it's conceivable that the patrons are examples of “life caught unawares,” but surely the Pioneer girl asking for donations and the children who hover in the windows and drop fliers on



Vertov. *Kino-Eye*. 1924.



Vertov. *Kino-Eye*. 1924.

the men drinking below have been coordinated. Vertov also seems to have mixed Pioneer actor-participants with undirected bystanders in the scene where the Pioneers query merchants at the market about their prices. Vertov always maintained that he constructed these scenes—indeed, these two in particular—entirely via montage,⁴⁰ and close examination reveals that this may have been true, at least more or less. Many of the “conversations” are pieced together of close-ups, thus plausibly leaving undisturbed “the work of the people living on our planet.” Still, reviewers noted the similarity to *Island* and assumed that Vertov had staged his scenes too.⁴¹

I leave it to other scholars to debate whether Vertov actually staged footage (most now assume that he did) and whether, if so, this means that his films were “played.” Important here is how this possibility was understood publicly

40. Vertov, “Kino-Eye,” p. 76.

41. Vladimir Erofeev, “Kino-Eye,” in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian, trans. Julian Graffy (Gemonia: Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 2004), pp. 105–06.

and mobilized politically in contemporary debates, and his contemporaries certainly treated the film's allegedly staged portions as a compromise of Vertov's aesthetic program.⁴² Whatever the subtleties of his filmmaking practice, Vertov had staked his reputation in those years on the objectivity of his approach. Although his montage was often inventive, the authenticity of the images themselves was key to the integrity of the project. He compared the *kino-eye* to devices associated with scientific observation, such as telescopes and microscopes,⁴³ perhaps sensing that such claims underwrote the rationale for his project's existence within the technophilic frame of mind that saw Gastev's TsIT funded and Bogdanov's Proletkul't shut down. The perception that the Pioneers were acting was especially problematic because, as noted earlier, the Pioneers stand in for the *kino-eye* in the film, demonstrating the camera's ability to expose life's contradictions via an unbiased perspective. The café and the market sequences just described both depict children who catch their unsuspecting elders unawares—in one, they observe undetected from a second-story window before confronting the adults with facts about drinking and tuberculosis in the form of fliers thrown down in a surprise attack; in the other, they interrogate vendors in the market and record their findings in order to reveal pricing discrepancies. Vertov perhaps draws the parallel between the Pioneers and the *kino-eye* most pointedly when he deploys the keyhole effect, as in the shot where a Pioneer perches in a tree observing something offscreen as we—or rather the camera's round lens—observe the

42. Ibid.

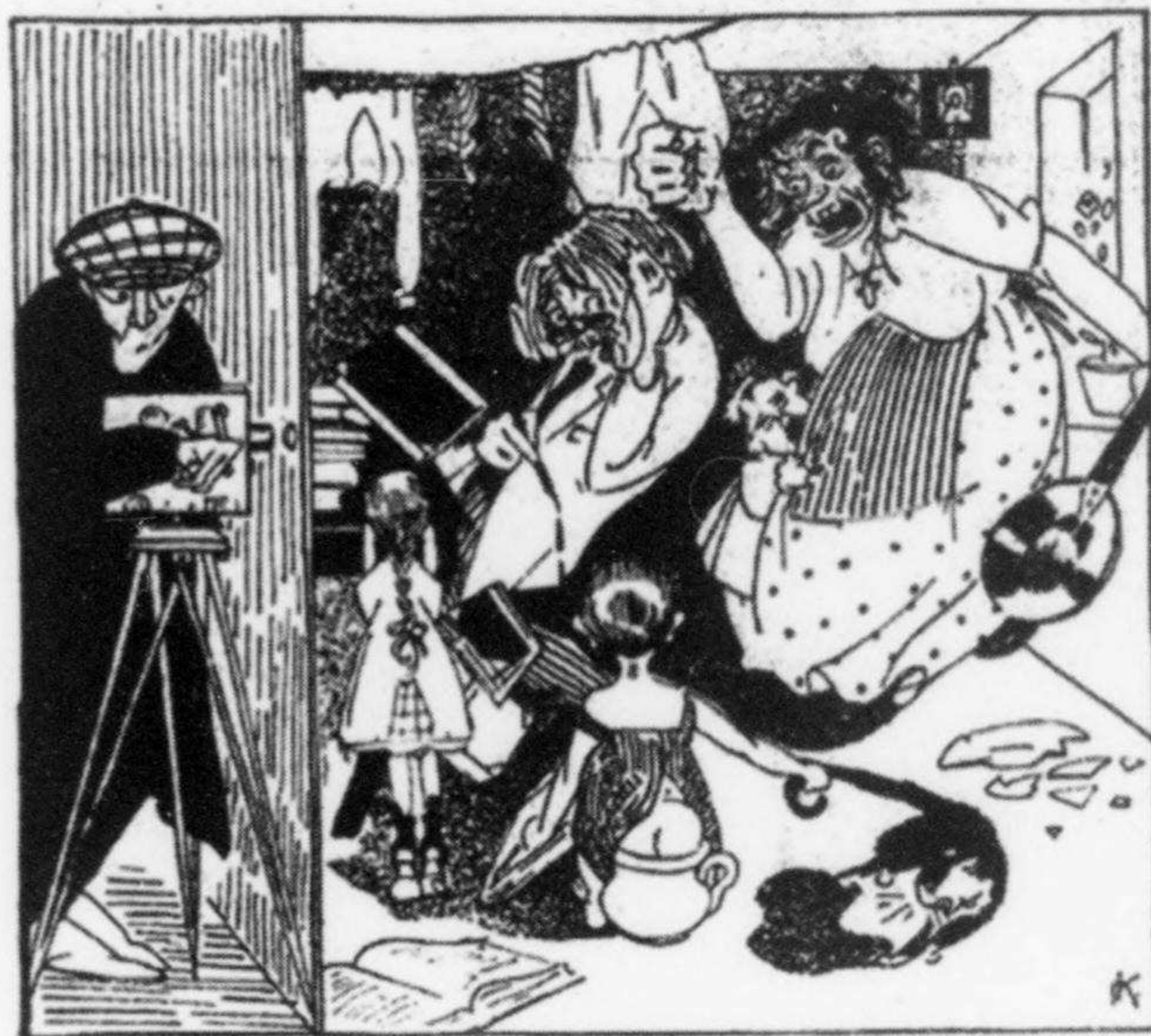
43. This is one point on which he separates *Kino-Eye* from *Island*: Dziga Vertov, "An Introductory Speech before a Showing of the First Part of *Kino-Eye*," in *Lines of Resistance: Dziga Vertov and the Twenties*, ed. Yuri Tsivian, trans. Julian Graffy (Gemonia: Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 2004), pp. 99–103.



Vertov. *Kino-Eye*. 1924.

boy. The film may feature the Pioneers, but as the title indicates, its true subject is the *kino-eye* itself. If the Pioneers were putting on a charade, what did it mean for Vertov's cinema truth?

There is something disconcerting about Vertov's insistence on objective and detached observation when it is embodied by the children's surveillance of the adults. Again, Vertov's actual practice may demonstrate nuanced complexities and open-ended experimentation that belie his more black-and-white claims, but in understanding his differences with Gan, the aesthetic implications of these investments are pertinent. A cartoon of 1923 pushes the logic of his method to the extreme, depicting the filmmaker shooting footage of a family's private life through a hole in their apartment wall. Its humor lies in the equa-



G. Klinch.
 "Demonstration of
 Everyday Life' by the
 'Kinok' Method." 1923.

„Демонстрация быта" по способу „киноков".

tion of "catching life unawares" with a Peeping Tom, but the drawing also effectively illustrates the fundamental relationships inherent to Vertov's method, resembling diagrams of the camera obscura used to model Kantian epistemology in studies of spectatorship.⁴⁴ If we take Vertov at his word, he maintained this basic structure in enlisting the Pioneers in *Kino-Eye*. He sometimes included Pioneers as objects of observation and sometimes as unseen observers, but, either way, he always placed them securely on one or the other side of the wall. The problem with Gan's use of a script was that it reached through that wall in order to shape the object of representation, effectively negating the aesthetic foundation on which Vertov's project was built.

44. For example, Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 25-66.

It may have taken Gan's film to reveal the magnitude of this difference in their aesthetic platforms, but the fissure was there all along if one bothers to look. For example, in the January 1923 issue of *Kino-Fot*, Gan illustrated an article by Lev Kuleshov, a director known for his use of American filmmaking techniques, with two unrelated images from *Kino-Pravda*. Kuleshov's text praises the American actress Pearl White as an extraordinary example of a *naturshchik*.⁴⁵ Derived from the word "nature" and traditionally used to describe an artist's model, *naturshchik* was Kuleshov's term for a new kind of cinematic actor, one who behaved naturally in front of the camera rather than theatrically playing a role but who was also naturally exceptionally expressive and photogenic. The concept was sometimes pushed further to mean someone specially trained by a director to actually *be* the person he wanted to film.⁴⁶ Thus, for Gan to illustrate this article with stills from Vertov's *Kino-Pravda* was to present a critical juxtaposition of two ways of working with "nature" or, in this case, real people: Kuleshov proposed producing those people, whereas Vertov wanted to record them as they were. Because Gan went on to associate with Vertov not Kuleshov, the initial impulse is to read the juxtaposition as critical of the *naturshchik*, but Gan probably intended to expose the peculiarities of both. Indeed, recall that *naturshchik* was the word used for "actor" in the OSPK's plan. In Gan's booklet of 1923, *Long Live*, Gan also described participants in the demonstration of everyday life as "*naturshchiks*—not apes, but demonstrators."⁴⁷

There are two points that bear mentioning with regard to this reshuffling of alliances. First, Gan's position was entirely consistent with the Constructivist aesthetics that he and the First Working Group developed in 1921. If we take the quintessential Constructivist demonstration piece, Rodchenko's hanging spatial construction, as an example, what makes it Constructivist is not just its economy of materials and deductive structure but also, even more fundamentally, the way that one comes to know it by walking around it, watching it spin, folding it up, and re-expanding it—through active engagement.⁴⁸ It thus replaces bourgeois assumptions about aesthetic experience based on the autonomy of subject and object with a materialist practice in which all things and people are fully embedded in the historical moment. It is an object through which, as Marx wrote, one tests the truth of one's thinking in practice.⁴⁹

Second, Gan's position was entirely in keeping with his aversion to Gastev.

45. Lev Kuleshov, "Dom nenavisti," *Kino-Fot* 6 (January 8, 1923), pp. 4–5.

46. For example, O. Rakhmanova, "O metode vospitaniia aktera," *Kinozhurnal ARK* 6–7 (1925), p. 11. For a discussion of the complexities of Kuleshov's ideas about acting, see Mikhail Yampolsky, "Kuleshov's Experiments and the New Anthropology of the Actor," in *Inside the Film Factory*, ed. Richard Taylor and Ian Christie (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 31–50.

47. Aleksei Gan, *Da zdravstvuet demonstratsiia byta!* (Moscow: Press V. N. Pozniakova, 1923), p. 15.

48. This is what Benjamin H. D. Buchloh calls the hanging spatial constructions' "phenomenological feedback loop" in his "From *Faktura* to Factography," *October* 30 (1984), pp. 82–119.

49. Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," trans. W. Lough, in *Marx/Engels Selected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 1:13.

Vertov's *kinoks*, as modest camera operators, did not aspire to a privileged class in the way that Gastev and artist-specialists did. If anything, they went out of their way to cast themselves as plain workers, and this was an aspect of their work that Gan applauded. Still, their method was based on the same model of detached observation demonstrated in the earlier photograph of TsIT's methods. In a sense, Vertov hoped to place the general population in the position of both the observed worker and the observing scientist, enabling everyone to stand outside and critically analyze themselves. One can argue that this constituted a materialist project insofar as its ambition was to reveal the hidden connections among things and perhaps give people distance from which to see them.⁵⁰ But as far as Gan was concerned, this materialism was a surface structure built on a Kantian foundation. Gan's elimination of the division between observer and observed went further, eliminating detached observation altogether.

Indeed, although the overall impression of Gan's *Long Live* was that *Kino-Pravda* was Soviet cinema's greatest hope, he also included a substantial critique on precisely this point. He narrated *Kino-Pravda's* development as a progression beginning with straight newsreels and evolving toward "the demonstration of everyday life," but without ever quite arriving there. The first four installments, Gan explained, were composed of footage received from random cameramen (non-*kinoks*), and therefore shot in the old "one-sided" way. That is, "they just filmed it. . . . Nature was not activated. . . . All productive attention was directed toward the montage."⁵¹ By the tenth *Kino-Pravda*, however, the material was clearly being gathered with a theme in mind, so that collecting the footage became part of the construction of the film. Gan considered this progression from random to purposeful to be a positive evolution,⁵² but one whose path to the final goal was obstructed by inherent limitations in the *kinok* method. He explains,

The *Kino-Pravda* workers approached the matter from only one side: they learned to use the camera to capture formal manifestations of proletarian daily life in a superficial and, one might say, ritualistic way. . . . Their work has not fully realized the depiction of daily life, because they almost always capture nature in a single outer moment of display. . . . The most important thing is absent: the moving levers, the cementing principles, the sharpness of those contradictions of actual everyday life that make a person burn inside, its sensuousness on the level of mood.⁵³

Here Gan seems to pull his criticism directly from Marx's critique of Feuerbach: "the chief defect" of Vertov's form of "materialism . . . is that the thing, reality, sen-

50. This is Tsivian's argument in "Dziga Vertov and His Time," pp. 9-14.

51. Gan, *Da zdravstvuet*, p. 7.

52. This is in keeping with the Constructivist concept of "purposiveness" as explicated by Kiaer in *Imagine No Possessions*, p. 8.

53. Gan, *Da zdravstvuet*, pp. 4-5.

suousness, is conceived only in the form of the object, or of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, as practice."⁵⁴ To really demonstrate everyday life demanded not detached observation but active involvement, just as understanding the hanging spatial constructions required the viewer to walk around them, fold them up, and so on. This embedded and interactive relationship to the material is what defined a materialist work for Gan, whether work with people or with plywood. He pressed the point again at the end of the book: filmmakers should strive "not to fulfill newsreel needs like a clerk, but to grasp daily life in its most alive form, in the moment and in all its complexity. . . . The anonymous man, with his nonobjective passions and pure spirit . . . is rather quickly excluded from life."⁵⁵

Thus, although Vertov has been characterized as the most important representative of Constructivism in film, his aesthetic position was actually opposed to that of Constructivism, at least as Gan understood it. In *Kino-Fot* and *Long Live* Gan's betrayal was delivered with a kiss—he couched his criticism of Vertov in subtle juxtapositions and convoluted sentences buried under more accessible expressions of praise. Vertov's experimenting with more purpose-shot and staged footage may even have been a response to this soft nudge. The fundamental nature of their differences only became apparent when Gan produced a film in which the Pioneers were *naturshchiks* rather than *kino-eyes*. At some point that summer, Vertov heard rumors about a script, and then more about sprucing up the Pioneer camp where Gan was shooting. Gan assured him there was no need to worry and Vertov believed him, but he was obviously unprepared for what came next.⁵⁶ Considering Gan's anti-art rhetoric and no-nonsense position on the rationalization of labor, the last thing one would have expected was that the product of his new approach to filmmaking would be as much like an artwork as like a newsreel. Yet a more careful examination of his writings shows that this had always been his position: "Described in the language of the art lover, a film in the mode of the demonstration of everyday life must be a finished work."⁵⁷ And again, "Workers in this field swing back and forth like a pendulum: from newsreel to art drama, from drama to newsreel, as if there were no other directions."⁵⁸ For Gan, the stark division between fiction and documentary was an enforcement of the wrong boundary. He would instead utilize aspects of art and life in a new combination, "drawing living nature into the artwork." He concludes: "It would make sense to conduct a series of practical experiments with nature that *really acts* (*deistvuiushchei*, not *igraiushchei*)."⁵⁹

54. Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," 1:13.

55. Gan, *Da zdravstvuet*, pp. 11–12.

56. Vertov relayed this series of events in his letter Shub. RGALI f. 2091, op. 2, d. 305, ll. 1–3.

57. Gan, *Da zdravstvuet*, p. 5.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Island of the Young Pioneers

Island of the Young Pioneers was Gan's practical experiment in developing a third direction, a form in which performance and reality coincide. Judging by the intertitles and the details conveyed by reviewers, the plot revolved around a brother and sister, Vava and Lida, who leave home because their father is anti-communist. The final straw comes when he beats the children and calls them "lousy commies" after catching them reading *Drum* (Baraban), a magazine devoted to Pioneer life published by a group of Moscow Pioneers. They in some way confront the issue of illegal moonshine production before coming upon a pair of homeless kids. With the words "Whoever is with us, follow us. You were a stranger [*chuzhoi*] but will become a brother," they all go together to a Pioneer camp, where they begin to live a wholesome and productive communal life: They have lessons, go hiking and diving, work on a farm, practice good hygiene, and make everything with their own hands.⁶⁰ They live a little like Marx imagined in *The German Ideology*, fishing in the afternoon and writing criticism after dinner.

What's interesting about Gan's choice to set much of the story in the Pioneer camp is that many of the activities written into the script are those in which children might engage at a summer camp anyway. Moreover, they would probably perform those activities under the direction of a camp counselor, whose purpose would be not to produce a show but to cultivate the children's talents and initiative. That Gan understood the project in this way is supported by his naming the leader of the Pioneer camp Verevkin.⁶¹ Recall that this is the name credited as the scriptwriter in the intertitles. The real Verevkin seems to have "played" himself in the film.⁶² Gan's stepdaughter, who was a camper there that summer and recalled the filming as being "really an event for us kids," characterized Gan's role that way too:

Gan worked confidently, happily, and calmly. He knew what he wanted, and he loved children. He knew how to communicate with us on an equal level, and at every opportunity we all gleefully gathered around this tall, tall man (*vysochennogo cheloveka*) who sang to us around the campfire the song about potatoes and "Blue Nights, Light Up with Campfires" in a beautiful strong voice.⁶³

The songs mentioned are two of the earliest Pioneer songs, and thus lend a historical and cultural specificity to the proceedings, but the camper-counselor relationship and the nostalgia with which she presents it is familiar. In her expression of the children's adulation for the visiting filmmaker, she also highlights the

60. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11, ll. 8-9; and Boris Gusman, review of *Ostrov iunikh pionerov*, *Pravda* (September 24, 1924), p. 5.

61. Gusman, review of *Ostrov iunikh pionerov*, p. 5.

62. Boltianskii suggests this in his review, "Iunye pionery," p. 7.

63. Konopleva, "Aleksii Mikhailovich Gan," p. 214.

difference between Gan's Constructivist approach and Vertov's *kinokism*. Rather than unobtrusively observe like a machine, Gan used all his most human abilities to charismatically draw the Pioneers into the work. He made the film by making his presence, tall and strong-voiced, central. It was the most marked event of the Pioneers' summer.

Gan's elaboration on his own working method is worth reading closely, particularly for his description of the function of the script and of the film's medium.

Above all, I constructed a true cinema-object not on top of everyday life, but out of everyday life. The story offered by comrade Verevkin's script did not weigh life down in my work. Instead, the everyday life of the Young Pioneers absorbed the story, making it possible to capture the essence of the young Leninists in their spontaneous actuality [or immediate reality, *neposredstvennoi deistvitel'nosti*]. This materialist approach freed us from art cinema's bourgeois illustration of a literary text, overcame the "government-issue" formalism of the newsreel, and allowed us to productively establish devices for filming with a socialist character.

Another, no less important achievement was the activation . . . of nature. Sentient human material lived and functioned in the process of the work without swerving from normal daily behavior. . . . The natural environment [*sreda*] and technical medium [*sreda*] participated as directly as the human material [*sreda*]. The frames were structured naturally, without any aesthetic inclination.⁶⁴

For Gan, Verevkin's script functioned a little like a chemical catalyst, or, more simply, like salt: When the Young Pioneers absorbed it, it brought out their essence, or new aspects of their inherent properties. Gan downplayed the importance of montage (Shub did the editing anyway),⁶⁵ emphasizing instead that the environment, the Pioneers, and the technical apparatus all played equal parts in composing the film—he referred to all three with the word *sreda* (translatable as "material," "environment," or "medium"). Gan's medium was not film in the technical sense, but *the making of the film at the camp* as an overall situation. It was not constructed on the editing table, as Vertov made such a point of doing, but on the level of reality.

The project relied on this reality's being separated from the Pioneers' everyday life. The isolated "island" of the camp allowed the children to demonstrate natural behavior under altered conditions, ones in which the habits ingrained on the consciousnesses of their elders were inoperative. It thereby also allowed Gan

64. Paragraph breaks altered by author. Gan, "Da zdravstvuet demonstratsiia byta," p. 18.

65. Boltianskii, "Iunye pionery," p. 7.

to sidestep the divide between fiction and documentary to create a performance that was also a reality, a sort of realism in which playing and action were the same thing. It was a demonstration of everyday life as it could be. One perceptive reviewer unwittingly pointed to this in his criticism of the film: The Pioneers, he complained, were clearly performing for the camera. Why hadn't Gan "corrected their play/acting [*igra*]?" As a result, the film did not demonstrate authentic everyday life so much as "authentic life during an experience of film production."⁶⁶ Of course, the very staginess of the acting was a natural reaction for amateurs placed in front of a camera. Gan's refusal to "correct" them reveals how he defined his means and ends. The "human material" did not serve the script; the script and camera served as "devices" to draw the Pioneers out. The "look at me" aspect of their performance—particularly in evidence in the drumming images—bears witness to the fact that their development was the central goal. *This is what made Gan's realism socialist.*

There is a fine line between Gan's form of socialist realism and that of later projects claiming to document labor camps—for example, Rodchenko's photo essay on the construction of the White Sea Canal (1933), and the films *Solovki* (1928) and *Road to Life* (1931) that feature in Cristina Vatulescu's recent study.⁶⁷ These projects also blurred the lines between fiction and reality and presented camps as spaces of reform. There is a significant inversion, however, in Gan's decision to demonstrate his realism and collective self-development project not in a labor camp, where reform came through the most grueling of work, but in a summer camp, a space designed for childhood, arguably the only time in life when one's proper work is to play. If anything, it was Vertov who drew the Pioneers into a project that he insisted was labor, instrumentalizing their childlike qualities for surveillance in the world of adults.⁶⁸

The divide between children and adults is an important theme shared by *Kino-Eye* and *Island*. In both films, it represents the relationship between old and new, experience and innocence, as well as the traditional hierarchy and its overturning that is foundational to revolutionary politics. Innocence lends Vertov's Pioneers their objective vision. It also allows Gan's Pioneers to relate to one another in new ways. The two diverge again, however, when it comes to the value of experience. In the *kinok's* world, the loss of innocence would always be a liability. The narrative whole was constructed at the montage stage in order to

66. Ibid.

67. See Leah Dickerman, "The Propagandizing of Things," in Aleksandr Rodchenko, ed. Magdalena Dobrowski, Leah Dickerman, and Peter Galassi (New York: the Museum of Modern Art, 1998), pp. 62–96, and Cristina Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics: Literature, Film, and the Secret Police in Soviet Times* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 123–60. The films that Vatulescu treats were sponsored by the Society of Friends of Soviet Cinema (*Obshchestvo druz'ei sovetskogo kino*), or the ODSK, which was the OSPK's more tightly governed replacement, founded in 1925 and directed by Cheka head Felix Dzerzhinsky.

68. See Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, pp. 77–122.

keep the material fresh. Gan's *Island*, in contrast, was a device for acquiring new experience. It thus relied on creating real experiences and real interactions that would lead to the actual development of the real people participating in them, even if this meant creating an alternate reality for it all to take place.

This aspect of Gan's project may be best demonstrated in an episode toward the end of *Island* that is also one of the stranger parts of the film. The kids have constructed platforms in the forest "for *igry*"—that is, for games or for playacting; either would be appropriate at this point. "We will play Makhnoites and Budennovites," the intertitle reads, referring to followers of Nester Makhno, the Ukrainian anarchist who held out against the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, and Semion Budennyi, a military commander in the Red Army closely allied with Stalin. The intertitles continue, "Who wants to be a Makhnoite? Who wants to be a Budennovite? You have to cast your lot." After what appears to be a mock battle, the two groups decide, "It's time to change sides."⁶⁹ The Makhnoites become Budennovites, and vice versa, and they perform the battle again. Insofar as the Pioneer organization aimed to prepare future soldiers, this scene can be understood as part of the larger campaign for military preparedness, akin to producing more airplanes. But Gan provides an unusual take when he has the children switch sides. It becomes something of an empathy-building role-playing exercise, in which the Pioneers learn to "be prepared" to put themselves in other people's shoes. Moreover, by specifying that those shoes belong to anarchists and Bolsheviks, Gan is, in a sense, asking the Pioneers to put themselves in his shoes. He had switched sides in 1918. It thus speaks transitively to political *and* generational divides. Insofar as switching sides mimes the structure of Bogdanov's model of comradely cooperation, in which organizer and executor switch roles, it may also address a class divide.

This relationship of understanding and empathy (but not necessarily consensus) is fundamentally at odds with the harsh criticality of *Kino-Eye*, where the children sneak up on the adults and make self-righteous demands. In the market scene, they outsmart the salespeople by recording and comparing prices rather than negotiating. The fliers that they distribute in the café are no more diplomatic, opening with the words "Adults! This is our ultimatum." In a culture where literacy rates mapped onto the generational divide, the fact that these episodes revolve around reading and writing taps into a specific anxiety related to the reversal of traditional power dynamics. The children's power over the adults stems from their observational acuity and their access to written language and math. In the market, Vertov emphasizes their pencils and notebooks. When the boy withdraws from the oral exchange with the meat seller to concentrate on his notes, the resulting isolation of consciousness mirrors Vertov's larger project. It also represents the most truthful shot in the sequence if we believe Vertov's claim that *Kino-Eye's* interactions were constructed via montage.

69. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11, l. 9.

In *Island*, the question of what to do with adults, those outmoded relics of the old world that nonetheless continue to exist, is treated with more compassion. Lida and Vava's father embodies everything that was wrong about patriarchal bourgeois consciousness. He abuses those weaker than himself. He has nothing to gain from communism and makes clear that he is against it. Still, the children feel affection for him, and when he goes on trial for child abuse, rather than abandon



Cover of Drum. 1924.

him to the criminal-justice system, they convince him of the value of Pioneer ways. According to one review, the father instantly reforms, transforming on-screen from beastly to kindhearted. The reviewer faulted the scene for its simplistic and saccharine resolution,⁷⁰ but the contrast with Vertov is still instructive. In *Kino-Eye*

70. X. X., "Iunye pionery," *Izvestiia* (September 24, 1924), p. 66.

change proceeds through confrontation with facts and slogans, while in *Island* it comes through personal relationships and forgiveness.

Considering Gan's work with magazines—*Kino-Fot* was just the first of many that he designed—it is not surprising that the Pioneer magazine *Drum* plays a prominent role in the film. The intertitles introduce Lida by stating that she loves reading it, and it seems to provide her and Vava's initial connection to the Pioneer movement. We have seen that it precipitates the rift between the children and their father. It crops up once more at the end of the trial/conversion episode, where the intertitles identify text on the screen as coming from *Drum*.⁷¹ The magazine demonstrates in the film how Gan intended his film—and Constructivist objects more generally—to function in life. The primary conditions in which Lida and Vava are embedded are determined by their abusive father. *Drum's* collection of images and texts about Pioneer life demonstrates how things could be otherwise. It is their island of Young Pioneers.

A Conclusion for Gan

In the end, it was Vertov who went on to truly fulfill the third part of the OSPK's plan: the training of interested parties as specialists. As John MacKay has shown, Vertov worked with his Pioneers until at least 1926, when the group organized a Vertovian "Photo-Eye" circle of their own.⁷² From Gan's point of view, however, training new specialists, though they may be from a formerly oppressed class economically or age-wise, simply propagated the same divisions. It would produce more playactors and art workers, people who would have no jobs if his rationalization of artistic labor were implemented. Gan proposed eliminating professional artists, but not art as a separate sphere of experience. It was not a merging of art into life, nor a redefinition of art as labor, but rather a fair rationing of participation in a formerly privileged form of work.

In March 1924, around the time they would have thought about making the films, Gan described Constructivism's project in this way:

Constructivism does not strive to create new types of art. It develops forms of artistic labor through which workers can actually enter into artistic labor without losing touch with their material labor. . . . Revolutionary Constructivism wrenches photography and cinematography from the hands of art-makers. Constructivism digs art's grave.⁷³

The passage is aggressive in its attitude toward art, but also fateful. Setting up a system in which everyone would have some experience with dirt and gravity as well as art and play was not exactly the same as cold-blooded murder of professional art. Still, that sort of art would die just because it would have no place to live. Part

71. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11, l. 8 ob. The intertitles do not specify what the text says.

72. John MacKay, "A Single Head: Authorship and Form in *Kino-Eye* (1924)," from his forthcoming book on Vertov. I am grateful to MacKay for sharing his related work.

73. Aleksei Gan, "Konstruktivizm mogil'shchik iskusstva," *Zrelishcha* 78 (March 18–23, 1924), pp. 5–6.

of the appeal of this labor economy was concern for resources; another was simply that fair was fair. Less obviously, it also addressed the military pressures on labor policy, albeit by a vastly different route. The world did not need to produce art any more than it needed to produce airplanes, as long as it produced people able to think beyond their assigned routine and their own narrow self-interest. In that process of self-production lay the utility of Gan's art.

Gan had trouble convincing those professional artists whose grave Constructivism was digging. Records show that the film did relatively well in distribution,⁷⁴ but this was hardly good news for those in the industry. One account reported on Gan's appearance at a discussion screening in November 1924 where *Island* was one of the specimens. When Gan got up to elaborate on his idea for replacing actors with the "dramatization of everyday life" (*instsenirovkoii byta*), he met with "definite obstruction" from the actors in the audience, whose coughing and shuffling drowned out his argument. In the reviewer's assessment, Gan still won the debate. His logic was sound.⁷⁵ But if he won that battle, it was only to lose the war, and on a number of fronts. On the aesthetic front, the forms of socialist realism that emerged in the late 1920s and '30s took all of the wrong lessons from the aesthetics of his film. Monumental painting and studio films were far from the model of amateur participation that fed his vision. On the political front, his game of us versus them was transformed into mindless nationalistic boosterism, and on the labor front, all those obstructionist actors in the audience were probably right. Gan's rationalization rhetoric lost its nuances and only contributed to a collective hurrah surrounding "the triumph of labor." Gan himself ended up in the other kind of camp, the Gulag where he died.⁷⁶ While it may have been the least of his worries, in alienating art's professionals, Gan also lost on the historical front. I have tried to reclaim at least that for him here.

74. It did as well as any of Proletkino's productions. It was shown in numerous venues in Moscow and elsewhere, and seems to have had a particularly good run in Tblisi. GARF f. R-8326, op. 1, d. 11.

75. A. Kor, "Kino-Boi," *Rabochii zritel'* 28 (November 26–December 2, 1924), p. 14. For more on the event, see "Kino smotr," *Kino-Gazeta* 63 (November 18, 1924), p. 2.

76. Gan moved to Khabarovsk in 1934, apparently looking for work. He was officially arrested in 1941 and executed in 1942.

Drawing Between Reportage and Memory: Diego Rivera's Moscow Sketchbook*

MARIA GOUGH

Rivera—the first artist to realize the possibility of a revol[utionary] art, dedicated to the masses. The theoretical discussions of whether such an art is possible to-day become academic in the light of this work. . . . New iconogr[aphical] types; new scale and order. Individual recreation of a tradition. General weakness; dependence on accumulation of detail; prettiness; lack of concentration and power. Incidents have quality of a survey; drama of single gestures and postures, not of total action; mechanical connection of parts; impact of magnitude, abundance, rather than of p[ain]t[in]g.

—Meyer Schapiro¹

The extraordinary proliferation of political demonstrations around the world over the past several years has reminded us once again of the phenomenal power of the real-time convergence of people in public space, a power to which Diego Rivera's Moscow Sketchbook—a corpus of forty-five small watercolor drawings—bears graphic witness.² The sketchbook dates from Rivera's seven- or eight-month sojourn in Moscow, which began in early November 1927 with his direct participation in the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the revolution as a delegate to the inaugural international Congress of Friends. Publicly

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1. Meyer Schapiro, untitled note, n.d. (ca. 1930s), typescript, n.p.; Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Meyer Schapiro Papers, box 360, folder 23 (research files on Diego Rivera).

2. Sketchbook plate numbers are cited parenthetically in the body of the present essay. The sketchbook itself is reproduced in its entirety for the first time, beginning on page 86.

announcing the artist's arrival in Moscow on November 3, the Communist Party's national daily newspaper *Pravda* discussed his "extraordinary frescoes" in the new Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico City—which the poet Vladimir Mayakovski had earlier lauded as "the world's first Communist mural"—and went on to explain that, as a revolutionary artist, Rivera now prefers the collective address of "wall painting" over the private easel picture to which he had devoted himself for a decade or so in Paris before 1921.³ A new venture in Soviet cultural diplomacy, the Congress of Friends had as its objective the forging of a broad, cross-party international alliance of those willing and able to come to the defense of the Soviet Union in their home countries.⁴ Rivera, a member of the Mexican Communist Party at the time, participated in the congress at the invitation of the Comintern, which was responsible for hosting notable foreign communists when they were in town and, as such, played a major role in the organization of the three-day meeting. On the first day of the congress the artist was elected—from a pool of 947 delegates—to its Presidium (governing board) and press bureau as a member of the foreign intelligentsia.⁵

In the weeks and months that followed, Rivera garnered an (ultimately unrealized) mural commission and a slew of teaching and speaking appointments, and quickly found himself and his medium of monumental painting at the center of the great Soviet debate of the late 1920s over the true nature and future direction of proletarian art. The key protagonists in this debate are by now well known: On the one hand, the newly established October Association (*ob"edinenie "Oktiabr"*), which argued for the constructedness of visual representation and the embrace of a wide range of media, especially those associated with either technological reproducibility (graphic design, photomontage, photography, and cinema) or collective production and reception (mural painting and architecture); and, on the other,

3. Gamma, "Nashi gosti i druzia (ot nashego berlinskogo korrespondenta)," *Pravda*, no. 252 (November 3, 1927), p. 4. For Mayakovsky's oft-cited praise, see his *My Discovery of America* (1925), trans. Neil Cornwell (London: Hesperus Press Ltd., 2005), p. 17.

4. On the Congress of Friends, see Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921–1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 122–27.

5. See "Vsemirnyi kongress druzei sovetского soiuza," *Pravda*, no. 258 (November 11, 1927), p. 3. Rivera was also among a smaller group of eighty congress delegates invited to an audience with Stalin. During the lengthy speeches that transpired, Rivera apparently sat opposite the Soviet leader and made a number of pencil sketches of him, emphasizing what he later recalled as a pair of "thick black mustache ends droop[ing] along each side of his mouth" (see Diego Rivera with Gladys March, *My Art, My Life: An Autobiography* [New York: the Citadel Press, 1960], p. 149). Stalin signed and dated one of these sketches, adding a message in blue pencil, "Greetings to the revolutionary workers of Mexico"; this sheet is reproduced in Emil Ludwig, "Stalin," *Cosmopolitan*, no. 555 (September 1932), p. 35 (see the reproduction on page 83 of this volume). Also in connection with the congress, Rivera attended an evening banquet held at the Central House of Scholars in honor of the solidarity of foreign and Soviet science, literature, and the arts, and presented some very flattering after-dinner remarks—at least according to a newspaper report published the following day—in which he praised the emancipation of scientific and artistic labor in the Soviet Union, and proposed it as a new model for the intelligentsia worldwide; see "Vecher solidarnosti inostranoi i sovetской nauki," *Pravda*, no. 258 (November 11, 1927), p. 3.

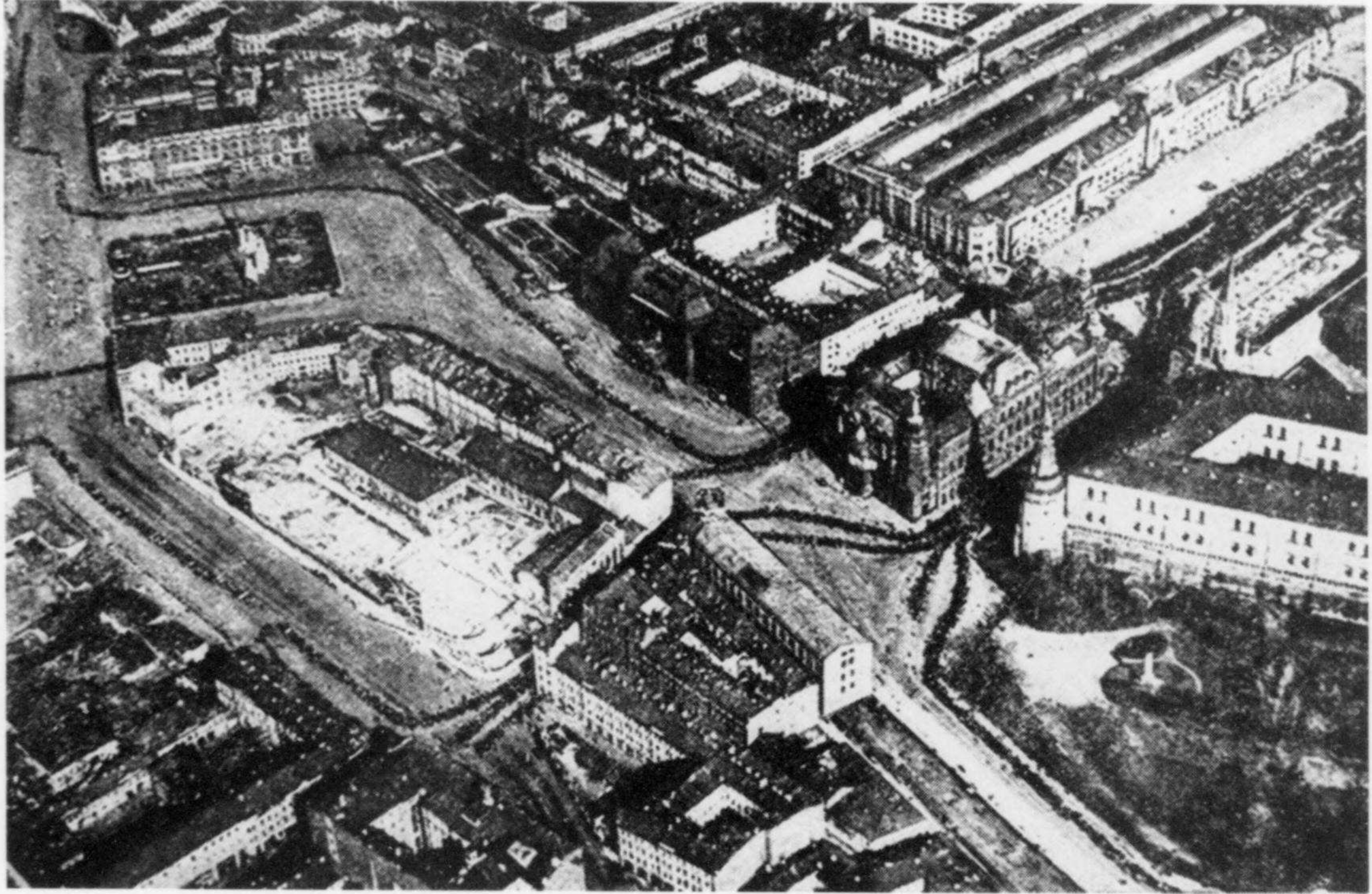
the older Association of Artists of the Revolution (AKhR), which was oriented toward the production of the realist easel picture. Rivera joined the October Association upon its foundation in March 1928, not so much because he was opposed to easel painting per se—in fact he later claimed to have made a number of small oils while in Moscow—but rather because he rejected the AKhR's claim that such pictures could provide a genuinely collective basis for a proletarian art; only mural painting, he believed, could achieve this.⁶ It is worth noting that one of the artist's chief handlers through the course of this controversial debate was the German writer Alfred Kurella. Perhaps most notorious for his later role as an authoritarian and repressive minister of culture in the postwar GDR, Kurella served in the 1920s not only as the Moscow-based head of the Comintern's Department of Agit-Prop but also as a highly visible, widely published, and polemical member and defender of the October Association and as a speaker at the Communist Academy, alongside Rivera himself.⁷

For all of Rivera's polemical efforts to practice and proselytize monumental painting in Moscow, however, the most substantial pictorial record we now have of his visit to the world's first workers' state—a journey made by over one hundred thousand foreigners of differing political persuasions and class formations in the interwar period—is his Moscow Sketchbook. The sketchbook thus possesses a certain historical monumentality of its own, notwithstanding its intimate scale and private address in comparison with Rivera's much better-known public-mural practice. Little known and rarely discussed, the sketchbook has been in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York almost since its foundation in the years immediately following Alfred H. Barr and Jere Abbott's own visit in the winter of 1927–28 to the Soviet Union, where the pair first encountered the Mexican artist.⁸ The present essay

6. See Diego Rivera, "AkhRR i stil' proletarskogo revoliutsionnogo iskusstva (otkrytoe pis'mo v redaktsiiu)," in *Revoliutsiia i kul'tura* 2, no. 6 (1928), pp. 43–44. For reproductions of the oil paintings see *Diego Rivera* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1931), cat. no. 33, and also *Diego Rivera: Catálogo General de Obra de Caballete* [Mexico, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1989], cat. nos. 790 and 797). For an instructive overview of Rivera's visit to Moscow and his role in this debate, see William Richardson, "The Dilemmas of a Communist Artist: Diego Rivera in Moscow, 1927–28," in *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1987), pp. 49–69. See also Bertram D. Wolfe, *Diego Rivera: His Life and Times* (New York and London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939), pp. 235–47; and Leah Dickerman, "Leftist Circuits," in idem and Anna Indych-Lopez, *Diego Rivera: Murals for the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: the Museum of Modern Art, 2011), pp. 15–21.

7. Kurella is clearly the "Corrolla" whom Rivera describes in a 1932 article as "the comrade who was formerly in charge of 'Agit-Prop' work," and who "organized a group 'October,' to discuss and make use of the Mexican artistic experiments"; see Diego Rivera, "The Revolutionary Spirit in Modern Art," *The Modern Quarterly* (Baltimore) 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1932), p. 56. See also Wolfe, *Diego Rivera*, pp. 239–42.

8. See Alfred H. Barr, "Moscow Diary" (1927–28), in *October* 7 (Winter 1978), pp. 7–56, and also Jere Abbott, "Russian Journal, 1927–1928," reproduced beginning on page 125 of this volume. To the best of my knowledge, the only study of the sketchbook published to date is James Wechsler, "Diego Rivera's *May Day*, Moscow sketchbook," in *Latin American & Caribbean Art: MoMA at El Museo* (New York: El Museo del Barrio and the Museum of Modern Art, 2004), pp. 82–86.



*Boris Kudoiarov. Workers'
Demonstration on Red Square.
May 1, 1932.*

attempts a close reading of the Moscow Sketchbook as a complex graphic object located on the continuum between reportage and memory.

Demonstration

Rivera's subject is one of the most distinctive and abiding features of Soviet life—the affirmative political demonstration. Held in commemoration of major events on the Soviet calendar, the demonstration offered symbolic and ritual affirmation of the collective architecture of communist experience. Most typically, it involved the daylong procession of tens of thousands of citizens organized into ensembles according to their place of work, school, university, sports club, chorus group, etc. Boris Kudoiarov's aerial photograph of one such celebration in the Russian capital—in this case the 1932 commemoration of International Workers' Day, otherwise known as May Day—helps us to grasp the nature of the mass phenomenon Rivera sought to encapsulate in his sketches: Multiple tributaries of demonstrators march toward the city center, eventually converging on its geopolitical heart, Red Square, the oblong-shaped open space in the upper right corner of the frame.⁹ This kind of physical convergence of individuals into a single mass would become a key structural device in communist literature and film for the representation of the transformation of human consciousness. For Rivera, it had a strong figural dimension: "I shall never forget my first sight in Moscow of the organized marching and movement of people," he recalled in his posthumously published autobiography. "The marching mass was dark, compact, rhythmically united, elastic. It had the floating motion of a snake, but it was more awesome than any serpent I could imagine. It flowed slowly from the narrow streets into the open squares without end."¹⁰ The recent presentation of the sketchbook in its entirety at the Museum of Modern Art almost seemed to capture that very serpentine motion, in the sequencing of its forty-five sheets in a jogged double-hang across the breadth of two walls, their abundance of red banners and red flags beating a syncopated rhythm against a rich sea of royal blue.¹¹

Medium

Executed in watercolor with crayon or pencil underdrawing on squared paper, each sheet in the Moscow Sketchbook measures 4 1/8 x 6 3/8 inches or thereabouts and is signed and dated 1928 by the artist. Along one edge of each sheet are traces of perforation, indicating it once belonged to an everyday sort of notebook—a top-bound reporter's notebook, probably not dissimilar from the

9. Reproduced from *Proletarskoe foto* 2, no. 6 (June 1932), p. 7.

10. See Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, p. 148. This autobiography is based on a series of interviews Gladys March conducted with the artist in the 1940s and '50s.

11. This installation was part of an exhibition organized by Leah Dickerman entitled "Diego Rivera: Murals for the Museum of Modern Art" (November 13, 2011–May 14, 2012).

one seen in snapshots of the artist around this time. One can suppose such a notebook being readily accommodated in his back pocket, or the inner pocket of his jacket or coat. Thus, if we typically think of Rivera at work on the vast expanse of permanence that is mural painting and to a significant extent physically constrained by its scaffolding, the sketchbook conjures a very different picture of the artist, one that enables us to imagine him on the move: the muralist turned roving reporter of sorts.

A reporter's notebook is an intriguing choice of support for watercolor, a medium in which Rivera had already had considerable experience. On the one hand, its thin pages would seem to be unsuitable given the medium's liquidity, which would suggest that his original intent had been simply to sketch the crowd in motion as rapidly as possible in pencil or crayon—thereby shoring up the status of his sketches as a form of reportage—and that the decision to transform them into watercolors had come only later. On the other hand, it is worth noting that the paper found in such notebooks was manufactured pre-sized with a special coating so as to prevent blotting by the fountain pen, which was the writing instrument typically used by reporters before the advent of the ballpoint. The presence of this coating suggests that Rivera's choice of support was less inappropriate for the application of watercolor than initially might be thought. It is entirely conceivable, in other words, that the artist had watercolor in mind from the outset.

