# THE VISUAL LANGUAGE OF SOVIET ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINES IN THE 1930S: *RABOTNITSA, KRESTIANKA,* AND *USSR IN CONSTRUCTION*

by

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## Abstract

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by

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The Soviet mass media's essential role in the mobilization of the masses for the construction of the new Socialist world during the 1920s and 1930s is well known. The regime needed to develop a universal means of communication that could easily reach its poorly literate population spread across an enormous geographic area. The Soviet printed press played a crucial role in shaping of the cultural and political discourse of the nation, and, as such, has attracted serious scholarly scrutiny. Yet, little attention has been paid to the actual distribution and consumption of art during Stalin's regime, and, so far, no study has explicitly focused on the printed media as an agent delivering art to the masses.

My study deals with an expensive, luxuriously printed monthly *USSR in Construction*, which was distributed to the Soviet elite and to readers abroad, and inexpensive mass periodicals, such as the illustrated magazines for women, *Rabotnitsa* (Female worker) and *Krestianka* (Female peasant), which were more accessible to ordinary individuals. Widely distributed, these two magazines featured a great diversity of visual information and provided representative examples of the media and methods used to present and promote visual language and cultural canons throughout the Soviet Union.

This dissertation explores the nature of the cultural information that related to the visual art, the use of graphic/handmade and photographic illustrations in the magazines'

layout, and studies photomontage as a major design method of the 1930s. The nameless designers and highly established artists eagerly contributed to both ends of Soviet design: high — represented by *USSR in Construction*, and low — appearing in the women's magazines. This dissertation aims to show that Soviet visual language was formed as a result of the dynamic exchange between them and traces the nature of this process. Overall, the study of Soviet magazines provides an important insight into the formation of the Soviet mentality as they reflect the changes in socio-political as well as cultural spheres and reveal elements of the discourse's communication with the population.

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**List of Illustrations**

**List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

| | |
|---|---|
| AKhR | *Assotsiatsiia khudozhnikov Revolutsii* [Association of Artists of the Revolution] |
| AKhRR | *Assotsiatsiia khudozhnikov revolutsionnoi Rossii* [Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia] |
| GARF | *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* [The State Archive of the Russian Federation] |
| GIZH | *Gosudarstvennyi institut zhurnalistiki* [The State institute of journalism] |
| Glavlit | *Glavnoe upravlenie po okhrane gosudarstvennykh tain v pechati* [General Directorate for the Protection of State Secrets in the Press] |
| INKhUK | *Institut khudozhestvennoi kul'tury* [Institute of Artistic Culture] |
| IZORAM | *Izo rabochei molodezhi* [Art of the working youth] |
| LEF | *Levyi front iskusstva* [Left Front of the Arts] |
| Narkompros | *Narodnyi kommissariat prosveshcheniia* [People's Commissariat of Enlightenment] |
| NEP | *Novaia ekonomicheskaia politika* [New Economic Policy] |
| OGIZ | *Obedinenie gosudarstvennykh knizhno-zhurnal'nykh izdatel'stv* [Association of State Book and Magazine Publishing Houses] |
| OSOAVIAKHIM | *Soiuz obshchestv sodeistviia oborone i aviacionno-khimicheskomu stroitel'stvu SSSR* [Union of Societies of Assistance to Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR] |
| OST | *Obshchestvo stankovistov* [Stander's Society] |
| Proletkult | *Proletarskaia kul'tura* [Proletarian Culture] |
| RGALI | *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstvo* [Russian State Archive of Literature and Art] |
| RGASPI | *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arhiv social'no-politicheskoi istorii* [Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History] |
| RKKA | *Raboche-krest'ianskaia Krasnaia Armiia* [Workers' and Peasants' Red Army] |
| ROPF | *Revoliutsionnoe obshchestvo proletarskikh fotografov* [Revolutionary Society of Proletarian Photographers] |
| ROSTA | *Rossiiskoe telegrafnoe agenstvo* [Russian State Telegraph Agency] |
| SNK, or Sovnarkom | *Soviet narodnykh kommissarov* [The Council of People's Commissars] |
| SSSR | *Soiuz sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublik* [Union of Soviet Socialist Republics] |
| TsMRKA | *Tsentralnyi muzei Krasnoi Armii* [Central Museum of the Red Army] |
| VKhUTEMAS | *Vysshie khudozhestvenno tekhnicheskie masterskie* [Higher Artistic-Technical Workshops] |