Whatever his initial intentions, Rivera exploits the full range and limits of graphic notation in the sketchbook. Some sheets are altogether conventional in fixing the principal lines of their subjects (1), while others deliver the crisp and energetic delineation of details, such as individual faces in the crowd (23). The majority, however, comprise only the hastiest of pencil or crayon jottings. Consider, for example, the ensemble of demonstrators near the Kremlin Wall in Red Square, bearing aloft their banners and flags and a giant top-hatted papier-maché head—a carnivalesque caricature of venal capital or imperialist intervention, or both (21). Here, Rivera's crayon races across the breadth of the



Diego Rivera. Moscow Sketchbook. Installation view at the Museum of Modern Art. 2012. Photographer Thomas Griesel. © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.

sheet like the registration of a radio frequency, as if recording the electrical energy of the crowd itself. But it is only with the application of watercolor that the artist elicits the full import of the scene witnessed, remembered, or reimagined, each of these steep undulations coming to signify an individual body within the crowd.

Precisely when that application occurred is unknown. It may have been while Rivera was still in Moscow, and thus at some point before the end of May or June 1928. It is equally possible, however, that it was applied after his return to Mexico,



*Frida Kahlo and
Diego Rivera. 1930.*

at some point prior to the sale of the sketchbook in 1931 to the New York collector Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, an early major benefactor of the Museum of Modern Art, to which she donated it in 1935. (The handsome sum of \$2,500 that Rockefeller paid for it—the equivalent of the fee Rivera had just recently received for an entire fresco at the Luncheon Club of the Pacific Stock Exchange in San Francisco—was intended to cover the cost of his travel to and residency in New York in

the fall of 1931, in connection with the preparation of his first solo exhibition in the United States, which opened at the young museum in December 1931.¹²) Unfortunately, the scant biographical and autobiographical references to the sketchbook, riddled as they are with contradictions and inconsistencies, shed no light on the matter of when the watercolor was applied. Indeed, uncertainty on this front raises the question of the sketchbook's very identity. Should it be understood primarily as a work of reportage, or one of memory? Is it an eyewitness record of Rivera's experience on the ground—as his choice of the reporter's notebook might infer—or a memorial to that experience brought into being after the fact by later recourse to the watercolorist's box?

12. See Dickerman, "Leftist Circuits," p. 22.

Sequence

An immediate problem one confronts in endeavoring to answer this question has to do with the sequence of the sketchbook's forty-five sheets. This problem is compounded by a further uncertainty as to when they were separated, though it seems plausible to suggest that this most likely occurred in conjunction with the application of watercolor since working in a wet medium imposes specific temporal and physical constraints on the drawing process. Two different numeration systems appear on the verso of the sheets. What seems to be the older of the two is completely random, offering no coherent sequence of any kind. The newer system comprises the museum's inventory numbers. This sequencing, at least of the first dozen or so sheets, seems to accord with a later statement by Rivera himself: Among the "three or four sketch books recording [his] observations of the life of the Soviet people," Rivera deemed the "one in water colors depicting the May Day celebration" as "especially impressive," recalling that it portrayed "a Russian worker and his family from the time they prepared to attend this event until its close, including the march into Red Square."¹³

To what extent is Rivera's later recollection borne out by the evidence of the corpus itself? Certainly, a cluster of six sheets detail the morning ritual in what seems to be—in an apparent shift away from early Soviet attempts to remodel family life along communal lines—a private apartment: A man, presumably the worker to whom Rivera refers, washes his hands, while a toddler looks on (4). The same man then dresses the child, who stands upon a chair while he does so (3); a small bust of Lenin sits on a bookshelf behind the pair, as if triangulating and thereby adjudicating the relationship between father and son. A woman, presumably the man's wife, prepares something in the kitchen (2), the gendered predictability of the scene mitigated only by the role her husband has taken on in caring for their child, at least on this special holiday. The father sits at the breakfast table, light streaming in through the window behind him (1). A second man also sits at the table, embracing another young boy (5). Different color washes seem to conspire to produce yet a third man—almost a composite of the first two—who embraces a somewhat older child (6). One wonders who these people are, and how Rivera had come to be in this almost preternaturally luminous apartment at breakfast time. Was this perhaps an instance of "planned spontaneity," that is, a pre-arranged home visit with a worker and his family designed specifically for foreign visitors in order to convince them of the high quality of proletarian life in the new workers' state and, thus, the irrefutable success of the Soviet experiment?¹⁴

In this connection it is worth noting that the representation of a day in the life of a proletarian family would soon become a major rhetorical device of Soviet persuasion in the realm of both reportage and documentary photography. One of the best-known examples is "24 Hours in the Life of a Moscow Working Family," a

13. Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, p. 156.

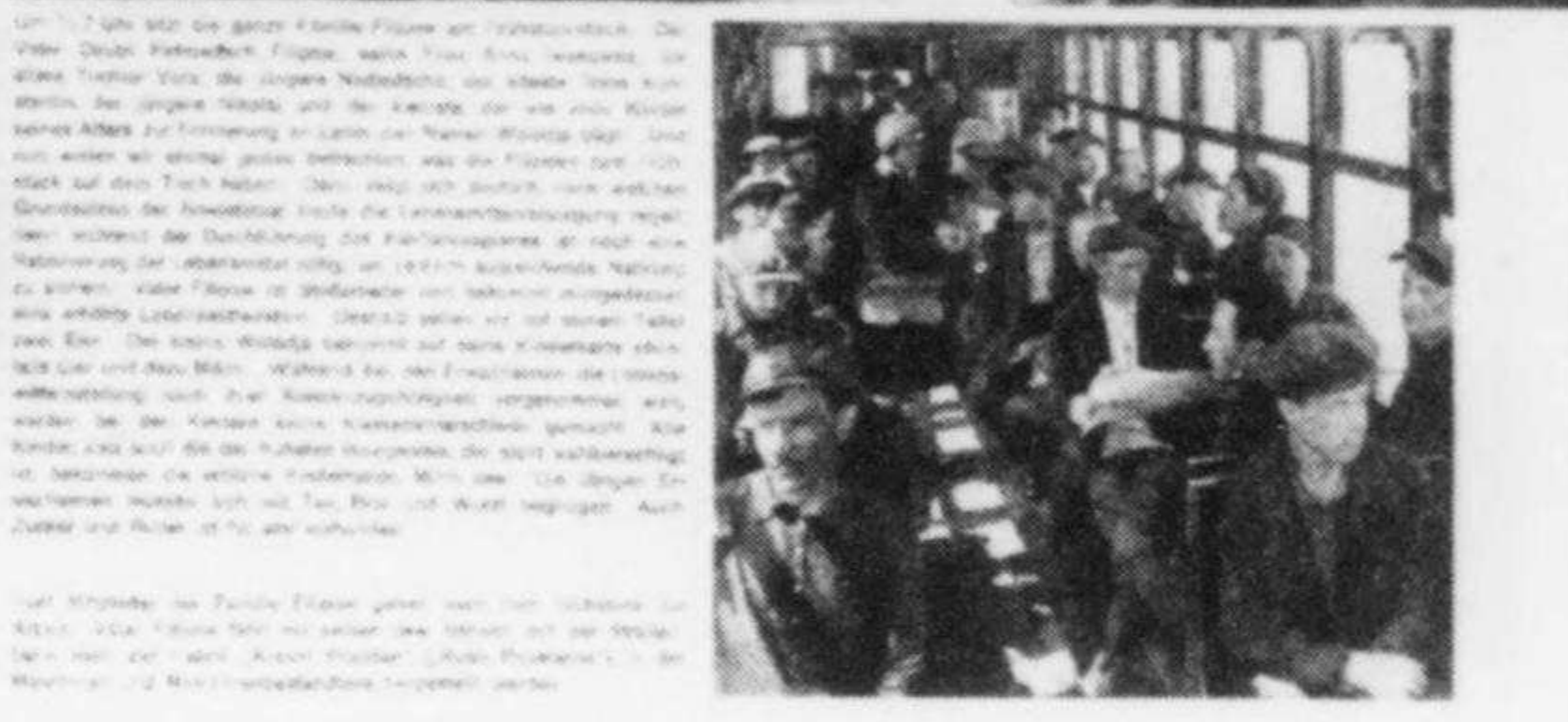
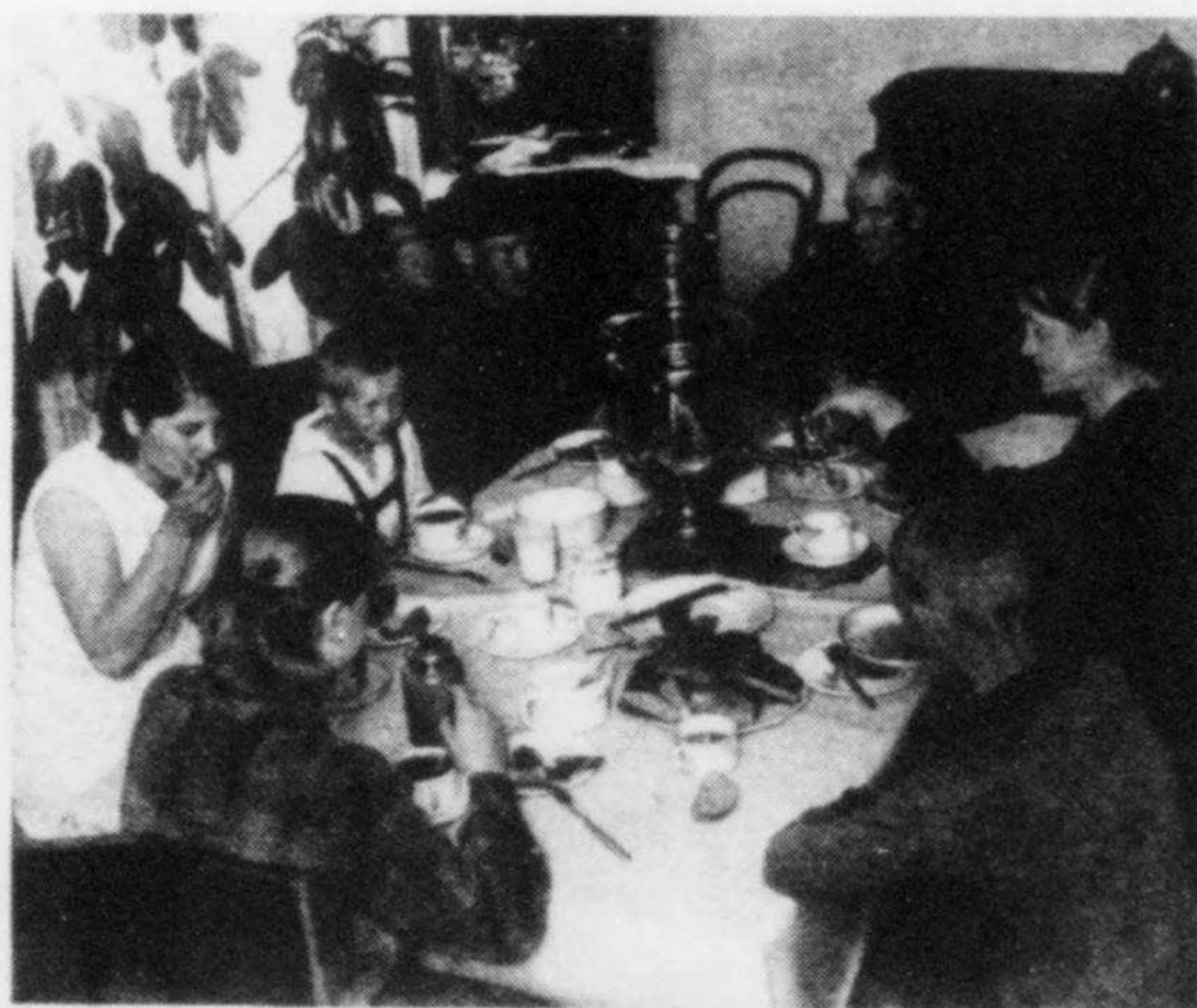
14. See David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*, p. 126.

24 Stunden aus dem Leben einer Moskauer Arbeiterfamilie

Vier wache Arbeiter für die Arbeit in einer Fabrik, darunter die junge Mutter, die viele Hausarbeiten des ersten Arbeiters und Hausarbeiten macht. Die neuen Moskauer Arbeiter, Arbeiter und Arbeiterinnen, die die Arbeit in der Fabrik machen, sind sehr glücklich, weil sie die Arbeit in der Fabrik machen können. Die Arbeit in der Fabrik ist sehr schwer, aber die Arbeiter sind sehr glücklich, weil sie die Arbeit in der Fabrik machen können. Die Arbeit in der Fabrik ist sehr schwer, aber die Arbeiter sind sehr glücklich, weil sie die Arbeit in der Fabrik machen können.



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"24 Hours in the Life of a Moscow Working Family," AIZ, September 1931.

groundbreaking and controversial photo-essay published in the September 1931 issue of the *Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung* (Berlin), one of the high-circulation journals in the media arsenal of Willi Münzenberg, in whose company Rivera had spent a month in Berlin prior to his arrival in Moscow.¹⁵ Through a sequence of shots by Arkadii Shaikhet and Max Al'pert, inter alia, this photo-essay attempted to convey the quality of proletarian life under communism by introducing Germanophone readers to the life, labor, and leisure of a "typical" proletarian family, the Filippovs, who lived—the accompanying text asserted—in one of Moscow's newest housing estates. Like the *Moscow Sketchbook*, the Filippov photo-essay also began at breakfast.

After sketching the worker and his family absorbed in their morning ritual, Rivera exits from the apartment and follows them into the street (7 and 8). There, we discover that they are not in the center of Moscow but rather an outlying neighborhood. He trails behind them as they walk through its near-empty

15. Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, pp. 142–46. While Rivera was in Berlin, Münzenberg arranged for one of his publishing houses to produce a monograph on him (see *Das werk des malers Diego Rivera* [Berlin, Neuer deutscher verlag, 1928]). Featuring high-quality full-page reproductions of Rivera's frescoes in the Secretariat of Public Education and at Chapingo, its plates were captioned in both German and Russian, suggesting perhaps that the volume was also to be used as a kind of calling card during his Moscow visit.

streets to join the main parade. En route, they encounter the first red flag of the corpus (9); it flaps in the wind, and Rivera zooms in (10). The family then meets a trio of young women holding a red banner (14); dressed in pale-blue cotton smocks and sporting uniform red headscarves for the occasion, these women are presumably local factory workers (*rabotnitsy*, lit.: female workers) who will be marching in the parade as a collective unit. For a moment, Rivera becomes absorbed in the way one worker helps her colleague tie her headscarf (15 and 16). On the left of another sheet (37), he tracks their assembly into a group of uniformly clad *rabotnitsy*. In the middle of this same sheet, we find the members of a sports club preparing to enter the main parade. Light-gray upper-case Cyrillic letters superimposed across a retinue of still unfurled tall red flags in the center of the sheet suggest the word "Dinamo," perhaps identifying this staging ground as the newly completed Dinamo Stadium,¹⁶ which was located about three and half miles from the city center, making it a straight shot from there down Leningradskii Prospekt and Tverskaia Street to Red Square. At the far right of the sheet, a group of onlookers gathers on higher ground to watch, perhaps waiting for its turn to join the march; in a closely related sketch (29), Rivera zooms in on a group of spectators.

Clusters

It is at this point that we suddenly find ourselves searching in vain for the family we met at breakfast. By now we have lost track altogether of its members, who seem to have been fully absorbed into the swelling crowd, no longer distinct protagonists in the massing demonstration. On the one hand, this absorption signifies the convergence of the individual into the mass, and thus the dialectical realization of the transformation process mentioned at the outset. On the other hand, and more literally, their absorption signals the breakdown of the "24 hours in the life" model of Soviet persuasion, for it is around here that the sketchbook seems to diverge into a number of what could be called clusters of attention, as well as scattering into a host of sundry other details. The following discussion considers three clusters; although their precise sequence and interrelation are uncertain, I present them here within the overall rhetorical frame of convergence provided by the drive toward the center—the march on Red Square from all quarters of the city—that characterized day-long demonstrations.

The subject of the first of these clusters has already been mentioned, namely, the blue-smocked *rabotnitsy*, who, in their personification of the collective unit of the factory, displace the sketchbook's initial focus on the nuclear proletarian family. In addition to the four sheets already mentioned, *rabotnitsy* appear in sundry others (12, 17, 25, and perhaps also 33). Rivera follows their march downtown (11), and details them as they wait their turn to enter Red Square (19).

16. In this connection it is worth noting that Rivera asserts that he was engaged by metallurgical workers in Moscow to paint the walls of their "Dynamo Club" on Leningradskii prospekt; see Rivera, "The Revolutionary Spirit in Modern Art," p. 56.

Ahead of them in line at the same location on Nikolaskaia Street is a group bearing aloft a carnivalesque cabal of papier-maché heads (28); in the rearground of this sheet we catch a first glimpse of the massive Kremlin Wall that faces onto Red Square, above which the red-flagged dome of the Senate building—the seat of government—rises.

A second cluster of drawings moves the viewer into Red Square itself. Comprising eight closely related sketches, this cluster surveys the demonstration as it moves slowly through a now densely crowded square (e.g., 41). In the rearground, the Kremlin Wall looms, trussed in cascading red banners. Taking as our point of reference the wall's Nikolskaia tower—at the far right of the sheet—we can watch Rivera slowly panning left, away from the tower, zooming in and out as he proceeds (37, 43, 39, 45, 41, 44, 40, 42). Almost hyperbolically cinematic, drawing here seems haunted by the possibilities for the representation of movement afforded by the then-new medium of film. This is all the more fascinating given Rivera's polemical resistance to his fellow October Association member Aleksei Mikhailov's insistence that film, being the industrial art par excellence, is the best way forward for proletarian art, a resistance Rivera expressed in a debate held at the Communist Academy in late March 1928.¹⁷ Even more crucial, however, is the fact that throughout this panning cluster Rivera consistently remains at a distance from the crowd he observes, watching it go by at a safe remove; he registers its movement, but he himself is always in more or less the same place. He is the observer of the unfolding scene, in other words, standing just outside the path of the demonstration, watching, waiting, drawing.

In the third major cluster, by contrast, Rivera himself is on the move, placing his own viewpoint within the jostle of the parade, shifting his position from that of observer to one of observer-participant converging with his very subject, as it were, and thus thoroughly transforming the affective value of his reportage (24, 12, 35, 38, 27, 20). Overhead lines in some of these sheets suggest that the cluster tracks the movement of the demonstration parade either along a tram route—perhaps Tverskaia Street, if the segment of the parade with which Rivera is marching is coming in from Dinamo Stadium—or under the electrical wires that crisscross Red Square. At a certain point, Rivera finds himself in the heart of the square, with the Kremlin Wall looming on the right and St. Basil's Cathedral straight ahead at its southeastern end (27). In the distance, a young child on its father's shoulders waves a little red pennant in evident excitement. Have we caught up again, finally, with the family we met at breakfast? Maybe. But the sketchbook plays tricks on our diegetic desire. For, closer still to St. Basil's, we find another child perched upon its father's shoulders, similarly waving a pennant (20). And then we

17. See the summary of Rivera's ambivalent response to Mikhailov's remarks on cinema at an important debate held in the Literature and Art section of the Communist Academy, "Soderzhanie rechi khudozhnika Diego Rivera," in *Iskusstvo v SSSR i zadachi khudozhnikov: Disput* (Moscow: Kommunisticheskaia akademiia, 1928), p. 72.

notice yet another such configuration (32). It is their very differentiation through watercolor that prevents the conflation of these children into a single figure seen at various moments within an unfolding narrative sequence.

Excursus: The Red Army Sketches

The dramatic contrast in the artist's viewpoint between the second and third clusters just discussed becomes relative, however, when we consider another, much smaller group of seven sketches that Rivera also produced in Moscow. Confusingly,



Rivera. Untitled (Red Square, November 7, 1927). 1927.
© 2013 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

this group has been mistakenly described as belonging to the sketchbook that is now in the Museum of Modern Art, most notably by Rivera's good friend Bertram Wolfe, in his pioneering and influential 1939 biography of the artist.¹⁸ Their present whereabouts unknown, our knowledge of these sketches is based only on black-and-white reproductions, some of which were generated by the studio of Tina Modotti in Mexico City, presumably before her expulsion from the country in 1930.¹⁹ Five sketches depict scenes from a military parade, including infantry formations and cavalry and artillery charges. Running across the rearground of

18. See Wolfe, *Diego Rivera*, p. 238. The same error recurs in a second and revised edition that appeared in 1963 (see Bertram D. Wolfe, *The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera* [New York: Stein & Day Publishers, 1963], p. 216), and in several later publications that draw upon Wolfe.

19. Modotti's studio stamp appears on the verso of the photographs used as reproductions in Wolfe's biographies; for these original prints, see the Hoover Institution Archives, Bertram David Wolfe papers, box 176, folders 2 and 6. No information regarding medium or dimensions has accompanied their infrequent and poor reproduction (see *Diego Rivera: Catálogo General de Obra de Caballete*, pp. 108–09), but at least one sketch looks to be on squared paper and has a perforated edge, which suggests that it, like those in the Moscow Sketchbook, derives from a reporter's notebook.

four of this five is a series of low-slung arches, an architectural detail that identifies the parade site as Red Square, the arch being the dominant motif of the first and second floors of the State Department Store (GUM) situated directly opposite the Kremlin Wall, flanking almost the entire length of the square. Detailing the same parade, the fifth sketch shows a cavalryman, his horse stiffly rearing as he salutes, we are to infer, the party leadership and foreign dignitaries standing on the viewing platform atop Lenin's mausoleum. A sixth sheet shows from behind an open-bed truck full of soldiers, and the seventh presents Red Army men in formation in front of the recently completed Lenin Institute (1927) on Sovetskaia Square, the modularity of their aligned bodies echoing the strict symmetry of the new building's façade. Given their common subject matter—the Red Army—and Rivera's evident effort to capture the hieratic and formal quality of the Soviet military spectacle, we can assume that these sketches were connected in some way or another to the unrealized commission the artist received from Anatolii Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Education and Enlightenment, to paint a fresco cycle in the Red Army club in Moscow.

Wolfe states that Rivera either made or had the idea for these Red Army sketches on November 7, 1927, the day of the tenth-anniversary parade.²⁰ Indeed, these sketches generally accord with photographs documenting the appearance of Red Square that morning, and also with newspaper reports of the almost three-hour

20. Wolfe, *Diego Rivera*, p. 237.



*Military parade in Red Square,
Moscow, November 7, 1927.*

military parade and display that ran from 8 a.m. through 10:45 a.m., fully occupying the square before the regular workers' procession was allowed to enter.²¹ Wolfe also notes that Rivera made the sketches on "the reviewing stand against the old Kremlin wall."²² This comment has sometimes been taken to suggest that the artist had secured a place on the aforementioned viewing platform mounted on Lenin's tomb. This is unlikely. Although the practice of inviting foreign visitors to share the platform with the party leadership apparently did begin on the occasion of the tenth anniversary, it was reserved for only the most politically significant of foreign visitors, and Rivera, never one to miss an occasion to self-promote, nowhere mentions having been extended such an honor. In addition, the point of view of the Red Army sketches is much closer to the ground. It seems more likely, therefore, that Rivera was stationed in the bleachers that had been purpose built on either side of the mausoleum for journalists and foreign delegates to the Congress of Friends.²³ The more important matter here, however, is that Rivera's viewpoint in his Red Army sketches—no matter where he was stationed—is elevated above and outside the action. It is the viewpoint of an observer watching at a distance. In their affective register, the Red Army sketches are thus utterly distinct from those in the Moscow Sketchbook, with the single exception of the panning cluster of eight sketches discussed above (though these last were made, I should clarify, not from the bleachers but at the point where Nikolskaia Street runs into the square).

Montage

Significantly, it is precisely that panning cluster that documents the celebration of the tenth-anniversary parade in November 1927 rather than the demonstration held on May Day in 1928. The evidence for this lies in the drawings themselves: The distinctive striation of the Kremlin Wall that we see throughout this cluster is clearly an attempt to render the way in which the wall was draped for the November festivities; there was no such bunting for May Day 1928. The green papier-maché dragon being carried aloft by a group of demonstrators in sketch 41 seems to document the carnivalesque performance during the tenth-anniversary procession, according to newspaper reports, of a "forty-foot dragon with green scales" that was "two-headed," one head representing the British statesman Sir Austen Chamberlain with his monocle, and the other Mussolini, with a Fascist swastika on his forehead.²⁴ The overall gray tonality of the cluster would seem, furthermore, to register the incipient snow and icy air that day that was reported by both the artist and the press.

Could it be, then, that Rivera was mistaken in identifying his sketchbook as a representation of May Day 1928, and that, in its entirety, it documents instead the

21. Walter Duranty, "Red Army Marches in Soviet Capital," *The New York Times* (November 8, 1927), p. 3.

22. Wolfe, *Diego Rivera*, p. 237.

23. See Duranty, "Red Army Marches," p. 3; and also Vladimir Tolstoy, Irina Bibikova, and Catherine Cooke, *Street Art of the Revolution* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1990), pp. 171–72.

24. Duranty, "Red Army Marches," p. 3.

tenth anniversary?²⁵ After all, in his autobiography Rivera does say that “during the three hours that I withstood the icy winds watching this [i.e., tenth anniversary] procession, I drew many sketches for water colors. About fifty of these were afterwards purchased by Mrs. John D. [i.e., Abby Aldrich] Rockefeller, Jr.”²⁶ That remark, though it sits uneasily with his statement regarding May Day cited above, would seem to suggest that the Moscow Sketchbook is indeed a representation of the tenth anniversary. The evidence of the corpus itself shows, however, that this can be only partially the case, because there are numerous sheets in the sketchbook sold to Rockefeller that do not accord with the climatic conditions reported on that day. Incipient snow and icy winds is not the kind of weather in which a *rabotnitsa* would be on the street in a short-sleeved cotton smock and bare legs. Furthermore, a good number of sketches have such a warm luminosity—through the very translucence of the watercolor medium, which allows the support to function as a lighting agent—that they bespeak the radiant arrival of spring as a figure for the emancipation of labor, not a grim and determined march into winter.

What the evidence of the drawings suggests, in other words, is that the Moscow Sketchbook is a montage of both the tenth anniversary and the May Day demonstrations, and may also include scenes from other parades as well. As such, it is a product of editing as much as eyewitnessing. This, in turn, raises the further question of whether the sketches derive from a single notebook—in which the artist recorded different events over the course of many months—or whether it was assembled from several sketches made in identically formatted notebooks. This last is a distinct possibility since Rivera mentions having left Moscow with, as noted earlier, “three or four sketch books recording [his] observations of the life of the Soviet people.”

The question of November versus May might seem like one of those trivial matters with which art historians routinely get saddled, but in fact it speaks directly to the significance of the shift in viewpoint, already alluded to, from Rivera as outside observer (in November) to Rivera in the jostle of the crowd (in May). For even though the Moscow Sketchbook is a montage of at least two demonstrations, Rivera presented it to Rockefeller in 1931 under the rubric of May Day rather than that of the tenth anniversary. It was presumably on the basis of the artist's own description that Rockefeller housed it in a custom-made box dated 1928, and that, when a selection of its sheets was exhibited in his 1931 exhibition, they were listed under the title “The May-Day Sketchbook of Diego Rivera, May 1, 1928, Moscow.”²⁷

The question then arises as to why Rivera suppressed the sketchbook's composite nature in favor of a singular emphasis on May Day? There are several possible explanations, ranging from the banal to the purposeful. He may have simply forgotten or become confused about the precise subject of the sketches. Or

25. This scenario is suggested in Dickerman, “Leftist Circuits,” pp. 16 and 45 n. 17.

26. Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, p. 148.

27. See *Diego Rivera* (New York: the Museum of Modern Art, 1931), cat. no. 65. Exhibition records in the museum's Department of Drawings reveal that, with minor variations, the May Day title has been used ever since the 1931 show.

perhaps he felt that acknowledging their composite reality would compromise their status as reportage and his own status as an eyewitness to the world's first workers' state, which was surely a large part of what would have made the sketches especially compelling during the throes of the Depression. (As Meyer Schapiro expressed it in his ambivalent review of the 1931 exhibition, the latter "excited the greatest interest because of [Rivera's] original connection with a revolutionary movement. The exhibition could not have been staged at a more propitious moment than Dec[ember] 1931, when the Depression had reached so low a point and the communists have won the sympathy of the entire city."²⁸)

Alternatively, and more profoundly, the suppression of the sketchbook's composite reality perhaps had to do with where Rivera was, politically speaking, by 1931 with respect to the Soviet experiment. In this regard, it is worth underscoring that May Day was a much older tradition than the anniversary of the revolution, and it was one that had distinctly non-Soviet origins dating back to the call to action after the Haymarket massacre of 1886 in Chicago. Before his visit to Moscow, Rivera had treated the subject of May Day quite extensively in his fresco cycle for the Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico City. It was a holiday that the artist himself had celebrated, as Modotti's famous photograph of Rivera and Frida Kahlo marching together with colleagues from the Revolutionary Union of Technical Workers, Painters and Sculptors in Mexico City on May Day 1929 testifies. By presenting his Moscow Sketchbook in 1931 under the exclusive rubric of May Day, Rivera thus ensured its place within a circuit of associations that were much broader and more truly international than those provided by the Soviet state alone.

Of further note in the context of the present discussion is the pronounced absence in the Moscow Sketchbook of any representation of the party leadership, or even a single glimpse of the Lenin mausoleum upon which that leadership stood during these daylong commemorative parades, ostensibly greeting each and every participant with a glance or a wave. That Rivera ultimately loses himself in the jostle of a moving crowd that has no evident leader, aside from a red-pennant-waving child perched on its father's shoulders, is also significant. And the fact that that child (presumably a synecdoche of the socialist collective) appears to be paying homage to St. Basil's Cathedral (that vestige of Russia's orthodox and historical past) rather than to any of the icons of the revolutionary present beyond the crowd itself is even more significant. This was a fact that seems not to have escaped the notice of Paul Rosenfeld, a critic for *The New Republic* who, in his review of the 1931 exhibition, suggested that the sketchbook provided evidence that Rivera clearly saw "the persistence of 'Holy Russia' in Moscow's May Day exercises."²⁹

It was certainly the case that by the end of Rivera's extended visit to the Soviet Union, his relationship with both Soviet government and Communist Party officials had soured.³⁰ A year or so after his return from Moscow he was expelled from the

28. Meyer Schapiro, "Diego Rivera" (Dec. 1931), typescript, n. p.; Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Meyer Schapiro Papers, box 360, folder 23 (Research Files on Diego Rivera).

29. Paul Rosenfeld, "The Rivera Exhibition," in his "The Old Master of Photography," *The New Republic* (January 6, 1932), p. 216.

30. See Wolfe, *Diego Rivera*, pp. 242-47; and also Richardson, "The Dilemmas of a Communist Artist," pp. 63-64.

Mexican Communist Party. In 1932 he published a sharp critique of the Stalinist bureaucratization of the arts and the stranglehold exerted over both international communism and revolutionary artists by what he called, around this time, the "Stalintern," a sarcastic reference to Moscow's domination of the Comintern, the very organization that had brought him to Moscow in the first place.³¹ (Such opprobrium did not stop Rivera, however, from allowing the use of his work, including pages from the Moscow Sketchbook, to illustrate Emil Ludwig's feature story on Stalin in the September 1932 issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine.)

31. See Rivera, "The Position of the Artist in Russia Today," in *Arts Weekly* (New York) 1, no. 1 (March 1932), pp. 6-7. The term "Stalintern" is drawn from a related essay by Rivera entitled simply "Painting" (typescript, n.d. [ca. 1932], Hoover Institution Archives, Bertram David Wolfe Papers, box 117, folder 18): "The revolutionary organizations are not yet in a position to help the revolutionary artist, the genuine one—who is not a new kind of beaurocrat [*sic*], receiving financial help from the Russian workers and peasants through the Stalintern, who is not the 'yes' man of some of the Stalinist art clubs—this revolutionary artist has to conduct himself like a partisan, a 'guerilla fighter.'"

STALIN

by EMIL LUDWIG
Author of "Napoleon" and "Lincoln"

Workers marching past the wheat-export office, 1927.

A review of the Red Army in Moscow.

A Soviet "bread line" waiting to buy flour at the minimum price.

A scene at the first of May celebration.

Cosmopolitan sends Ludwig to interview Stalin:
The greatest student of men in the world sizes up the greatest living enigma among men . . . the amazing result, printed here, will make history

A drawing of Stalin by Diego Rivera engraved by the artist

class, not the strengthening of a national state but of a Socialistic one that will take care of all the workers of the world. If every one of my steps did not lead to the strengthening of this state, I should have to consider my life senseless.

What kind of life has such a man had? We need not compare these modern leaders, who have all come up from the people, with the presidents of our democracies; we need compare them only with the leaders of the French Revolution, who—like Danton, like Robespierre—lived as advocates and free citizens in Paris until the revolution brought them power and danger together.

But he who was known as a Russian Socialist around 1900 gave up everything that freedom, grandeur, family, security, possessions—for, since he was engaged in understanding just these things, he could not demand them for himself. Youthful love of adventure can start such a course, but only belief in one's ideal can sustain it.

Stalin did not become a Socialist because of the degradation of his parents. He was the son of a workman, a slawmaker, who was at the same time a peasant, and so he has in his make-up something of both classes, yet his youth acquired no resentment from either class. On the contrary, it was only because his father succeeded in getting him into a Jesuit seminary in order to have him educated for the priesthood that Stalin became revolutionary.

"My parents," he said in answer to my question, "were uneducated people, but they treated me very well. Not until I was in the monastery

Emil Ludwig, "Stalin." From *Cosmopolitan*, no. 555 (September 1932). Illustrations by Diego Rivera.

Rivera would spend the next decade or so as a "non-aligned socialist," to use the late David Craven's term, eventually entering into the anti-Stalinist orbit of the exiled Trotsky.³² Thus, if his sketchbook constitutes the most substantial pictorial record we now have of his response to the world's first workers' state, it also makes a forceful and polemical statement as to the changing nature of his political commitment in confrontation with the rapidly shifting realities of power in that state. A complex graphic object that takes its place on the continuum between reportage and memory, Diego Rivera's Moscow Sketchbook is ultimately an anti-monumental monument to both communism and the workers' state as the fundamental and abiding principles for any present or future utopia, notwithstanding the apparent failure of its most concrete instantiation to date.

32. David Craven, *Diego Rivera as Epic Modernist* (New York: G. K. Hall & Co., 1997).

Diego Rivera: Moscow Sketchbook

Diego Rivera made the following sketches during a seven-to-eight-month stay in the Soviet Union between 1927 and 1928. A prominent member of the Partido Comunista de México (Communist Party of Mexico), Rivera traveled to Moscow to participate in the tenth-anniversary celebrations of the 1917 Revolution. Word of Rivera's dedication to muralism as a politically potent art form preceded his arrival, and he quickly became embroiled in debates about Soviet art's ideological aims and physical characteristics. He lectured on monumental painting at the Komakademiia (Communist Academy) and joined the Oktiabr' (October) group, a body of artists—many former Constructivists—working in varied media but united in their rejection of easel painting in favor of works intended for public display and mass audiences. Rivera also received a commission from Anatolli Lunacharsky, the first Soviet Commissar of Enlightenment, for a fresco cycle (ultimately unrealized) at the Red Army's headquarters. As Maria Gough argues in this issue, the group of drawings, long assumed to be from a single notebook, is likely an amalgamation of sketches created during two distinct events, the tenth-anniversary celebrations in November 1927 and the May Day festivities of the following year. Rivera's sketches capture his reaction to these officially mandated public demonstrations—spectacles so large in scale that they defined a new type of mass political event. In January 1928, Rivera met two young American scholars—Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Jere Abbott, the future director and associate director of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, respectively—who were on the Russian leg of a European tour designed as an education in contemporary artistic developments. The three met regularly, visiting exhibitions and the studios of Moscow-based artists. The fruits of this unlikely friendship between a radical art-world celebrity and two fledgling art historians were seen in Rivera's one-man show at MoMA in the winter of 1931–32, a blockbuster that decimated the young museum's existing attendance records. In support of the exhibition, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, a founding trustee of the Museum, purchased the sketches to help defray the cost of the artist's stay in New York. She donated the works to MoMA in 1935.

The sketchbook is published here in its entirety for the first time thanks to MoMA's Department of Drawings. Special thanks to Kathy Curry.

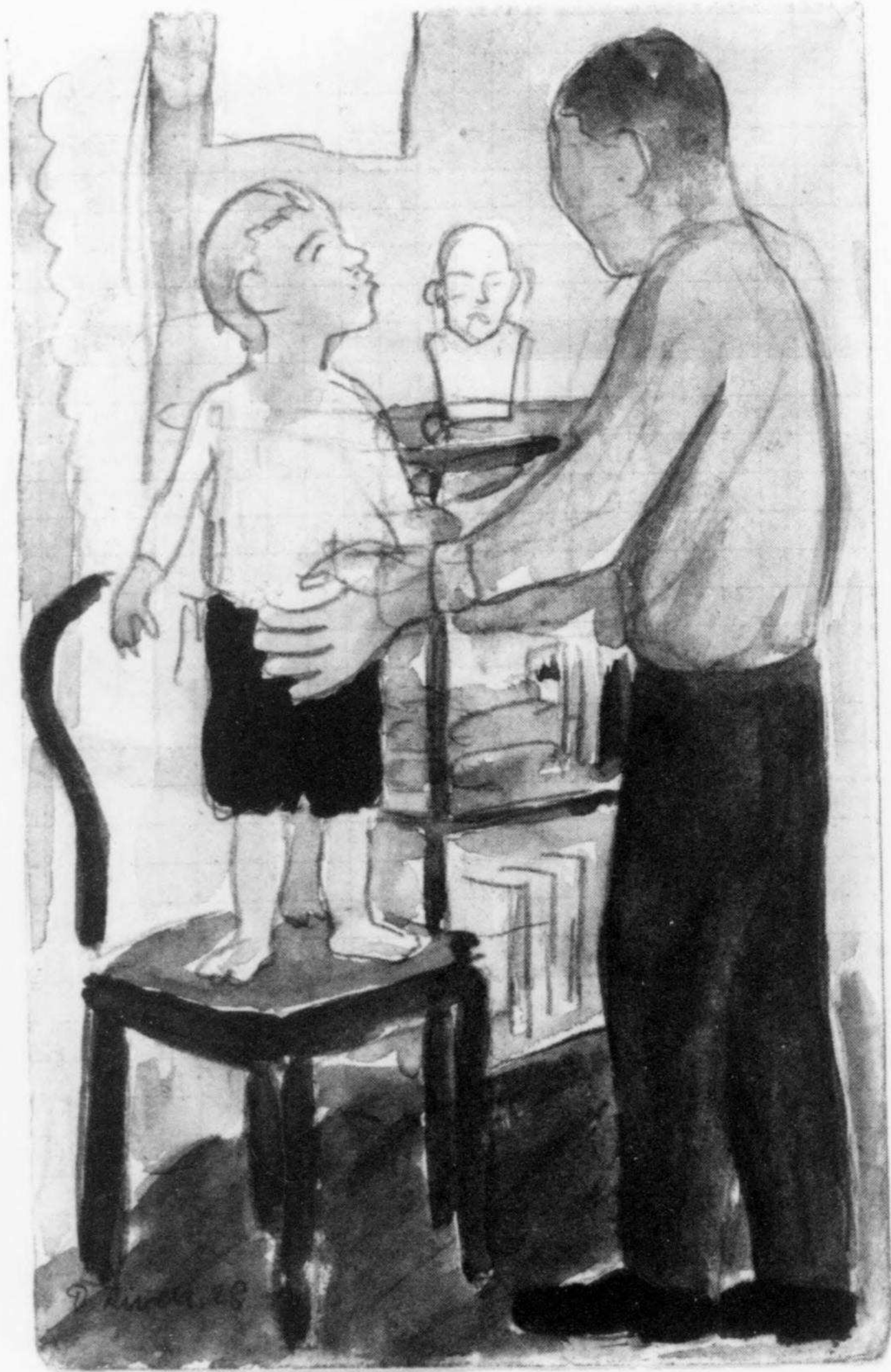
—Jodi Roberts



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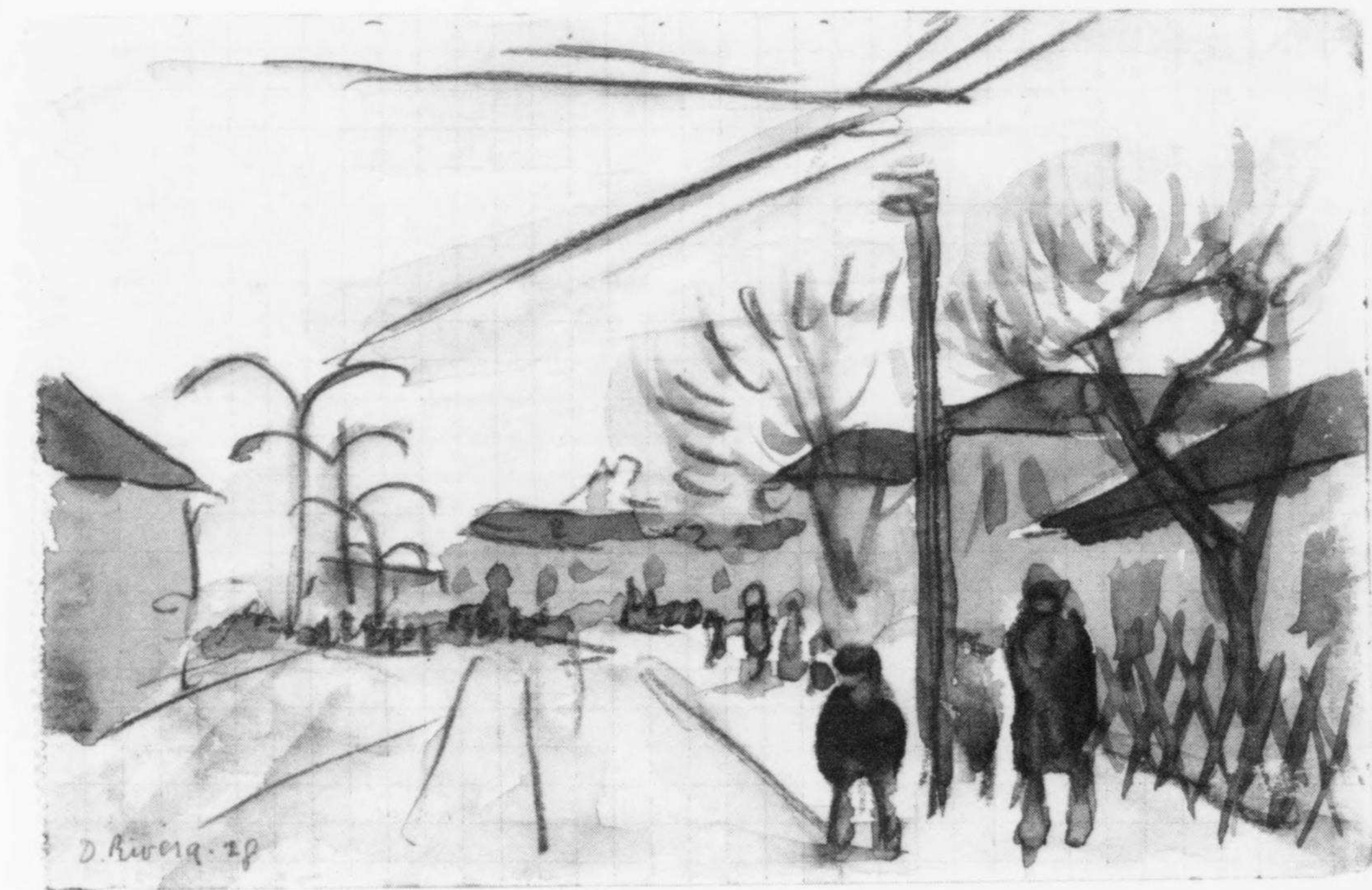








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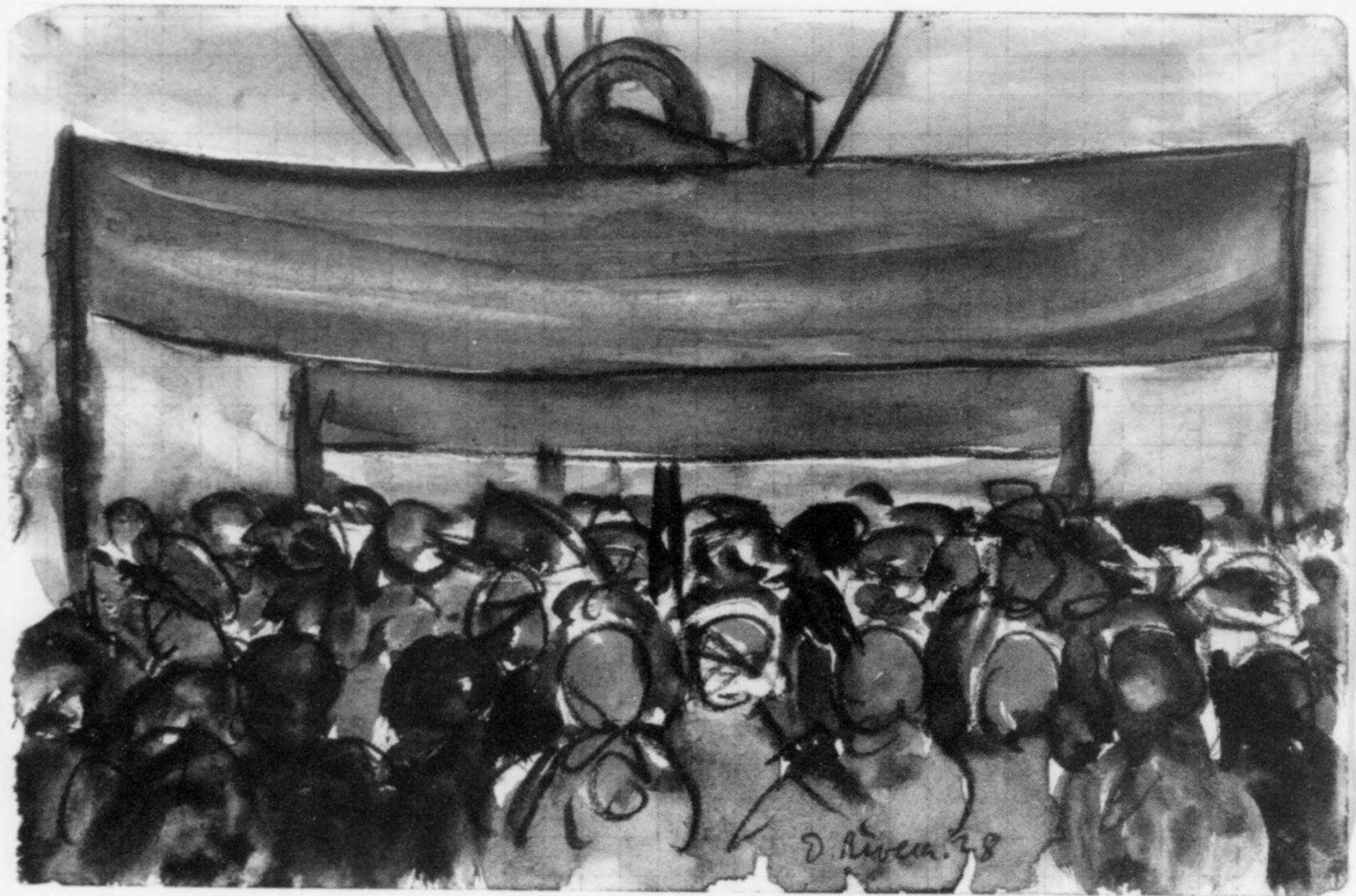


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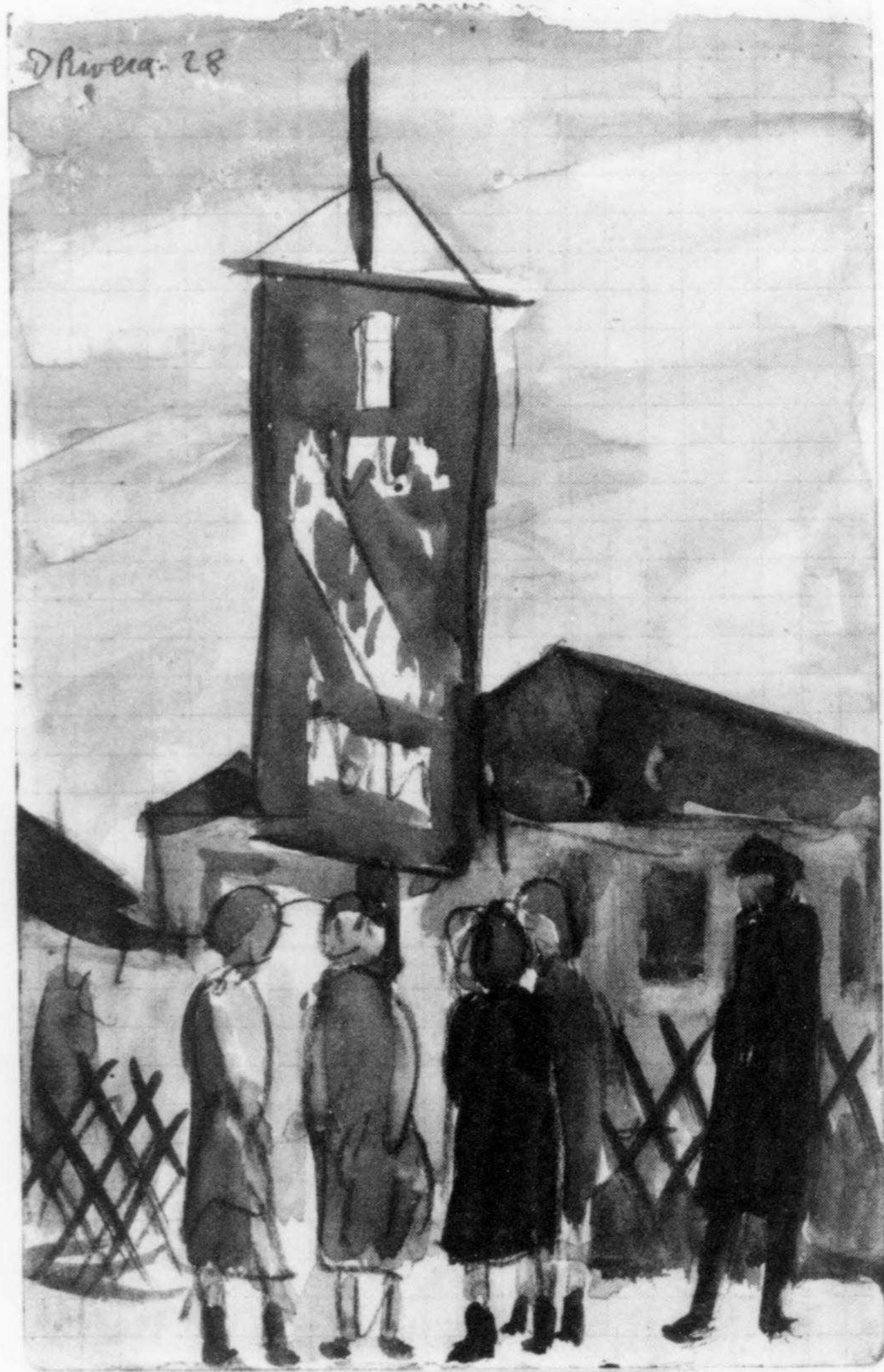


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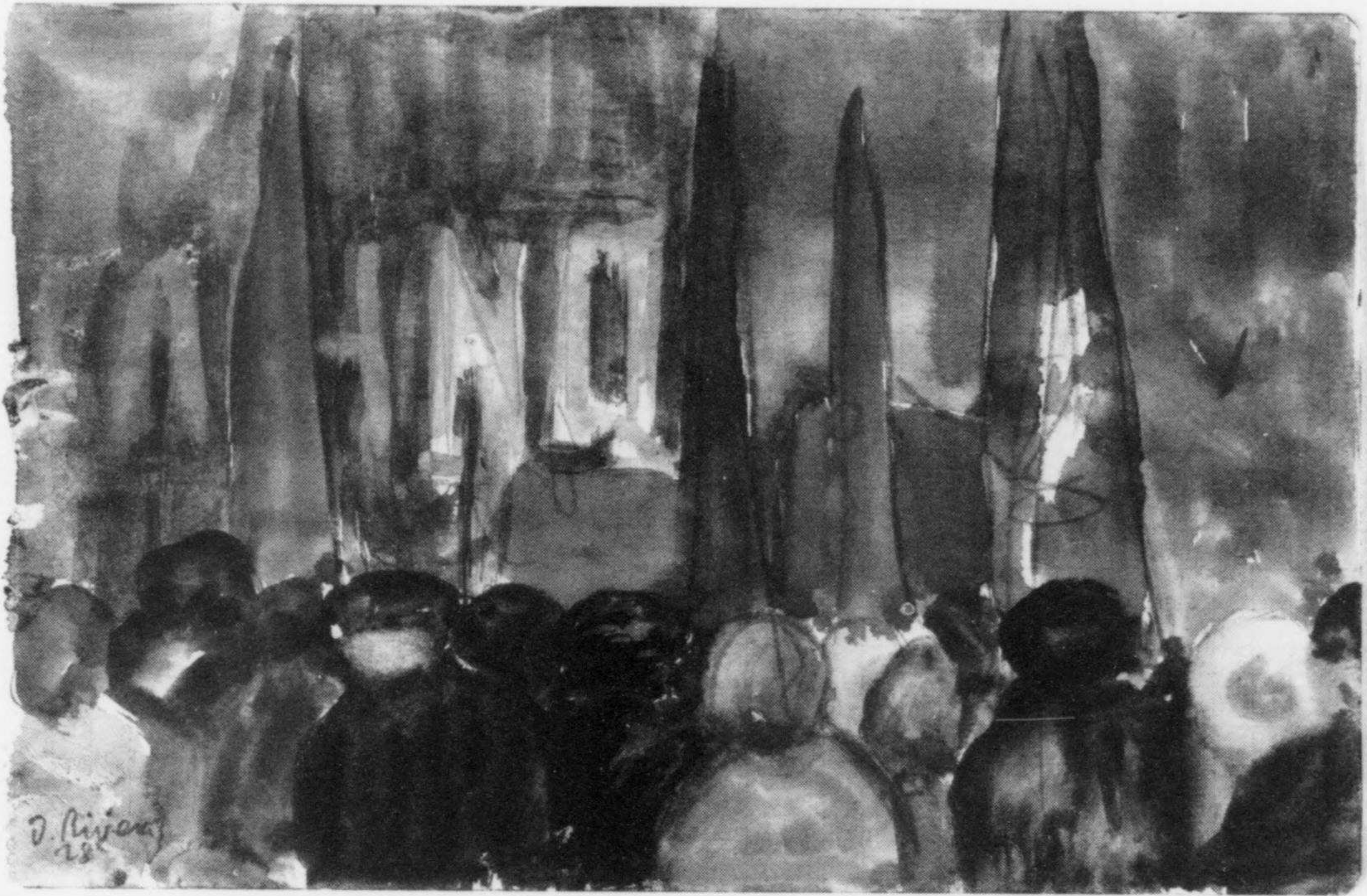
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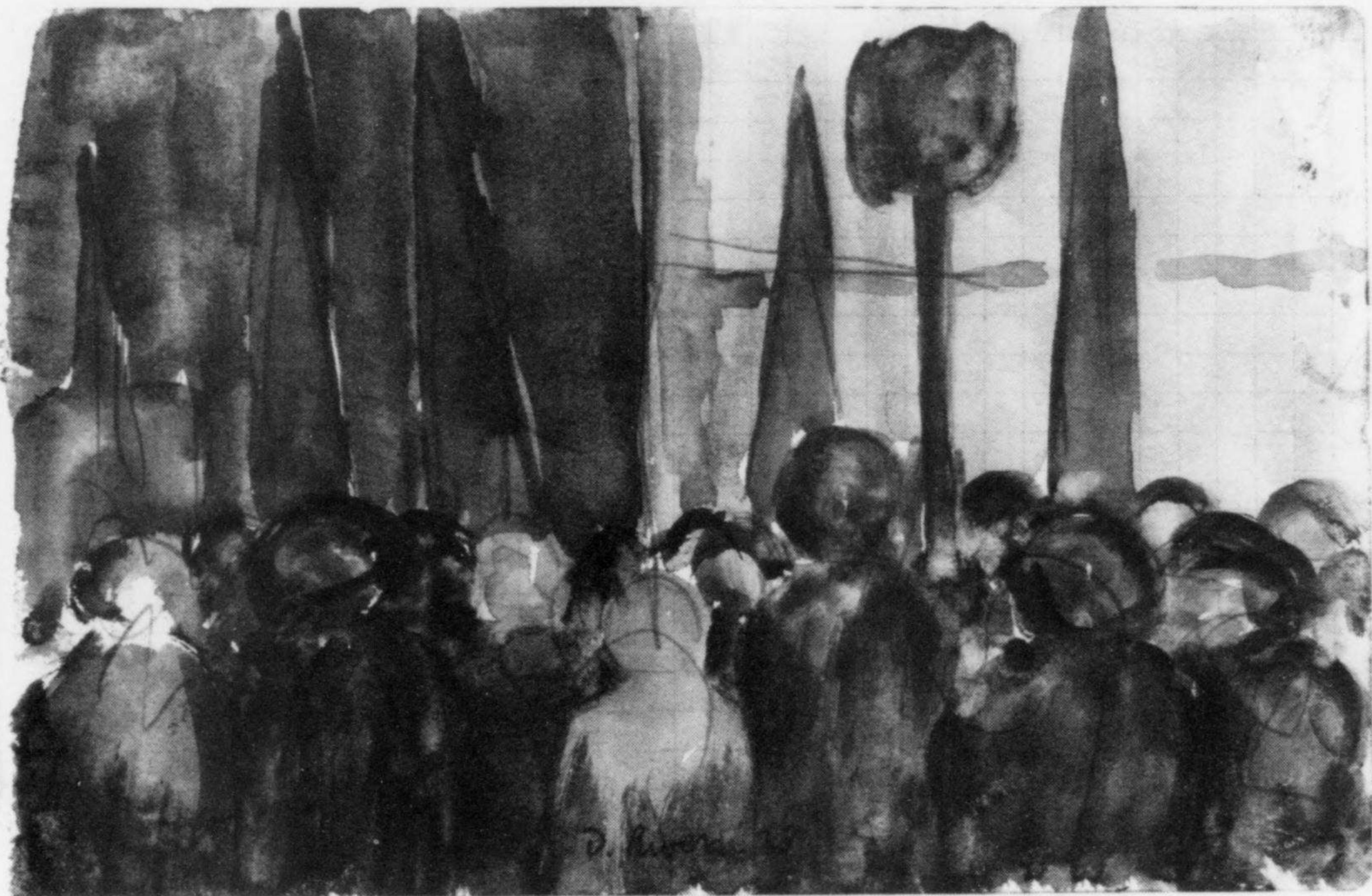








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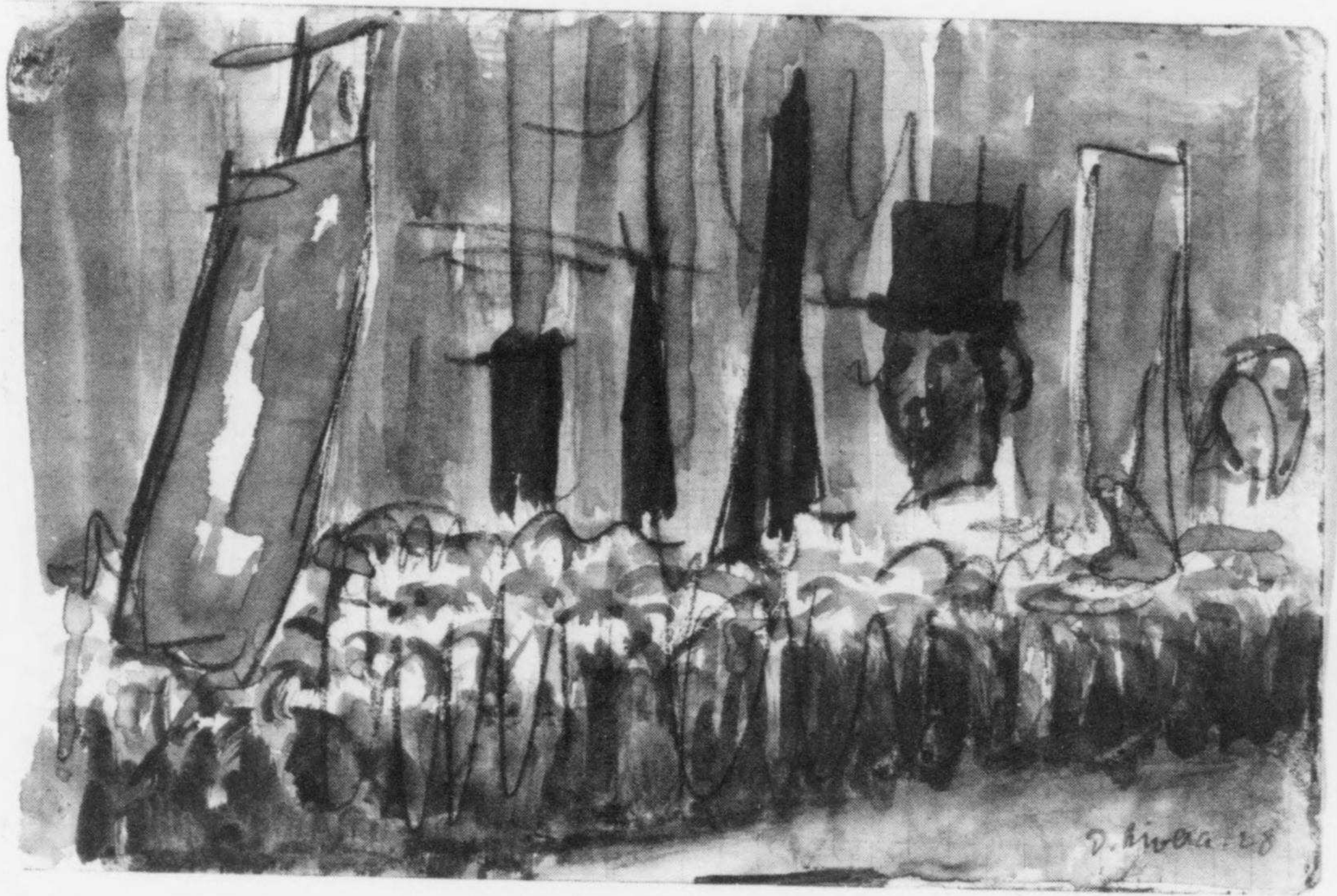
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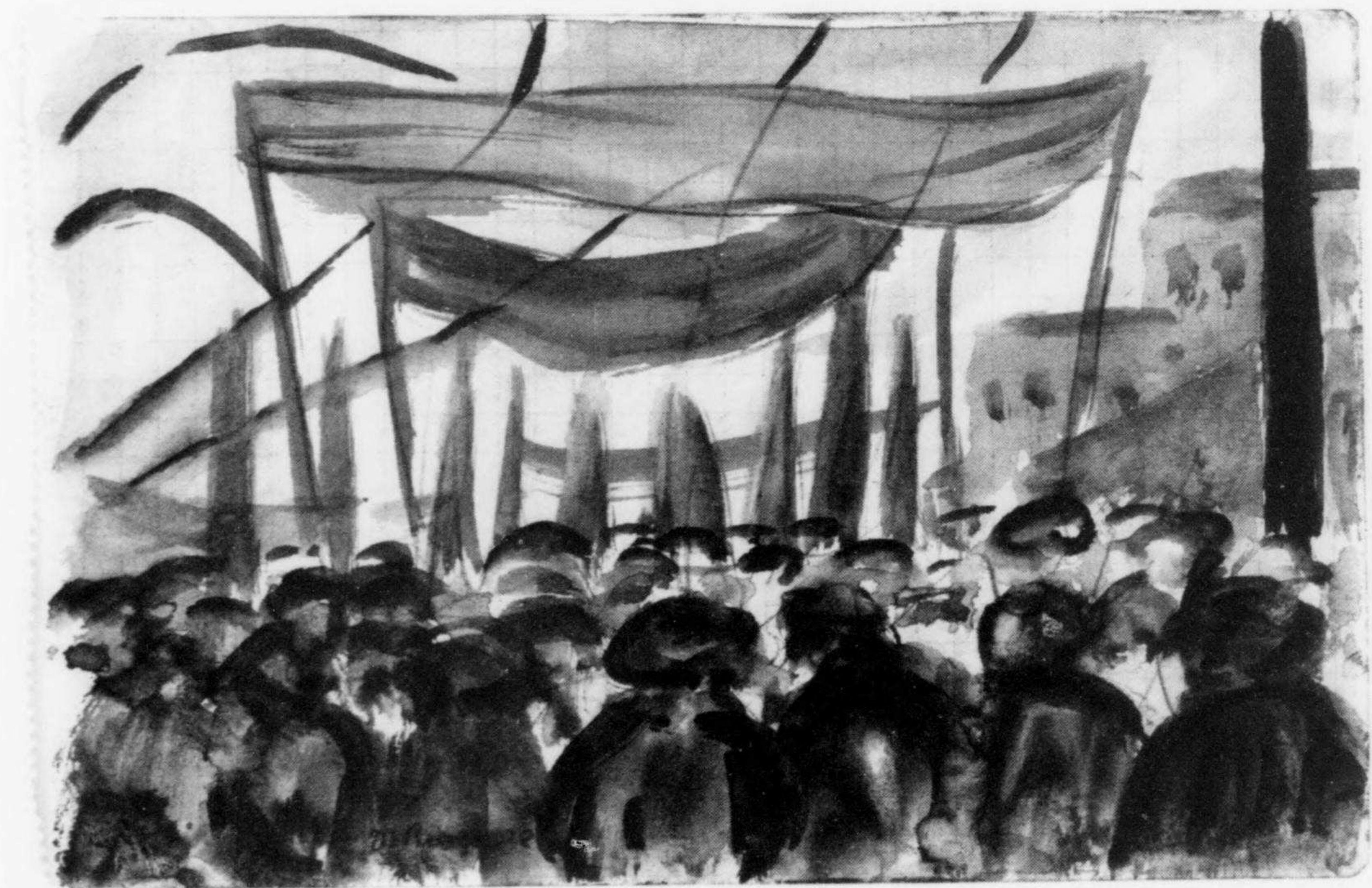
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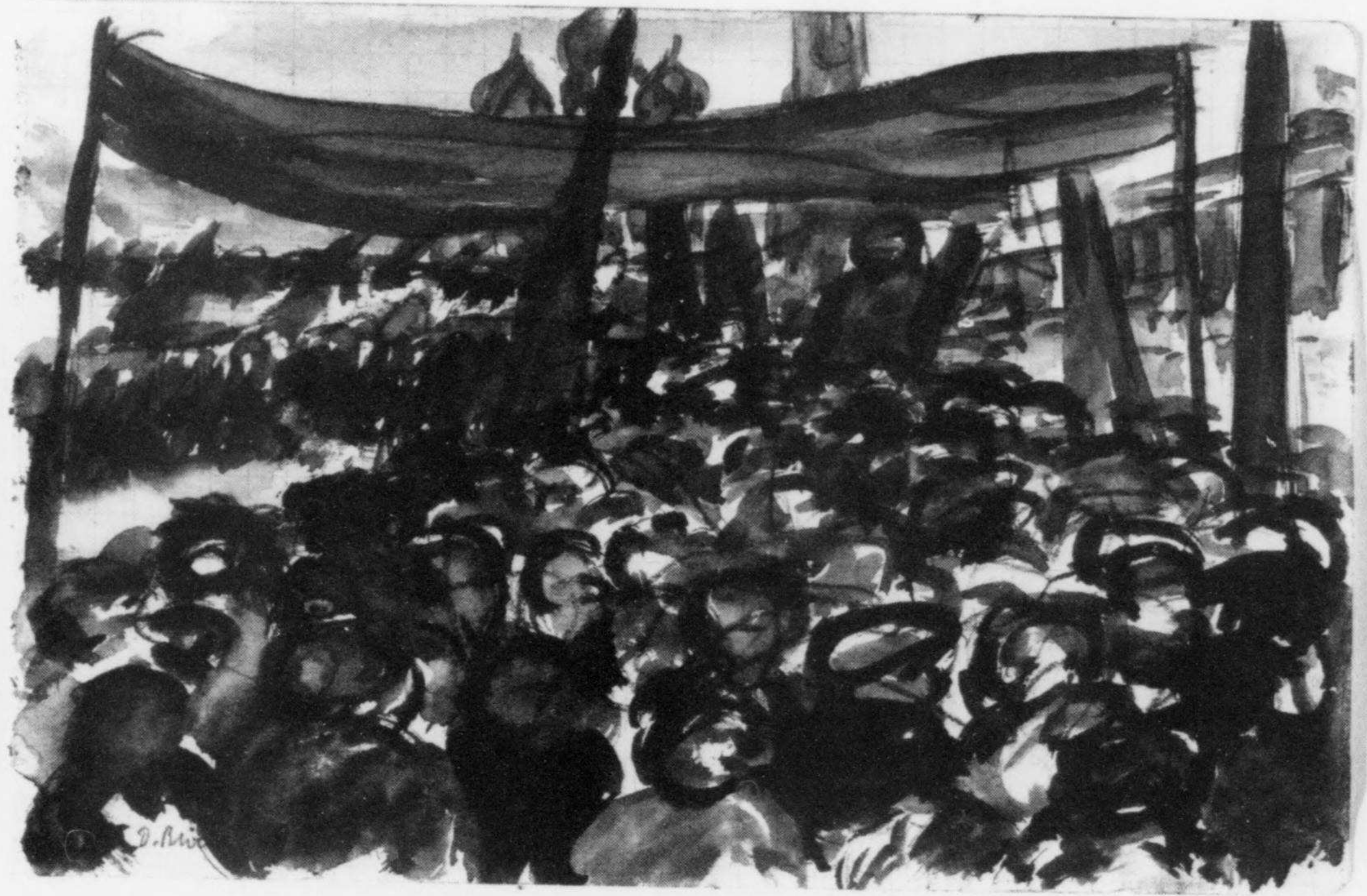
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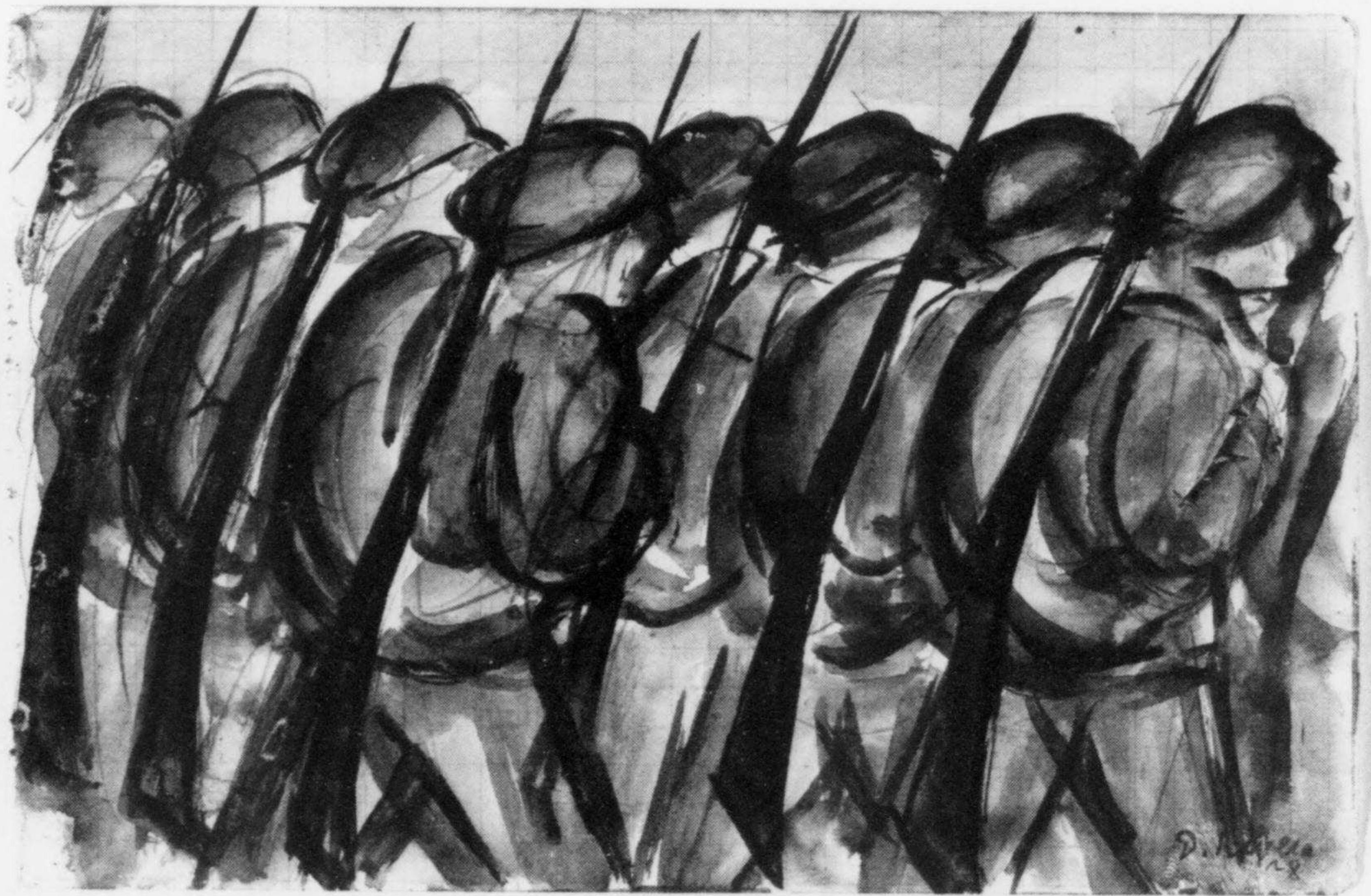
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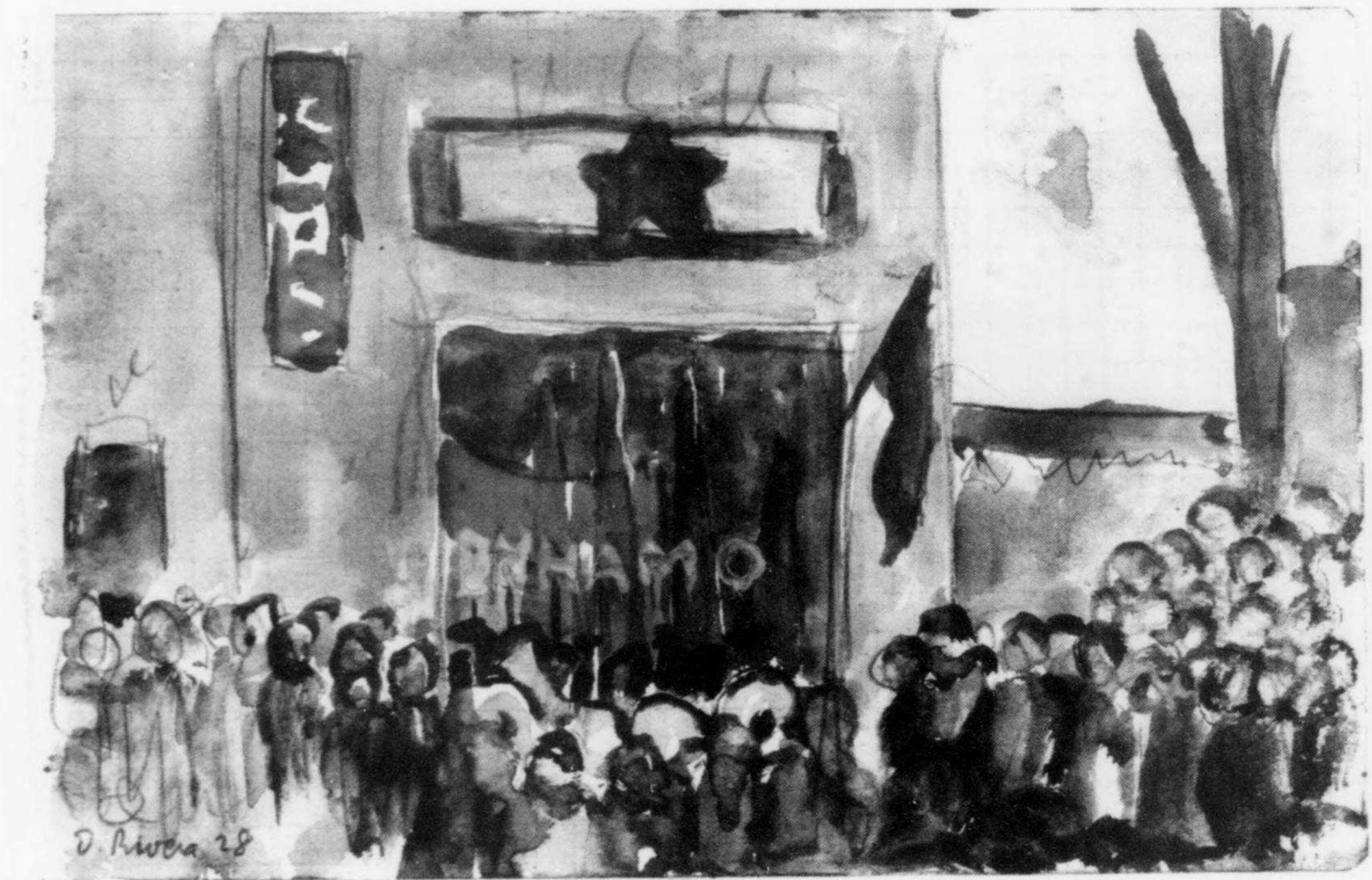
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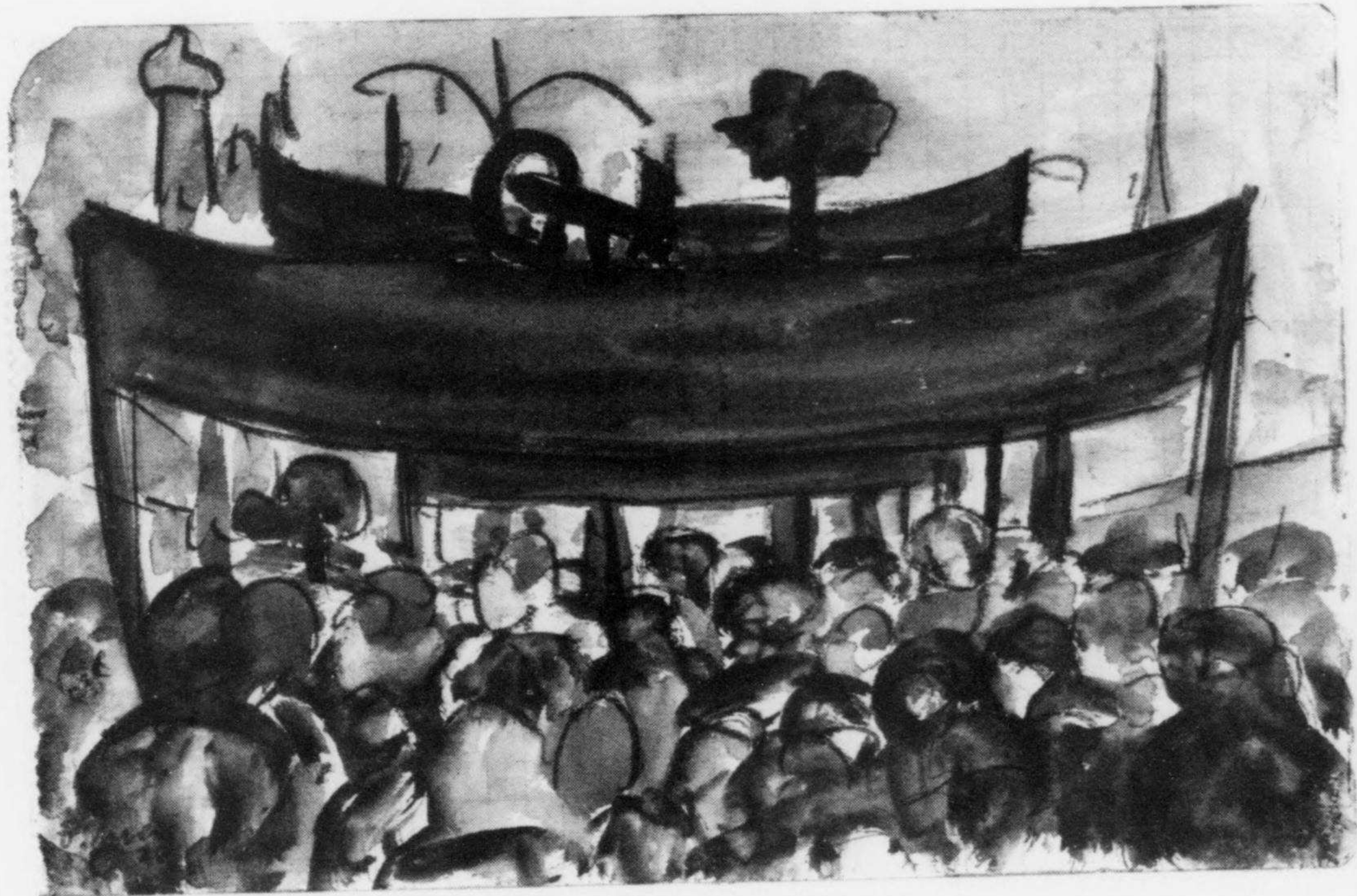
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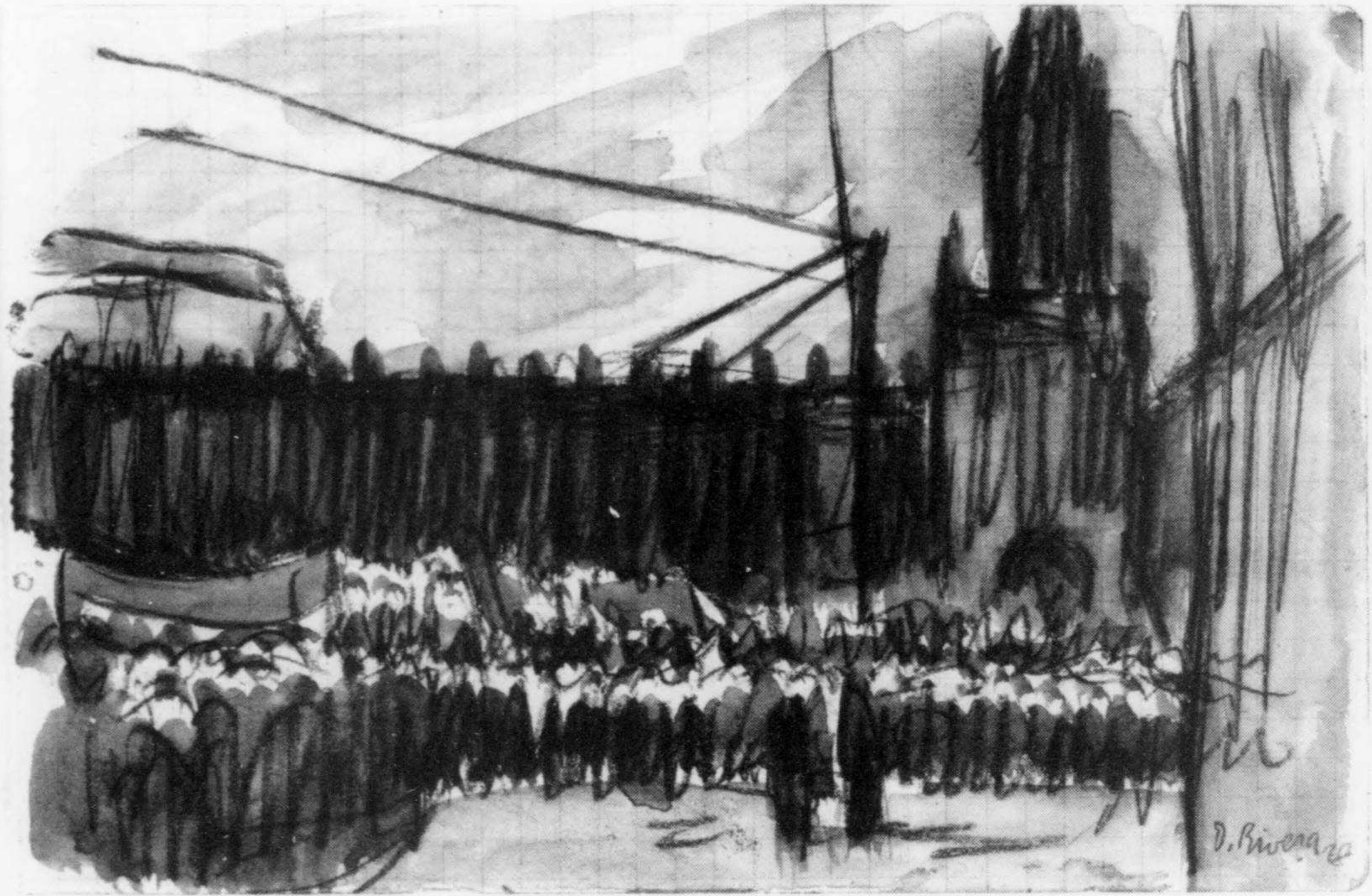
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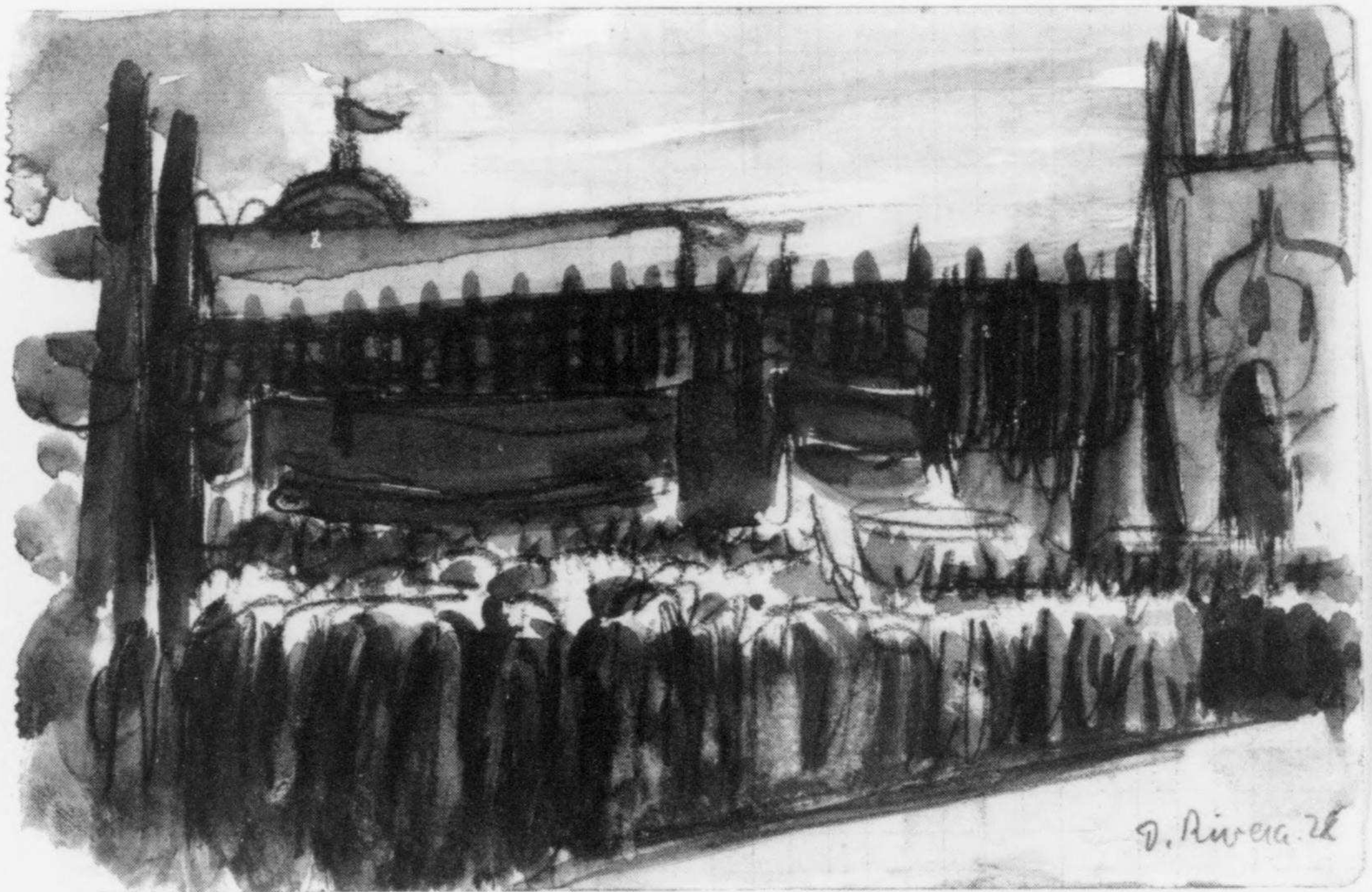
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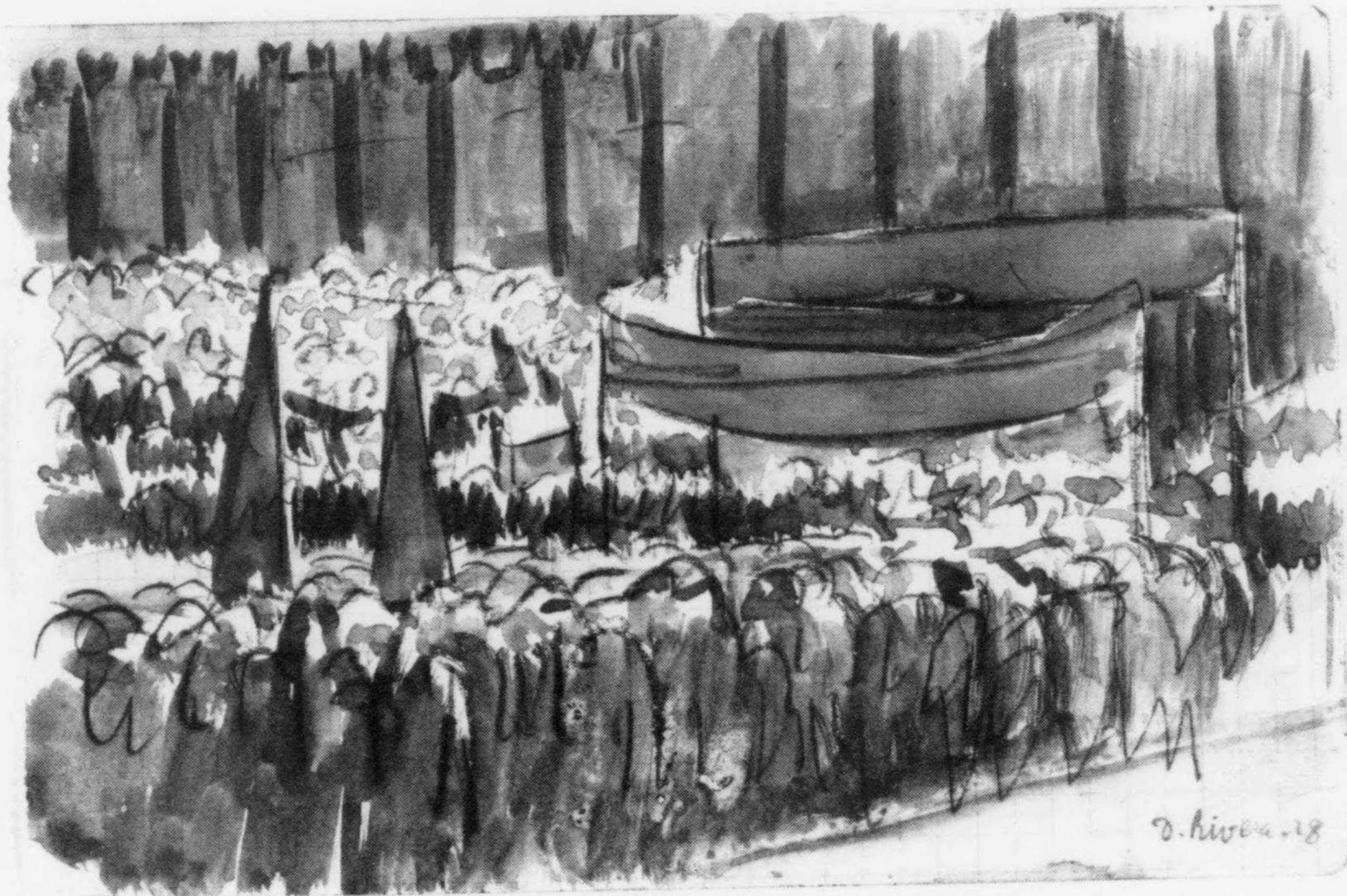
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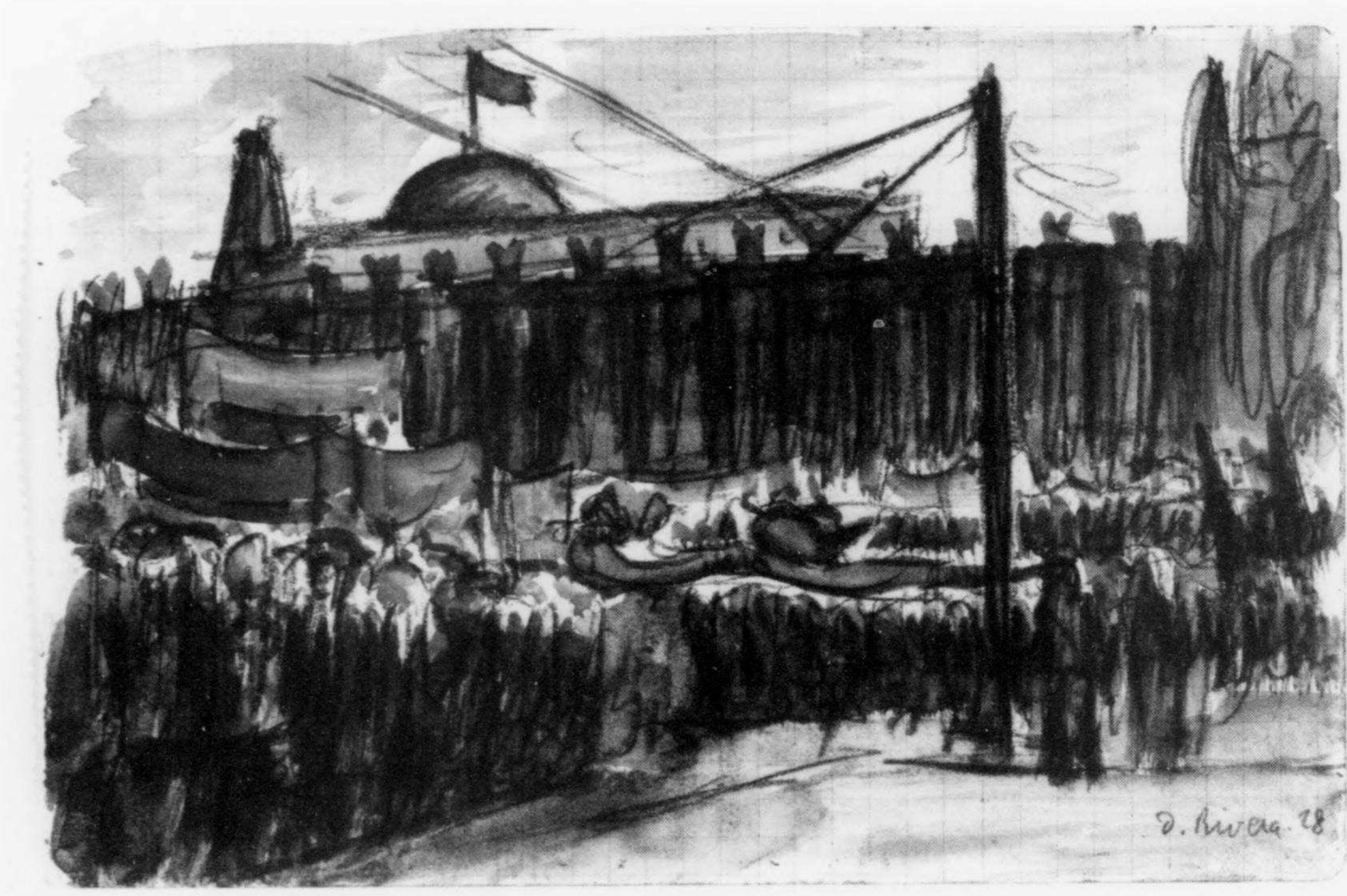
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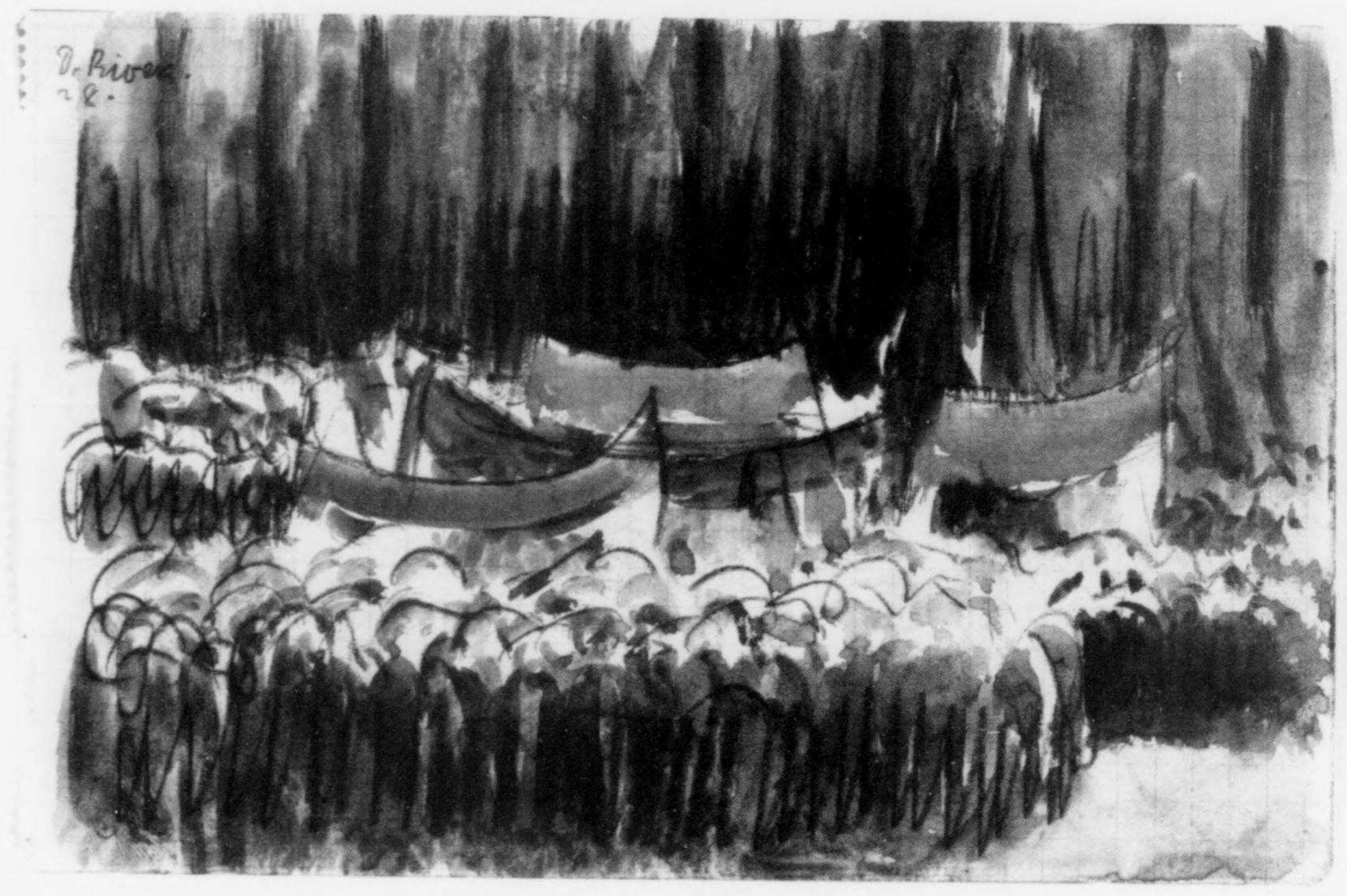
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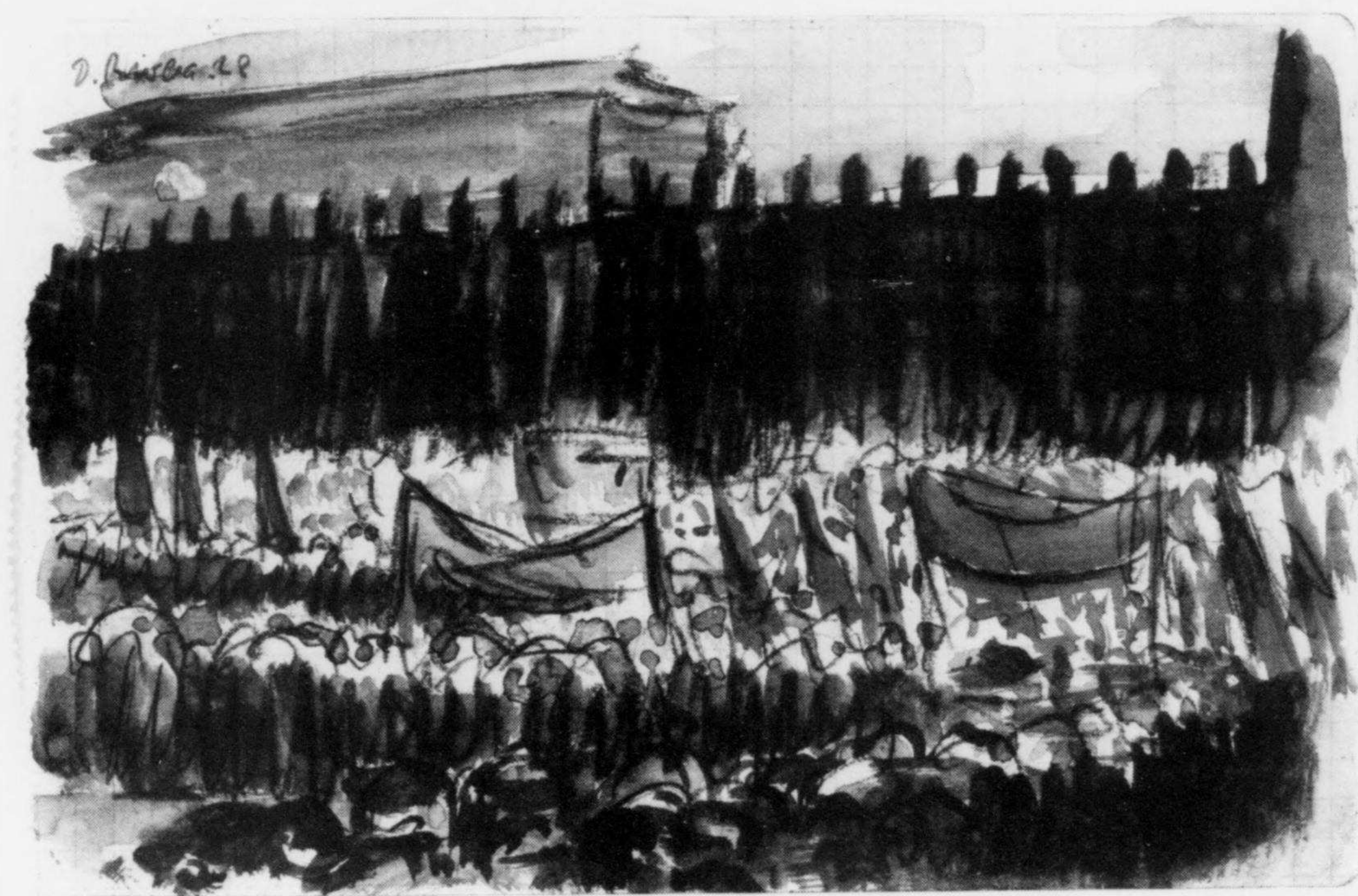
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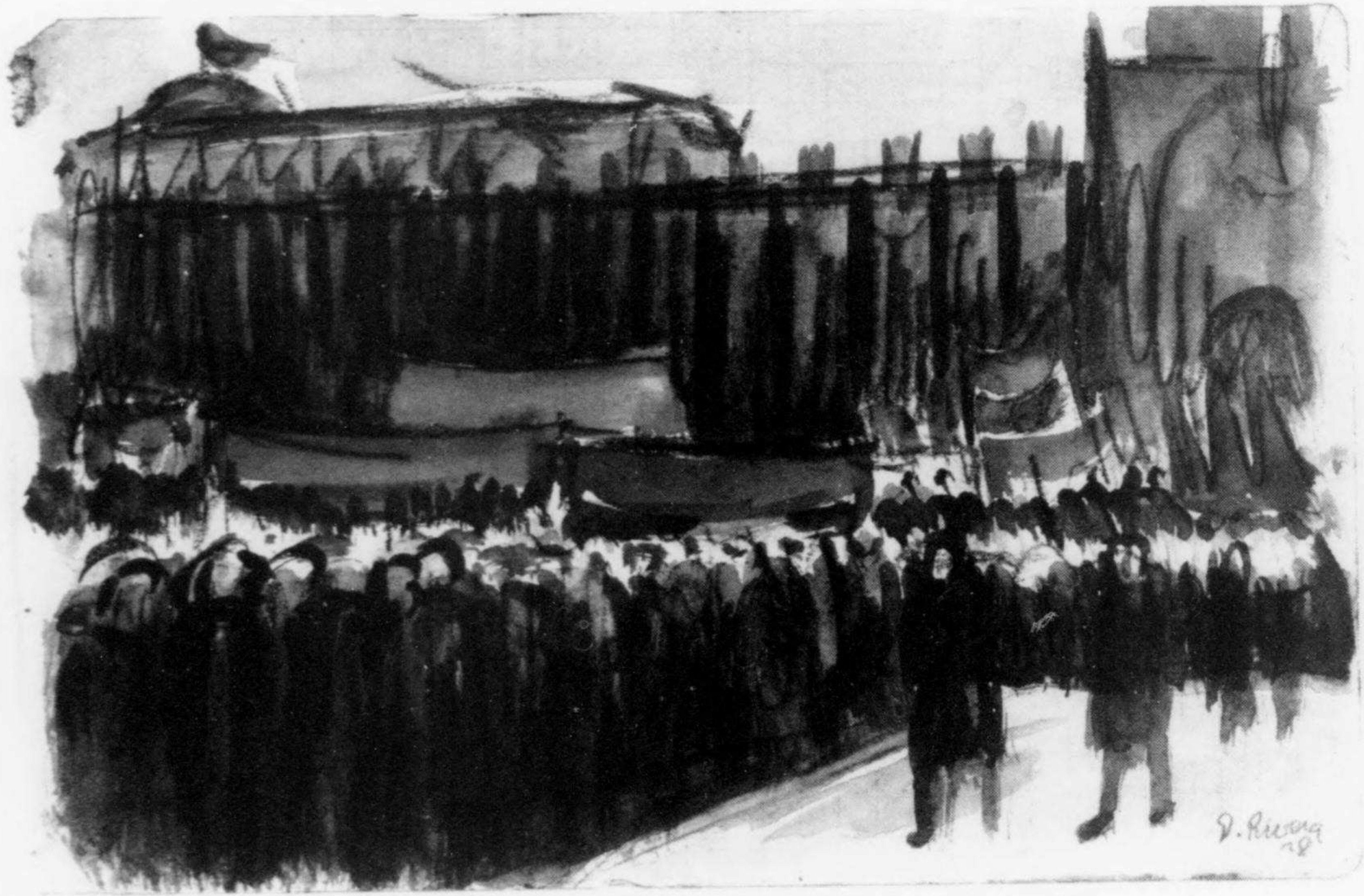
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An Introduction to Jere Abbott's Russian Diary, 1927–1928*