**Notes on Transliteration and Style**

In this dissertation, I used the Library of Congress system of transliteration for Russian names and titles, except when a word has an established spelling in English, such as Konstantin Yuon (not Iuon), El Lissitzky (not Lissitskii), or Bolshevik (not Bol'shevik).

Titles of artworks, books, periodicals, and exhibitions are italicized; titles of photographic spreads, photo-essays, and magazines' articles are in quotation marks while names of groups, societies, and institutions are not.

The first name of some individuals mentioned in the text was not always available. A question mark in brackets indicates such cases. When only an initial of the first name is known it is provided.

## Introduction

In the past two decades scholars of the Soviet period increasingly turned their attention to the period of the 1930s. Historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and many other disciplines delved into researching Soviet literature, theater, cinema, and mass culture. Considering the mass-oriented nature of Soviet art, little attention has been paid to the actual distribution and consumption of art during Stalin's regime, and, so far, no study explicitly focuses on the printed media as an agent delivering art to the masses. Given the situation in which a substantial number of images produced by Soviet artists was consumed by the masses from the pages of the illustrated periodicals, such disregard limits our understanding of the period.[1] Accordingly, the critical and analytical investigation of the periodical press as an artistic, cultural, and socio-historical document offered in this dissertation contributes to a better understanding of the 1930s and counters often still-prevailing assessment of the period as the most unproductive and barren in Soviet history.[2]

The Soviet mass media's essential role in the mobilization of the masses for the construction of the new Socialist world is well known. The Bolshevik Revolution of

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[1] Sally Stein also pointed this out in relation to the American periodical press. Sally A. Stein, "The Composite Photographic Image and the Composition of Consumer Ideology," *Art Journal* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 39.

[2] Formed during the Cold War, "the totalitarian model" developed a notion that viewed Soviet culture as ideologically charged, oppressive, and incapable of producing anything innovative or aesthetically valuable, thus not worthy of consideration. According to this approach, the Soviet Union was a totalitarian state governing the atomized society while repressing ideological dissent. Already in the 1970s, historian Sheila Fitzpatrick and other revisionist scholars disputed this model, and elucidated the complexity of Stalinism, challenging the conception of the period as monolithically repressive and aesthetically impotent. The traditional view of the Stalinist period casts doubt on the possibility of preserving a sense of a coherent, subjective self under this regime. A similar, but less pessimistic approach assumes that members of Soviet society had to operate externally in submission to State policies and ideology, but were able to preserve their independence within the private sphere. For a review of the literature concerning the theme of individuality under the Soviet regime and a comparative discussion of the popular opinion under totalitarian regimes see Paul Corner, ed., *Popular Opinion in Totalitarian Regimes: Fascism, Nazism, Communism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009).

1917 necessitated a replacement of one set of symbols with another. The first decade of the Soviet regime was marked by the process of developing and establishing a new symbolic order, while the Cultural Revolution of 1928-1931 worked on making this order universal.[3] In the 1930s, the Soviet government focused on the task of bringing "culture," which included personal hygiene, manners, and familiarity with artworks and literature, closer to the majority of the Soviet population (consisting mainly of workers and peasants) with the goal of strengthening the political consciousness of the "masses." The government wanted educated, culturally- and ideologically- developed Soviets capable of fully participating in the life of the Soviet State. The role played by visual culture and art in aiding such individual transformation is the key issue.

Obviously, the press was one of the major channels through which the Bolshevik party influenced the people to accept the new symbolic order.[4] In many cases, the masses had their first encounter with paintings, caricatures, and drawings, as well as with portraits of their leaders, through newspapers and magazines. Photographs published in the magazines played an essential role in registering and documenting the changes taking place in the country and in portraying the heroes who were making these changes. Because of their ephemeral quality, illustrated magazines have been largely ignored by art historians, despite recognition of the magazines' central role in the visual landscape of

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[3] Many social historians use the term "Cultural Revolution" to define the social and cultural changes experienced in Russia during the period of the First Five-Year Plan (1928-1931). The Cultural Revolution involved a struggle against the old intelligentsia, as well as bourgeois cultural values, elitism, privilege, and bureaucratic routine. It was also associated with the struggle against "class enemies": the *kulaks* (wealthy peasants) in the countryside and private entrepreneurs in urban areas. For a discussion of the Cultural Revolution in Russia see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front. Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992). Also see David Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).

[4] For an in-depth study of the development of Bolshevik propaganda see Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985). Also see footnote 35.

the period. To remedy such scholarly oversight, this dissertation offers an in-depth study of the visual content of Soviet illustrated periodicals published during the 1930s, which leads to a better understanding of their role in the construction of the desires and values of the masses and in shaping of the cultural and political landscape of the nation during the1930s.

My discussion concerns mass periodicals in general while the illustrated magazines *Rabotnitsa* [Female worker] and *Krestianka* [Female peasant] serve as case studies. The history of *Rabotnitsa* — the earliest magazine directed to working-class women — goes back to 1914, when its first, text-only issue, appeared. The publication ceased to exist during the Civil War (1918-1922), yet in 1922 it reappeared as a popular political and cultural supplement to *Rabochaia gazeta* [The Worker's gazette].[5] In 1922 *Krestianskaia gazeta* [The Peasant's gazette] also started to publish an illustrated supplement, *Krestianka*, defined as a magazine for peasant women and created to counterbalance *Rabotnitsa's* appeal to women workers.

By 1932 *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* reached the print run of 500,000 copies. This number does not reflect the actual readership, since the subscriptions were given to factories and libraries where multiple individuals shared one copy. In any case, these were among the most popular and most widely distributed mass circulated magazines. *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* featured a great diversity of visual information and were similar to other illustrated periodicals, such as *Prozhektor*, *Krasnaia Niva*, and *Ogonek* that served the general Soviet population. In other words, they were typical in their

[5] *Rabochaia gazeta* (which appeared from 1922), one of the most popular newspapers, was published in a daily edition of three million copies — the largest at the time. Beginning in the 1930s, *Rabotnitsa* was published by *Pravda*. Rafail Ovsepian, *Istoriia noveishei otechestvennoi zhurnalistiki* [History of the new fatherland journalism], 2nd ed. (Moscow: Moscow State University, 2005), 108.

appearance and as such provide representative examples of the media and methods used to present and promote cultural norms throughout the Soviet Union. At the same time, these were the only All-Union women's periodicals continually published during the 1930s, when other periodicals intended for women were no longer in print.[6] As the magazines for women, they served explicitly defined segments of society, working- and peasant-women respectively; thus offering a unique opportunity to view the process of shaping a specific cultural paradigm.

The position of women in the Soviet society was very complex in nature.[7] Women's cooperation was necessary for the future of Soviet society and it is not surprising that the women's press attracted the special attention of Soviet officials.[8] In 1922 a special letter from the party's Central Committee highlighted the importance of the pages for working women and peasants in local newspapers, requesting that such pages cover political, economic as well as the daily life topics. Then, in 1927 a special

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[6] By the 1927 18 periodicals serving women were published in the USSR. Among them were instructional publications for the party members, such as *Kommunistka* [Communist woman] and *Delegatka* [Delagate woman] as well as privately published popular illustrated magazines, such as *Zhenskii zhurnal* [Women's journal, published by Ogonek publishing association (1926 to 1930) or *Rabotnitsa i Krestianka* issued by Leningrad regional party committee (1926-1930). All of these were short lived publications and after 1931 no women's magazines were published as All-Union periodicals. See Lynne Atwood, *Creating the New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922-1953* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). Also see Chapter One of **this** dissertation.