LEAH DICKERMAN

In 1978, in its seventh issue, *October* published the travel diaries written by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., who would go on to become the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art, during his two-month sojourn in Russia in 1927–28. They were accompanied by a note from Barr's wife, Margaret Scolari Barr, who had made the documents available, and an introduction written by Jere Abbott, an art historian and former director of the Smith College Museum of Art who had returned to his family's textile business in Maine. Abbott and Barr had made the journey together, traveling from London in October 1927 to Holland and Germany (including a four-day visit to the Bauhaus) and then, on Christmas Day 1927, over the border into Soviet Russia. Abbott, as Margaret Barr had noted, kept his own journal on the trip. Abbott's, if anything, was more detailed and expansive in documenting its author's observations and perceptions of Soviet cultural life at this pivotal moment; and his perspective offers both a complement and counterpoint to Barr's. Russia after the revolution was largely uncharted territory for Anglophone cultural commentary: This, in combination with the two men's deep interest in and knowledge of contemporary art, makes their journals rare documents of the Soviet cultural terrain in the late 1920s. We present Abbott's diaries here, thirty-five years after the publication of Barr's, with thanks to the generous cooperation of the Smith College Museum of Art, where they are now held.

Jere Abbott and Alfred Barr met at the Sunday concerts held at George and Ethel Rowley's house in Princeton, where music by modern composers such as Maurice Ravel, Erik Satie, and Francis Poulenc was played.¹ Abbott had con-

* We are grateful to Smith College Museum of Art for their cooperation in publishing Abbott's journal, and wish to thank Jessica Nicoll, David Dempsey, Linda Muehling, and Aprile Gallant in particular for their support of this project. Our thanks to the family of Jere Abbott and to Colby College for their generous help. For research and other aid, I am grateful to Jodi Roberts, Masha Chlenova, MaryKate Cleary, and Jenny Harris.

1. Sybil Gordon Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge and London: the MIT Press, 2002), pp. 86–87.

templated a career as a concert pianist: Having just returned from a year in Paris (1923–24) where he studied music and art, met Gertrude Stein, and befriended Virgil Thompson, he was now pursuing the life of an academic, doing graduate work in art history at Princeton. Barr also was in Princeton, serving as a preceptor for courses in Italian and nineteenth-century painting, but he was complaining openly about the conservative curricula there, particularly the lack of any serious study of contemporary culture.

At the end of the year, Barr accepted an invitation to teach a course in modern art of his own design at Wellesley for the academic year 1926–27. Encouraged by Barr,² Abbott applied to go to Harvard, to study in Paul Sachs's famous "museum course," begun in 1922. The course was distinctive in combining historical investigation with the study of individual works. Using examples drawn from the Fogg Museum's collection, students defined and classified structuring principles—a formalist approach, novel in this country, which became known as the "Fogg method." Under his tutelage, Sachs's students also focused on museological topics (also rare in an American graduate curriculum at the time): They traced the historical development of the museum; compared the structure of different institutions and collections; and organized experimental, thesis-based exhibitions in the Fogg galleries. Sachs carefully built a roster of international contacts—art historians, collectors, and museum personnel. He encouraged his students to travel and sent them forth with dozens of long introductory letters; they in turn were expected to bring back names and addresses, bibliographies, books, and photographs. Many recall Sachs continually updating the two little black books he maintained for contacts.³

Barr and Abbott roomed together in Cambridge, at 34A Irving Street, with Barr commuting the half-hour to and from his teaching job.⁴ He failed to get two fellowships for which he had applied, and Abbott paid Barr's share from the allowance provided by his family, explaining in a letter to his father that "I look upon paying his share of the rent as a sort of monetary compensation for his company, we get along very well together, his ability, much greater than meager mine, which I draw on continually, and his kindnesses in introducing me where the *entre* [sic] might have been difficult."⁵ Barr attended the Sachs course with Abbott "when convenient,"⁶ and both were part of the tight social circle that formed among the cohort of students in the course, including Julien Levy, A. Everett Austin, James Rorimer, R. Kirk Askew, Jr., and Henry Russell

2. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 88.

3. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 55. Paul Sachs, "Tales," part 1, vol. 1, p. 42, CORP.

4. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 104.

5. Letter from Jere Abbott to his father, postmarked April 7, 1927. Jere Abbott papers, Bowdoin College Archives.

6. Abbott's written recollection reprinted in Rona Roob, "Alfred H. Barr, Jr.: A Chronicle of the Years 1902–1929," *New Criterion* (Special Issue, 1987), p. 12.



*Petr Likhachev (left), Jere Abbott (center), and Alfred Barr (right) in Moscow. 1928.
Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.*

Hitchcock. (Hitchcock, together with Philip Johnson, would organize the landmark "Modern Architecture. International Exhibition" held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932.) Friends in their group commented on the unusual closeness of Barr and Abbott's arrangements: Hitchcock described them in a gossipy letter to Virgil Thompson as "cette étrange [*sic*] ménage."⁷

The description for Art 305, Barr's course at Wellesley, read, "Contemporary Painting in relation to the past, to the other arts, to aesthetic theory and to modern civilization."⁸ It was perhaps the first at any American college to survey the arts of the last fifty years: The syllabus began with post-Impressionism and Symbolism (Cézanne, Seurat, Van Gogh, Redon), using large-scale color reproductions, and then moved assertively into the present day. It was also impressively multidisciplinary. Students read, for example, Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* (Towards an architecture, 1923), and went to see the Motor-mart and Necco factory in Cambridge.⁹ Abbott tagged along with the group, and his photographs of the Necco building were published in the first issue of *Hound & Horn*.¹⁰ Film was also covered: *Metropolis* was analyzed in terms of "primitive and barbaric art, the psychology of expressionism, the discipline of cubism and constructivism, and the importance of the machine."¹¹ Abbott and Randall Thompson, a music professor at Wellesley, gave a recital after the final take-home exam: The program included music by Stravinsky, Milhaud, Bartók, and Satie.¹² The course stands as Barr's first effort to approach the field of modern art systematically.

Barr left for London in mid-July 1927 on a travel fellowship personally funded by Sachs, intended to help him define a dissertation topic—both the machine and the primitive as sources for contemporary art were topics he had floated.¹³ Abbott joined Barr there in October, and they stayed as paying guests at the home of Percy Horton.¹⁴ According to Abbott, Russia was not originally on the itinerary. In London, the pair met Wyndham Lewis; through Lewis they were introduced to Nina Hamnett, who had recently returned from a trip to the Soviet Union. Hamnett, in Abbott's description, "was enthusiastically Communist in spirit. There was discussion about Russia. We decided to go

7. Cited in Alice Goldfarb Marquis, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.: Missionary for the Modern* (Chicago and New York: Contemporary Books, 1989), p. 48. Letter from Henry Russell Hitchcock to Virgil Thompson, September 27, 1928, Music Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven.

8. Reprinted in Roob, "Alfred H. Barr, Jr.: A Chronicle," p. 9.

9. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, pp. 102–103. Mary Bostwick (a student in Barr's course), "Wellesley and Modernism," *Boston Evening Transcript* (April 27, 1927), p. 10.

10. Jere Abbott, photographs of the Necco factory, *Hound & Horn* 1, no.1 (September 1927), p. 36. Barr wrote an article about the building for *The Arts* 13 (January 1928), pp. 48–49.

11. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 104.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

13. *Ibid.*, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 146.

14. Roob, "Alfred H. Barr, Jr.: A Chronicle," p. 14.

there. It was that simple."¹⁵ There are suggestions, however, that Barr may have begun to focus on Russia as a destination already in August 1927, before Abbott arrived in London: He mentions "the trip to Russia and Germany" in a letter to the dealer J. B. Neumann, whose plans to join Barr as a traveling companion that summer had fallen through.¹⁶

Abbott and Barr left London at the end of October 1927, traveling first to Holland, where they met J. J. Oud and saw the work of the De Stijl artists, then to Germany. There, their itinerary was structured according to a list of progressive artists, critics, and art professionals provided by Neumann. On Neumann's suggestion, they spent four days at the Bauhaus in early December. Barr later remembered Moholy-Nagy's "sullen expression when I asked him whether he or Lissitzky first used photomontage,"¹⁷ an image that gives a sense of how the faculty there may have responded to the determined inquiries of the American boy-professors. From Germany, they traveled through Poland and into Russia, arriving in Moscow on December 26, 1927.

In Moscow, they stayed at the Hotel Bristol. Their room was twin-bedded, velvet-draped, and full of bedbugs. (Barr describes the sleeping costumes they adopted to defend against their aggressors and appends one of the creatures to a page in his journal.) Despite its discomforts, the hotel seems to have offered some sense of community for foreign visitors to Moscow. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, an acquaintance of Sachs's from Cambridge doing research on the new Soviet theater, was staying there, as were both Robert Wolf, who had come over for the tenth-anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution and remained as a correspondent for *The New Masses*,¹⁸ and the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, who was already an art-world celebrity in Barr's eyes. A friend of Nina Hamnett's, an Irishwoman named May O'Callahan, also lodged at the hotel: She ended up being a crucial figure for the success of the trip, bringing the young travelers to the writer Sergei Tret'iakov's house on the third day of their visit, where they met Sergei Eisenstein.

Dana's interpreter, Petr Likhachev, described by Abbott in 1978 as "a thoroughly delightful Man-Friday helper and guide of sorts," accompanied Abbott and Barr on many of their outings. This Russian contact, more than the cultural figures they met, provided Abbott and Barr a view into the traumatic impact of recent historical events in the Soviet Union on individual lives. Likhachev's father, a merchant-ship captain, had committed suicide after his ship was torpedoed in the Baltic during the First World War. His sister was

15. Jere Abbott, Introduction to Alfred H. Barr, Jr., "Russian Diary, 1927-28," *October* 7 (Winter 1978), p. 8.

16. Cited in Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, pp. 150, 161. Letter from Barr to Neumann, September 29, 1927. Neumann papers, AAA.

17. Cited in Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 159. Letter from Barr to Joan Fiske McCullough, February 6, 1967, the Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

18. Barr, entry for December 26, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 12.

killed in the street fighting in St. Petersburg that accompanied the October Revolution. He himself was smaller than he should be, he said, explaining, "[D]uring 1919 and '20 when I was supposed to be growing, I was starving."¹⁹ A suit and an overcoat were beyond his financial reach—so Abbott outfitted him, taking a certain pride in doing so.²⁰

The distinct mind-sets of the two men comes across in their respective journals. Barr's is full of quick, apt judgments: Following the pair's first meeting with Lissitzky, he notes of the artist's work that it is "the most frankly paper architecture I have ever seen";²¹ he calls Diego Rivera "a large, hearty, rather Rabelaisian character";²² and he labels the cross-media production seen in the studio-cum-living quarters of the artist-couple Rodchenko and Stepanova "an appalling variety of things."²³ A reader often feels that Barr is grappling to make sense of the shifting cultural terrain of the Soviet Union in these years, to understand how things fit in terms of a historical narrative, even struggling at times with the ways that the figures he meets confound expectations. After a visit to Rodchenko on January 19, he writes: "I had prepared a list of questions to ask him. He answered them in a rather disgruntled manner, insisting that the past bored him utterly and that he couldn't remember at all when he had painted this way or that." Abbott, on the other hand, seems to view his role less as that of historian of the contemporary and more as simple observer, earnestly inventorying facts and observations. He systematically lists works in the former Shchukin and Morozov collections (perhaps with Sachs in mind). More than Barr, Abbott seems sanguine about the waning relevance of easel painting among the Russian avant-garde. Captivated by the mechanics of Russian Constructivist set design, Abbott offers detailed accounts of the structure of theatrical productions, frequently accompanied by labeled drawings of the sets. And he views film after film, often going solo or with Likhachev, seeking, it seems, to cover the complete filmography of Soviet avant-garde directors during his time there.

Little of an explicitly political nature is mentioned in the diaries of either man. In 1927, while Barr and Abbot were in the Soviet Union, Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party along with seventy-five others, after a period of struggle with political rivals. The cultural tourists were well aware of this event: Abbott writes a letter to his parents from Vienna after leaving the Soviet Union, saving communication about politics for this point: "Of course we *were in Moscow* when Trotsky was sent to Siberia for his anti-government

19. Barr, entries for January 12 and January 15, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," pp. 29, 32. Jere Abbott, entry for January 9, p. 174.

20. Abbott explains this expense in a letter to his parents, addressing them "Dear 'pay-rents.'" Letter from Abbott to his parents, February 10, 1928. Jere Abbott papers. Bowdoin College archives.

21. Barr, entry for January 3, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 19.

22. Barr, entry for January 4, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 22.

23. Ibid.

activities. Nothing could have been handled in a more quiet, orderly fashion. He was not outwardly under guard and, while a crowd gathered at the station, there was absolutely no indication of anything unusual in Moscow before or after his departure."²⁴ However, hints of the shifts in the cultural terrain consolidated with Trotsky's expulsion and subsequent exile appear in the journals of the two men. An exhibition they planned to attend with Rivera was unexpectedly closed; the Mexican artist offered suggestions that this was because portraits of the leftist opposition—Trotsky's allies—were present, and that an allegorical representation of Lenin's funeral included nudes.²⁵

Their arrival in this transitional moment allowed Barr and Abbott to see the soon-to-be-fully dismantled remains of the radical museological experiments of the civil-war period. The Museum of Painterly Culture, reduced from its original displays in 1920 and 1921, was now installed on the premises of the former Stroganov school.²⁶ From Barr's perspective, it was nonetheless "the best collection of the finest twentieth-century Russian painters, better by far than the Tretyakov . . . the cubists, the cubo-futurists, and suprematists were there in serried ranks, also the post-impressionists."²⁷ The halls of the Tretyakov Gallery were in Barr's assessment a "barren waste of nineteenth-century story pictures, portraits and allegories," and he and Abbott had to visit the cellar to see works by the Bubnovy Valet [Jack of Diamonds] group.²⁸ Works from the Petrograd Museum of Artistic Culture were incorporated within the collections of the State Russian Museum in 1926. The small selection still on public view prompted Barr to write that it was "exactly the sort of collection which we lack in any American Gallery except Duncan Phillips."²⁹

Abbott and Barr also witnessed aspects of an intense and far-reaching debate taking place at the time over the future direction of postrevolutionary literature and art. Through O'Callahan, the first cultural figure they met was Sergei Tret'iakov, one of the editors of the journal *Novyi lef* and the foremost champion of a new factographic aesthetic that abandoned poetry and painting

24. Letter from Abbott to his parents, sent from Vienna, March 7, 1928. Jere Abbott papers. M284_Russian_letters. Bowdoin College archives.

25. Barr, entry for January 6, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 24.

26. The Museum of Painterly Culture, dedicated exclusively to the work of living artists and then under the direction of Kandinsky, was opened in March 1920. In July 1921, Narkompros closed its original galleries on Volkhonka Street, while new premises were sought. After nearly a year in storage, it was reopened in April 1922 on Povarskaia Street. In 1924, it was moved to the former Stroganov School on Rozhdestvenka Street, where Abbott and Barr saw it. In 1928, it was made a branch of the Tretyakov Gallery, then, in 1929, abolished altogether. See Maria Gough, "Futurist Museology," *Modernism/modernity* 10, no. 2 (April 2003), pp. 327-48, for this historical chronology and discussion of these early Soviet museum initiatives.

27. Barr, entry for January 17, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 33.

28. Barr, entry for January 14, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 30; Abbott, entry for January 14, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 182.

29. Barr, entry for February 22, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 49.

for "the fixation and montage of facts."³⁰ In literature, this was a call for short reportage-style genres, often first-person accounts by eyewitnesses; in the visual arts, for photography and film. "Tret'iakov seemed to have lost all interest in everything that did not conform to his objective, descriptive, self-styled journalistic ideal of art," Barr complains. "He had no interest in painting since it had become abstract! He no longer writes poetry but confines himself to 'reporting.'" Barr added in a later entry that "I must find some painters if possible."³¹ Abbott reports with understated comprehension: "The utilitarian ideal makes a painting per se not interesting."³²

Abbott later recalled that on leaving, waving good-bye to Likhachev from the Leningrad train platform, "Alfred and I dissolved shamelessly into tears."³³ After their return to the United States, Barr presented a grateful Sachs with a long list of contacts to add to the latter's rosters.³⁴ He resumed teaching at Wellesley in autumn 1928, incorporating material from the trip into his course. In the department's printed notice for his 1929 spring lecture series, the fifth and final lecture, "The Lyef Group of Moscow," was accompanied by the following outline:

The Artist and the Marxian ideal. "Down with aestheticism." "Chicagism" and the cult of materialistic efficiency in a collectivist society. The fall of futurism and the rise of constructivism. Literature, (Tretyakov); the theatre (Meyerhold); the kino (Eisenstein); typography, photography, photomontage and the "death of painting" (Rodchenko and Stepanova). The triumph of the artist.³⁵

That same spring, Barr organized an exhibition of avant-garde graphic design at Wellesley called "Modern European Posters and Commercial Typography," on view from May 2 to May 22, 1929, displaying examples that he and Abbott had collected on their trip.³⁶ The Wellesley show was also notable for its wall labels, the use of which he had noticed in visiting the Tretyakov Gallery, writing to Sachs from Russia with one of many museological observations: "Such a label eliminates individual titles for each picture and makes the

30. See, for example, in the pages of the journal, Sergei Tret'iakov, "S novym godom. S 'Novym lefom'!", *Novyi lef*, no. 1 (1928), p. 1, and Osip Brik, "Blizhe k faktu," *Novyi lef*, no. (1927), p. 34. Factography is the subject of a special issue of *October*, no. 118 (Fall 2006).

31. Barr, entry for December 27 and January 3, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," pp. 14, 21.

32. Abbott, entry for December 26, p. 130.

33. Abbott, Introduction to Barr, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 9.

34. A typescript of Russian contacts made on Barr's and Abbott's 1927-28 trip is included in Barr's papers at the Museum of Modern Art archives, New York: AHB [AAA:3262:1165].

35. Reproduced in Margaret Scolari Barr's "Our Campaigns," *The New Criterion* (Special Issue 1987), pp. 23-74. Unnumbered internal page.

36. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 188. The graphic material shown at Wellesley would be incorporated into Barr's 1936 "Cubism and Abstract Art" show, and given to the Museum of Modern Art.

picture readily located through the plan of the wall above the inscription and relates the wall label to the catalogue. . . . There are none in America."³⁷

Once home, both Abbott and Barr went on a publishing campaign: Abbott's articles on the work of Sergei Eisenstein appeared in *Hound & Horn*, the publication founded by their Harvard friend Lincoln Kirstein,³⁸ and he included edited selections from his Russian diaries in the same journal.³⁹ Abbott also privately published a small book called *Peter* in 1928 that presented the letters written to Abbott by their guide Petr Likhachev after their return, with little editing of his ungrammatical English or added commentary—a rather factographic format in itself.⁴⁰ Barr published "The 'LEF' and Soviet Art" in *Transition* and articles on Eisenstein and contemporary Soviet architecture in *The Arts*.⁴¹

In 1929, the founders of the Museum of Modern Art—Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lillie P. Bliss, A. Conger Goodyear—asked Sachs to become a trustee of the new institution. In his telling, he agreed on the condition that he could name its director.⁴² Sachs proposed what was at the time an extraordinary salary for such a position—\$12,000 plus expenses, which was eventually trimmed to \$10,000⁴³—and nominated Barr. After an interview with Abby Rockefeller at the Rockefeller summer home in Seal Harbor, Maine, Barr insisted that Abbott be named his deputy. Mrs. Rockefeller telephoned Abbott, who was with his family in Dexter, Maine, and invited him to join them in Seal Harbor.⁴⁴ "I would rather work with you on this thing than anything I know," Abbott wired Barr, passing up the chance to establish an art department at Wesleyan in order to do so.⁴⁵ Abbott was named associate director, and the two came to New York together. They stayed again at a Hotel Bristol, this one off Fifth Avenue in the 1940s,⁴⁶ sharing quarters until Barr's marriage to Margaret Scolari at New York's City Hall on May 8, 1930, which followed a sudden

37. Kantor makes this observation about the use of wall labels in the Wellesley show. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr*, p. 188. Letter from Barr to Paul Sachs, January 17, 1928; Sachs papers, pt. 1, v. 28, p. 3947, CORP.

38. Abbott, "Notes on Movies (with Reproductions)," *Hound & Horn* 2, no. 2, pp. 159–62.

39. Abbott, "Notes from a Soviet Diary," *Hound & Horn* 2, no. 3, pp. 257–66; and *Hound & Horn* 2, no. 4, pp. 388–97.

40. *Peter*, ed. Jere Abbott, privately printed (1928). A copy is held in the Bowdoin College archives.

41. Barr, "The Lef and Soviet Art," *Transition*, no. 14 (Fall 1928), pp. 267–70. Barr, "Sergei Michailovitch Eisenstein," *The Arts* 14, no. 6, pp. 316–21; reprinted in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Modern Art: Selected Writings of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, edited by Irving Sandler and Amy Newman (New York: Harry Abrams, 1986), pp. 142–46. Barr, "Notes on Russian Architecture," *The Arts* 15, no. 2, pp. 103–106, 114, 146.

42. Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr.*, p. 211.

43. Marquis, *Missionary for the Modern*, p. 64.

44. Roob, "Alfred H. Barr, Jr.: A Chronicle," p. 19.

45. Marquis, *Missionary for the Modern*, pp. 72, 77.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

engagement that seems to have surprised most of their family and friends.⁴⁷ Abbott and Cary Ross were witnesses.⁴⁸ Abbott continued in his post at the Museum of Modern Art until 1932: On the recommendation of Sachs,⁴⁹ he received an offer to serve as director of the Smith College Museum of Art in the spring of 1932. Barr's correspondence states that the trustees had been planning on asking Abbott to leave for reasons unstated, and that Barr persuaded him to accept Smith's offer.⁵⁰ Abbott's not-fully-voluntary departure from the museum, and from Barr's world, clearly caused him pain. Years later, in his 1978 introduction to Barr's diaries, Abbott remained wistful about this earlier period in his life, and about the 1927-28 trip especially. "We went anywhere we pleased," he wrote, "life was less regulated and easier than it was ever to be again."⁵¹

47. Ibid., pp. 73-74.

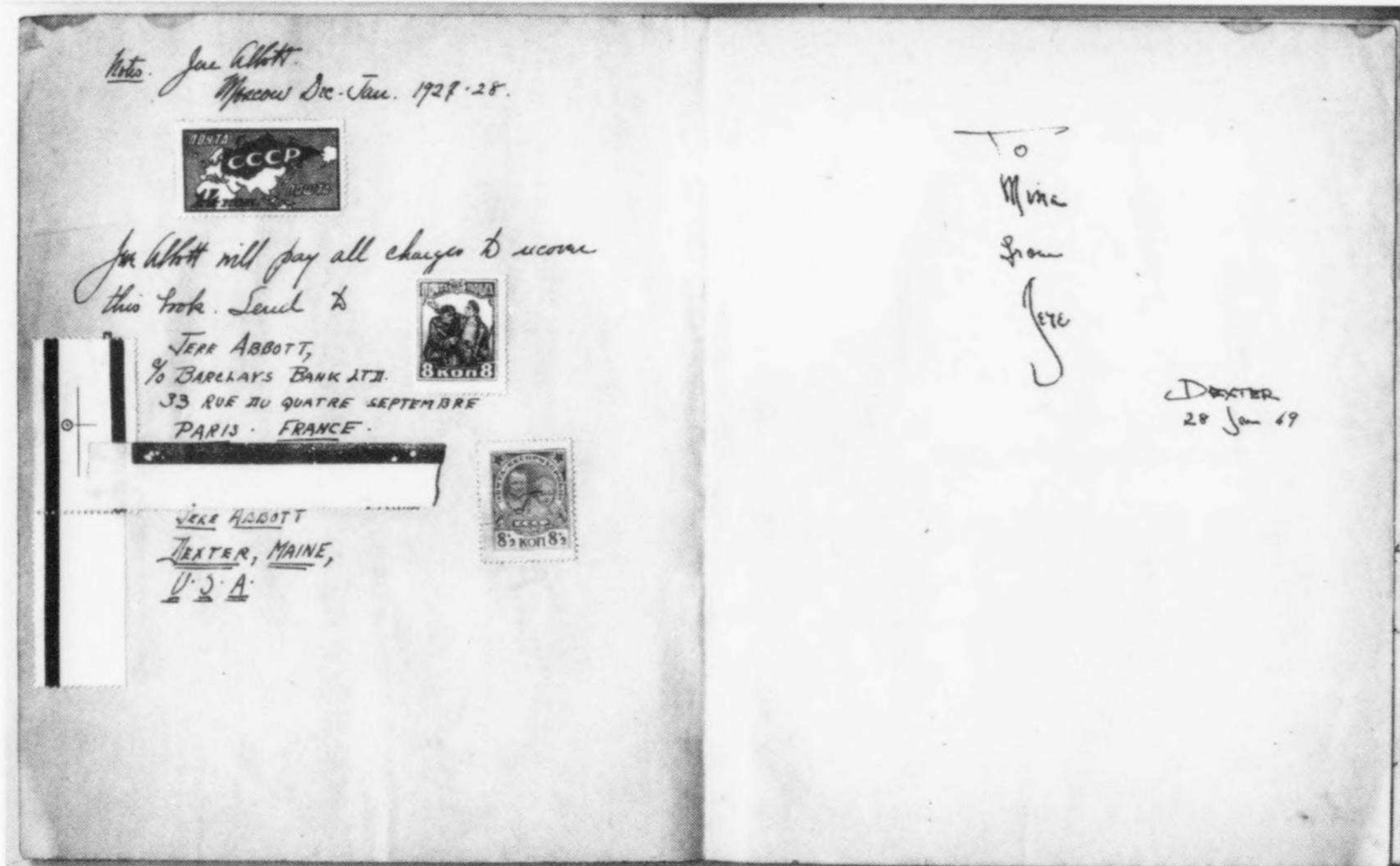
48. Margaret Scolari Barr, "Our Campaigns," p. 24.

49. Jere Abbott, letter to his parents, January 27, 1932. Jere Abbott papers: M284_MoMA. Bowdoin College archives.

50. Unsent draft letter from Alfred H. Barr, Jr. to Conger Goodyear, March 18, 1932, and letter from Alfred H. Barr, Jr. to Conger Goodyear, March 22, 1932. The Museum of Modern Art archives, New York.

51. Abbott, Introduction to Barr, "Russian Diary, 1927-28," p. 7.

Jere Abbott:
Russian Diary, 1927-1928*



Cover of journal reads:

Notes: Jere Abbott / Moscow Dec-Jan. 1927-28 / Jere Abbott will pay all charges to recover this book. Send to: / Jere Abbott c/o Barclay's Bank LTD. / 33 rue du Quatre Septembre / Paris FRANCE / Jere Abbott / Dexter, MAINE / USA / To / Mina / from / Jere / Dexter / 28 Jan 69

* Annotations by Jodi Roberts with additional research by Leah Dickerman and Masha Chlenova. Transcribed from the handwritten original by Catherine Wheeler, with spelling and punctuation left as it appears in the original.

Spread 1

Monday Dec. 26. 1927.

Arrived in Moscow at 2:15 and met by M. Rozinsky. Went to Hotel Bristol Trevokaya [*sic*] 39.¹ Had dinner in hotel with R- and went for a walk, sending cable home. Picturesque costumes in streets—streets crowded—most people on foot—weather sharp—Maine-ish—no. of people selling things on sidewalks.—Good buses—fast trams—search out conductor to pay.—fined one rouble if go beyond punched ticket. Golden domes of churches in late sun. Had tea off the Theatre Square. Evening movie in large hall of the Music Academy to see a film Moscow-Leningrad. (Revolution. Strike in steel mills—rebellion of troops [*side note*]: End of St. Petersburg)² Propaganda not necessarily a hindrance to artistic production. Film very good. Excelleration of human action unhinged by interpolating mechanist scenes in same tempo. Engines—steam rushing out of whistles, smoke pouring from factory chimnies. Photography excellent. Cousichealle broken photography (cut in of different scenes on one plate—not much double printing—Reaccuring [*sic*] motifs used symphonically. The statue of Peter the great occuring at intervals, the machinery in the mill, whistles. Owner caricature—superb elevation scene. Dignity of picture—no hysteria of movement. The frequent use of the camera at an angle. The excellence of the group scenes. No. of well composed shots surpassed those in majority of American and German films.

1. The correct street name for the Hotel Bristol was Tverskaia.

2. Vsevolod Pudovkin completed *Konets Sankt-Peterburga* (The End of St. Petersburg) (1927) as a commission for the tenth-anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution.

Monday Dec. 26, 1928
 Heard a concert at 2:15 and met G. M. Pizinsky. Went to Hotel Bristol
 Troickaya st. Had dinner in hotel with P. and went for a walk, reaching
 cattle house. Pisharev continues in thick - thick crowd with people
 on foot - wattle sheep - Main's job - no. of people selling things on
 side walks - good trees - just trees - several out evidence to
 pay - Fried one walk if go beyond punched ticket. Golden
 dome of church in late sun. Went to of the Theater square
 training movie in large hall of the Music Academy to see a
 film *Priglasenie k revolyutsii* [Revolution. Still in bed with - rebellion of
 troops] Propaganda not necessarily a hindrance to artistic production.
 Film very good. Exaltation of human action emphasized by in-
 terpolating mechanical scenes in same tempo. Figures - then making
 out of whistles, work pouring from factory chimneys. Photography excellent
 Leningrad. Taken photography (cut in of different scenes on one
 plate - not much double printing - Rescuing wife and sympathizer
 the statue of Peter the great securing at intervals, the machinery in the
 mill, shutter. More education - superb education scene. Dignity of
 picture - no system of movement. The frequent use of the camera
 at an angle. The best excellence of the group scene. No. of well
 composed shots surpassed those in majority of American and
 German films.

Spread 2

Returned to the hotel and met Henry Dana [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana],³ Robert Wolf⁴ and May O'Callahan.⁵ Had tea in Dana's room and talked till late—theatre—Soviet-literature etc. O'Callahan exceptional person—very intelligent.

Tuesday. Went to Vox⁶ [*sic*] (Society of cultural relations for strangers) attended to Passport regulations—Lengthy job. Had lunch with Dana and dined with O'C-. Talked Russia—types—etc. She sees in me new American type! Returned and studied theatre schedules. Alfred [H. Barr Jr.] under the weather. At nine (evening) went with Rozinsky and Dana to Professor Weaksteel's [Alexander Wicksteed]⁷ room and talked Russian life—literature—government etc. W- prof. of English in the Lenin Institute⁸ here. Russian types, many of them pretty English or American in appearance it seemed to me. Other Russian students there. Came home afoot in a snow storm at 2 A.M. Got a great "kick" out of seeing for the first time the Red Square and the Kremlin under those conditions. Church of St. Basil very fine—finest I've seen. Effect wonderful in the snow. To bed liking Moscow immensely.

Wednesday. Went for a walk around town and a bit of Christmas shopping with Dana and Peter (Piétre) [Petia Likhachiov].⁹ Went with Dana to room of two girls who are at the writers cafe so entertainers. Very interesting—very poor but apparently in best of spirits. One plays piano fairly well—other sings. There were there his little children about four or five one the daughter of one of the girls. The children danced for us to a guitar and the grace and sense of time remarkable. It was delightful to see their natural theatricality (inherent in the race) and they enjoyed it hugely. The housing problem still very severe in Moscow but it is improving.

The evening: To the poet TRET'YAKOV's [Sergei Tret'iakov] house with O'C- Wrote Roar of China [*sic*] now being done by Meirehold [Vsevolod Meyerhold].¹⁰ Met there [Sergei] Eisenstein and three other cinema men, the latter from Georgia. Eisenstein will show us some of his work later—he being very busy now finishing his film which should have been done for the October celebration.¹¹ Tret'yakov prides himself on being utilitarian. The peasant poet Marxian ideal. A reporter type he would call himself (proudly). His life of a Chinese boy. Problem of reconstruction on fact. Showed us his notes and the drawings of the Chinaman from the many interviews with whom he derived his tale.¹² His style concise and crisp. Their house new. German (Bauhaus) [cont.]

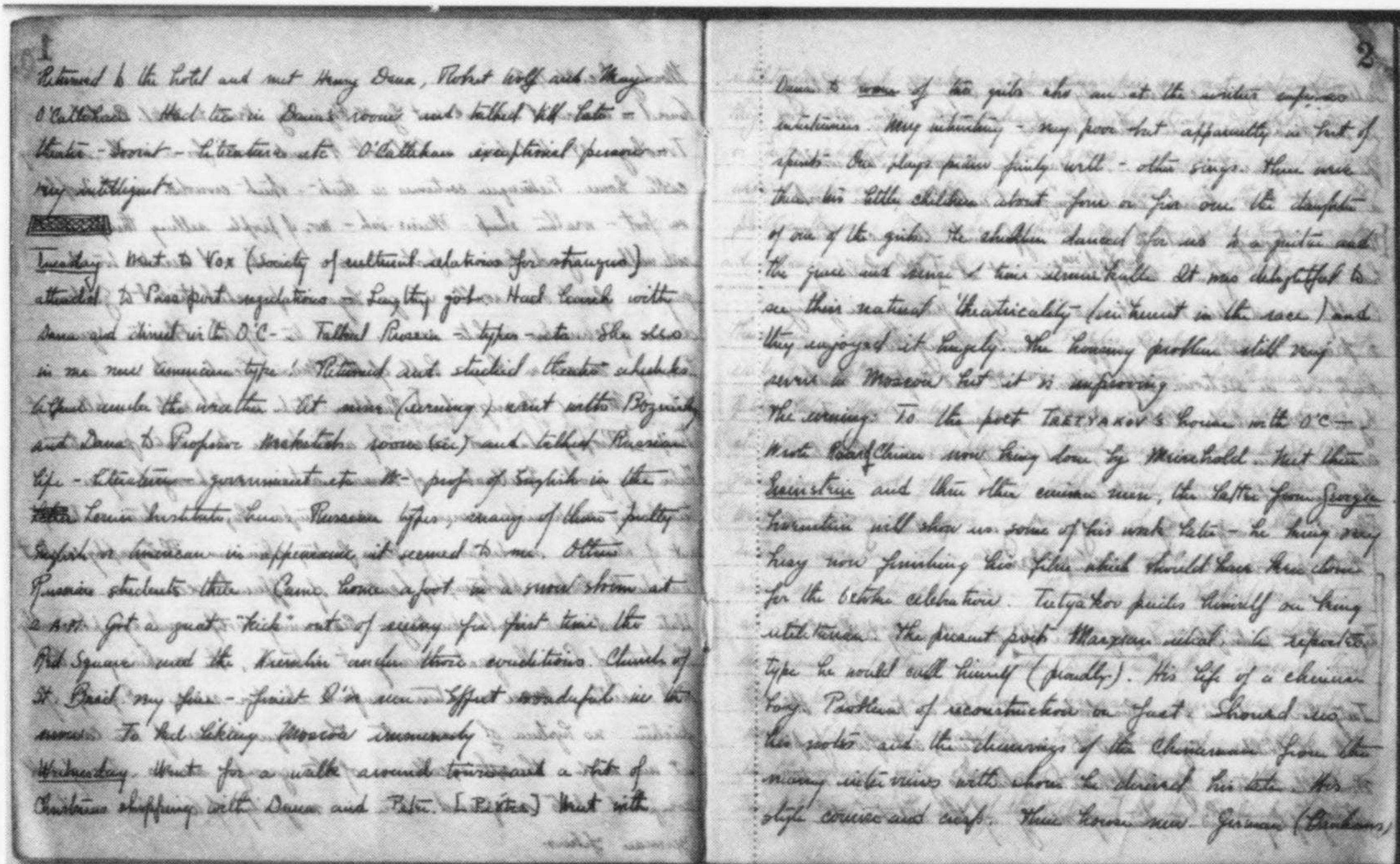
3. Grandson of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Dana was an outspoken pacifist and a literary scholar specializing in Soviet drama. After earning a Ph.D. at Harvard, he taught at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) from 1908 to 1910, and then at Columbia University from 1912 to 1917, until he was dismissed because of his political activities. Dana lived in the Soviet Union from 1927 to 1928.

4. Robert Wolf came as a delegate to the tenth-anniversary celebrations of the Russian Revolution in October 1927 and stayed on as a correspondent for *The New Masses*.

5. Abbott and Barr met May O'Callahan through Nina Hammet, whom Abbott later described as "enthusiastically Communist in spirit." They met Hammet in London through the artist Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957).

6. VOKS (Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries).

7. Wicksteed was an English writer who moved to the Soviet Union after the 1917 revolution. He later wrote two books about his time there: *Life under the Soviets* (London: John Lane, the Bodley Head, 1929) and *Ten Years in Soviet Moscow* (London: John Lane, 1933).



8. Founded in 1924, the Lenin Institute played a pivotal role in defining the history of the Communist Party and fostering the cult of Lenin in the years immediately following his death. Its activities included the creation of an archive on the revolutionary leader's life and legacy.
9. Abbott refers to his translator as "Peter" throughout the diary. Peter's signature on the back of the photograph he took with Barr and Abbott, reproduced on page 117, reads "Petia Likhatchew."
10. Sergei Tret'iakov's *Rychi Kitai!* (Roar, China!) (1926) was among his most widely produced plays. Meyerhold's staging of the work figured prominently in the Meyerhold Theatre's repertoire during its first international tour in 1930 and contributed significantly to the play's reputation outside the Soviet Union.
11. Abbott here refers to Eisenstein's *Oktiabr': Desiat' dnei kotorye potriasli mir* (October: Ten Days that Shook the World), which like Pudovkin's *The End of St. Petersburg* was commissioned for the tenth-anniversary celebrations of the revolution. Eisenstein did not finish his film until 1928, however.
12. Tret'iakov was working on *Den Shi-Khua, bio-interv'iu* (Den Shi-Hua, Bio-Interview) (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1930), which first appeared with cover and layout design by Aleksandr Rodchenko. An English version of the text appeared under the title *A Chinese Testament* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1934).

Spread 2A

International 1927 academic style.¹³ Since they do not belong to the particular trade whose workers live there they have to pay an aggravated price. They pay for 3 rooms 200 roubles a month \$100. Inside crude compared with American work (Russia is trying hard to be the efficient America but has no idea of it nor has had no practice at it). The building hardly seemed durable. It was already after a year going to pieces. We were served supper. Small dining-room so party ate in sections. Alfred—Mrs. T [Olga Tret'iakova]—O'C and I first. Meal began with salade (Russian) then sausage and sweet cabbage, then tea cakes, tea, and candy sweets. Peculiar Russian apple candy—delicious.

Eisenstein's Europe: Generalaya Linya:¹⁴ following Potemkin.¹⁵ Latter pronounced "Pōchō mpkin"

Left about midnight and froze ear tips on returning to hotel!

Tretyakov read us from his book—O'C acted as translator. His book on childrens toys, how to make them, cut from paper. Book illustrated by [Aleksandr] Rodchenko who has gone over into photography. This is true of many of the artists. The utilitarian ideal makes a painting per se not interesting. They go over into scene design for the theatre, ballet etc. or into photography and the Кино.¹⁶ The photos for T's book were exceptionally well done—also those for the *Left* (?) [*sic*] publication.¹⁷ One vertical photo suggesting Bauhaus—almost a duplicate. Suspect B- copied perhaps. Not important.

Thursday. Historical Museum Textiles Books Mns [manuscripts]. icons (not early) etc. Statues from Caucassians interesting. Icelandic quality. Return later. Made only a rapid survey. Charts for illustrative statistics seemed excellent. Tried next to get into St. Basil. Grand church—not open—very cold—wind snow red square. Went in Cooperative store—one side of square Italian-like interior arcade then into Iberian shrine by the gate. Service going on. Priests chanting. The altar piece looked perfectly straight Byzantine and not Russian. Back to a vegetarian restaurant. Vegetarian rest. seem to be the best in Moscow. Food here a problem. Lack of any silverware. Service very shop worn. Restaurants crowded. Nothing repaired—up keep nil. In the evening with Dana and an interpreter to the "End of Twistedsnout" [*sic*] [The End of the Village]¹⁸ at the Revolusky [*sic*] Theatre.¹⁹

13. Tret'iakov lived in the Gosstrakh Apartments (1926–27), designed by Moisei Ginzburg, a major proponent of Constructivist architecture whom Abbott and Barr met later in their trip.

14. Eisenstein's *General'naiia liniia* (The General Line), also known as *Staroe i Novoe* (Old and New), premiered in 1929. Centered on rural life in the Soviet Union, the film was in part an effort to promote a new governmental policy encouraging the formation of peasant cooperatives.

15. Eisenstein's *Bronenosets Potiomkin* (Battleship Potemkin) premiered in 1925. Its narrative focuses on the mutiny of that ship's crew in 1905.

16. Abbott uses the words "КИНО" and "kino" throughout the diary to refer to cinema generally and individual films.

17. *Lef* (1923–25) and *Novyi lef* (1927–28).

18. Abbott is referring to Boris Romashov's play *Konets Krivoryl'ska* (The End of Krivoryl'ska, a town whose name literally translates to "twisted snout") (1926).

19. Abbott means Teatr Revolutsii (Theater of the Revolution), headed by Meyerhold from 1922, the year it opened, until 1924. His tenure there overlapped with his directorship of another smaller theater founded in 1920, known as the Meyerhold Theatre after 1923.

Spread 3

Революции [*Teatr Revolutsii* (Theater of the Revolution)]: Конец Криворыльська [*Konets Krivoryl'ska* (The End of Krivoryl'ska)]: Second to Meirehold in that type of direction. Play directed by: [Abbott's omission]. Over acted but high level of acting impressive. Not one part poorly acted. Simple staging in black hung stage. Interesting use of piano in some of the scenes, carelessly played on BUT usually in some way to accent action if only for one of the characters going to it and punching out his or their notes. Orchestral music interpolated to emphasize action. Use of traps. Parts of sets coming up from below. Action often played well forward almost into the audience. The play melodramatic but with much humor and satire. Young Soviets pretty much Freshmen—certain Y.M.C.A! atmosphere almost. In the end the bad are punished and the good leave the village for Moscow—i.e. the young people to enter the schools. 7:30 to 12! Entrances frequently made from lower boxes cut away. In scenes such as the courtroom scene the “play” audience seated very far forward in an effort to bridge the gap between audience and stage. Quite successful.


Is a propaganda theatre. Audience real proletariat. Scenes shifted in dark—settings let down—pushed forward or shot up from below! End “departure from the station” good trick. Effect of audience being on the moving train. Station pulled off stage then on a moving belt the actors go by the audience (front stage) waving goodbyes at the departing train, the audience. Lighting was very simple & frank. Often for additional light the spot merely followed the principle characters about. Audience enthusiastic. (Theatres in Moscow packed—some sold out four weeks in advance—accumulative programmes—past successes frequently repeated. Makes it difficult to see all the good things.) Long entre acts. We went out drank tea and Dana's interpreter explained what had gone on. Standing for coats and overshoes—always checked. Crowd regulated coming out of the theatre to prevent crowding. After we went with the writers club the Dom Gertzner [Dom Gertsena].²⁰ Interesting types.

Notes on staging of the play:

[see figure] Home scene. /Lattice with two red posters on dark stage. Lattice *green* and *red*.

20. The Dom Gertsena (Herzen House) was a writers' club named after Aleksandr Herzen.

2
 РЕВОЛЮЦИЯ. Павел Криворученко. Сценарий к Мейерхолду
 that type of direction. Play directed by. An outlet but high level of
 acting superior. Not one part overacted, poorly acted. Simple
 staging on each long stage. Interesting use of piano in some of the
 scenes, carefully played on BUT occasionally in some way to accent
 action of only for one of the characters going to it and
 punching out his or their notes. Orchestral music interpolated
 to emphasize action. Use of traps. Parts of acts coming up
 from below. Action often played well forward about mid the
 audience. The play melodramatic but with much humor and
 notes. Young Soviet pretty much. Fashion - certain political
 atmosphere about. In the end the last act finished and then
 good leave the village for Moscow - i.e. the young people
 leaving the school. 1930s style. Characters frequently made
 from below traps out away. The scenes reach to the audience
 when the play audience reacted very far forward in
 an effort to bridge the gap between audience and stage.
 Goals successful. ...
 was propaganda theater. Audience read political. Some
 played in dark settings set down - pushed forward in
 situation from below. Last departure from the station.

3
 good trick. Effect of audience being on the moving train.
 Station pulled off stage then a moving set. The
 actors go by audience (front stage) moving good eyes at
 the departing train, the audience. Lighting was very simple -
 thank often for additional light the spot mainly followed
 the principle characters about. Audience enthusiastic. [Theatre
 in Moscow packed - some sold out four weeks in ad-
 vance - accumulation programs - part success frequently
 repeated. Makes it difficult to see all the good things.]
 long into act. He went out back to and then interrupted
 explained what had gone on. Standing for work and speeches
 always checked. Avoid regulations coming out of the theatre
 to prevent crowding. After or went into the workers club
 the Tom Galtzman. Interesting types.
 Note on staging of the play


How scene
 Later with his and partners
 on dark stage. Later goes
 and red.

Spread 3A

[see figure] blue shaft to lamp/bench/door/red sign of a workings mens club/red poster/entrances also recede from rear up over back see arrow/dark green/Bench/Scene entitled "moonlight"

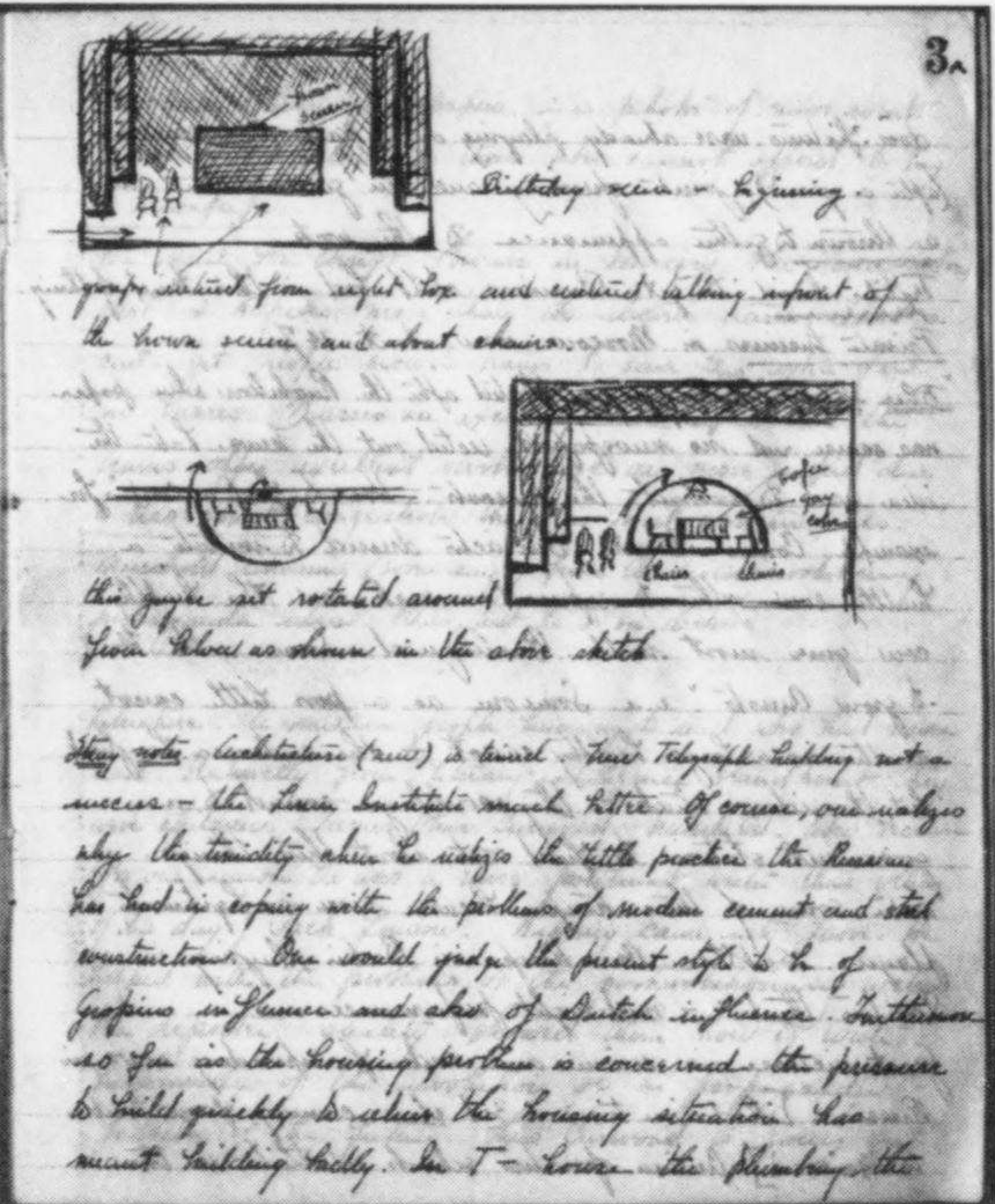
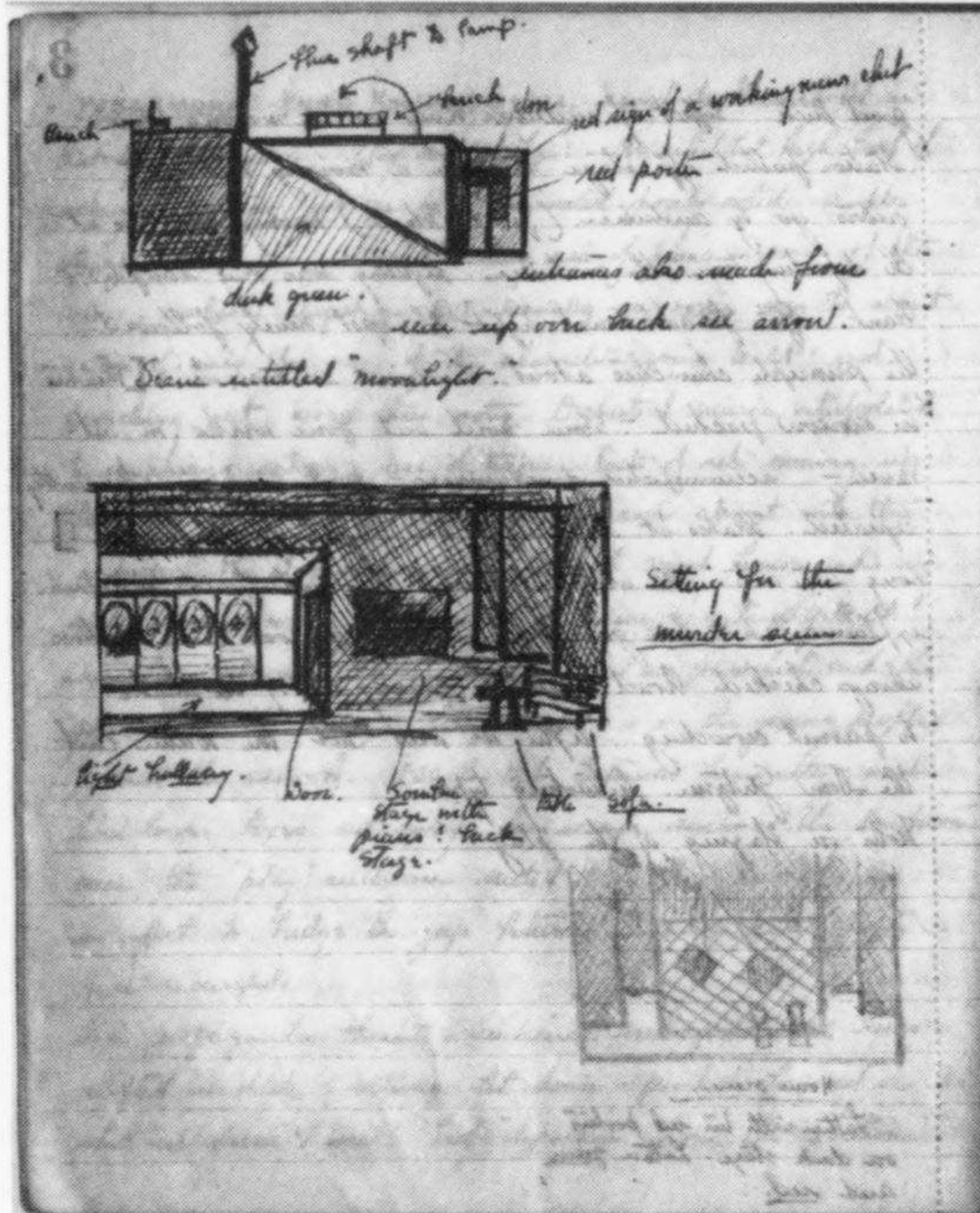
[see figure] Setting for the murder scene/sofa/table/[illegible] stage with piano! back stage/Door./light hallway

[see figure] Birthday scene—beginning/brown screen/groups entered from right box and centered talking in front of the brown screen and about chairs

[see figure] sofa/gay color/chairs/chairs/this gayer set rotated around from below as shown in the above sketch

Stray notes. Architecture (new) is timid. New telegraph building²¹ not a success—the Lenin Institute much better. Of course, one realizes why the timidity when he realizes the little practice the Russian has had coping with the problems of modern cement and steel construction. One would judge the present style to be of [Walter] Gropius influence and also of Dutch influence. Furthermore so far as the housing problem is concerned the pressure to build quickly to relieve the housing situation has meant building badly. In T-house the plumbing, the [cont.]

21. The Central Telegraph Office, designed by architect Ivan Rerberg, was completed in 1927.



group situated from right top and evident talking report of the town scene and about chains...

the people are rotated around from below as shown in the above sketch.

They note (architectural) a kind of new Telegraph building not a success - the Swiss Institute much better. Of course, one analyzes why the tendency when he visits the little province the business has had in copying with the pattern of modern cement and steel construction. One would judge the present style to be of German influence and also of Dutch influence. Furthermore so far as the housing problem is concerned the pressure to build quickly to relieve the housing situation has meant building badly. In T - house the plumbing, the

Spread 4

door fixtures were already playing out. Walls were cracking (after a year) joints opening and in general there was a thrown together appearance to the work.

Textiles hard to get. Business still bad in this kind of thing.

Private business in Moscow now about 14%.

"Blue Shirts:"²² Actor groupes. Started after the Revolution when paper was scarce and no newspapers. Acted out the news. Later the idea used to instruct the peasants. "How to feed a cow" for example. Comic element. One actor dressed to imitate a healthy cow other to represent a weak cow. The healthy cow gave most milk. Burlesqued. "Same with How to grow carrots" i.e. Someone as a poor little carrot another as a large healthy carrot—the audience laughed but ideas stuck—they would go round to a government station to find out about these things. Later some of these troupes became more as legitimate players. Subtle. One troupe in Berlin playing in Piscators Theatre²³—mid-night performances.

Great increase in cinema and radio for spreading news in Russia. (Radio on train—3rd class coming from border to Moscow) Cinema operators schools establish in the provinces. Picture newspapers. i.e. photos of news events put in shop windows for those who cannot afford to buy a newspaper.

The need for thrift shown in Moscow. The buses (motor) cost 2 kopeks more than the electric trams. About a cent. Yet people crowd trams to save this extra fare in busses. Busses are excellent and rapid and the trams offer excellent service and are more rapid due to less street congestion than in most Western cities. Meierhold returning (some say) from the severe revolutionary propaganda idea. Others, that he is on decline.

Literature. A million people learning to read who had never read. Naturally from literary-intelligence standpoint they were children. James Oliver Curwood translated. Also because (for one reason he was a more proletarian [*sic*] writer than others of his day). Jack London. [Rudyard] Kipling came into favor. He helped with the problems of the postrevolutionary writers. The "reporter" quality showed them how to write historically of the revolution or in propaganda fashion of the future. Thus Curwood is going out [cont.]

22. Named for the blue workers' uniforms worn by its performers, the *Siniaia Bluza* (Blue Blouse) was a theater collective started by Boris Yuzhanin in 1923 under the auspices of the Moscow Institute of Journalism. The form of propaganda theater the group employed—a "living newspaper" in which current events were acted out—quickly spread throughout the country. By 1927, there were approximately 5,000 Blue Blouse troupes with more than 100,000 members.

23. Erwin Piscator, the theater producer and director, founded the Piscator-Bühne theater company in Berlin in 1927 and was active in Germany until 1931. The original Blue Blouse troupe appeared on Piscator's stage that fall.

door features were already playing out. Walls were reaching (after a year) into dressing and the general habit was a Western together appearance & the work.

Tricks had to get. Business still had in their kind of thing. Private business in Moscow now about 14%.

Blue shirts - Labor groups started after the Revolution when paper was scarce and no newspapers listed out the news. Later the idea went to instruct the peasants. How to find a cow for example. Considered a cow as a healthy cow - other to represent a weak cow. The healthy cow you must milk. Paraphrased "Some with food & grow Amos" i.e. Some are as a poor little cannot another as a large healthy asset - the audience laughed. But the ideas stuck - they would go round to a government station to find out about these things. Later some of these groups became more as legitimate players. But the blue shirts in Berlin playing in Revolution theatre - mid-night performances. Great success in various and such for spreading news in Russia. [Radio on train 3rd class coming from Berlin to Moscow] Russia operates school relations in the

provinces. Picture newspapers i.e. photo of news events put in shop windows for those who cannot afford to buy a newspaper.

The need for thrift shown in Moscow. The fares (cost) cost 2 kopeks more than the electric trams. About a cent but people would hurry to save this extra fare in trams. Trams an excellent and rapid and the trams offer excellent service and are more rapid than to bus street congestions than in most western cities. Household economy (some say) from the more revolutionary propaganda ideas. This, that he is in Berlin.

Literature. A million people listening to and who had never read. Naturally from literary intelligence standpoint they were children. James O'Hara translated like he was (for our money he was a more potent writer than other of his day) Jack London. Kipling came into favor. He helped with the problem of the post-revolutionary writers. The reporter quality showed them how to write historically of the revolution or in propagandist fashion of the future. This covered is going out

Spread 4A

and now, of course, Sinclair Lewis and [Theodore] Dreiser is being translated in full. Also, [Leo] Tolstoy in complete editions is being republished.

Bob Wolf's talk before the University on the lack of proletariat writers in America. Judicially he treated the problem as an economic one although feeling himself it to be more Freudian: i.e. our young writers not being reared in a post revolutionary atmosphere could not write such poetry. To his surprise (he feeling that there was an anti-Freudian feeling among the party) one of the very brilliant students raised his very point after the lecture. But now there seems to be a tendency away from foreign writers.

The love of the American mechanical sense, no sympathy of course with the capitalistic spirit back of it.

"Chicagismus" in Moscow.

The above not only applies to Moscow. There is in Europe almost a pitiful striving for American efficiency without knowing how it is done. And on the other hand without a realization of how little time the American business man wastes as compared with his European prototype. The people who are working here are on the whole earnestly trying to overcome old methods and ways. But their problem is a tremendously difficult one.

Writers in Moscow are more financially secure than anywhere else. Paid by the line. Ungrammatical—illiterate quality of some of their work complained of by some. Some feel that they refuse to get down to study and work (some of the younger artists) and that their seriousness can be doubted. (Not only applicable to Moscow but in other countries!) d

When O'Neil's [Eugene O'Neill] play "Desire under the Elms" [1924] was done the emphasis was on the lust for property (non-existent in O'Neil's conception) rather than on the lust for the flesh. The Hairy Ape [1922] also produced. O'Neil liked in Russia as a playwright. ЛЮБОВЬ ПОД ВЯЗАМИ [Liubov' pod viazami (Desire under the Elms)]

Friday: Visited the remarkable Shchukin Collection now the 1st State Museum of Modern Western Painting.²⁴ Collection is staggering and the Museums as a whole are crowded with [cont.]

24. Sergei Shchukin, a Moscow-based textile merchant, began collecting Impressionist and early-twentieth-century European and North American art in 1897, with the purchase of his first Monet. After 1907 he opened his doors to young Russian artists and other visitors every Sunday, providing many with important firsthand exposure to artistic developments in the West. Shchukin's collection was nationalized after the revolution, and his home transformed into the First Museum of New Western Painting.

and now, of course, Sinclair Lewis and Dreiser is being translated in full. Also Tolstoy in complete editions is being republished.

Bob Hoff talks before the University on the lack of proletarian writers in America. Technically, he treated the problem as an economic one although feeling himself to be more Freudian. One of our young writers not being present in a post-revolutionary atmosphere could not write such poetry. To his surprise (he feeling that there was an anti-Freudian feeling among the party) one of the very brilliant students raised his very point after the lecture. But now there seems to be a tendency away from foreign writers.

The loss of the American mechanical sense, its sympathy of course with the capitalistic spirit lack of it "Chicagoism" in Moscow.

The above not only applies to Moscow. There is in Europe almost a pitiful craving for American efficiency without knowing how it is done. And on the other hand without a recognition of how

4.
little time the American business man wastes as compared with his European prototype. The people who are working here are on the whole naturally trying to overcome old methods and ways. But their problem is a tremendously different one.

Writers in Moscow are more financially secure than anywhere else. Partly by the high organizational - abstract quality of some of their work complained of by some. Some feel that they refuse to get down to study and work (some of the younger artists) and that their seriousness can be doubted. (Not only applicable to Moscow but in other countries)

When O'Neil's play "Desire Under the Stone" was done the emphasis was on the hunt for property (not equivalent in O'Neil's conception) rather than on the hunt for the flesh. The heavy life also produced O'Neil's book on Durrell as a play writer. Медведь в Океане

Friday

Visited the remarkable Scherkin Collection now in the State Museum of Modern Western Painting. Collection is stupendous and the museum as a whole are crowded with

Spread 5

people.

The list below is complete in case of certain artists when marked with a check mark ✓

MATISSE: ✓ 1. Danse: 2 seated nudes (Red backgrounds): Les capucines à la danse: Still Life 1901 (Redon—Bonnard): Later still life: Le chambre rouge '08: Family portrait 1912: Studio of painter 1911: Arab Café—(curious pale yellows, light blues punctuated with black—flat): Nude (black brown period): Conversation 08? Vue de Collioure (pointellist '01?) Woman on Terrase 1905 (The following are in one room!) Girl in Green: Two portraits of Moroccan men, one portrait Moroccan woman: Still life '08 in Venetian red, Spanish women '09: Still life Seville '11: Girl with tulips '10. Woman and Man '09 (Zae) 3 flower pieces. Jeux de Balle '08: Gold fish: Still life (Redon in color) Still life (the statue and picture composition): Still life 1909 (big swirl of tapestry figuring over the composition) Portrait (flat period) 1913: Spanish still life: Iris on dresser (Purples and Venetian reds) Still life 1900.

VAN GOGH ✓ Buissons: Arena à Arles (before his late manner very Gauguin) Portrait '89: Women at Arles '88 (Gauguin)

MONET ✓ Dejeuner sur l'herbe '66: Rouen Cath noon '94: Ledges of Belles Isles '86 Meules de foin: Cliffs of Etretat '86: Cliffs Dieppe '97: Prairies of Giverny '88: Rouen, Evening: Lilas au soliel '73: Nymphs '99: Vue de Vetheil [*sic*]: Houses of? [Abbott's omission] '04:

SISLEY ✓ Village scene '72

PISSARRO ✓ 2 Paris scenes / Ave. Opera, Place de Th. Francais

DEGAS ✓ The Danser at the Photographers (oil): Race course (P): Blue Danse (P). Concert singer (P) Women (P): Two scenes of the Toilet (Pasteles)

MANET ✓ Two men at a table, one with pipe. Fine color.

RENOIR ✓ Young girls in black: Woman in black: Nude '76: Drawing of a woman in Sanguine.

SIGNAC ✓ Bord de la mer '90

MARY CASSART [*sic*] ✓ Mother & Child (P)

JEAN PUY ** Landscape (Bonnard)

GAUGUIN ✓ Tahitian figures in boat drawn up on shore '96: Idol: Native Woman by a fruit tree '99: Two nudes on beach: Women [cont.]

people
 the best blow is complete in case of certain artists when
 reached with a check mark.

MATISSE ✓
 2. Dawn: 2 seated nudes (Red background): Les copieuses à Tardieu
 Still life 1901 (Redon - Bernard): Late still life: Le chapeau rouge '02:
 Family portrait 1912: Studies of painter 1911: Last days - (curious
 pale yellow, light blue punctuated with black & flat): Nucle (Black
 Brown period): Conversation '08: Vue de Collioure (pointillist '013)
 Woman on Terrace 1905: [The following are in our room!] Girl in Green
 Two portraits of Moroccan girls, one portrait Moroccan woman
 Still life '00 in washbasin: Spanish woman '09: Still life Seville '00
 Girl with tobacco: Woman and Man '09 (Red): 3 flower pieces
 Trois de table '08: Gold fish: Still life (Redon in color): Still life (the
 statue and picture composition): Still life 1902 (Top end of tapestry
 figuring over the composition): Portrait (offset period) 1910
 Spanish still life: Lino on cushion (Purple and black ink)
 Still life 1900.

VAN GOGH ✓
 Brissens: Luncheon à l'ulster (before his later manner very Gauguin)
 Portrait '89: Woman at table '80 (Gauguin)

MONET ✓
 Dymna sur l'herbe '66: Rouen Cath. Noon '70: Studies of Balbe Lake '80
 Meules de froment: Cliffs of Etretat '50: Cliffs Dieppe '77: Poppies '80
 of Giverny '88: House, Giverny: Lilies au soleil '73: Poppy field '77:
 Vue de Vetheuil: Houses of Giverny '90

SISLEY ✓ PICASSO ✓
 Village scene '82: A Paris scene / Vue d'Oran / Place de la Fontaine

DEGAS ✓
 The Dance at the Photographers (oil): Race course (P): Blue
 Dance (P): Concert singer (P): Women (P): Two scenes of
 the ballet (Pastels)

MANET ✓
 Two men at a table, one with pipe: Two actors

RENOIR ✓
 young girl in black: Woman in black: Nude '86: Drawing
 of a woman in Sanguine

SIGNAC ✓ MARY CASSATT ✓ FRANZ RUY ✓
 Bord de la mer '90: Mother & Child (P): Landscape (Dominiot)

GAUGUIN ✓
 Tahitian figures in boat drawn up on shore '96: Idol: Native
 woman by a fruit tray: Two nudes on grass: Women

Spread 5A

in a room: Natives collecting fruit: Reclining Mango Woman: Nativité: Le gué '01: Paysage '99: Scene of Tahitian life: Self portrait: Women by the sea: Gathering fruit (large group): Women with goats: Cezannish still life: Tournesols:

The Gaugins were not as impressive as some of the collection. Although of fairly high order they were the crowded compositions—less simple.

CEZANNE ✓ Self Portrait: Fruit, Still life!!: Man with pipe!: An abstract Mt. S. Victoire: A triangular composition, woman in blue: Mardi Gras!!! (Picasso): M. St. Jean (Aqueduct thru trees: Flowers (Courbet)

HENRI ROUSSEAU ✓ Vue de Vaunes '09: Monsouris!: Tiger (small version of large Chicago picture) Luxemburg, monument Chopin: Muse inspiring "Le poète!": Vue porte de Sevre '08 with Balloon, Dirigible and airplanes!: Horse and jaguar fight!!

LAURENCIN ✓ Two early oil portraits and a watercolor. Possibly around 1914.

VLAMINCK ✓ Three landscapes, one very Cezannish

FRIESZ ✓ Rouen Cathedral!: Keepers.

MARQUET ✓ Eight early ones. Very fine Marquets

VAN DONGEN ✓ Woman with man play guitar: Portrait of a woman

PICASSO (Blue) The old Jew '03: Portrait of a man: Poet Savarteg '01: L'Étreine '02 Head of woman: *Pastels* Nude youth: study for Les Ca[illegible]: Rendezvous (P) Boy with dog (P): Spanish woman from Majorque: Absinth ((P) Woman):

For continuation see pg. 21.

in a room: Native collecting fruit: Picking Mango
Woman: Native: La guir. 20: Paysage '99: Scene
of Tahitian life: Self portrait: Women by the sea:
Gathering fruit (large group): Woman with goats:
Organic still life: Tournesols:

[The Gauguins were not as impressive as some of the
collection although of fairly high order they were the
crowded compositions - less simple.

CEZANNE ✓

Self portrait: Fruit, still life !!: Man with pipe !!: Sun
abstract Mt. S. Victoire: Le triangular composition, woman
in blue: Mardi gras !!! (Picasso): M. St. Jean (aquatint
blue tree: Horse (blue tree)

HENRI ROUSSAUX ✓

Vue de Vouves '09: Monocorns !!: Tiger (small version of
large Chicago picture) Luxemburg, monument Chopin:
Man inspecting "Le poète" !!: Vue de la Seine '09
with Bolivar, Diderot and Napoleon !!: Hool and jaguar
fight !!

LAURENCE ✓

Two early self portraits and a nude color. Possibly around
1910.

KNAMING ✓

Three Landscapes, one very lyrical

FRÉZÉ ✓

Woman Cathedral: Peuples

MARQUET ✓

Eight early ones Very fine Magasin

YAN TONGEN ✓

Woman with man playing guitar: Portrait of a woman

PICASSO

(Blue) The old Jew '02: Portrait of Man: Post Secretary '02: The woman
Head of woman: Parrots: Study for Les Femmes:
Family group: Boy with dog (P): Spanish woman from Málaga:
Woman (R. woman)
for continuation see pg. 21.

Spread 6

Friday evening: With Rozinsky to an all Scriabin concert (piano) at the academy of music. Bored thru part of it. Was surprised to find so much *Shumann* [Robert Schumann], and [Hugo] *Wolf* and *Chopin* in Сидякин [Sidiakin] [*sic*]. The study for left hand op. 9 is very fine of its kind. The slow movement of соната 19 [Sonata 19] has good moments. Of the sonatas played the 5th and 9th were by far the best things on the program. The audience was enthusiastic. I was very interested to hear Scriabin as one rarely hears him at home.

Saturday. Dec 31. Spent morning trying to get theatre tickets but apparently its like New York in the holidays. No luck. All sold out! Then went shopping for envelopes, note book, stamps and Russian blouses!

Saturday evening: Канунъ Нового Года [*Kanun Novogo Goda (Happy New Year)*] 1927. Going to the Dom Gatzynier [Gertsena] with Dana to a New Year's party. Probably the only New Year "I will meet" as the Russians phrase it, in Moscow. Seems difficult to believe that a week has passed since our arrival.

Sunday morning Jan. 1, 1928

Dom party rather a fizzle. Most bourgeois crowd one could imagine. Food not too good for the price. Of course the place was amusing and the people interesting types in part. One man out of the guest crowd succeeded in dancing some Russian dances rather well.

Went out with O'C to the Novodevitchy [Novodevichii] Convent.²⁵ We were unable to get into the museum or 16c. church of the Cathedral of our Lady of Smolensk.²⁶ Have to return because in the church are some of the best works of the painters of the Moscow school of the 17th century. Took a brisk walk (cold) in the direction of the river and the Lenin hills (formally the Sparrow Hills).²⁷ Many people skiing and skating. The Cathedral is very beautiful from without and the red scarred texture of the belfry and other baroque buildings is very effective against the white of the snow. Russian graveyards are interesting but ugly. Find certain Russian baroque exteriors in red and white very pleasing. The type, that is, a represented by certain buildings in the monastery grounds.

On our return went into a late 19th century church near the monastery. A christening going on. The mother and father were seated with the youngster and the old long-bearded priest while the later was writing down the name in a ponderous book. The baptismal water had [cont.]

25. Founded in 1542, the Novodevichii Convent in Moscow became the Museum of Women's Emancipation in 1922 and then a historical and art museum in 1926.

26. The cathedral, a five-domed structure, is the oldest building in the convent complex.

27. Located on the right bank of the Moskva River, the Sparrow Hills were renamed after Vladimir Lenin following the revolution.

Friday evening: with Bogusky to an all-Soviet concert (piano) at the academy of music. Found this part of it. Then surprised to find so much Shumann and Beethoven and Chopin in CHABRIAN. The study for left hand of 9 is very fine of its kind. The slow movement of concerto 17 has good moments. Of the Sonata played the 5th and 9th were by far the best things on the program. The audience was enthusiastic. I was very interested to hear Scriabin as one rarely hears him at home.

Saturday Dec. 31. Spent morning trying to get tickets. Tickets for apparently like New York in the holidays. Tickets all sold out! Then went shopping for envelopes, post cards, stamps and Russian House!

Sunday morning: NAVYAS HANNOVA 1927 going to the station. Spent with Dora & a few friends party. Probably the only had been "I will meet" so the Russians please it; in Moscow. Some difficult to know a work has passed over our own.

Sunday morning Jan. 1, 1928. Dora party rather a fizzle. Most Georgian crowd one could imagine. Found not too good for the price. Of course the beer was amusing and the people interesting types in fact. One man out of the guest crowd succeeded in dancing

6

some Russian dancing rather well. Went out with D. to the Novodevichy Convent. In order to get into the museum or church of the Cathedral of our Lady of Smolensk. Was to return to come in the church and some of the best works of the painters of the Moscow school of the 19th century. Took a walk (cold) in the direction of the river and the Lenin Hills (formerly the Sparrow Hills) through people skiing and skating. The Cathedral is very beautiful from without and the red several pictures of the Kopy and other Pagan buildings or any effective against the white of the snow. Russian gardens are interesting but ugly. Found some Russian paintings in and while my painting. The type that is represented by certain buildings in the monastery grounds.

To see Dora went into a 19th century church near the monastery. In chimney going up the mother and father were seated with the son and the old long-haired priest while the latter was writing down the name in a parchment book. The baptismal water had

Spread 6A

been heated for the ceremony and was steaming in a lively fashion! The church was pretty awful. Returned to hotel (very cold) and stopped in [Abbott's omission] church. It being later the church was locked but we got a priest to admit us. Only a *very* few interesting icons. There were two however that were interesting in connection with [El] Greco. (Must return to look at them when the light is better.)

After late dinner went with OC to Meierhold's theatre to see Gogol's "the Revisor" [*sic*].²⁸ Meierhold has rewritten it or rather taken parts from both Gogol's Mns [manuscripts] and also interpolated from letters etc. of the author. We went back stage (see diagrams) before the performance and also into the lighting booth. The lighting is rather unique. There are in booth A all the switches etc. for handling lights etc. and two large search lights in reality of 22,000 candle p. each and a cinema projector. There are in addition floods and spots manipulated by operators from c—c All under telephonic connection with the stage.

Staging at the Meierholds for Revisor. РЕВИЗОР [Revizor]

(see figure) Stage from above./Small stages that slide on tracks./Orchestra hidden. Certain sections swing back to allow the small stage to come out front./No curtain is used./Action may come out into auditorium

The small stages were set up off stage and pulled on by cable and electric motor. The action was not necessarily confined to the small stage although usually it furnished the background for the principle actors. One stage was also suspended and let down.

(see figure)

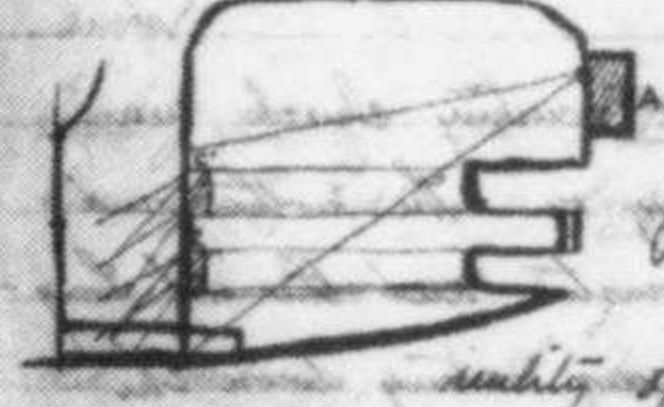
The small stages were both of exaggerated slope. (see figure) so that the effect was that of looking at the scene a bit from above. Some of the action [cont.]

28. Abbott is referring to Meyerhold's 1926 staging of Gogol's *Revizor* (1836), translated into English as *The Inspector General*.

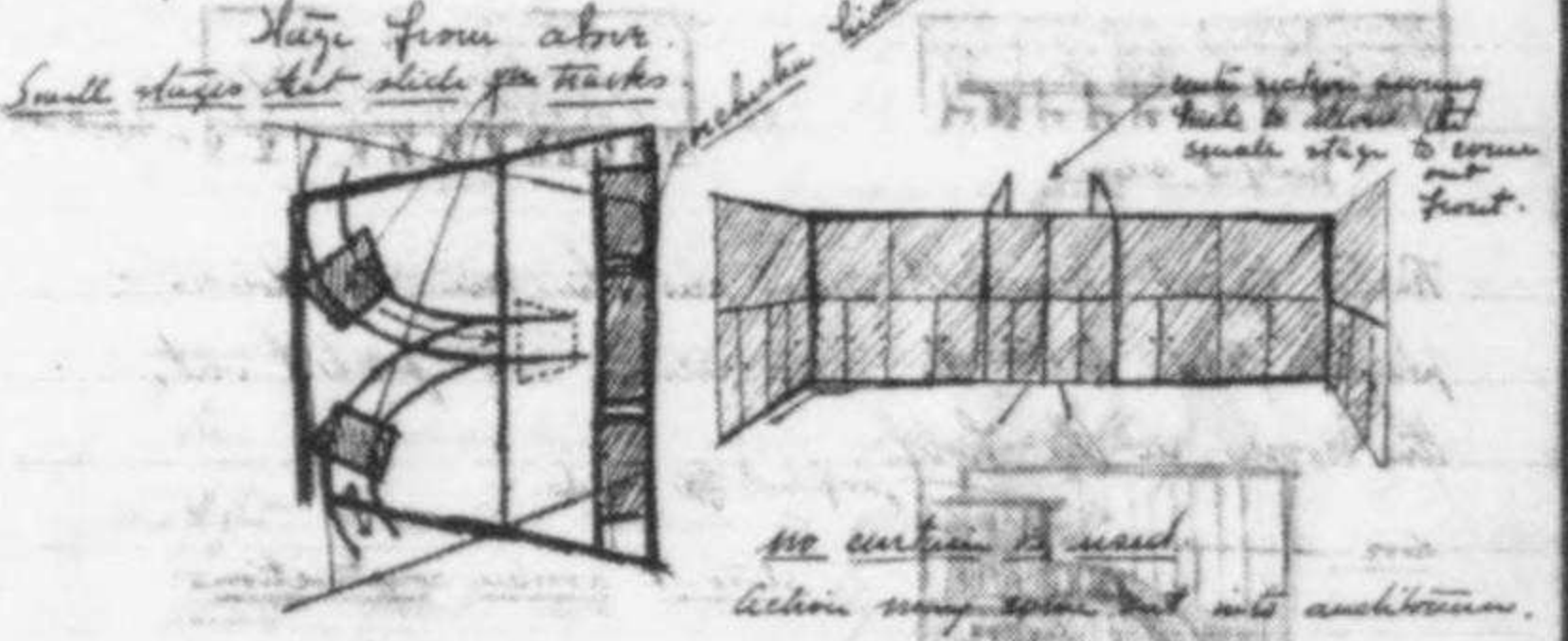
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 been treated for the ceremony and was streaming in
 a fairly fashion! The church was pretty useful.
 Returned to hotel (very cold) and stopped in
 Church St. Very late the
 church was locked but we got a permit to admit us.
 Only a very few interesting icons. There were two
 however that were interesting in connection with
 Gues. (Must show to look at them when
 the light is better.)