[7] The literature on the "women's question" in Soviet culture is extensive. For an overview see Helena Goscilo and Beth Holmgren, *Russia — Women — Culture* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996); and Linda Edmondson, ed., *Gender in Russian History and Culture* (Houndmills, UK and New York: Palgrave, 2001). The political and social equality of women was an important aspect of Soviet ideology; however, the Soviet woman was also charged with the traditional responsibility of child care and for creating the proper Soviet domestic environment. Through women's magazines, Soviet ideological influence was projected onto a much larger segment of society.

[8] The position of women as a target audience of official propaganda is a contested issue in current research. Beth Holmgren believed that women's unacknowledged secondary status in Stalinist society exempted them to some extent from the party's regime of approval or censure. (Beth Holmgren, *Women's works in Stalin's time: on Lidiia Chukovskaia and Nadezhda Mandelstam* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 10.) On the other hand, art historian Susan Reid suggested that, rather than paying less attention to the control of women, the party adopted a differentiated approach to male and female regulation and persuasion. Regarding women as politically underdeveloped, it aimed at bonding them emotionally. Susan Reid, "All Stalin's Women: Gender and Power in Soviet Art of the 1930s," *Slavic Review* 57, no. 1 (1998): 173, note 145.

decree specifically deliberated on the necessity of enhancing press services for women and, what is especially significant for my study, requested the enlivening of "the content and *design* (italics mine)" of women's magazines.[9]

Though *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* targeted different readerships, they shared a lot in terms of subjects, printing quality, and design style while the same artists and writers would often contribute to both magazines. The differences appeared in the choices of specific artists and designers and emphasis in the subject matter. Both magazines functioned, as I hope to show, not only as a source of information but also as a visual medium transmitting as well as shaping the socio-cultural discourse. In general, they placed relatively little value on the formal quality of the artworks, privileging instead their content. In this study I focus on mapping out the subject matter and form of presentation rather than on formal analysis of individual images, leaving most of the discussion of their style and quality for the future. My review of the content as well as context of the images produced (and reproduced) reveal specifically the women's magazines role in bringing visual culture to the public, while the typicality of these publications and the fact that the same images and similar design methods were used in other periodicals supports the claim that the illustrated press was an active agent in shaping a unified Soviet visual language.

I also bring into discussion *SSSR na stroike*, also known as *USSR in Construction* — a luxurious and expensive magazine intended for the Soviet and foreign elite — that played a very important role in shaping graphic design trends of the period, and in many ways served as a role model for other illustrated periodicals in the Soviet Union and

[9] A letter" June 10, 192 and "Ozhivit' oformlenie" [To enliven design], *Sovetskaia pechat v dokumentakh* [Soviet press in documents] (Moscow: Politicheskaia literature, 1961), 239-40.

abroad.[10] *USSR in Construction* differed from popular periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka,* in that that it was based exclusively on photographic spreads glorifying the construction of various Socialist projects and did not include journalist articles or other text-based content. My study reveals that *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* as well as other illustrated magazines not only often recycled images from *USSR in Construction*, but also incorporated very similar design principles. I call attention to the fact that the popular illustrated magazines represent a juncture of the artistic and vernacular practices of graphic design, providing us with unique visual evidence of the interpenetration and mutual co-existence of "high" and "low."

The period of the 1930s was marked by the development and implementation of Socialist Realism, which constituted, to use the expression of historian Sheila Fitzpatrick, the "Stalinist *mentalité,*" which saw things as they were becoming and ought to be rather than as they were.[11] As an artistic style, Socialist Realism was expected to represent simultaneously existing and desired reality and was applied in all spheres of cultural production: literature, theater, and visual arts. At the First Writers Congress in 1934, Socialist Realism was pronounced the official style of the Soviet arts, following which cultural practitioners eagerly delved into defining its meaning and form.[12] However, as

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[10] The magazine is a unique publication of superior quality representing outstanding examples of photography, photomontage, and graphic design. It was published in a large, 15-by-12-inch format in several languages (Russian, English, French, German, and Spanish), and was distributed in the Soviet Union and abroad mostly among the institutions and Party functionaries. It was too expensive for an ordinary subscriber. See Erika Wolf, "When Photographs Speak, to Whom Do They Talk? The Origins and Audience of 'SSSR na stroike' (USSR in Construction)," *Left History* 6, no. 2 (2000).