Left the dinner went with OC to Marshall's theater
 to see Gogol's The Revision. Marshall has rewritten
 it or rather taken parts from Gogol's work
 and also interpolated some letters etc. of the author.
 He went back stage (see diagrams) before the performance
 and also into the lighting booth. The lighting is

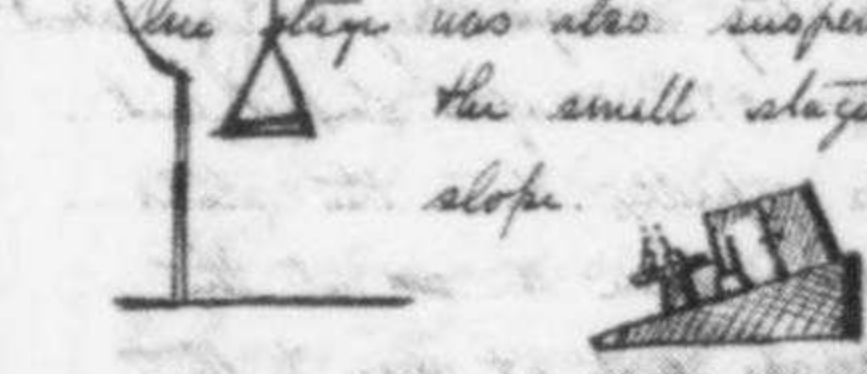
rather unique. There are in
 booth A all the switches etc.
 for handling lights etc. and
 two large search lights in
 ceiling of 2200 candle p. each
 and a cinema projector. There are in addition



Hooks and spots manipulated by operators from c.c.
 all under telephonic connection with the stage.
 Staying at Marshall's for Revision. FEB 23 1907



The small stages were set up of stage and pulled on
 by cable and electric motor. The action was not necessarily
 confined to the small stage although usually it
 furnished the background for the principal actors.
 One stage was also suspended and let down.
 The small stages were both of upraked
 slope so that the effect was
 that of looking at
 the scene a bit from above. Some of the action



Spread 7

took place mainly in front of the doors as in the case of the breakfast scene or the scene when they return a bit drunk from the banquet.

[see figure] breakfast scene or [see figure] balustrade

Rather typical Meierhold scene was the one let down—played flush with the door scene, not pushed out, the room in the hotel

[see figure] unfished [*sic*] boards/staccato wooden construction/bed/trap door. Cellar for wood storage/door

extraordinarily humorous effect is obtained in this scene at the point when Revisor and his aid dressed to the point in military regalia are about to depart with the major. The majors stupid aid with much clatter falls rapidly down the stairs head first and disappears down the [word scratched out] into the trap head first. The groups rush at once to the trap door and peer down. Very good theatre.

Among the best scenes is the reading of the letter. The counterpoint throughout [*sic*] this scene. The effect of the crowded room by so many people on this small stage. The emphasized where everyone tries (in usual manner on such occasions) to pass chairs around. Excellent action. Fine grouping and skillful candle emphasis when the letter is read. Done against a drittes rococo background.

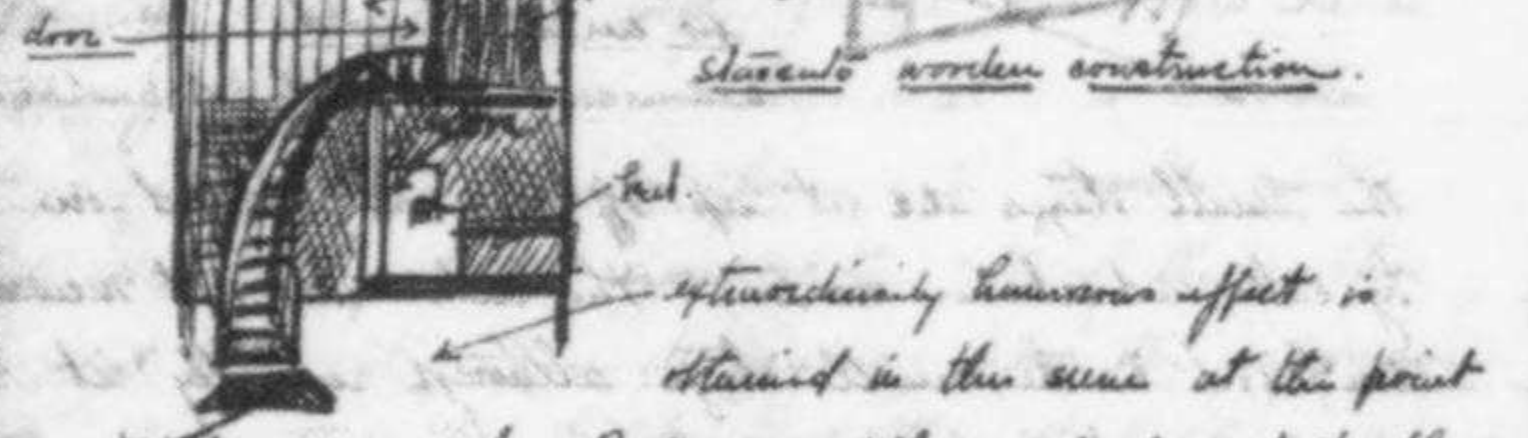
One disadvantage in such scene shifting is the draught when the curtain is opened up.

Tricks: Didn't care especially for the suitor scene. The wife day dreaming of the young officer lovers. The clothes press opens and the young officers pour out and sing a song—not bad but at conclusion one finds a pistol—the top of a box mirror. This open and from it pops another officer with a bouquet. Amusing but not very good—“slipped out of the picture” I felt. The acting and character work was of unusual high level and the grouping extraordinary many times. Small stage idea has great possibilities for the [cont.]

took place mainly in front of the doors as in the case of the breakfast scene or the scene when they when a bit drunk from the banquet.



Rather typical Munchausen scene now the one to show - played flesh with the door scene not pushed out, the scene on the left, implied for scene.



staircase wooden construction. An extremely humorous effect is obtained in the scene at the point when Perison and his aid dressed to the point in military regulation are about to depart with the major. The major stepped back with much chatter falls rapidly down the stairs head first and scrapes down the wall into the trap. Head first. The group rush at once to the back door and peer down. Very good theater.

among the best scenes is the reading of the letter. The scenic point throughout this scene. The effect of the crowded room by so many people on this small stage. The emphasized when everyone tries (in normal manner) to pass chairs around. Excellent action. Fine grouping and skillful small emphases when the letter is read. Done against a dark scene background. One disadvantage in such scene shifting is the draught when the curtain is opened up.

Tricks: don't care especially for the scene the wife day discussing of the young officer loves. The clothes pass of the young officer pour out and say a song - not last but at conclusion see for a pistol - the top of a box missile. This open and from it paper another officer with a pocket - amusing but not very good - slipped out of the picture. I felt the acting and character work was of unusual high level and the grouping extraordinary many times. Small stage which has great possibilities for the



Spread 7A

for the small immobile stage of the small theatre. In the theatre there is also a museum with excellent models of all the productions. Crowds of people there at inter act. Made an appointment with M- for Wednesday at 12:30 and are to see a *rehearsal* that afternoon.

His staging often Giottesque. [see figure] Movement thruout timed almost in a ballet sense- snyconized [*sic*] action—movement of groups.

Rozinsky excuses the lack of good *writers* of contemporary Russian drama thru their inexperience in coping with this problem of making the individual the background for the group instead of all former ideas when this was reversed. However, I feel, whereas the individual may represent a type, in Revisor he did not do so but departed far from type, the individual hero or villain still remains individual to the audience—whatever the theory may be to the contrary. That seems to be born [*sic*] out in the

October play at the Proletkult²⁹ called “Власьт” [Власть] *Blast*.³⁰

See below:

Large numbers of actors in company. A small theatre may have a hundred. The opera here possibly 2 or 3,000! Russian casts all very large.

Monday night

Proletkult Theatre Власьт. One of the October plays—story of the Kerensky [Aleksandr Kerenskii] regime³¹ as reflected in village life.

[see figure] SETS:/Old stage/Proscenium arch/Wide angle/Dark grey curtains/Present stage enlarged

This shows very well the tendency in Russian staging to get away from the set stage. To “throw” much of the action “front and back.” To push it out into the audience. The rather makeshift transformation of this theatre seemed to work very well, the stage was more than doubled in capacity.

29. Founded in 1917, Proletkul't, an abbreviation of *proletarskaia kul'tura* (proletarian culture), established workshops throughout the country intended to expand literacy and encourage the creation of new worker-written plays, novels, and poetry. The organization initially received state financial support, but it was not directly affiliated with the Communist Party. By the early 1920s, government support for Proletkul't waned, and it ceased to function in 1923.

30. Abbott likely mistook the Russian word “ВЛАСТЬ” (*vlast*), which means “power,” for “blast.”

31. Kerenskii served as the prime minister of the Russian Provisional Government until it was overthrown by the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution.

for the small simple stage of the small theater
 in the theater this is also a museum with excellent
 models of all the productions. Crowds of people there
 at each act. Made an appointment with M. for
 Wednesday at 12:30 and we to see a rehearsal that
 afternoon.

His staging of the Geotayun  Insomniac throat turned about in a ballet sense -
 synchronized action-movement of groups.

Boginsky excused the lack of good writers of
 contemporary Russian works. He said that their
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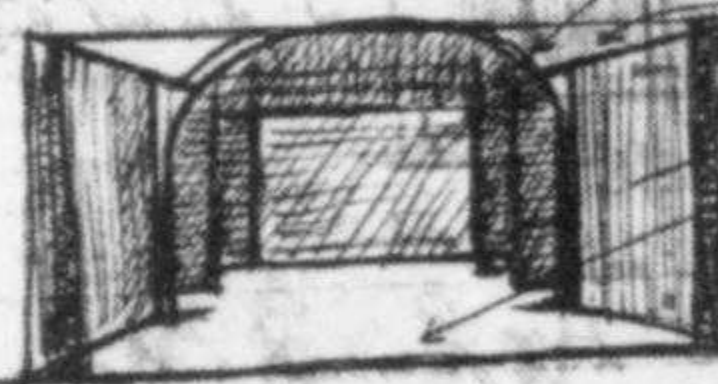
Delovaya play at the Prolet Kult called "ВРАЧ" Act 7A
 See below:

Large numbers of actors on company to small theater may
 have a hundred. The price here possibly 200,000.
 Russian casts all very large.

Monday night

Prolet Kult Theater. ВРАЧ. One of the better
 plays - story of the Kuznetsky region as reflected in
 village life.

SETS:



This shows very well the tendency in Russian staging to
 get away from the set stage. To throw much of
 the action front and back to push it out
 into the audience. The rather makeshift
 transformation of this theater seemed to work
 very well, the stage was more than doubled in
 capacity.

Spread 8

[see figure] dark grey hanging/pink wall/lights/screen black. stage dark/railway switches with red & green lights. color!/action on and off platform/low spots on this area /door/Opening scene. Railway Station

[see figure] Black back ground/Balustrades white/seat/stair rail bright red/Hallway/coat rack/white post

The action in the above took place up and down the stairs in rather contrapuntal relation to the action on the lower floor itself.

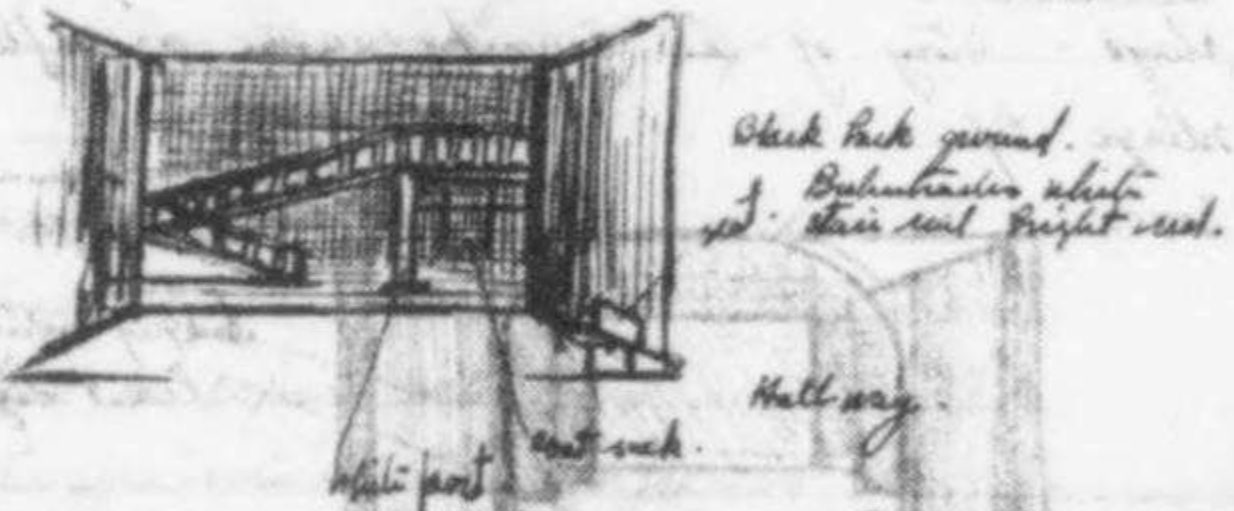
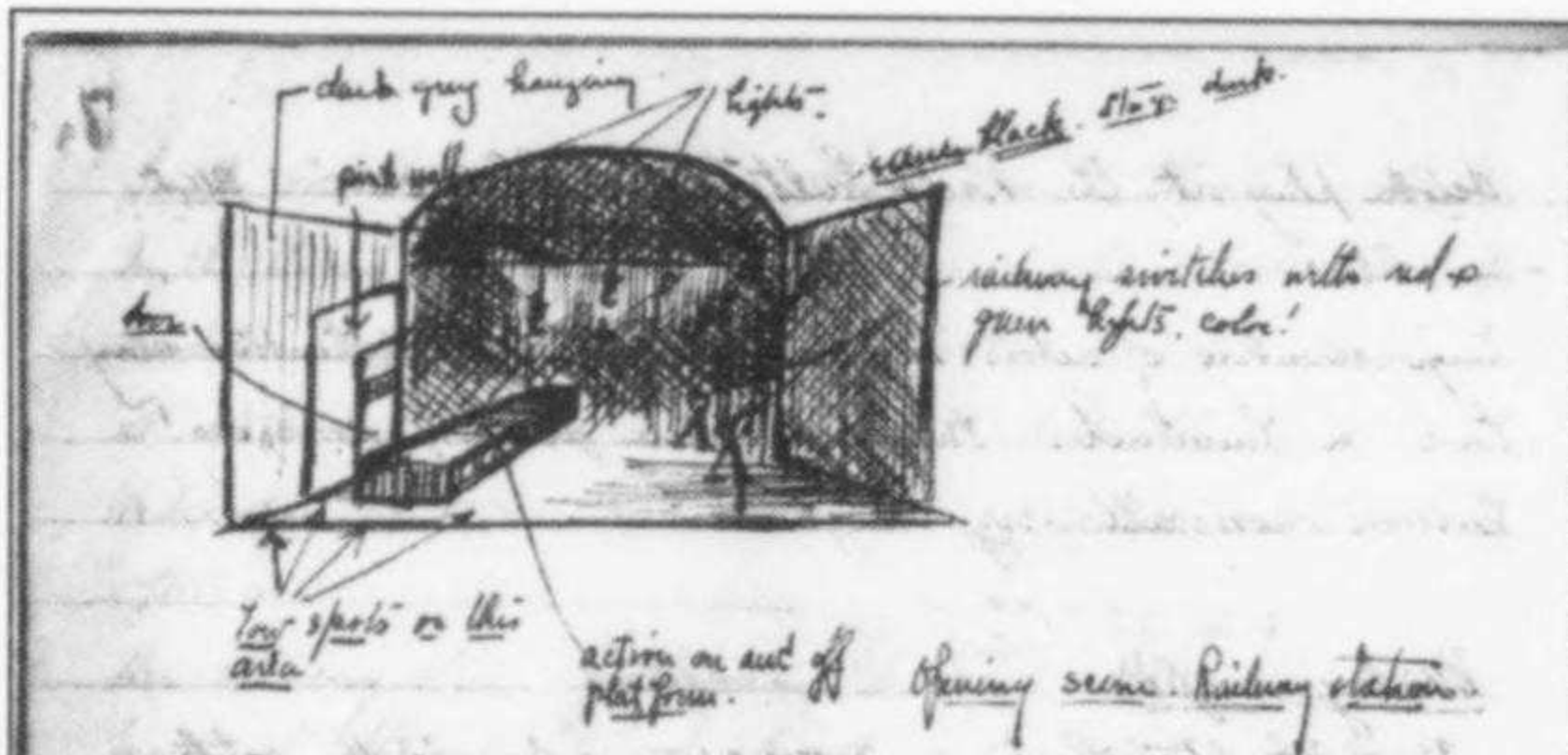
Set, top of page 8.

The action of the miners bringing in carts and dumping them on c . . . and the group of women waiting at the closed bread window. The sharp wringing [*sic*] of the signal bell for the "carrier lifts" gave clever dramatic punctuation.

[see figure] dark green masking curtain/curtain pulled back showing light wall (A) of the theatre. many entrances made then by workers./men with carts (miners) keep entering from this side./steel girder construction./chute being filled with coal from miners carts. Bell ring. Lifts go up and down. good movement./group of peasants waiting for bread on this side

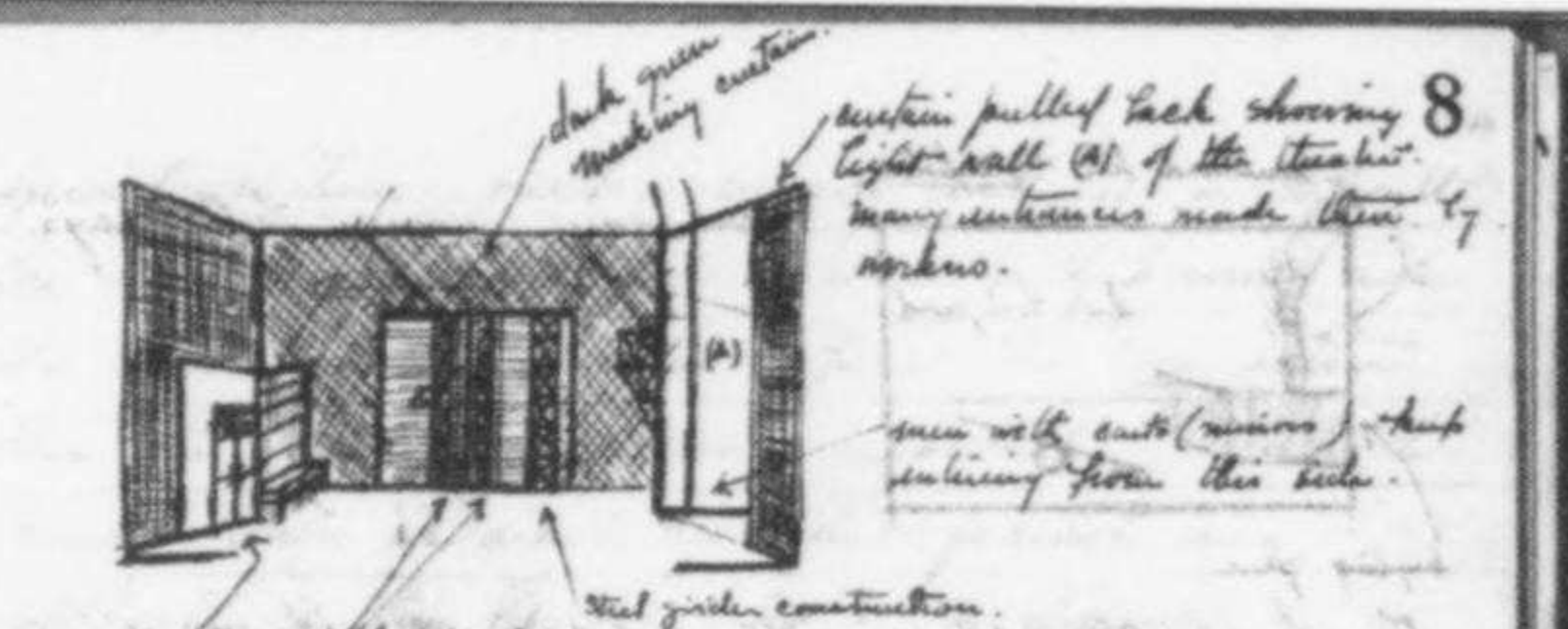
For the second part of this set the dark green masking curtain is drawn up, the strikers line up the carts front stage, and the speakers harangue the crowd from the elevators and girders. Very good effect simply obtained. done against a black drop.

[see figure] In the peasant scene are shown on the following stage there was used almost with acrobatic effect a see-saw. In the finale when the peasant and revolting troop who came to shoot the peasants march front stage this see saw forms a platform for people to "peak" the movement—excellent group [cont.]



The action in the above took place up and down the stairs in rather counterpointal relation to the action on the lower floor itself.

Set, top of page 0. The action of the scene beginning in cars and stamping them on canvas and the group of women waiting at the closed front windows. The sharp ringing of the signal bell in the corner left gave clear dramatic punctuation.



group of peasants waiting for food on this set.

In the second part of this set the dark green masking curtain is drawn up, the shades are set the east front stage, and the speakers hang on the sound from the elevator and guide. Very good effect simply obtained done against a black drop.



In the present scene shown on the following stage this was used almost with automatic effect. In the scene in the final when the peasant and military troops who came to shoot the peasant march front stage this set was formed a platform for people to "peak" the movement - excellent group

Spread 8A

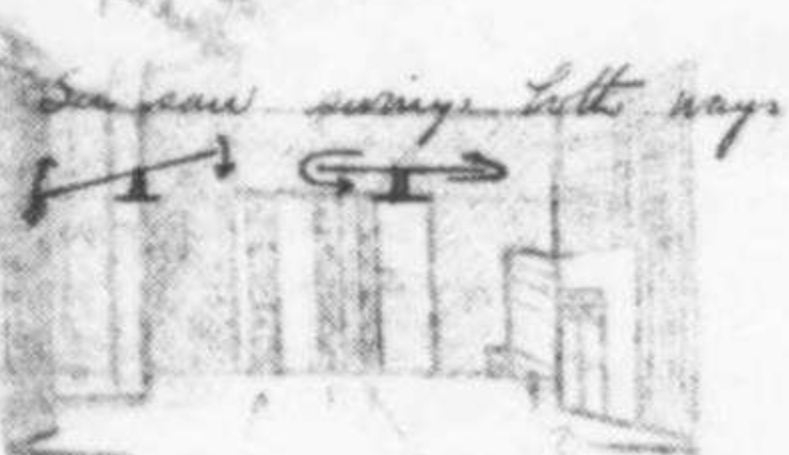
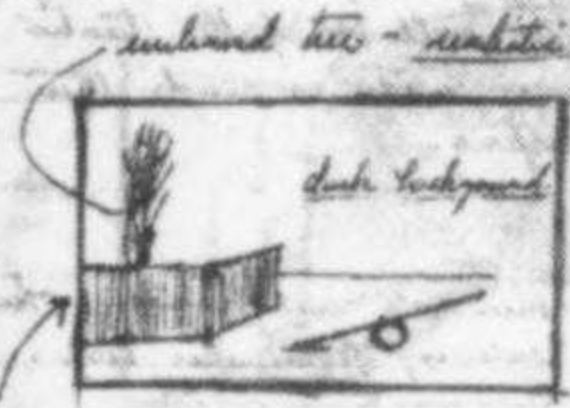
[see figure] unleaved [*sic*] tree—realistic/dark background/sapling fence

[see figure] /See saw swings both ways

The theatre Proletkult. The actors of this theatre have all been originally working people. They were chosen from the various local dramatic clubs of the factories and the like and now have their own theatre. The performance, however, is of a purely professional merit and the direction especially interesting because of the ingenious use of sparse props etc.

The effect on the whole is sometimes not too happy but in the main the mis-en-scene is particularly good—especially from the standpoint of the “little theatre.”

We have been told that the new Russian drama concerns itself, naturally, with the mass, not with the individual and the poor quality of the contemporary writers of drama in Russia is often excused on these grounds—namely that it is difficult for them to use the individual as a background and the mass as the important force. the type rather than the person then becomes important. Meierhold himself when we asked him that question as applicable to his Revisor (here it is difficult to see in this work “types”—in fact Revisor is not a type at all as played but a caricatured individual) replied that it was the type not the individual. I couldn't agree. In *Власть* the young sailor may have represented a type but it was evident that to the audience he was the hero of the play in so far as the play lent itself to a hero. He was never once submerged in the mass and always stood out distinctly as an individual. I think here we are getting too much of theory. One felt the advantage of propaganda in art. Meierhold again in our conversation was not (intelligently enough) willing to be dogmatic on this point. But it is true, it seems to me, that it does add a stimulus to the art. Furthermore it makes [cont.]



the theatre Proletkult. The actors of this theatre have all been originally working people. They were chosen from the various local dramatic clubs of the factories and the like and now have their own theatre. The performance, however, is of a purely professional spirit and the direction especially interesting because of the ingenious use of various props etc.

The effect on the whole is certainly not too happy but in the main the work on stage is particularly good - especially from the stand point of the little theatre.

We have been told that the new Russian drama concerns itself, naturally, with the mass, not with the individual and the poor quality of the contemporary works of drama in Russia is often

expressed on these grounds, - namely that it is difficult for them to see the individual as a background and the mass as the important force. The type rather than the person thus becomes important. Merzhold himself when we asked him that question as applicable to his *Revisor* (but it is difficult to see in this work "types" - in fact *Revisor* is not a type at all as played but a caricatured individual) replied that it was the type not the individual. I couldn't agree. In *Bracot* the young sailor *May* *Leve* represented a type but it was evident that to the audience he was the hero of the play in so far as the play but itself is a hero. He was never once submerged in the mass and always stood out distinctly as an individual. I think there was one getting too much of this. One felt the advantage of propaganda in art. Merzhold again in our conversation was not (intelligently enough) willing to be dogmatic on this point. But it is true, it seems to me, that it does add a stimulus to the art. Furthermore it makes

Spread 9

more firm the "rapport" between the audience and the player. It might almost for this reason be classed as a part of that movement to mingle player and audience. Or of the tilted stage (with Meierhold markedly tilted stage) to throw audience and player closer together. Perhaps the latter is too fragile theory. The experience portrayed thus in these contemporary revolutionary dramas has been so vividly held in mind as real experience by the audience that it enters vigorously into the drama.

Tuesday. Jan 3, 1928.

Up at ten and went with the efficient Peter to buy the weeks supply of theatre tickets. The demand is so great here that it is best to purchase them always ahead of time. The trams stop a few moments at the Arbat.³² Frequently beggars come aboard and sing for money. Today a young man—(on one leg) came aboard. He was a Caucasian and sang the story of his life. A real bard. The melody was interesting.—his own as of course was the story. In the afternoon went out to see Lissitsky [El Lissitzky]—once painter now architect. (The utilitarian idea again!) Mme. L- met us with her charming youngsters who were home for the Holidays, being educated in Germany (sic!) The younger, aged seven, does quite ammussing paintings—quite truly in the Kinder genre. We looked at some of her husbands renderings before his arrival. Their texture interesting—uses papers painted on—glazed surfaces etc. so that the plane becomes the crispest thing imaginable. Admirably successful. The trouble with most of his work is its imposability from the Russian knowledge of construction. He delights in playing with counter-a forces—his elevations are almost vector diagrams. There to [sic] is much [illegible] space and this problem of congested streets even tho the buildings are elevated is not thereby remedied. (Houses disgorge in to the streets below, of course)

[see figure] His architecture frequently it seems to me judging from his sketches is strangely no [sic] utilitarian and strikes one often as [cont.]

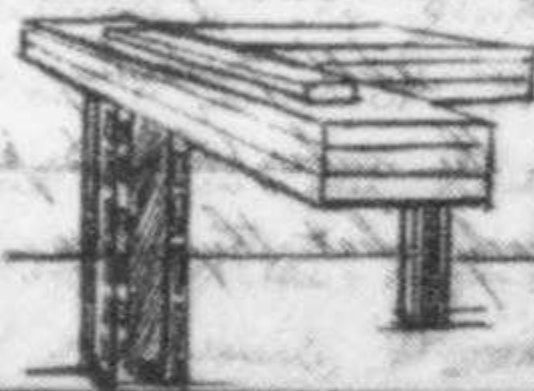
32. The Arbat is a kilometer-long pedestrian street dating from the fifteenth century and located in Moscow's center.

more from the support. Return the audience and the play ~~from the~~. It might almost for this reason be classed as a part of that movement to mingle player and audience. Or of the tilted stage (with Weirich's the markedly tilted stage) to show audience and player shown together. Perhaps the latter is too fragile theory. The experience portrayed thus in these contemporary revolutionary chamber has been so vividly held in mind as real experience by the audience that it falls vigorously into the chamber.

Tuesday, Jan 3, 1928.

Up at ten and went with the efficient Peter to buy the week's supply of theatre tickets. The demand is so great here that it is best to purchase them always ahead of time. The trains stop a few moments at the depot. Frequently beggars come aboard and sing for money. Today a young man - (one on the way) came aboard. He was a Chaucerian and sang the story of his life. A real treat. The melody was interesting - his own as of course was the story.

In the afternoon went out to see Leach's new painter new architect. (The utilitarian idea again!) Met us with his charming young wife who were home for the holidays, being educated in Germany (sic!) The young, aged man, does quite amusing paintings - quite only in the Kinder genre. He looked at some of his husband's drawings. Before he arrived these texture interesting - were papers pasted on - glazed surfaces etc. so that the plan becomes the crispest thing imaginable. Technically successful. He will take most of his work is its representativeness from the Russian knowledge of construction. A delight in playing with numbers & faces. In sketches are about vector diagrams. There is a much part space with two further of conjugated streets even tho' the building as sketched is not likely remedied. (Some baggage in to the street below, of course). His architecture frequently seems to me judging from his sketches is strongly utilitarian and utilitarian even after as



Spread 9A

experimentation in counteracting forces radically handled. I think he has made a very definite contribution in his manner of rendering his plans. His work shows some influence of Bauhaus—but the feeling behind it is quite different. I feel in L—the artist drawing his plans rather than the architect working out the construction of his building. It is very interesting to see how careful these former painters are to repudiate painting. Some of his photographs very skillful technically but date definitely in their tricks of double exposure etc. His ideas on the conscious and unconscious primitivism I couldn't follow. We had to hurry away late to another engagement.

Ate!

And to [Abbott's omission] with M.O'C and gathered some catalogues of books published by the Soviet [Abbott's omission] has part charge of this printing also edits a cinema journal to which I intend to subscribe Кино.³³ Was presented with three copies of it. Russia is still publishing her literature at a loss but the subscriptions to periodicals this year are double already what they were last year the number of books published is greatly in advance of what it was before the war. The government has already started the compilation of many new encyclopedias—medical—scientific etc. and its general encycl. is no [*sic*] finished for the first three letters of the alphabet. The thirst for information—a great inquisitive mind, it seems to me, a very skeptical mind, has grown up out of the mass of people who for the first time feel themselves of some importance. The packed theatres, the great increase in library reading lists, the educational films—many and complicated ones—these seem to have it out. Russian typography improves. It has had it seems to me, and Rodchenkos work seemed to indicate it, the tendency to try to say too much rather than to be crisp and sparse. This shows in its posters, stamps etc. This is rather paradoxical when one considers the excellence of the graphs made since the revolution to instruct the non-reading population. In most cases one finds graphic simplicity here, but in some of the larger ones, I found confusions, even if one reads, present. [Edgar Rice] Borroughs [cont.]

33. *Sovetskoe kino*, published by the Commissariat of Enlightenment (Narkompros), was an important early venue for Soviet avant-garde film theory and criticism, in the period between 1926 and 1928. Rodchenko was for a time an editor, and his wife, the artist Varvara Stepanova, was the designer and managing editor. The formalist film critic Viktor Shklovsky was also a key contributor.

8
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In most cases one finds graphic simplicity - less
but in some of the larger ones I found confusion,
even if one reads, ~~the~~ present. Bourgeois

Spread 10

books "Tarzan of the Apes" [1912] and others translated into Russian. (I asked Peter what the younger people in Russia were reading. He said that while novels were being read—[Joseph] Conrad—[Arthur Conan] Doyle "Sherlock Holmes—he added to the list—that the interest in technical books and publications now occupied most of the attention. Young Russia is eager to become technically proficient. Burgeoning—the sciences come to the lead. A natural reaction of a Marxian people.)

To Rodchenko's house (accent on first syllable) in the evening and were swamped with photographs—early paintings and the like. His background peasant. Came to Moscow in 1915 with his compass—constructed drawings *sic!* (early date for these) They were not excepted [*sic*]. Then worked on a futuristic picture—his first exhibition. Showed us pictures and printed matter and photos.

Found his typography on the whole a bit crowded. Some were striking but attempted to say too much in print. The utilitarian age. Poets writing for match-box designs—artists doing the designs for tea cans. R- renounces—as do most of this group his pictures. Photography and the cinema (now directing) interest him most of all. Uses in many cases small camera for work. His photography very good. Bauhaus—Rodchenko vert. shot of building. Uses little trick photography. The Russian grotesque humor in some of his work—his wives portraits. One very fine one ([illegible] shot from below) Thus the utilitarian or rather the activity for mass result is no doubt acting, as a spur for these men. They paint not for the understanding of a few but they enter into work for which the final reaction comes from the mass. The approach mimics the middle ages "rapport" between the artist and the patron that ever since and the patron *is* the people.

Expand psycologicoly [*sic*].

books. Many of the books and others translated into Russian. I asked Peter what the younger people in Russia were reading. He said that which work was being read - Conrad Doyle, Shakespeare, Tolstoy - he added to the list - that the interest in technical books and publications were occupied most of the attention. Young Russia is eager to become technically proficient. Engineering - the sciences come to the head. A natural reaction of a Russian people.

To Rodchenko's house (across from the square) in the evening and were swamped with photographs - early paintings and the like. His background pleasant. Came to Moscow in 1915 with his comrades. Constructed drawings etc! (early date for them). They were not accepted. Then worked on a futuristic picture - his first exhibition. Showed no pictures and printed matter and photos.

Found his typography in the whole a bit crowded. Some were striking but attempted to say too much in print. The utilitarian age. Peter writing for math & design - artists doing the designs for tea cans! R. surmises - as do most of the group his pictures. Photography and the cinema (now directing) interest him most of all. But in many cases small camera for work. His photography very good. Ben Lavin. Rodchenko not shot of building. Was little back photographically. The Russians get a humor in some of her work - his wife portraits. One very fine one (opening shot from below). Thus the utilitarian or rather the activity for mass result is no doubt activity as a spur for their work. They paint not for the understanding of a few but they use art work for which the final reaction comes from the mass. The approach means the visible eyes support. Between the artist and patron there is a union and the patron is the people. Expand psychology.

Spread 10A

Wednesday, January 4, 1928

To Meierhold's Theatre at 11:30 A.M. with O'C and Dana. For a short interview before seeing the rehearsal for a revival—"The Magnanimous Cuckold"³⁴ in which he was working in some new actors. Were led into the empty theatre where the director (M.) was listening to a jazz band rehearsal—band used in "Roar of China." The jazz was not bad for European Jazz and we tried to give questions to him above the music. Frequently interrupted by his numbers [*sic*] aids coming to him with questions. A nervous, tense, man—fine face—sturdy figure—sympathetic director. His actors all admiration for him. Giotto influenced him in Revisor. Rather avoided the propaganda question as to whether an aid or not. Think he feels it does establish a rapport between audience and actors. Has no hesitancy in mixing cinema and play. His use of spots entirely cinema-esque. He did not feel that the crowd on the stage in Revisor made it at times difficult for both actor and audience. The old problem of "type" we did not agree on. It still seems that the character is frequently too individual to convey a "type" idea

He took us into Museum. Excellent models. Explained them thru an interpreter. We were deluged with literature about the theatre by the librarian and went to rehearsal. Quite entertaining. Want to ask him about the dynamics of his plays sometime. Know his "mechanics" I think. One thing impressive about rehearsal—more intense than I've yet seen. The Russians throw themselves marvelously into their theatrical work. Meierhold very cordially invited us to the evening performance of *Лес*³⁵ and to rehearsal the following morning. Terrific energy of the man! Left and had lunch at the Dom with Dana. The grand-daughter of Tolstoi [Leo Tolstoy] lunched with us. An interesting girl. Evening to Meierhold's theatre as his guests to see *Лес* [*Les* (The Forest)]. Did not care so much for it. The plot being long and boresome I lost interest. The staging was not very amusing. One Meierholdish thing was the use of incline plane. The relation of dynamic groups to static groups not using the plane was extremely clever, in spots. The clowning became monotonous towards the end. The small [cont.]

34. When it premiered in 1922, Meyerhold's version of Fernand Crommelynck's *Le Cocu magnifique* (*The Magnificent Cuckold*) combined Constructivist costumes and machine-like sets by the artist Liubov' Popova with Meyerhold's biomechanics, a new approach to acting intended to release a performer's emotional force through schematized, physically amplified movement.

35. Abbott here refers to the play *Les* (The Forest) (1871) by the nineteenth-century playwright Aleksandr Ostrovskii, who wrote works that were critical of Russia's merchant class. Ostrovskii was reclaimed in the Soviet revolutionary era.

Wednesday, January 2, 1928

To Menckel's Theatre at 11:30 A.M. with OC and Susan. For a short interview before seeing the rehearsal for a second - The Magnum Opus Adapted in which he was working in some new actors. Then led into the empty theatre where the director (M) was listening to a jazz band rehearsal. - And read in How of China. The jazz was not bad for European jazz and we had to give questions to him about the music. Frequently interrupted by his manner such coming to him with questions. A nervous, tense man - few faces - sturdy figure - sympathetic director. His actors all admirations for him. Gets influenced then in Review. Pithy avoided the propaganda questions as to whether an end or not. Think he feels it does not stand a support Review audience and actors. His no hesitancy in mixing scenes and plays. His use of spots entirely serious-spirited. He did not feel that the crowd on the stage in Review made it at times difficult for both actor and audience. The old problem of type we did not agree on. It still seems that the Director's propaganda was too individual to convey a type idea.

We took us into Museum. Excellent month. Spent there then an interview. It was shared with Director about the theatre by the Lithuanian and went to the rehearsal. Quite satisfactory. Went to ask him about the dynamics of his plays sometime. "Knows his mechanics" I think. Am being impressed about the rehearsal - more intense than I've ever seen. The Success Three Members manipulation think theoretical work. Menckel my collaboration invited us to the evening performance. I DECided to a rehearsal the following morning. Temp arrangement of the man left and had back at the Door with Susan. The grand daughter of Tobler joined us. In rehearsing just coming to Menckel's office to his guest to see DEC. Did not see the book for it. The Plot Very Long and Complex. I lost interest. The staging was not very convincing. One Menckelish thing was the use of the incline plane. The relation of dramatic groups to static groups not using the plane was extremely clear in spots. The showing became monotonous towards the end. The small

Spread 11

prospectus needed for the play were brought in by the scene changer while stage was light. Stereopticon used to announce change of scene.

[see figure]/Stereopticon/screen/scenes of wood parqueted in large squares

dove cut

[see figure] Even actors at rest on the plane sujet unstable equil./alway dinamic up + down spiral/first unbalance, one swinger thus balance two swingers

Majority action balanced.

This set, in some ways illustrates as well as any the mechanics of the movement of the stage, always so well worked out with Meierhold. Probably Ostrovsky [Aleksandr Ostrovskii] was most to blame for part of the long-drawn-out-ness which even M couldn't overcome. As usual the action was of high order but it seemed to me there were fewer subtle arrangements than in "the Revisor." Await the "Roar of China" which said to rival the former. Home and to bed at the usual late hour. Enlarge later on this balancing of forces. Frequently sequence thus stable—unst.—st.—unstable.

Thursday

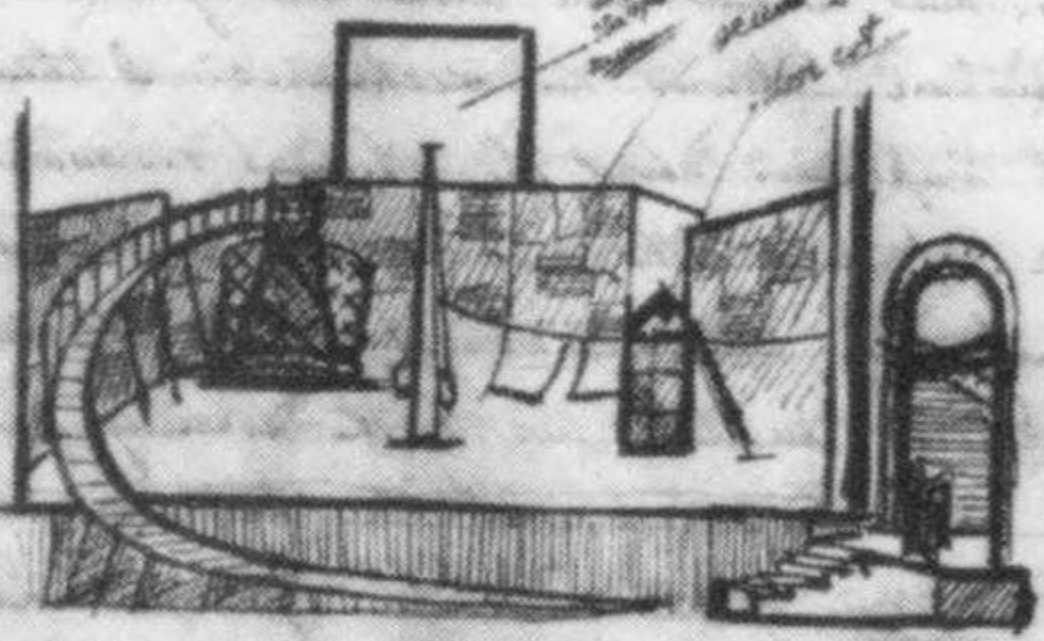
Meierholds to see a rehearsal of his new play, Diego Rivera came along with Dana—B—and myself. Meihold [Meyerhold] an energite [*sic*] director. Rarely have I see a rehearsal when actors "put themselves" into it with such vivre. Great fun.

Then at 3:30 with Dana meeting Rozinsky for dinner and to the house of a young composer where Sercabin [Scriabin] was played and own composition. Saw Frinel influence but Alfred found them Cyril Scott. Anyway they were fifteen or twenty years behind the times.

There arrived a young Russian from the Russian Art Theatre³⁶ to give us the best puppet show imaginable! He had been in America playing the Lysistrata and Carmencita.

36. Abbott here likely means the Moscow Art Theater, founded in 1898 by Konstantin Stanislavski and Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko. A landmark cultural institution almost from its inception, the Moscow Art Theater was the central promoter of Stanislavski's approach to naturalistic theater.

proprietor needed for the play were brought in by the same change while stage was light. Stereoscopic and 8 microphone change of scene



Two other at rest on the stage... about dynamic... this set, in some ways illustrates as well as any of the mechanics of the movement of the stage, change as well as what set with... Probably... was most to thank for part of the... out-mess which were it could be... concern. As usual, the action was of high order

but it seemed to me there were fewer and better arrangements than in the Russian. About the 'Poa of China' which was to meet the former. Home said to find at the usual late hour. Delay late on this balancing of forces. Thursday frequently requires this style work-st-

think both to see a rehearsal of the new play, Eugene Porena came along with... and myself. He held an upright position. Rarely have I seen an rehearsal where actors put themselves into it with such vim. Great fun. Then at 3.30 with Dana meeting Roginsky for dinner and to the house of a young composer... where Sorokin was played and our occupation... and French influence but Alfred found them... and so on. Anyway they were fifteen or twenty years behind the times. Then arrived a young Russian from the Russian Art theatre to give us the first puppet show imaginable! He had been in America playing in Equitabre and Carmen.

Spread 11A

In the evening to Meierholds to see Tretyakov's Рычи Китай! [*Rychi Kitai!* (Roar China!)] a play (propaganda) against English and American intervention in China. Trouble—one-side. The Chinese down beautifully, the "other side" caricatured until there was no possibility of interest in them. Play thusly lost, what is the feat of overcoming fools! Well staged. As usual, group action well-nigh perfect.

Jan 6:

We're going with Diego Rivera to exhibition of modern Russian painting. Are told it is closed why? Rumor has it that it is because 1. Portraits of source of the opposition 2. In a group representing Lenin's burial there were some objectionable nudes. Went in the afternoon with Roz to an exhibit of paintings by peasants and untutored workers in the 1st University. Arranged to buy possibly from later. One by a young Russian peasant boy of 16. Met him.

Evening to the Jewish theatre³⁷ to see comic operatta [*sic*] 200,000.³⁸ Very fine. Stylized acting in chorus—delightful sets and costumes. Set for the rich mans house—humor of the quantity of lace for the curtains. Costumes Chagallish [Marc Chagall] in color. Chagall decorations in the foyer. Music exceptionally good.

Stray notes:

The Russian Soldier songs are very fine and they sing them in his and their "voices" in marching. One hears them frequently.

See pg. 12A reverse. Sunday. Went into the Cathedral. Stayed there part of a service. Much impressed by the quality of tones of the singing of the congregation. It was so much better than most groups singing makes out to be elsewhere.

Fel [*sic*] as if I have to revise my former statement regarding architecture here. There is considerable building that seems to me very good in the modified Bauhaus style. However the finish in the interior, the detailed work is very sloppy indeed. Russia will have to be patient, it seems to me, in training here unknown.

37. Abbott and Barr visited the State Yiddish Chamber Theater, known by the acronym GOSEKT. In 1920, the theater's director, Aleksei Granovskii, tapped Marc Chagall as a costume and set designer. Both were key figures in a postrevolutionary effort to develop a modern, secular Yiddish culture.

38. *200,000: A Musical Comedy* premiered at GOSEKT on June 28, 1923. It was based on *The Big Win* (1915) by Sholem Aleichim and directed by Aleksei Granovskii, with set and costume design by Aleksandr Stepanov and Isaac Rabichev.

In the evening to the Palace to see Tretjakov's
 ПЫЛЬ И ПУХ! a play (propaganda) against
 English and American intervention in China.
 Trivial - one side. The Chinese done beautifully,
 the "other side" caricatured until there was no
 possibility of interest in them. Play thereby lost,
 what is the feat of overcoming fools!
 Well staged. No sound, group action well worth
 per se.

Task 6:

Am going with Diego Rivera to exhibition of
 Modern Russian painting. He told it is closed.
 Why? Museum has it. That's the reason. Portraits of
 some of the opposition & in a group representing
 Lenin's Social there were some objectionable pictures.
 Went in the afternoon with Pop to an exhibit of
 paintings by present and past workers in
 the 1st University. ~~arranged by people from the~~ War by a young
 Russian peasant boy of 16. Met him.

Went to the Jewish Theatre of 2 see comic operetta
 200,000. Very fine. Stylized acting in chorus - debuffed
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 costume Chagallish in color. Chagall decorations
 in the foyer. Music exceptionally good.

Notes:

The Russian Soldier songs are very fine and they sing
 them in bar and the "voice" in marching. One hears
 them frequently.

In pp. 122 review. Sunday went into the Cathedral. Stopped
 the part of a service. Much impressed by the quality
 of tone of the singing of the congregation. It was as
 much better than most groups singing makes out
 to Kabanov.

Had as if I had to make any formal statement regarding
 architecture here. This is considerable building that seems
 to me very good in the modern Bauhaus style.
 However the finish in the interior, the detailed work
 is very sloppy indeed. Panna will have to be
 patient, it seems to me, in training for workmen.

Spread 12

We see no American or English papers here and, reading no Russian we feel curiously detached from our part of the world. It will take wellnigh all Summer to "get in touch" again.

Peter told me with no pathos and not a little humor his effort to get a suit coat for 10 r. (unsuccessful) before Christmas. He doesn't own one. A really good suit may cost as high as 200 r. and nothing is obtainable under 40 r.

Werkstead [Alexander Wickstead?]: The students who were at a period of education during the Rev. got more, of course, and now represent a problem when they come up for work. They are hard working but they have no background. The condition improving.

When a working man (speaking of England) gets educated he doesn't become a better workman but he joins the intelligensia. Russia wants to guard against this, probably quite rightly, and the "modus operandi" of such a problem is difficult.

Is the problem of the individual which, of course, will never cease to exist, entirely, as yet, thot out? I feel it isn't, somehow.

Werkstead:

Before the war activity or its attributes—punctuality etc. was nearly defender. One could write or say a great deal so long as he didn't act—action was dangerous.

Story of philanthropic woman who established homes for poor children—forced often to "move on" and to change her name.

how "efficiency" is the word. Yet it must take some time to get over these old habits—so long ingrained.

Dana. The little theatre on the out ring—the excellently acted play—young actors where the crowd at the end shouted for the character to appear rather than the actor. Interesting.

He is no American or English paper here and, reading no Russian or feel extremely detached from our part of the world. It will take perhaps all summer to get in touch again.

John told me with no father and not a little humor his effort to get a ^{suit} coat for 10 r. (unsuccessful) before Christmas. He doesn't even see a really good suit may cost as high as 200 r. and nothing is obtainable under 70 r.

Abstract: The students who were at a point of education during the Rev. got more, of course, and now present a problem when they come up for work. They are hard working but they have no background, the tradition of improving.

Then a working man (speaking of England) got educated. He doesn't become a better workman but he joins the intelligentsia. Russia wants to guard against this, probably quite rightly, and the

'modus operandi' of such a problem is difficult.

Is the problem of the individual which, of course, will never cease to exist, entirely, as yet, that out? I feel it isn't, somehow.

Abstract:

Before the war activity or its attributes - punctuality etc. was nearly defunct. One could write or say a great deal so long as he didn't act - action was dangerous.

Story of philanthropic woman who established homes for poor children - freed often to "move on" and to change her name.

How "efficiency" is the word. Yet it must take some time to get over their old habits so long ingrained.

Drama: The little theater on the set ring - the excellent acted play - young actors whom the crowd at the end shouted for the character to appear rather than the actor. Interesting.

Spread 12A

Jan 7.

Up late. Morning and day rather wasted (wrote some) in effort to fix plans for visiting a monastery at Sergievo, about 70 miles from Moscow.

Afternoon with Roz. to see [Anatolii] Alexandrov who is perhaps the second ([Nikolai] Myaskovski the first) Russian comp of those who remain in Russia (sic). His wife is a professor of Dalcroze Eurythmics³⁹ at the 1st University. She sang some of his songs—rather charming—Scriabin and Prokofieff with again a French twang, I thought. His Sonata VI [1925] interested me a bit—the last movement especially but it did sound like the patching together of ideas separated worked out. It had not the feeling of a whole. The Russian eclectic background [*sic*] of [illegible] Tchaikovsky and Moussorgsky rose behind nearly everything.

In the evening to see *Desire* under the Elms at the Kamerny Theatre.⁴⁰—Badly done. Everything was exteriorized. No sense of the play itself. New England certainly missed out. The set interested me but A- found it not too clear. One [cont.]

[see figure]

[see figure] dark grey/ dull blue/soft orange yellow/natural brown wood put on as slats/to represent poured cement/soft orange yellow when flaps are up. These wall spaces can be closed in, wall-flaps. soft grey in tone. Also under upstairs room (dotted lines) wall are used here in some scenes. Made flexible and pulled down like curtains. Look like corrugated iron when down. [illegible] walls lift up in some scene.

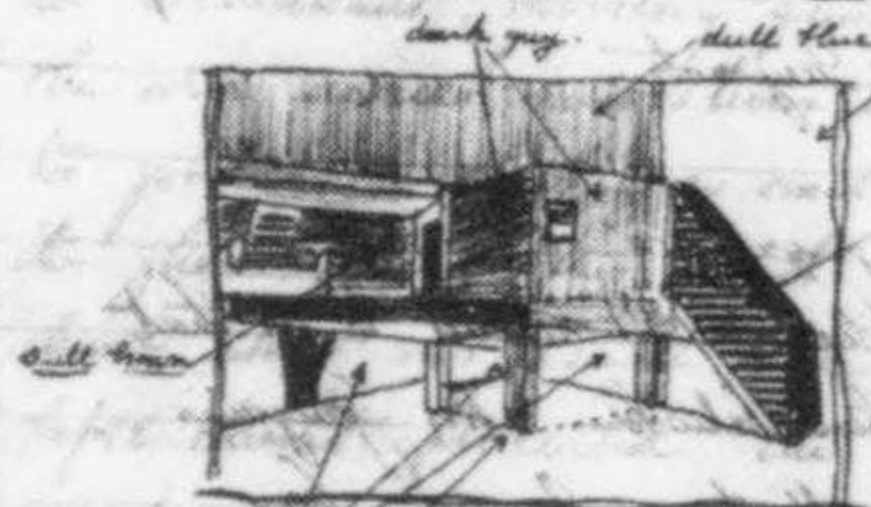
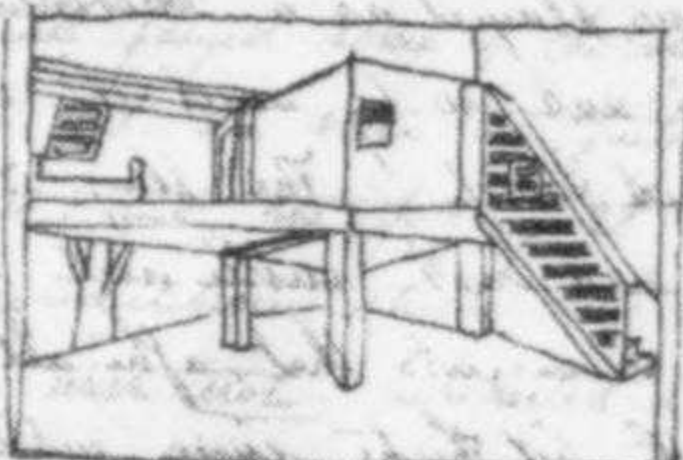
39. Dalcroze Eurythmics, developed in the early twentieth century by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, is a developmental approach to music education that stresses connections between the aural and the physical through movement.

40. Founded in 1914 by Aleksandr Tairov, the Kamerni [Chamber] Theater, though small in size, became a significant force in Moscow's avant-garde theater scene. The Constructivist artist Aleksandra Ekster, Tairov's primary collaborator, was frequently the set designer for productions there. Other artists involved with the theater included Georgii Iakulov, Natal'ia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov, Aleksandr Vesnin, Iurii Annenkov, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and Vladimir Tatlin.

Jan 8

4p late. Morning and day rather unattractive (wrote some) in effort to fit plans for visiting a monastery at Sergievo, about 70 miles from Moscow. A far room with Rog to see Alexandrov who is perhaps the second (Myaslovski the first) Russian comp of those who remain in Russia (sic). His wife is a professor of Dalcroze Eurythmics at the 1st University. She sang some of his songs - rather charming - Siabon and Poshopiff with again a Lamb Tracy, I thought. His son to be a Lt - the last movement especially but it did sound like the putting together of two ideas separated worked out. It had not the feeling of a whole. The Russian eclectic Lachyrovsky of Dalcroze - Tchoukovsky and Novosyolky who helped nearly everything.

In the evening I see Desires under the Stars at the Kamerny Theatre - Really done. Everything was splendid. No sense of the play itself. Newhofund certainly missed out. The most interesting me but I - found it not too clear this



dark grey - dull blue
 soft orange yellow
 natural brown wood pattern white
 all brown
 the present proposed treatment
 soft orange yellow above floor and up
 in wall above - soft grey in tone. Also include repetitive room
 (dotted lines) wall on one side from to some extent. While
 they have not pulled down the curtains look like completed
 room shut down. Some small walls left up in some cases.

Spread 13

thing is certain it was played as a melodrama of the eighties (nearly) and as A said the costumes savored of Tristan and Isolde! The play became then mediocre itself and not subtle and great as it perhaps it is. A regrets that, after all, it is a play to be done by the Art Theatre since subtlety is, with it, something of its keynote.

Sunday, Jan. 8 (see page 11A)

To the Morósoff [Ivan Morozov] Collection.⁴¹ It seemed to us that he had a better eye than Schukim [*sic*]. His Gauguins superb—Van Goghs excellent—Cezanne. Am making a catalogue of the collection with notes which I will append here later. Met the Director, M. Ternowitz [Ternovets] who has just finished a book on [Giorgio de] Chirico.⁴² He was most cordial and will help us to get photos etc. of the exhibits. Back late afternoon from the museum and to dinner.

Went there with the granddaughter of Tolstoi, the grandson of Longfellow to see the nephew [Mikhail Chekhov] of Tchekov [Anton Chekhov] play in "Гамлет"! [Hamlet] Tchekov is a very fine actor and played some of the scene with magnificent verve but his voice is failing him. T.B. it is rumored, and his forcing it lent a staccato quality to the production which was not pleasing. The settings were not advanced enough, i.e. one felt an inconsistent, wavering quality to the production. The [*sic*] were several innovations which I did not find too good. The ghost was omitted and Hamlet spoke the ghosts part in the second person. Bad. The dumb show was played twice, the rehearsal of it before Hamlet preceded the soliliqy scene. The worst ever, it seemed to me, was the omission of Hamlet in the King's Prayer Scene. The battle scene was over emphasized and ballet-ed too much. The opening scene with distant music, kettle drums—ghost trumpets—etc was very effective. The sets were pretty S[illegible] Jones. On the whole the performance interested, I am not, as yet, easily bored in Russian theatre, but was not good. Tchekov is immensely popular. The audience stayed for very many [cont.]

41. Morozov, a textile manufacturer, started out collecting Russian art, but like his compatriot Sergei Shchukin he became an avid collector of Western European modern art. Morozov systematically sought out exemplary works by Europe's best artists and commissioned new pictures from the painters he admired, including the Nabi artists Maurice Denis and Pierre Bonnard. Morozov's collection was also nationalized after 1917, becoming the Second Museum of New Western Painting.

42. Abbott means Boris Ternovets, who began managing the Museum(s) of New Western Painting in 1919. In 1928 Ternovets published *Giorgio de Chirico* (Milan: U. Hoepli).

thing is certain it was played as a *melodrama* of the nighties (marly) and so to speak the costumes saved of Turkish and Scotch. The play became then somehow itself and not subtle and great as it perhaps it is. I am sure that after all, it is a play to be done by the best theater ever, with it, something of its *Ray* note.

Sunday Jan. 8. [see page 110]

To the *Moscow Collection* it seemed to me that he had a better eye than I have. His *Journal* report - Van Zoghe excellent - again he was making a catalogue of the collection with notes which I will append here later. But the director, M. *Trojanov* who has just finished a book on *China*. He was most cordial and will help us to get photos etc of the exhibits. Back late afternoon from the museum and to dinner.

But then with the granddaughter of *Tolstoy*, the grandson of *Longfellow* & see the nephew of *Tchekov* play in "RAMBO" - *Tchekov* is a very fine

actor and played some of the scene with magnificent *nuance* but he was in failing him. It is *summed* and he's forcing it but a *staccato* quality to the production which was not pleasing. The *acting* was not advanced enough. i.e. one felt an *inconsistent*, *various* quality to the production. The *new* *arrivals* *innovations* which I did not find too good. The *ghost* was omitted and *Hamlet* spoke the *ghost's* part in the second person. *Bad*. The *climax* *scene* was played twice. The *rehearsal* of it before *Hamlet* *precluded* the *soliloquy* scene. The *great* *error*, it seemed to me, was the *omission* of *Hamlet* in the *King's* *Prayer* *Scene*. The *little* *scene* was *over* *emphasized* and *tellit-est* too much. The *opening* *scene* with *chord* *music*, *little* *chimes* - *ghost* *trumpets* etc was *very* *affective*. The *set* was *pretty* *Schumel* *form*. On the whole the *performance* *interesting*, I am not as yet, *exactly* *lost* in *Russian* *Theater*, but was not good. *Tchekov* is *immensely* *popular*. The *audience* *stayed* for *very* *many*

Spread 13A

recalls and one small lad in a box succeeded much to his delight in getting a special bow all for him from the artist. I suppose the ghost cut was inevitable.

Monday, Jan 9

Went to the Gos Bank for funds! It is interesting there to note the "counters" side by side with adding machines. They are very efficient however and for an European bank even dispatch matters quickly. Returned and found Peter waiting for me. A fine chap and invaluable guide. We went out with A to buy some carved wood and painted dolls. Tempting toys in Moscow.

Afternoon went to Messopow⁴³ (distributing) cinema building to see (privately) a Caucasian film "Dina."⁴⁴ Badly edited and cut but the peasant scenes were, on the whole well done. It seemed to me that it lacked the originality in "camera placing" which is usually the admirable quality of Russian films. Doubtful if such a film would go in New York although it was being considered for there. However have the promise from the director himself of seeing at a later date Gorky's "Mother"⁴⁵ which is supposed to be very fine.

Came home and in the evening went with Peter to see another film (dealing with peasant life). The plot very soapy but the photography grand. Especial scenes—Harvest (texture) Wedding in peasant village—Village Fête-day. This film again brings up in my estimation the fact of the excellence of Russian directing as far as the "angle of photography" is concerned.

Peter told me a bit of his history—rather Russian his sister killed in the 1917 Revolution—his father (a sea captain, had his ship torpedoed and then committed suicide! Peter is a very dependable and intelligent fellow. He seems to take great pride in showing me his Russia.

To bed, as always here—very late.

Much impressed with the amount of reading the people are doing here. The cinema had a reading room and book stand (conspicuous on it—Translation of Jack London) and the room was crowded [cont.]

43. Mezhrabpom-Rus (International Workers Relief Studio), in operation from 1922 until 1936, was one of the Soviet Union's most progressive film studios. It maintained a strong affiliation with Prometheus Films in Berlin, where Communist Party members supported the Russian-German collaboration. Hitler's rise to power put an end to the partnership in 1933, and in 1936 Stalin restricted Mezhrabpom-Rus's production to films for children.

44. *Dina Dza-Dzu*, directed by Iurii Zheliabuzhskii, premiered in 1926.

45. Vsevolod Pudovkin's film adaptation of Maksim Gorky's novel *Mat'* (The Mother) (1907) premiered in 1926. The filmmaker's interpretation of the story earned lavish praise from Anatolii Lunacharsky, the first Soviet Commissar of Enlightenment, who called the film "a genuine masterpiece of Russian cinematography." Sergei Eisenstein, Pudovkin's chief rival, derided the work as indulgently poetic.

with and one small lad in a top succeeded
much to his delight in getting a special bow
all for him from the artist. I suppose
the front cut was inevitable.

Monday Jan 20.

Went to the Gas Bank for funds. It is
interesting then to note the "country" side by
side with adding machines. They are very
efficient however and for an European bank
are dispatch matters quickly. Returned and
found Peter waiting for me. A fine chap
and invaluable guide. We went out with a
to buy some carved wood and painted dolls.
Templeton lives in Moscow.

Afternoon out to Mosopone (disturbance) cinema building
to see (privately) a Russian film. Really
admitted and out. But the present seems more on the
side well done. It seemed to me that it lacked
the originality in camera placing which is usually
the admirable quality of Russian films. Doubtful

if such a film would go in New York although was being
considered for there. However have the pleasure from
the director himself of seeing at a later date George
"Mother" which is supposed to be very fine.
Came home and in the evening went with Peter
to see another film. ^(dealing with peasant life) the plot very simple but the
photography grand. Special scenes - Harvest (optimum)
Wedding in peasant village - Village life-day. This
film again brings up in my estimation the fact of
the excellence of Russian directing as far as the
"angle of photography" is concerned.
Peter told me a bit of his history - rather Russian
his side - killed in the 1917 Revolution - his father (a
sea captain ~~that~~ had his ship torpedoed and then
committed suicide! Peter is a very dependable and
intelligent fellow. He seems to take great pride
in showing me his Russia.
To bed, as always here - very late.
Much impressed with the amount of reading the
people are doing here. The cinema had a reading
room and book stand (conspicuous on it - translation
of Jack London) and the room was crowded.

Spread 14

with people reading books and magazines. Peter tells me he usually reads until two A.M. always after he gets in from the kino or theatre! Where in America?

Tuesday, January 10, 1928.

Had a grand time this morning. Went around to the institute to get our pictures done by peasants and untrained artists (7). The exhibition had not been removed and there was quite a crowd about and when we started bickering for our pictures it increased. We found our man who spoke German—one of the young exhibitors, a nice chap. We, at last, succeeded in getting the ones we wanted. Barr 4 and I 4. I wouldn't have missed the fun for anything.

I got back at three for the mundane affair of bathing. One bathroom in this hotel for *all* the guests. Like France! But a very comfortable little room with a roaring Russian stove that serves the dual purpose of roasting you most agreeably and heating the water.

After that went to O'C's at the Lux for dinner. She has a Russian cook and it seemed very nice to eat away from restaurants. Fine meal including excellent caviar and tenhree kinds of wine topping off with coffee! She has been more than kind to us here and is one of the most competent and entertaining people I have ever met. She leaves for England soon much to our sorrow.

Went with A later to his room to meet two young Russians—one, a most delightful chap—a cinema critic, and talked "movies," he speaking French. Then to the Hermitage⁴⁶ to meet Peter to see a Russian film "Spatecus" [*sic*]⁴⁷ which (too late alas!) we found to be a ten year old film revived. It was unbelievably bad. Peter was quite disgusted. He walked home with us, A- retiring while Peter and I walked down to one of the municipal skating rinks. Gaily lighted with colored lights, [cont.]

46. In 1917 the Hermitage, formerly the Russian Imperial Collection, was made a state museum, along with the Winter Palace.

47. *Spartacus* (1926) was based on the historical novel by Raffaello Giovagnoli and directed by Mukhsin-Bei Ertugrul, a Turk who interned at Meyerhold's theater in 1925 and in 1926–27 worked at the Film Factory in Baku.

with people watching books and magazines. Peter
tells me he usually reads until two A.M. always
after he gets in from the house or theater. When
in America?

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Had a grand time this morning. Went around to
the institute to get our pictures down by peasants
and untrained artists. The exhibition had
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pictures it increased. We found one man who
spoke German - one of the young exhibitors, a
man Chap. He, at last, succeeded in getting the
ones we wanted. Over 4 and I + I would not
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I got back at home for the ridiculous affair of
having one bathroom in this hotel for all the
guests. Like France. But a very comfortable
little room with a roaring Russian stove that
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most agreeably and heating the water.
After that went to S.C.'s at the Lux for
dinner. She has a Russian cook and it seemed
very nice to eat away from restaurants. Fine
meal including excellent caviar and two kinds
of wine topped off with coffee. She has been more
than kind to us here and is one of the
most competent and interesting people I have
ever met. She longs for England so much
to our sorrow.

Went with G. Peter to the room to meet two
young Russians - one, a most delightful chap -
a genuine critic, and talked movies. He
speaks French. Then to the Hermitage to
meet Peter to see a Russian film "Spatsens"
which (to Peter alas!) we found to be a ten
year old film revised. It was remarkably
bad. Peter was quite disgusted. He walked
home with us, a - sitting while Peter and
I walked down to one of the municipal
skating rinks. Gaily lighted with colored lights,

Spread 14A

a band playing very well from an open-air pavillion at the end and about five or six hundred young people skating. I wondered what some people would have thought to have seen it with their newspaper ideas of the Soviet. We walked home in a light snow passed half hidden churches in winding streets their lightly gilded domes standing out against the falling white. The air is always so still here and the snow fall so gentle. Quite unlike New England. It stays always on the trees so that the woods are very lovely in the winter. I'll hate to leave Moscow. One grows easily to like it so much.

To bed, leaving orders to be awaked at 7:30! To take a nine o'clock train out to Sergievo (70 km.) to visit the monastery of St. Sergius. Troitzko-Sergievskaya Lavra⁴⁸ (founded in 1340).

Wednesday, January 11.

What a day! We (Dana—A—and myself) made the train after a hectic taxi ride with two minutes to spare! Rode for a ways on the closed platform it was so jambed in side. The types fascinating and I enjoyed watching them hugely. The Russian talks easily and I wished that I spoke the plaguey language that I might have entered in conversation with some of them.

Got to Sergievo and took Sanis to the Monastery. Most picturesque town—the monastery on a hill surrounded by a huge wall. We spent the visit looking at the architecture and icons. The Rubliev Trinity⁴⁹ is very fine. Also saw icons partly cleaned and negotiated for photos which the lord knows we may never get. The full town is especially beautiful. Left so as to make a three-six train back and calmly sat drinking tea while it left from a track way down the station yard! Then ordered a meal, Barr and Dana play chess with many improvised men and we

[Along side of page]: Kindly talkative guide. The "grapevine" houses!

48. The Troitse-Sergieva Lavra (Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius) in Sergiev Posad, a suburb of Moscow, was the most important monastery of the Russian Orthodox Church until 1920, when the postrevolutionary government closed it and declared its art collection public.

49. Andrei Rublev's *Trinity* (fifteenth century) originally belonged to the collection of the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius. It now resides at the Tretyakov Gallery.

a band playing very well from an open-air pavilion at one end and about five or six hundred young people skating. I wondered what some people would have thought to have seen it with their newspaper ideas of the Soviet. We walked home in a light snow past half hidden churches in winding streets - their brightly gilded domes standing out against the falling white. The air is always so still here and the snow fall so gentle. Quite unlike New England. It stays always on the trees so that the woods are very dark in winter. I'll hate to leave Moscow. She grows easily to like it so much.

To day leaving sides to be quaked at 9.30! To take a nine o'clock train out to Zagorsk (90 km.) to visit the monastery of St. Sergius Troitzko - Zagorskaya Lavra (founded in 1340)

Monday, January 18

That a day! We (Dana - G. and myself) made the train after a hectic taxi ride with ten minutes to spare! Rushed for a ways on the closed platform it was so jammed in side. The type fascinating and I enjoyed watching them lazily. The Russian talks surely and I wished that I spoke the language. I might have entered in conversation with some of them.

Got to Zagorsk and took Sam's to the Monastery. Most picturesque town - the monastery on a hill surrounded by a huge wall. We spent the visit looking at the architecture and icons. The Rublev Trinity is my favorite. Also saw several pretty stained and suggested for photos which the local monks were very nice to get. The felt door is especially beautiful. Left so as to make a three or four sack and calmly set drinking tea which it left from a back way down the station yard! Then ordered a meal. Poor and Dana may cheer ~~with many~~ surprised men and we

Spread 15

took a late train back. Being thus delayed I went directly from the station to the Moscow Art Theatre to see their October play "Armored Train, 14, 16 [*sic*]." ⁵⁰ Met O'C who was going with me there. Two acts the second and third hold up well and are excellently done and staged in the realistic Stanislavsky [Konstantin Stanislavski] manner. The first has little to do with the play and the last is bad from all standpoints having, since the play logically ends with the reds capturing the Train from the Whites at the end of the third act, little justification for being.

The scene on the church top was most excellent and for good melodramatic action the scene in the train when it was under siege was mighty good. The group work was, as usual, well nigh faultless and the settings out Belascoed Belasco. Came home dead tired and to bed. The theatre is quite dressy for Moscow. One thing much to the plays credit was its lack of burlesqued where the other (White) side was concerned.

Thursday, January 12.

Awoke a bit foggy after yesterday. Had an engagement to go shopping for some Russian blouses with O'C. Got two embroidered ones and a scarf and table cove—the scarf from the Caucasian shop, for mother. It is a temptation to buy too much here. For example, the childrens books—educational—from the artistic standpoint are better than I have ever seen anywhere! One feels like getting hundreds. Saw to getting M. Hams grammar this morning. Lunched early and wrote in diary. Have heard that Poland takes away Everything written in Russian on entering Poland from Russia. This *is* discouraging since it means we must send things by mail either to Paris or home. And mail is always a risk. I am a bit concerned for my notes. Also our route to Vienna is a problem. But we're not leaving before the first of February so no need to concern ourselves yet. However the getting of visas here is not too rapid work.

50. Vsevolod Ivanov based his 1927 play, *Bronepoezd 14-69* (Armored Train No. 14-69), on his novel of the same name, published in 1922.

took a late train back. Being then delayed I went directly from the station to the Moscow Art Theatre to see their October play "Forward Train, 14, 16." First S.C. who was going with me then took into the second and third which are well and are excellently done and staged in the realistic Stanislavsky manner. The first has little to do with the play and the last is just gone all straightforward history, since the play logically ends with the reds capturing the train from the whites at the end of the third act, little justification for being.

The scene on the church tops was most excellent and for good mechanical action the scene in the train when it was under siege was mighty good. The group work was, as usual, well made faultless and the settings out of doors of Redness. Can't know dead tired and so pale. The theatre is quite busy for Moscow. One thing much to the plays credit was its lack of subplots when the other (White) side was examined.

Thursday, January 10.

Wrote a bit of my offer yesterday. Had an engagement to go shopping for some Russian things with D.C. Got two shawl and a scarf and table cover - the scarf from the Caucasian shop, for mother. It is a temptation to buy too much. For example the children's books - educational - from the artistic standpoint - are better than I have ever seen anywhere! One felt that he's getting hundreds. And to getting Mr. Hanes' garments this morning. Lunched early and took a day. Have heard that Poland takes away everything written in Russian or entering Poland from Russia. This is discouraging since it means we must send things by mail with a 24 hour delay and mail is always a risk. I am a bit concerned for my notes. Also our route to Yelena is a problem. But we're not leaving before the first of February so no need to concern ourselves yet. However the getting of mail has to be not too rapid work.

Spread 15A

Friday Jan 13, 1928.

Went today to the Museum of Iconography [Museum of Icons] formerly the [Il'ia] Ostroukhov (J.S.) Collection.⁵¹ The collection, although not large (about 60 icons I should say) is of absolutely first rank and very fine. Makes one realize the importance Russia will take in art of this period when these things become better known. We are going to make a desperate attempt to get into the churches of the Kremlin and to the studio where icons are renovated—the latter should not be difficult. Made a list of those we wished photographed but had to go without photos and none exist (since the Revolution) and photographing them especially is too expensive. In the evening to moderately good kino with Peter called "The Rut". Fine shots in glass factory.

Saturday Jan 14.

In the morning to the Tzvetkoff [*sic*] Art Gallery.⁵² A hurried trip [illegible] with the exception of the "Jack of Diamonds"⁵³ groups which was a mixture of Primitism and Cezannism and very interesting. There was probably no direct connection with German group yet it was interesting to note both [Ernst Ludwig] Kirchner and Schmitt-R [Karl Schmidt-Rottluff] color with some of them. Also and early [Vasilii] Kandinsky drawing which was more sur-realist than anything I had ever seen by him. To the hotel to lunch and then with O'C. to Sofkino⁵ to meet Eisenstein. Most charming man in his early thirties. Showed about 2/3 of his his [*sic*] new film October which I found to surpass Potempkin. Is a master at "cutting." Shows what can be done in this respect and how much can be done by skillful cutting.

His "General Line" film saw only uncut shots. It is an educational film on agriculture. Was amused to hear him talk about the critics writing as to the pre-meditated cleverness when it was, as he said, entirely inspirational, much of it, at the time of the cutting!

Hurried away from the studio (security at door—passes to get in) to go with O'C and Tretchekova [Olga Tret'iakova] and husband to see Raslou [*sic*]⁵⁵ at Vactanyof [Evgenii Vakhtangov]⁵⁶ Theatre.

51. Ostroukhov, a landscape painter and collector of icons who served as a trustee of the Tretyakov Gallery between 1905 and 1913, later donated his collection to the museum.

52. Abbott seems to be referring to the Tretyakov Gallery, which grew out of the collection of Pavel Tret'iakov, a businessman who began acquiring works in the 1850s.

53. The Bubnovy Valet (Jack of Diamonds) exhibited together between 1910 and 1917. The group was founded by Mikhail Larionov, Natal'ia Goncharova, Aristarkh Lentulov, Pëtr Konchalovskii, Robert Fal'k, Il'ia Mashkov, and Aleksandr Kuprin. Works by the group were shown in Germany through the Blaue Reiter exhibiting society.

54. Sovkino (USSR State Committee for Cinematography).

55. *Razlom* (The Breakup), by Boris Lavrenov, debuted in 1927.

56. The actor and playwright Evgenii Vakhtangov founded the Vakhtangov Theater in 1920.

Friday, Jan. 13, 1926

Went today to the Museum of Geography formerly the Ostrovskov [D.S.] collection. The collection, although not large (about 60 items I should say) is of absolutely first rank and very fine. Make one realize the importance Russia will take in art of this period when these things ~~of~~ become better known. We are going to make a separate attempt to get into the churches of the Kremlin and to the studios where icons are renovated - the latter should not be difficult. Made a list of items we wished photographed but had to go without - photos and more spirit (since the Revolution) and photographing them especially is too expensive. In the evening to moderately good films with Peter called "the first" Fine shots in glass factory.

Saturday, Jan 14

In the morning to the Tsvetkovs' art gallery. He hurried here surprised with the explosion of the "Jack of Diamonds" group ~~which~~ which was a mixture of Primitivism and Byzantinism and very

interesting. There was probably no direct connection with Gemin group yet it was interesting to note both Kirchner and Schmitt-R. color with some of them. Also and early Kandinsky drawing which was more surrealistic than anything I had seen by him. To the hotel to lunch and then with O.C. to Sofka to meet Giannotti. Most charming man in his early thirties. Showed about 2/3 of his film now Jan October which I found to surpass Potemkin. As a master at "cutting" Shows what can be done in this respect and how much can be done by skillful cutting.

His general line film saw only uncut shots. It is an educational film on agriculture. Was amused to see him talk about the artistic value of the cinematograph, when it was, as he said, entirely impersonal, much of it, at the time of the cutting. Hurried away from the studio (Society at door passed to get in) to go with O.C. and Tushkova and husband to see Rasba at Vakhtangof theater.

Spread 16

The play has to do with the mutiny on the "Aurora".⁵⁷ Enjoyed it. Staging interesting and open to discussion or dispute since there were shown the most striking influence of the kino I have yet seen in theatre. May be wrong to do this.

See below for diagrams of some stage sets.

[see figure] light through back on scene/black solid screen/giving effect of a porch or window from another room.

Breakfast with Samovar./Hall with coat racks

[see figure] coil rope about port/porthole/sloping deck/sloping roof/companion glass/large circular opening/red door (sliding)

[see figure] Wallpaper/bed/45° slope! As if "shot" from above at angle.

[see figure] Bed and chair

[see figure] black/green table with map on it. Green light. Three men around it—sharp angle as if seen from above.

Scene opened us in *Кино*

Thus.

[see figure] opens up as a diaphragm opens up

57. The battleship *Aurora* had a storied revolutionary history. It was the subject of a mutinous takeover in 1905. Many of its crew participated in the February 1917 revolution that ended the monarchy, and many joined the Bolshevik Party. According to Soviet accounts, the shot that signaled the attack on the Winter Palace during the October Bolshevik Revolution was from its guns.

The play has to do with the meeting on the
curious. Enjoyed it. Slazig, interesting and
open to discussion or dispute since there was
shown the most striking influence of the kind
I have yet seen in theater. May be wrong to
do this.

See below for diagrams of some stage sets.
Light throwing back on scene. Back solid scene.



Wall with curt. racks. Buffet with raised. Giving effect of a porch or
windows from another room.



and then
large
accidental opening.

could see about part.
part hole.
slipping deck.
reliefing work.

comparison of scene

see page



Foot.
45° slope. Use of "foot" from above at
angle.

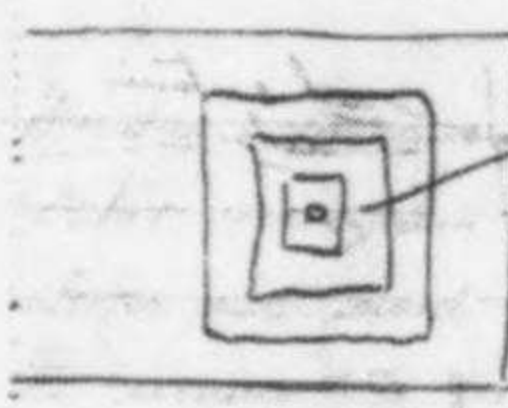


rel and chair.



Rack.
Gun table with map on it. Green light.
Three men around it - sharp angle
as if seen from a tower.
Scene opened us in 1800.

thus.



opening as a diaphanous frame
up.



Spread 16A

Sunday, January 15.

Up in time! to go to a 12 (noon) performance at Vaetangof [Vakhtangov] of Princess Turandot.⁵⁸ Fantastic staging and many points excellently adaptable for small theatricals.

Actors appeared first in Evening dress and put on their garments over their "[Abbott's omission]". Scenes change effected by curtains hung up in various parts of fixed scene. Thusly

[see figure] brightly colored weights. These let down and curtains fastened to them and then raised.

[see figure] red curtain rods.

[see figure] very effective way of doing on set

Left and went directly to afternoon (late) concert in the great Hall of the Trade Union Building⁵⁹ to hear a Prokoffieff [Prokofiev] program—4 Piano Sonata—Pieces for Violin—for voice and for small orchestra. Some very clever—none seemed of any *great* importance. Met a young Russian who was trying to dispose of his two extra tickets. Sat with him. Mining engineering in Institute. Rather keen.

Came back for Dinner at Hotel. Later to a poor kino with Peter. Laid in fisher village. (Good peasant work—that was all) Sent a cable home. Later to a bourgeoisie [*sic*] restaurant and cabaret.

Monday, January 16.

Didn't accomplish much. Tried to plough round the shops and used up some time at Vox. In the evening to the "leaderless" orchestra. Cannot entirely sympathize with the movement. The concert was, from our standards at home, very ragged and the playing lacked verve and punch—inspiration, if you will. The [cont.]

58. *Princess Turandot* (1762), a commedia dell'arte standard by Carlo Gozzi, was the basis for Giacomo Puccini's *Turandot* (1924).

59. This eighteenth-century building, formerly the Assembly of the Nobility, was reassigned to the Moscow Council of Trade Unions after the revolution. During the Soviet era, it hosted Communist Party conferences and state funerals, including those of Lenin and Stalin.

Spread 17

accompaniment to some songs was, from a purely critical standpoint, not too good. Of course a vastly interesting experiment but the "why" of it as yet, as shown by the playing in really not justified.

The audience applauded the most heartily a waltz by Glazanov [Aleksandr Glazunov] which was unbelievably banale!

Tuesday, January 17, 1928.

In the morning went around with Peter to the Museum for Art Culture⁶⁰ to exhibit. Members of the "Jack of Diamonds" group also work by Falk [Robert Fa'lk] and Sternberg [David Shterenberg], Rodchenko—Kandinsky. Also some super-graphical-theoretical stuff on complete analysis of a Cezanne portrait surface by a young enthusiast. Talked with a woman assistant who gave us some information regarding getting books on contemporary Russian art (very difficult to find here) Had to get back to meet a young architect who has worked with Eisenstein—did some excellent buildings—model farms etc. for the latter's "General Line" (agricultural film).

He brought many of his designs and we had a lively discussion, he spoke French fairly well, about his work. In the main they shy off Bauhaus and [Erich] Mendlesohn but it seems to me this work is pretty much academic. [Le] Corbusier—German etc. stuff. There is in his work undoubtedly a Lisitzky [Lissitzky] influence. Saw that in his scheme for station and hotel combined. Russia needs competent steel construction engineers more than it needs architects. Her problem is that of actual building not of designing. The designs are frequently very ingenious but they rarely put them up, the technical difficulties (for them) too great.

His use of flat unbroken surface rather good and he handled his frustration better than [cont.]

60. The Museum of Artistic Culture, a museum founded after the revolution, administered by artists, and dedicated to contemporary art, was moved from its original premises to reduced displays in the former Stroganov School. The Stroganov School had been founded as a school of applied arts in 1825 by the Baron Sergei Stroganov. After the revolution, it became first the State Free Art Workshops (Svomas), then the Higher Art and Technical Studios (VKhUTEMAS) in 1920, and finally the Higher Art and Technical Institute (VKhUTEIN) in 1926.

accomplishment to some degree was, from a purely critical standpoint, not too good. Of course a partly interesting experiment but the "why" of it as yet, is shown by the playing in really not justified. The audience applauded the most heartily a walk by Guggenheim which was unfortunately

Tuesday, January 15, 1928. In the morning went around with Peter to the museum for art exhibit. Members of the "Jack of Diamonds" group also work by Falk and Strubing, Rod Chudo - hand-drawn. Also some super-graphical - theoretical stuff on complete analysis of a human portrait surface by a young architect. Talked with a woman ~~and~~ assistant who gave us some information regarding getting books on contemporary Persian art (very difficult to find here). Had to get back to meet

a young architect who has worked with Eisenstein - did some excellent buildings - would favor it. for the latter's "General Line" (agitational film). He brought many of his designs and we had a lively discussion, he spoke French fairly well, about his work. In the evening they shy off Bauhaus and Kandinsky but it seems to me this work is pretty much academic. Persia - German etc. stuff. There is in his work undoubtedly a tendency influence from that in his scheme for station and hotel construction. Persia needs competent steel construction engineers more than it needs architects. Her problem is not that of actual building but of designing. The designs are frequently very ingenious but they rarely put them up, the technical difficulties (for them) too great. His use of flat surfaces rather good and he handled his construction better than

Spread 17A

it is handled in some of the buildings already built.

[side note] Uses [illegible] in his work!!

He was keen for using sculpture but rather as such in front of a flat undecorated wall, rather than as an integral part of the building. On the whole his work seemed to me very competent. Hope later to see his part of Eisenstein's film. Told me very vaguely (I suspect, on purpose) of a plan he had with Eisenstein on doing some sort of a novel purely architectural film.

Went with Dana and Platte to the Korsh theatre⁶¹ to see a play "The Factory of Youth"⁶² by [Abbott's omission]. Very good comedy. Excellent scene in the old experimenters laboratory where the woman is having her youth restored. Also a very fine scene—delightful farce—in a movie studio during the taking of a film. In many ways the play more approached a New York comedy with all its good (and weak) points than any play I've seen here. One never "well hardly ever" finds poor acting in Moscow theatres. I find it just doesn't exist.

Wednesday.

Looked at Riveras designs this morning. Also photos of his frescoes in Mexico. Has a strong giottesque trait and early Florentine feeling in his things. Think his work very fine. He has been asked to do some things here in the Lenin Institute. His composition geometrically worked without intruding this factor, negatively, upon the observer.

To Museum of Fine Arts⁶³

The graphic arts in all countries seem to be at a particularly low ebb just a [*sic*] present. Temporary exhibition there was very bad.

Their Egyptian things very fine including a groupe of mummy portraits and two large painted cloths. One especially fine portrait both A and I thought they dated too early in putting it 3rd B.C. instead of 2nd B.C. but there is also a [cont.]

61. Abbott here uses an abbreviation of *Moskovskii dramaticheskii teatr F.A. Korsha* (Moscow Dramatic Theater F.A. [Fedor Adamovich] Korsh).

62. *Fabrika Molodosti* (Factory of Youth), by Aleksei Tolstoi, premiered in the Moscow Dramatic Theater F.A. Korsh on December 28, 1927.

63. Renamed the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in 1934.

it is handled in some of the buildings already built. He has been for many sculptures but rather as such in front of a flat undecorated wall, rather than as an integral part of the building. On the whole his work seemed to me very competent. Hope to see his part of Eisenstein's film. Told me very vaguely (I suspect, on purpose) of a plan he had with Eisenstein on doing some sort of a novel purely architectural film. Went with Sam and Bette to the North theatre to see a play: The Factory of Youth. by ... very good comedy. Excellent scene in the old experimental laboratory when the woman is having her youth restored. Also a very fine scene - delightful scene - in a movie studio during the making of a film. In many ways the play ^{more} approached a New York comedy with all its good (and weak) points than any play I've seen here. One more will hardly ever find poor acting in

has been very good

modern theatres. I find it just doesn't exist.

Monday

Looked at Pevsner designs this morning. Also photos of his fresco in Mexico. Has a strong geometric taste and early Mountain feeling in his things. Think his work very fine. He has been asked to do some things here in the Lenin Institute. His composition geometrically worked out without introducing this factor, negatively, upon the observer.

To Museum of Fine Arts

The graphic arts in all countries seem to be at a particularly low ebb just at present. Temporary exhibition there was very bad. These Egyptian things very fine including a group of mummy portraits and two large painted cloth. One especially fine portrait both A and I thought they dated too early in putting it 3rd B.C. instead of 2nd B.C. but there is also a

Spread 18

always a tendency to "put dates back"! One of the first Terborch [Gerard ter Borch] portraits—standing woman, I've ever seen. Also capital [Jean-Baptiste-Camille] Corot portrait. The majority of paintings not very exciting.

In the evening with Tolstoia and Dana to see St. Petersburg⁶⁴ at the 2nd Moscow Art theatre.⁶⁵ One of the finest plays I've seen here. Tchekov in the role of the old minister of the Zar [*sic*]. Remarkable character work.

The gloom, the somberness of Petersburg beautifully brought out in the staging. Gauze curtains to give foggy effect in the ghostly large rooms. Slow tempo thruout yet with a finality of movement that held the attention unbroken to the end.

The wonderful scene of the old man toying with the "time bomb". The Ball Room scene.

Capital performance.

I am wondering if this perfection of Russian acting will make for lack of interest (thru comparison) in plays when I get home. Wonder?

Thursday January 19, 1928.

Busy day! Busy day!

Went with Rivera to the Moscow workshops for Arts and Crafts.⁶⁶ Vitally interesting place. Met Sternberg⁶⁷ who took us around. Met [Vladimir] Tatlin (charming person) and Falk. Work in "form study" something after the fashion of the Bauhaus. Not as well done as there but understand the difficulty of getting material with which to work.

Architectural work under Lisitsky [Lissitzky]. Of course they stand for a "mass" architecture so called where as they feel in the Bauhaus rather too much architecture for the individual. Not sure that this is true. However do get much ingenious paper architecture. Workers clubs—combination in-one work office and recreation room with sliding partitions—etc. But as have remarked many times before—Russians need the experience of handling materials most of all just [cont.]

64. Andrei Belyi based his play *Peterburg* (Petersburg), first staged in 1925 at the Moscow Art Theater with Mikhail Chekhov in the lead role, on his novel of the same name.

65. The Second Moscow Art Theater grew out of the Studio Stanislavski, an experimental, pedagogical laboratory aimed at developing and disseminating the precepts of Stanislavski's system. Mikhail Chekhov, one of Stanislavski's star pupils, served as the Second Moscow Art Theater's director.

66. Abbott is referring to VKhUTEIN (the Higher Art and Technical Institute).

67. Abbott likely means the artist David Shterenberg, who from 1918 to 1912 headed the Visual Arts Section of IZO (Fine Arts Department) of Narkompros (People's Commissariat for Enlightenment), the culture ministry. Rivera and Shterenberg had met earlier, when both were living in Paris before the outbreak of World War I.

always a tendency to "put dots back".
One of the joint Tolstoy portraits - standing
woman, I'm sure. Also capital best
portrait. The majority of paintings not very
exciting.

In the evening with Tolstoy and Anna to see
St. Petersburg at the 2nd Moscow Art theatre.
One of the joint plays we saw here. Tolstoy
in the role of the old minister of the Tsar. Remarkable
character work.

The groom, the comeliness of Petrovsky beautifully
brought out in the staging. Gaze curtains
to give foggy effect in the ghastly large
rooms. Slow tempo throughout yet with a
fluidity of movement that held the attention
unbroken to the end.

The wonderful scene of the old man trying with
the "time bomb". The Bull Brown scene.
Capital performance.

I am wondering if this perfection of Russian
acting (~~is not the best~~) will make

for lack of subject (the comparison) in plays
when I get home. Wonder?

Thursday January 19, 1925

Busy day! Busy day!

Went with Anna to the Moscow Workshops for Arts
and Crafts. Really interesting place. Not Stenberg
who took me around. But Tatten (charming person)
and Falk. Work in form study something of the
fashion of the Bauhaus. Not as well done
as there but understand the difficulty of
getting material with which to work.
Architectural work under Lisitsky. Of course they
stand for a mass architecture so called when
so they feel in the Bauhaus rather too much
architecture for the individual. Not sure that
this time however do get much ingenious
paper architecture. Make chips - combinations
in one work office and recreation room with
sliding partitions - etc. But as have remained
many times before - Russians need the
experience of handling materials most of all just

Spread 18A

now.

Later went to Falks house and studio. Possibly leading painter now living in Russia. Cubistic period. Cezanne-dipped-in-dark-varnish! period (very good!) Later more color. His work very competent and well thought out.

Returned to Bristol and met O'C who had decided to put off her trip to England another day because of a cold so we hurried off together to visit Rodchenko again. I looked at his photos while A put him thru a questionnaire about his early training. I left early to meet Peter at the Jewish Theatre who had gotten us tickets there for Benjamin the IIIrd. We met A who came on later at the first entre act.

[side note] The fine stylized acting here

The Jewish Theatre here is delightful. This, a comedy with music and well staged in the fantastic manner which we thoroughly enjoyed. Yiddish seems so simple to follow after listening to Russian and getting only a word, well scattered, here and there!

To bed dead tired!

Friday January 20, 1928.

Had an appointment with [Anatolii] Lunacharsky re getting into some of the churches in the Kremlin to see work on fresco restoration as am eager to do an article on the restoration of fresco and icons that is now going on here. But he had been called away on business so we visited the museum of Revolutionary Art.⁶⁸ Painting of the events of Revolution and after. See catalogue for painters and comments.

In the evening with Alfred to the 1st Moscow Art Theatre to see "The Days of the Turbins."⁶⁹ Very strong play. Clored [*sic*] at one time as too counter Revolutionary.

Story of the Whites and their defeat. No carachiture [*sic*]. Sympathetic characters. Fine acting. Might be described as example of one kind of revolutionary drama.

68. The Musei revoliutsii (Museum of the Revolution), established in 1917, is now known as the State Central Museum of Contemporary History of Russia.

69. *Dni Turbinykh* (Days of the Turbins), by Mikhail Bulgakov, premiered at the Moscow Art Theater in October 1926.

Latvian print & talks books and studies. Possibly
leading painter now living in Russia. A kinetic
period. Agamé-différentiel-dark-sansch! period
(very good!) Latvian more color. His work very
comptant and well thought out.

Returned to Bristol and met O.C. who had
decided to put off his trip to England another
day because of a cold, so we hurried off
together to visit Pochenko again. I
looked at his photos while he put him thru
a questionnaire about his early training. I
left early to meet Peter at the Jewish
theater who had gotten me tickets - then
for Benjamin the trial. He met a who
came on later at the first interval
the Jewish theater has a delightful show, a
comedy with music and well staged in the
Jewish manner which we thoroughly
enjoyed. Yiddish seems so simple to follow
after looking to Russians and getting only a

word, well scattered, here and there!
To the dead bird!

Friday January 20, 1928.

Had an appointment with Lunacharsky re getting
into some of the churches in the Kremlin to see
work on fresco restoration as an eager to do
an article on the restoration of frescoes and
sculpture that is now going on here. But he had
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In the evening with ~~the~~ ~~theater~~ ~~helped~~
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at one time as too counter Revolutionary.
Story of the Whites and their defeat. No character
sympathetic characters. Fine acting. Might be
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drama.

*Spread 19*Plot very briefly.

Family scene. Sister—her brothers are young. Older one officer in Whites. Relatives. The charming country cousin. Sister's husband! The Henchmen and the Germans withdraw support—the husband flees to Berlin. The older brother dismisses his young troupes in a stirring scene in the school house where they have taken their last stand after they have nearly killed him thinking him a coward (giving him the opportunity to make a stirring speech from the stairs. He is killed by the storming bandits—free lances—and the younger son escapes wounded.

[side note] The play has only subtle reference to the Red soldiers.

Last scene after some time. Christmas eve. The young country cousin who is much in puppy love with the sister is decorating the Christmas tree and reciting little poems to her. One of the Georgian officers of the Henchmen who has escaped returns to be promised the sister's hand *aha*. The young brother—badly shaken by it all lies on the couch—mending slowly with his crippled leg. The table is set for Christmas supper. The two relatives men come in—the husband returns [19] to be thrown out! It ends by their grouping at the window to watch the entry of the Bolsheviks as the International is played—a feeling that they are resigned to the coming new order. I found it a fine play.

Saturday. Jan. 21, 1928.

To the icon museum where we met M. Ostroukhov (J.S.) I left my Koudakov⁷⁰ book on icons for him to read and he kindly loaned me the new volume by Muratov, "Les icons russes"⁷¹ which I wanted to read very much and which is unobtainable in Moscow.

We left to meet Dana and Rivera to go to visit Sternberg to see some of his paintings which proved to be very interesting especially as to manipulation of surface. One very fine still life. Table—melon—cups etc.

Came back to the Bristol at 4 & meet Prof. Wickstead for dinner with Dana at Dom Gertsner (see page 12 op.) then Peter and I went [cont.]

70. Nikodin Kondakov and Florentine Trawinski, *Histoire de l'art byzantine considéré principalement dans les miniatures*, 2 vols. (Paris: Rouam, 1886).

71. P. P. Muratov, *Les icônes russes* (Paris: Editions de la Pleiade, 1927).

But my puppy
 family seem to be - his brother one young. He is one of the
 white. Relations. ^{the changing country} The Hudson and the German
 without support - the husband flits to Berlin. The older
 brother survives his young troops in a stormy sea in
 the school house where they have taken their last
 stand after they have nearly killed him thinking him
 a coward (giving him the opportunity to make a
 stirring speech from the stairs. He is killed by
 the storming Gauls - free lance - and the
 younger son escapes wounded.

Last scene after some time. Christmas eve. The
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 with the sister is decorating the Christmas tree and
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 officers of the Hudson who has escaped when
 he is promoted the sister's hand. The
 young brother - sadly shaken by it all lies on
 the couch - nursing slowly with his crippled leg.
 The table is set for Christmas supper. The two
 relatives - now come in - the husband returns

He says his only wife refused to let
 him go.

to be better out. It ends by their going out
 the window to watch the entry of the Bolsheviks
 in the International is played - a picture
 that they are assigned to the coming next
 year. I found it a fine play.

Saturday Jan 21 1928.
 To the icon museum when we met M. Ostrokhov (I.S.)
 I left my translator look over icons for him to read
 and he kindly loaned me the new volume by
 Muratov, "Les icons russes" which I wanted
 to read very much and which is unfortunately
 in English.

We left to visit Dana and Petrova to go to visit
 Strinsky to see some of his paintings which
 proved to be very interesting especially as to
 manipulation of surface. In my opinion
 still life. Table - mirror - cups etc.

Came back to the Bristol at 4 to meet Prof.
 Mikstov for dinner with Dana at Dom Gerts
 (see page 12 of) then Peter and I went

Spread 19A

to the Kino to see a new comedy much talked about called [Abbott's omission]. Good but not exciting. As usual had an industrial quirk. Two lads with an invention. Excellent in parts. River boat sequence—boat made out of old wagon (for paddle wheels) and later the real river boat (which gets stuck on a sand bar). Went with Peter to his house to look at some more of his English books and then to a restaurant off the "theatre square" for a bite. Returned home late.

Sunday.

Seemed to be a day of remarkable pictures. Barr and Dana rushed off at noon to see "Potemkin." I having seen it, and no sooner had they left than Peter called to say that another classic "Palace and Prison"⁷² was showing in another part of town. Leaving a note we dashed off there. A very impressive film of days of 1860's. Finely done in straightforward style without trickery. Slower tempo in many spots than usual in kino. Magnificent and convincing court scenes—the frightful gloom of the Petersburg prison well brought out.

We got back in time to hurry to see another Russian masterpiece of cinema, Gorky's "Mother." A stupendous film. Surely after Potemkin. Directed by Potoffkin [Vsevolod Pudovkin]. These two men with [Friedrich Wilhelm] Murnau in Germany lead the world as movie regisseurs. I am convinced.

In the evening to see "Antigone" at the Kamany [Kamernyi] Theatre.⁷³ Fine mass action—set excellent.

[see figure] openings so groups came up from below or literally melted into the ground. The towers turned showing soldiers stationed on platforms.

Another full day and a month gone since we [cont.]

72. *Dvorets i Krepost'* (Palace and Fortress), directed by Aleksandr Ivanovskii, premiered in 1924.

73. Tairov's version of *Antigone* debuted at the Kamerni Theater on October 1, 1927.

to the kids to see a new comedy much talked about called Good but not exciting. As usual had an industrial junk. Two kids with an invention. Excellent in parts. One boat sequence - boat made out of old wagon (for paddle shub) and later the real one boat (which gets stuck on a sand bar). Went with Pete & his house to look at some more of his English books and then to a restaurant off the "Theater square" for a late Russian from late.

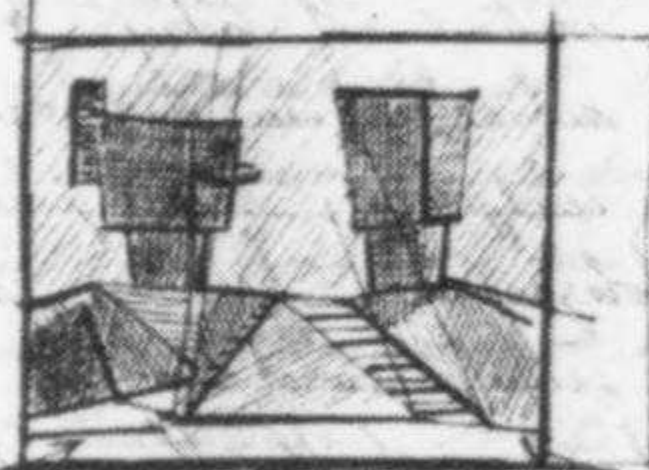
Sunday

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kind. Magnificent and convincing court scenes - the lighted glow of the Potemkin prison well brought out.

We got back in time to hurry to see another Russian masterpiece of cinema, Gorky's "mother". A stupendous film. Surely after Potemkin. Directed by Potoffkin. Three big men with Mannan in Germany lent the world as movie spectators. I am convinced.

In the evening to see "Antigone" at the Hansary Theatre. Fine mass action - not excellent.



showing as groups come up from below or literally melted into the ground. The tones turned showing soldiers stationed on platform. Another full day and a month's year since we

Spread 20

arrived in Moscow. It seems hardly possible. It has been the shortest and fullest month I have ever experienced and now we are thinking already of leaving.

Monday, January 23, 1928.

This morning to VOX to get a letter from there to the passport office that I can get my passport extended for a month, it expiring on the 25th.

Then out to Lunacharsky but found our appointment for Wednesday at one instead of today. We went to the Arts and Crafts school again and saw their other departments—sculpture, metal, plaster (Tatlin instructor) photography—printing etc. About 1200 students. Tatlin showed us his department and found some of the things very good indeed.

Ate with A and Dana at the usual restaurant and returned to write up notes and send letters. Peter called up at nine and I went home with him to help him with some English grammar. Very refreshing—a change of occupation.

He and I talked late (met a friend of his) about this, that, and the other—mostly about America and American things.

Walked home—very cold and frosty.—Will certainly regret leaving Moscow. Tomorrow the effort of passports.

Tuesday Jan. 24, 1928.

Voilà passports. What a jamb, as usual, but Peter was most efficient and we got the bothersome business over with a minimum of standing in line—not to mention profanity. In Europe one has to be patient with tape. After a “spoiled” morning we tried for tickets for “Love of Three Oranges”⁷⁴ on the 26th. Nothing except very poor seats. Returned to hotel to study Muratov, “Les Icons Russes.” Excellent book.

Went with Dana to Meyerholds to see about getting tickets for Magnanimous Cuckoo [*sic*] Великодушный рогоносец [*Velikodushnyi Rogonosets*] (The Maganimous Cuckold] but [cont.]

74. Prokofiev's opera *The Love for Three Oranges* premiered in Chicago on December 30, 1921.

around in Moscow. It seems hardly possible. It has
 the shortest and fullest mouth I have ever
 experienced and now we are thinking already
 of leaving.

Monday January 23, 1928.

this morning to VIX to get a letter from them
 to the passport office that I can get my
 passport extended for a month, it expiring on
 the 25th.

then out to Lavachinsky but found one appointment
 for Wednesday at one instead of today. We went
 to the art and crafts school again and saw
 their other departments - sculpture, metal plastic
 (Tatlin instructor) photography - printing etc.
 About 200 students. Tatlin showed us his
 department and found some of the things very
 good indeed.

Went with G. and Dana to the usual restaurant
 and returned to write up notes and several
 letters. Petya called up at nine and I went

home with him to help him with some
 English grammar. Very refreshing - a change
 of occupation.

He and I talked late (met a friend of his)
 about this, that, and the other - mostly about
 America and American things.

Walked home - very cold and foggy - will certainly
 regret leaving Moscow. ~~Today~~ Tomorrow the
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Tuesday Jan. 24, 1928.

Wrote passports that a game, as usual, but Petya was
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 with a minimum of standing in line - not to mention
 profanity. In Europe one has to be patient with tape.
 After a "spiced" morning we tried for tickets for
 "Love of Three Oranges" on the 26th. Nothing except
 my poor seats. Returned hotel to study Mautner
 "Les Deux Russes." Excellent work.

Went with Dana to Mayakovsky to see about getting tickets
 for "Mozartovna" (Александровский оперный театр) but

Spread 20A

he was not there. Back to Bristol and to more writing. In the evening to a film explaining certain reflex actions. Muscular experiments made on frogs dogs with electricity and association reflex carried out on monkeys, saliva reactions on dogs and feeding reaction on child. Ate little biscuits when metronome at certain speed. When ever metronome that speed opened mouth for food or cheered at given speed! Comparison of mentality. Child of five eating idiot of 25 eating. Results of loss of certain portion of brain—children, dogs. The film was excellent but, of course, much pity, impossible in America. The woman in childbirth etc. Many children attend these movies. A theatre where only instructive films shown.

Wednesday.

To Ostroukhov and talked with him about Grobius [Gropius], Muratovs and Koudahovs books. Kindly old man. Felt Muratovs book best

Stray notes:

Potofkin [Pudovkin] and Eisenstein are writers of “the sequence” in Kino. Murnau has it to lesser extent. Yet feel that the film sometimes “breaks” into sections. The stair episode in Potemkin the bridge episode in “October” are both tours de forces but perhaps? step out of the picture. These men show you just how flexible film is in the fine way they slice it and manipulate it. Eisenstein admitted with delightful frankness that many of his best effects came to him during “the cutting” and were not preconceived before the taking.

The flexibility of the russian use of camera. Nothing static— if of a field of grain at least with the slight movement of a light wind— the “movies” “move”.

and found much fault, rightly I suspect, with Koudakovs book.

At one went to see Lunachasky who received us most kindly and who promised to do his part to get us into the Churches of [cont.]

he was not then. Back to Bristol and to more writing.
 In the evening a film explaining certain reflex
 actions. Muscular experiments made on frogs
 dogs with electricity and association reflex
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 little *Sciurus* when metronome at certain speed
 and then even mechanism that speed opened
 mouth for food or churred at given speed!
 Comparison of mentality. Child of five eating
 idiot of 25 eating. Results of loss of certain
 portion of brain - children, dogs. The film
 was excellent but, of course, much pity,
 impossible in America. The woman in
 child birth etc. Many children attend these
 movies. A theatre where only instructor
 films shown.

Wednesday

To Ostrowski and talked with him about
 Galus, Murator and Kondakors looks.
 Kiedly del. man. Left Murator looks last

Stay notes

Tompson and Eisenstein are members of "the regimen"
 in view. *Morgan* has it to ~~the~~ *less* extent
 get feel that the film sometimes "breaks" into
 actions. The other episodes, ^{in *Blumkin*} or the *Bridge* episode in
 "October" are both *troupe* forces but perhaps? slip
 out of the picture. These men show you ^{how}
 flexible film is in the free way they slice it
 and manipulate it. Eisenstein admitted with
 delightful frankness that ^{many} of his best
 effects came to him during "the cutting" and were
 not pre-conceived before the taking.

The flexibility of the Russian use of camera
 nothing static - if of a field of grain ^{at East}
 with the slight movement of a light wind -
 the "moving" man.

and found much fault, rightly I suspect,
 with Kondakors look.

at one point to an *Lunacharsky* who received
 us most kindly and who promised to do
 his part to get us into the churches of

Spread 21

the Kremlin to see the icons there. It is, literally, probably the hardest thing in the world to do at the present time. He wrote us a note to the "Na Com Del" (Foreign office) thus begin a series of adventures. Friday we presented note: told to call on Monday at 1 on phone. Monday told to call Tuesday at 2:30 on phone. Tuesday told that unforeseen things had come up. Told to call L. Called L. (out) told call Friday (out of the question) Called another man. Process finally started again. It is truly difficult. Dana called Florensky secretary Thursday. To call again Friday and there is some hope we may get in Tuesday.

In the evening very poor kino "Inn Keepers Daughter."

Thursday:

To Fine Arts Museum. Fine Magnascos. "Monks Supper." A fine Tubough. Unfinished Chardin [Jean-Siméon Chardin] still life. Good Corot portrait. One very spikey Magnasco wood scene.

Jacopo Giovanni Palma [Jacopo il giovane Palma]: No 364 Moscow. "Christ Healing". T [illegible]—Greco— heads. Small groups at rear. Charming Morandini, Francesco. "Venus and "Mars" almost like *English* early 19th.

Bazzani, Giuseppe 1690–1759 [sic] carried on the Magnasco—Greco tradition.

Returned to the Shchukin.

Additional notes.

Marquets very good. Superb [Georges] Rouault "Baignade dans le lac." Early Laurencin portraits (2) good. Roussau all good except "Vue commune de varres.

Cezanne. Mardi Gras XXX. Les fruits XXX. L'homme avec le pipe XX Dame en blue XX.

While in the Matisse room twenty youngsters came in on tour with a teacher who explained with enthusiasm. In that room alone there were 21 Matisses!

Picasso. Cubist nature mort 6. Woman with fan. 3 Landscapes. Late negro Martique phase 1908-9, 17. La danse aux voiles 1907 very important first begins to work background and foreground together. Still-lives futurist '14-'15. 7.

the Kinkin & see the scene there. It is, literally, probably the hardest thing in the world to do at the present time. I wrote a note to the "Malcom Del" (Foreign Office) thus begin a series of adventures. Today we presented note: told to call on Monday at 1 on phone. Monday told to call Tuesday at 2:30 on phone. Tuesday told that important things had come up. Told to call L. Called L. (out) told call Friday (out of the question) called another man. Process finally started again. It is truly difficult. Nana called Hornby secretary ~~Friday~~ Thursday. To call again Friday and there is some hope we may get in Tuesday.

In the evening my poor kind "Ann Kapers daughter."

Thursday:
To Fine Arts Museum. "Works Supper"
To Fine Arts Museum. Fine Magnasco. A fine
to hope. In finish of Chaudin still life. Good
best portrait. One my nephew Magnasco wood scene.

Tacapo Geroni Palma: No 364 Moscow. Christ Hating
Tribut - Guco - Lunds. Small groups at sea.
Charming Morandini, Franceses. "Venus and Mars"
almost like English early 19th.
Bazzani, Giuseppe 1470-1759 carried on the
Magnasco - Guco tradition.
Returned to the Sachu Ken.

Additional notes.

Magnasco very good. Superb portrait Bagnacchi Sansa & the
Lady Laurence portrait - (2) good. Rousseau all good
except "me commun de mouro."
Cezanne. Mudi Jus xxx. Les Juis xxx. L'homme avec le pp. xx
Name in the xx
While in the Matera room tonight, your sister came in on
time with a teacher who explained with enthusiasm.
In that room about there were 21 matras!
Picasso. La Fiti. Naku makt. 6. woman with fan. 3
Landscape. Late negro painting phase 1700-7, 18.
La Savaun any viles 1708 very important first begin
to work background and foreground together.
Still life portrait '14-15, 7.

Spread 21 (2)

Maurice Denis 4, [Edouard] Vuillard "Interior" 1893. Puvis [Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898)] 2. figure pieces. [Eugène] Carrière 5 fig. pieces. Guerin 3 fig. Pierre Girreud flowerpiece, George Braques Le Chateau '09. Leopold Survage 2 landscp., Jean Lurçat 2, 1 fig. 1 fig. 1 lands., [André] Derain 3 still lifes. Bridge (signat-marquit.)

Landscapes: Le Chateau, Le lac, Bois 1913, Le Port, Vue de la fenêtre (still life foreground) 1912., Groupes Samedi (family group) 1911-14, l'homme au journal. Portrait jeune fille. F. Leger. Composition 1918 (oil). Renoirs of very first order. Superb Manet. Man with a pipe at café table. Other things of less import. 3 whistlers. 1 James Paterson Lands. 2. [Frank] Brangwyn. A fine Mary Cassat pastel. Mother and child. Edith Cockcroft? Whoops dearie! "Village", Thomas Austin Brawn "Man with Cow" Alfred Maurer [Alfred Henry Mauer] Café (good). "au jardin". Redon pastel—Fontain Latour [Henri Fantin-Latour] 1, Menard, Lobre [Maurice Lobre], Meunier, Cotlet, Thaulow [Fritz Thaulow].

At night to see architect Ginsberg [Moisei Ginzberg]. Very interesting man. Looked at plans photos and models. Very international Paris-German—1928 architecture

Liked his model for a compact! apartment house. Think he gets many ideas from Bauhaus but he is not a copyist. Studied in Milan, Italy.

Saturday.

With ever patient Peter to get passports having left there to get extension of our living permit. In the afternoon to Morosoff collection again.

Renoirs (not as fine as Shchukin?)

6 portraits—2 groups—1 small landscape. Very fine Joukin.

[Aristide] Maillol. Four life size bronzes—seven small ones.

Signac. Landscape and sea piece.

[Ker-Xavier] Roussel (1) Denis (1) and room of wall decoration.

Vuillard 3 interiors 1 garden scene. Bonnard 3 street scenes, 1 landscape. Guerin 3 portraits, 2 groups, 1 interior, 2 nudes. [Ignacio] Zuloaga 2, [Joaquin] Sorolla 1, La Lasque 1. Valtat, Louis. 4 Landsc. Du frenoy Paris st. scene. Redon (p) 1, Fine Degas nude (p) (1).

The Gauguins are superb in this collection.

1. Le Café d'Arles (same woman at the table Van Gogh painted) [cont.]

Musée Denis 4, Kaulland Antoni 1893. Paris 2 figures
 pieces. Cassini 5 fig. pieces. Jacquin 3 fig.
Pierre Girard Hempfen, George Bignon La Chateau '09.
Lepold Swager 2 landscape, Jean Lurgat 2, 1 fig. 1 sketch,
Orain 3 still life. Bridg (squat - maquis.)
Landscape: Le Chateau, Le lac, Bois 1913, Le Port, Vue de la
 Jerte (with top foreground) 1912, Le sans pont 1910, Port en
 Poenne. Les sables 1912. Groupes Samueli (family
 group) 1911-14, L'homme au journal. Portrait jeune
 fille. 7. Loge Composition 1918 (oil) on fine canvas,
Remois of my first order. Supet Manet. Man with
 a pipe at cafe table. Other things of less import. 3
 sketches, 1 James Robinson Lund. 2 Bernays. a fine
May Cassat portrait. Mollie and child. Edith Cockcroft
 ? abrupt charis! isillayi, Thomas Austin Brown
"Man with cow". Alfred Mann. Capri (good). in garden.
Ridon portrait - Fontaine Labori 1, Maurice Loba, Mummier,
Cottet, Trambor.
 at night to see architect Guindrey. Very interesting
 man. Looked at plans Flot and model.
Key international Paris - German - 1928 architecture

Liked his model for a compact apartment house.
 think he gets many ideas from Bauhaus but he
 is not a copyist. Studied in Milan, Italy.

Sunday

With our patient Peter to get passports having
 left them to get extension of our living permit.

In the afternoon to the Woozoff collection again.

Remois (not as fine as Stebelin 3).

6 portraits - 2 groups - 1 small landscape. Key
fine portrait

Maillet. Some life size Portugis - some small ones.

Signac. Landscape and sea piece.

Roussel (1) Denis (1) and room of wall
decorations.

Kaulland 3 betwixt 1 figure scene. Bonnard 3 street
scenes, 1 landscape. Guerin 3 portraits, 2 groups, 1

interior, 2 males. Zuborga 2, Sorolla 1, Le Lesque 1.

Paltet, Louis + Lund. Bernays Paris et scene.

Ridon (6) 1, Fine Dezys scene (P) (1)

The Gauguin are superb in this collection.

1. Le Cafe d'Arles (same woman at table Van Gogh painted)

Spread 22

2. Les paons, 3. Pastorales Tahitiennes 4 Le Conversation, 5. Le Bouquet, 6. La femme au fruit 7. Le gros actor, 8. La vie champitre a Tahiti 9. Trois femmes au fond jaune, 10. Le grand Budhah, 11. Les oiseaux des îles (still life)

Sisley 5 landscapes, Monet 5 landscapes. Pissarro 3 fine landsc.

Bonnard. Sein à Vernou (very fine)

Cezanne. Grand!!!

1. Les Sapins, 2. Les fleurs, 3. Etude des Baigneurs!! 4. Le paysage blue. 5. Paysage (house beyond lake). 6. S. Victoire (very fine) 7. Les bords de la Marne, 8. Le Fumier.

9-10. Fruit (very fine) 11. Mme. Cezanne. 12. Le port, 13. S. Victoire. 14. Jas de Bouffan. 15. Jeune fille au piano!! 16. Interieur! 17. Self Port. 18. Paysage à Pontoise. Noble collection.

Van Gogh.

1. Café de nuit (in a class by itself!!) 2. Après le pluie. 3. Les chaumieres. 4. Les viques rouges d'Arles. 5. La mer. 6. La ronde des prisonniers.

Leger. 1 oil 1 drawing. Rene Parejce 1, [Ossip] Zadkine—Head!! Kissling Head! [Amédée] Ozenfrant 1. [André] Lhote Lhote 2 landscapes.

Vlamincks 1. La riviere 2. Vue de la Seine. 3. Bateaux sur la seine. 4. Country street.

Dupuis 1. River scene.

Evening stayed in to write.

Sunday: Went to market with A- and Peter and pawed round much junk. Got an icon tryptych and a small stamped brass one. Great mob of people. The area where they were selling [illegible] that of Bate and the Parisian merrygo-rounds!

At five went to Tischler [Aleksandr Tyshler]. Very agreeable young artist. Found his work surprisingly frank and imaginative. Liked especially his pen style and didn't care so much for last things. "The basket complex",— wonder why. Stayed till nine and returned to write notes and letters.

Monday.

Went to book store [illegible] books on Russian. Selected 36 in all—most of which I think he'll [cont.]

2. Les paons, 3. Pastels Tahitiens & la Couronne,
 5. Le Biquet, 6. La femme au fruit, 7. Le gros arbre,
 8. La vie champêtre à Tahiti, 9. Trois femmes au font
 jaune, 10. Le grand Puelkui, 11. Les oiseaux des
 îles. (still life)

Salay 5 Landscapes, Morat 5 Landscapes, Pisarro
 3 fine Landsc.

Bonnard. Sein à Vernon (very fine)

Cezanne. Grand!!!

1. Les Sapins, 2. Les fleurs, 3. Étude des Baigneurs!!
 4. Le paysage bleu, 5. Paysage (homme beyond lake)
 6. S. Kactovin (very fine), 7. Les bords de la Merne, 8. La femme.
 9-10. Fruit (very fine), 11. Mon Cagnone, 12. Le pont, 13. S. Victoire.
 14. par de Bouffon, 15. femme folle au fruit!! Interieur!
 16. Le Self Port, 17. Paysage à Pontrose. Whole collection
Van Gogh

1. Café de nuit (in a class by itself!!) & après la
 pluie, 3. Les chausseries, 4. Les viges rouges d'Alsace.
 5. Le mur, 6. La soie des pinsons.

Suzanne 101. Cherbourg. Rene Passet 4. Zadkin. Head!!

Kniskern Head! Griffon 1. Chate 2 Landscapes

Hominika. 1. La rivière, 2. Par de la sein, 3. Baigneurs
 sur la sein, 4. Country street.

Dupuis 1. Thin sein.

Erasmus stayed in to write.

Sunday: Went to market with a - and Peter and
 found some much junk. Got an icon try to
 and a small stamped brass one. Great lots of
 people. The area when they were selling vaccination
 shot of Bate and the Parisian surroundings!

At first went to Tschler. Very agreeable young
 artist. Found his work surprisingly fresh and
 imaginative. Liked especially his pen style
 and didn't care so much for his things.
 The "bucket complex" - wonder why. Stayed
 till nine and returned to write notes and
 letters.

Monday

Went to look over Gathmann's books on Museum.
 Selected 16 in all - most of which I think I'll

Spread 22 (2)

find reasonably important to have.

[side note]: Also got tickets for [Roland] Hayes concert.

Took some time as had to look thru a mess of material. Met Alfred and lunched late. Then to Peter's house to tea and met his sister and their charming children. The little girl aged six and the little boy, four, each presented me with one of their drawings and inscribed them, the latter with great effort. I enjoyed it all hugely. He (Peter) and I then went to see "Poison" by L. Good photography but plot poor. Preceding it was an excellent comedy on the trials of questionnaires Well done.

Home late.

Tuesday.

Up late and to bank, the necessary evil. Back to room to write and read. Rosinsky called and we discussed theatre. Bought a drawing from Diego Rivera. remarkably keen fellow and has analyzed the situation in art here sympathetically and to the point. R stayed until it was time to go to the Hayes concert. Hayes had a cold and was not in good form but the packed hall applauded and applauded. He has tremendous magnetism. Met him afterwards and found him charming.

Wednesday February 1, 1928.

T called and took us to the head office of the Moscow "Blue Blouse". This work "playing" of new political—advertisement etc. Simple costumes, play in clubs. Have some of the best people writing for them. Made arrangements to see them the following night at the Club for tram way and autobus workers.

In the evening to Meyerholds to see the October play "Window on the Village"⁷⁵ and found it decidedly agreeable. All peasant stuff and much music. Really scenes from peasant life. Combined kino with theatre. Has been much criticized here and is not a success in Moscow. Little applause at end. While waiting before the performance Hayes came in (one meets [cont.]

75. Meyerhold first staged Rodion Akul'shin's play *Okno v Derevniu* (Window on the Village) in 1927.

21 Also got tickets for Hayes concert.
Found reasonably important to have. Took some time
as had to look thru a mass of material. Went
off and lunched late. Then to Peter's house
to see and meet his sister and their charming
children. The little girl aged six and the little
boy, four, ^{very} presented me with one of their
drawings and inscribed them, the latter with
great effort. I enjoyed it all hugely. He (Peter)
and I then went to see "Pierrot" by L. Good
photography but not good. Preceding it was an
excellent comedy on the trials of questionnaires.
Went down.
Home late.

Friday

Up late and to bank, the necessary evil. Back
to room to write and read. Prosky called and
we discussed theater. Bought a drawing from
Diego Rivera. Remarkably keen fellow and has
analyzed the situation in art here significantly.
Said to the point. He stayed until it was time

22 to go to the Hayes concert. Hayes had a cold
and was not in good form but the packed hall
appreciated and applauded. He has tremendous
magnetism. That his aptness and found him
charming.

Wednesday February 15, 1928.

I called and took me to the head office of the
Moscow "Other Shows" their work "playing" of such
political - abstractism etc. Simple costumes,
play in clubs. Had some of the best people
waiting for them. Made arrangements to see them
the following night at the Club for ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{the}
way and auto bus workers.

In the evening to Mayakovsky to see the octet
play "Mourning on the Village" and found it
decidedly agreeable. All peasant stuff and
much music. Really comes from peasant life.
Combined Paris with the theater. Has been much
criticized here and is not a success in Moscow.
Little applause at club. While waiting before
the performance Hayes came in (one note)

Spread 23

everyone in Moscow) with [Abbott's omission] and we had a long chat. Hope to lunch with him later. Most intelligent person. In spite of much criticism Meyerhold is pretty much a genius at direction. Where has time gone—it is already February. Its hard to believe we arrived the night after Christmas—it seems years ago. We [*sic*] done so much since then.

Thursday, Feb. 2, 1928.

Up and tried to get Miller [Victor Midler] at the Trechikov [Tretyakov] by phone. Went to Meyerholds for tickets for next Tuesday and then to Eisenstein as I had an appointment with him. He's still finishing his "October." It will be a masterpiece but he looked nearly dead. Delightful and humorous young man. I asked him if he was going to go on a vacation after he finished it to which he replied that he thot probably he was going to die. The purpose of the visit was to get stills from his October to use in an article on Кино here.

Came back and Peter told me story of his school during 1920. He then 14. Getting bad food. He elected delegate to find out why. Exposed the head as a thief and finally had him jailed. The remarkable seriousness and initiative of the young Russian of those weary times. He nearly died of hunger during the famine. This evening to the club to see the Blue Blouses. Felt them somewhat overrated. Their parody of Carmen was quite delightful and some of their ballet-like acrobatics were interesting. How far superior it was to our vaudeville, however, that is why one tends to be too critical of it.

Friday, February 3.

Peter came early and invited me out Пашино [Pashino] to visit, he said his uncle, but it turned out to be really his brother-in-law who lives in that tiney village. We took a tram to the Baltejsky station and then boarded a "local" train crowded with good natured (and sleepy!) peasants re- [cont.]

anyone in Moscow) with and we had a long chat. Hope to lunch with him later. Most intelligent person. In spite of much criticism Mayakovsky is pretty much a genius at direction. When two time zone - it is already February. He had to when we arrived the ~~Monday~~ night after Christmas - it seems years ago. as shown so much since then.

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 1928.

My aim was to get Miller at the Teatrol by phone. Went to Mayakovsky for tickets for next Tuesday and then to Eranstein as I had an appointment with him. His still finishing his "October". It will be a masterpiece but he looked really dead. Delightful and humorous young man. I asked him if he was going to go on a vacation after he finished it & which he replied that he that probably he was going to do. The purpose of the visit was to get "atlas" from his October to use in an article on K.W.H. & Co.

Anna Luck and Peter told me story of his school during 1920. He then 14. Getting bad food. He started delegate to find out why. Exposed the head as a thief and finally had them jailed. The remarkable seriousness and imitation of the young Russians of their wrong times. He nearly died of hunger during the famine. This evening I had a chat to see the Blue Blouses. Told them somewhat associated. Their parody of Carmen was quite delightful and some of their Ballet-like acrobatics were interesting. How fun superior it was to our vaudeville, however, that is why one tends to be too critical of it.

Friday, February 3.

Peter came early and invited me out to SAUNHO. I went, he said he much, but it turned out to be really his mother-in-law who lives in that tiny village. We took a train to the Baltijskij station and then loaded a "local" train crowded with good natured (and sleepy!) peasants. We

Spread 23 (2)

turning from market. Don't know how many milk cows we crawled over! Spent the day eating! and skiing and our host insisted we stay the night which after a hearty meal and much good wine I heartily agreed to!!

Saturday.

The morning dawned very cold and the hour frost on the trees was wonderful. I'll not soon forget the picture the frosty little settlement thawing out in the red early morning sun with every window pane opaque and each chimney smoking furiously. It was great! After breakfast Peter and I went for a tramp to a neighboring settlement and in the late forenoon took the train back to Moscow. A great outing.

At one we went to see Midler and found him very charming. There are many icons hidden away at the Trechakoff [Tretyakov] gallery which he someday promises "to dig out" for us.

We then to see [Igor] Grabar⁷⁶ again to talk with him about icons and returned late for lunch. Grabar wishes to show us his own painting and we made a tentative date for Thursday to see it.

Sunday: Stayed in and wrote letters. Alfred under the weather with a bad stomach. Had a doctor who assured us nothing serious. Hope he feels well again soon as Moscow not too easy a place in which to be ill.

Monday.

Went with Peter to shop for fruits and things for the patients, Dana, also having "crawled in" and feeling rather miserable. Also to book stores on never ending hunt for book but found no art books of interest. Peter and I sent Prof. Hams small library to him and I am hoping that he receives it OK. In the evening [cont.]

76. Grabar edited and contributed to an important early, multivolume history of Russian art and architecture: *Istoriia russkogo iskusstva* (Moscow: Knebel, 1910-15).

turning from market. Don't know how many milk cans or crabs we! spent the day eating! and skiing, and our host insisted we stay the night which after a hearty meal and much good wine I readily agreed to!!

Saturday

The morning dawned very cold and the hour frost on the trees was wonderful. I'll not soon forget the frosty little settlement towering out in the red early morning sun with every fire window pane opaque and each chimney smoking furiously. It was great! After breakfast Peter and I went for a tramp to a neighboring settlement and in the late forenoon took the train back to Moscow.

A great evening

Got one or more to see Miller and found him very charming. There are many views hidden away in the Trechakoff gallery which he would very willingly show for us.

We then to see Zubov again to talk with him about views and returned to the first luncheon. Zubov wishes to show us his own painting and we made a tentative date for Thursday to see it.

Sunday: Stayed in and wrote letters.

Went out under the weather with a bad stomach. Had a doctor who found us nothing serious. Hope he gets well again soon as Moscow not too early a place in which to be ill.

Monday

Went with Peter to shop for fruits and things for the patients, Lina, also having "cramped in" and feeling rather miserable. Was to look stores on ~~own~~ seeking hunt for books but found no set books of interest. Peter and I went Prof. Hanes' small library to Lina and I am hoping that he receives it. In the evening

Spread 24

to a tiny кино on the outskirts. The crowd mighty interesting. The machine broke down in the middle of the performance and what a time. Great fun. Everyone clamoring for money back—everyone arguing—gesticulating. A true comedy. We left and to home and to bed.

Forgot to mention had dinner with a friend of Peter's who is last year engineering student here. Seems to feel that the task is well nigh colossal in getting Russia to be a manf. country. No capital as yet. Necessity of knowing American methods. English language. Course six years. Difficulty of practical experience. But always faith in a bright future. Keeps them going.

Tuesday Feb. 7, 1928.

Alfred still in bed. This morning Mary Reed gave in. Have quite a "ward" here now. Very glad to have someone like Peter to go about with as it keeps the spirits up. He and I went "shopping" this morning to get him some things he needs badly. "Poverty no crime" and I enjoyed it hugely. It is so little effort and so much fun "doing" for grateful people.—Well on another track—To tea at his house then Peter to restaurant where we saw some very good dancing and he and I talked for two hours politics. His views very friendly to the party, naturally, and very intelligent and interesting. The party loyalty here is extraordinary viewed from the standpoint of America.

Home late and writing in diary before retiring. Cancelled our engagement with Borov, going later when Alfred is more able.

Another item. Went to St. Basils. Extraordinary interior. Some good XVI Moscow sch. icons. Also into Historical Museum again to examine icons there. The square [cont.]

to a tiny ~~AMP~~ on the outside - the crowd might be interesting. The machine broke down in the middle of the performance and what a time. Just fun. Everyone clamoring for money back - anyone arguing - got out of hand. A true comedy. We left and to home and to bed.

Forgot to mention had dinner with a friend of Peter's who is last year engineering student here. Seems to feel that the task is still very colossal in getting Russian to be a mass country. No capital as yet. Necessity of knowing American methods. English language course six years. Difficult of practical experience. But always faith in a bright future. Keeps them going.

Tuesday, Oct 9, 1928.

Left still in bed. This morning May Red gave us have quite a "scare" here now. Very glad to hear some one like Peter to go

about with as it keeps the spirits up. He and I went shopping this morning to get some things he needs badly. Particularly no more. and I enjoyed it hugely. It is so little effort and so much fun doing for grateful people. - with one another truck.

To tea at his house then. Peter to restaurant where we saw some very good dancing and he and I talked for two hours politics. His views very friendly to the party, naturally, and very intelligent and interesting. The party loyalty here is so the ordinary raised from the standpoint of America.

Home late and writing in diary before retiring. Canceled our engagement with Boris, going. Peter when helped is more able.

~~Protestant~~ wrote letter. Went into St. Basil. Extraordinary interior. Some good ~~old~~ Moscow sch. icons. Went into Historical Museum again to examine icons there. The square

Spread 24 (2)

was remarkable this morning. "Twenty below" clear and sharp with a bright sun. Frost on all the trees and the domes and crosses of the Kremlin looked like the powdered decorations on Christmas trees. Its the most impressive square I know of anywhere.

Wednesday Feb. 8, 1928.

Alfred felt like getting up—hes on the mend but thot it wiser to stay in bed today anyway.

Called up Grabar and post-poned our conference with him until later.

Went to Trechikofs [Tret'iakov's] to dinner at five. Had a long argument with him on the idea of "selection" in purely functional architecture. I maintained an aesthetic theory—he argued that there was no such thing as "selection" in a purely functional architecture. His curious ideas for a man his aged—hang over from Futurism—of razing Moscow—to build the modern city on it. Excellent evening and enjoyed it hugely.

Thursday: February 9, 1928.

Alfred up and about. Sent a cable home and went to lunch at Peter's home. Returned to find Dana quite ill again and unable to consider Kremlin visit of tomorrow. Too bad. In the evening wrote and looked up main points of interest (frescos: icons) to be found in the Kremlin. Will probably leave Moscow Thursday February 16 for Leningrad. That will make our stay here 53 days. The most remarkable of all my European visits. Tomorrow at ten, the Kremlin—at last after effort. I look forward to the visit with much interest—the most important, the frescos [*sic*] and churches from our point of view.

Friday, February 10, 1928.

Dana still under the weather but Alfred and I went [cont.]

was remarkable this morning. "Variety Above"
 clear and sharp with a bright sun. Frost
 on all the trees and the domes and spires
 of the Kremlin looked like the powdered
 decorations on Christmas trees. It's the most
 impressive square I know of anywhere.

Wednesday Feb. 8, 1925.

Waked felt like getting up - his on the mind but
 that it was to stay in bed today anyway.
 Called up Jack and post-poured our conference with
 him about the.

Went to Vasiliyevskaya to dinner at five. Had a long
 argument with him on the idea of "selection"
 in purely functional architecture. I maintained
 an aesthetic study entered, - he argued that
 there was no such thing as "selection" in a
 purely functional architecture. His curious
 ideas for a man his age - long over from
 Leningrad - of razing Moscow - & build
 the modern city on it. Excellent evening

and enjoyed it highly.

Thursday: February 9, 1925.

Waked up and about. Sat a while longer and
 went to lunch at Peter's home. Returned &
 had some quiet all again and finally I
 consider a train visit of tomorrow. Too late
 in the evening wrote and looked up main
 points of interest (fascos: icons) to be found
 in the Kremlin. Will probably leave Moscow
 Thursday February 10 for Leningrad. That will
 make our stay here 53 days. The most
 remarkable of all my Leningrad visits. Tomorrow
 at ten, the Kremlin - at last after effort. I
 look forward to the visit with much interest -
 the most important, the fascos and churches from
 our point of view.

Friday February 10, 1925.

Waked still under the weather but about and I went

Spread 25

at ten with a man from the foreign office (who called at the Bristol for us) to the Troitzsky Gate [Troitskaya Tower] where passes were given us and we entered the Kremlin. The trip was not up to expectations. Saw the museum of armour and visited the Blagoveshchensky Sobor (Annunciation) [Blagoveshchenskii Sobor (Cathedral of the Annunciation)] (Rubliev—Theophou G.) the Archangelsky Cathedral [Arkhangel'skii Sobor (Cathedral of the Archangel)], and the Uspensky Sobor [Uspenskii Sobor (Cathedral of the Assumption)]. The restoration in the latter left one a bit doubtful of the effect when completed. A's remark on that manner of restoration I thot pertinent as usual. There, of course the Aurora and the bell—Voilà—fini and out. We made an appointment with our guard, however, to see the icons in the Historical museum. We regretted very much not being able to get into the church of "Our Redeemer in the Wood".

Saturday 10.

Not much of interest today. Necessary work! To the Bank; started packing books at went at six to Wicksteds [Wicksteed] to have dinner with him in a Caucasian restaurant near the bridge Baltschug's

Talk ran to negro characteristics in S. Africa and America (of all things) types of new pupil in Russian schools. Wicksted an amusing old satyr but not very deep. Afterward met Peter and did a promenade with much talk. To bed late.

Sunday 11.

Went in the morning to the Phur-Phor [*sic*] Museum⁷⁷ formerly one of the houses of the Morosov and saw a fine display of pottery about which I know nil nor am I much interested. (Simon Ushakov Museum) We then tried to get into the Church of our Lady of Georgia but it was closed. Then to Basil which was a fine interior and some excellent Moscow school icons and later to the historical museum taking a turn about it.

The Dom Boyar we found very worthwhile. The house arranged in the style of the dwellings of the wealthy bojars of ancient Moscow

Monday 12. Feb

This seemed a day of defeat! We found Grabar [cont.]

77. Barr's diary recorded that he and Abbott visited a "Porcelain Museum" that was "formerly one of the Morosov Palaces." "Phur-Phor" is an incorrect transliteration of *farfor*, the Russian word for "porcelain." February 11, 1928, entry in Barr's Russian diary, published in *October* 7 (Winter 1978), p. 45.

Spread 25(2)

unable to see us and when we went to see Medler at the Trechyakov he told us it was impossible to see the icons in storage there. Eisenstein also in the morning had proved not available. We spent some time in the library of the Trechykov [Tretyakov] and then returned to the hotel. Previous to going to the gallery Alfred, Peter and I had our photos taken by one of the numerous photographers that frequent on pleasant days the boulevards [see page 117]. After Alfred had one taken of the back drop above which was a fine Rousseauian picture.

In the evening to the Proletcult. to see "The Way of the Road." Three scenes stood out above the others although A and I both thought the direction good thruout (Eisenstein heartily disagreed to that the following day!)

1. A very ribald scene in a room with an extraordinary good character actress portraying a fat peasant wife

2. A cheap cabaret scene with a row of old toppers down stage very drunk at table while back stage on a stage went on a pathetically real cheap cabaret went on. It was well done. Ending of scene. Changing lights—blaring jazz—rotating tables—like a dream—here again influence of kino. Good staging.

3. Scene in gym of workers club. Meyerhold influence.

Tuesday

Very heavy day in Historical Museum. Dept. icons. Not open to public. Superb show—quantities.

unable to see us and when we went to see Muller at the Tschyakov he told us it was impossible to see the scene in charge there. Excursion also in the morning had proved not feasible. We spent some time in the library of the Tschyakov and then returned to hotel. Previous to going to the gallery Alfred, Peter and I had seen photos taken by one of the numerous photographers that frequent old peasant days tea tables. After Alfred had seen taken of the Tschyakov above which was a fine Roumanian picture. In the evening to the Prokalt. It is an ^{the way of the} ~~small~~ ^{road}. When news stood out above the scene although A and I both thought the direction good throughout. Excursion tentatively arranged for that the following day!!

1. A very small scene in a room with an extraordinary good character actors portraying a fat peasant with 2. A cheap cabinet scene with a row of old topics ~~at~~ down stage very drunk at tables while back stage on a stage went on a pathetically

and that about out on. It was well done. Ending of scene. Changing lights - Hairy jigg - waiting tables - like a show - true again impression of scene - good staging.

3. scene in form of scenes about. Meyerhold influence.

Tuesday.

Very busy day in Historical Museum. Light scene. Not open to public. Sapsuk show - quantities.

A matter of lifedeath

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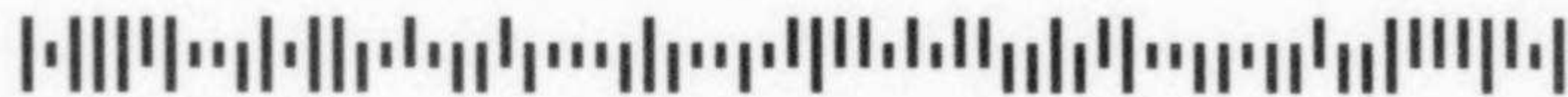
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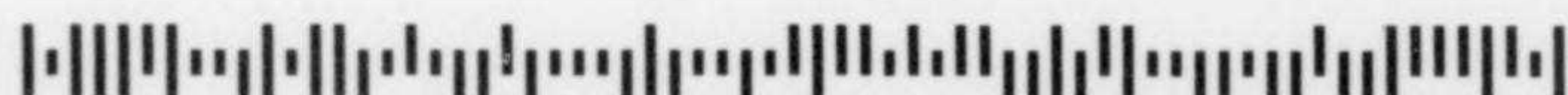
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