[11] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9. For a comprehensive list of the existing English sources on Stalin and the Stalinist regime and culture see David R. Egan and Melinda A. Egan, eds., *Joseph Stalin: an Annotated Bibliography of English-language Periodical Literature to 2005* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007).

[12] For a discussion of the history of Socialist Realism see L. A. Bulavka, *Sotsialisticheskii realizm: prevratnosti metoda* [Socialist Realism: problems in the method] (Moscow: Kul'turnaia Revoliutsiia,

literary historian Jeffrey Brooks pointed out, initially Socialist Realism was only a catchy phrase from the newspapers and the majority of the Soviet population encountered it through the mass media.[13]

Indeed, for the Soviet people, especially in the provincial parts of the country, the periodical press (newspapers and magazines) was the main, and, in some cases, the only agent of cultural information. The importance of the visual content of the periodical press was well realized at the time. The press was regarded as the main tool not only of socio-political education but also of cultural and artistic education since, as an observer had noted in 1931, "it reached the reader that rarely got to see a book."[14] Soviet affairs specialist Mark Hopkins in his 1970 pioneering study of the Soviet mass media noted that Soviet government ranked journals and magazines above newspapers in terms of solidity of information and appearance of thought-provoking essays, while the images published in the magazines were usually of a better quality of reproduction.[15]

*Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* regularly included cultural and educational information. They published photographs that visualized the new cultured village and showed cultured collective farmers. They printed works of art and published exhibition reviews and articles about artists and museums, thus introducing high culture to working and peasant households. The magazines reproduced posters (arguably the best studied product of Soviet visual culture and graphic design),[16] which in their original large-scale

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2007); and Irina Gutkin, *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic 1890-1934* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999).

[13] Jeffrey Brooks, "Socialist Realism in Pravda: Read All about It," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 8.

[14] See Georgii Brylov, *Illustratsiia v knige, zhurnale i gazete* [Illustration in book, magazine, and newspaper] (Moscow and Leningrad: OGIZ-Izogiz, 1931), 78.

[15] Mark Hopkins, *Mass Media in the Soviet Union* (New York: Pegasus, 1970), 89.

[16] See Elena Barkhatova, *Soviet Constructivist Posters*, trans. V. A. Fateev (Moscow: Kontakt-Kul'tura, 2005); N. N. Glushko, *The Soviet political poster / Sovetskii politicheskii plakat* (Moscow: Kontakt-

format were an important component of the 1930s visual landscape. Yet, like many iconic paintings, posters often reached the public as magazine reproductions. This was especially the case in areas removed from Moscow and other large cities, since many areas of the Soviet Union experienced a shortage of visual material despite the large numbers of posters produced.[17]

Clearly, the consumption of images appearing in illustrated magazines differed significantly from that of the posters or original paintings The visual impact of a poster or a painting was more powerful due to its size and public placement (on a wall, where it affected and was affected by the surrounding environment). A magazine, however, was held in the hand, providing a more intimate, visual as well as tactile experience. The pages could be turned back and forth, turned around, brought closer to the eye for the observation of a detail. The pictures could be cut out and preserved. The size of the magazine, paper and printing qualities, scale of images, and design all played their role in the perception and interpretation of the images. By engaging with formal and contextual analyses of the magazines' design and content, I hope to indicate how the Soviet population might have experienced the images reproduced in the printed media.

Photography was the principal element of the printed media's visual content. Frequently the magazines featured photomontages that took the form of spreads composed as combinations of full-frame photographs or of cut-and-paste assemblies of fragments with varying degrees of cropping. This dissertation revisits the still persistent

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kul'tura, 2003); Victoria E. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997); Stephen White, *The Bolshevik Poster* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); and Leah Dickerman, ed., *Building the Collective: Soviet Graphic Design, 1917-1937* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).

[17] For the examples of shortages in visual propaganda supplies see Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 124.

belief that the period of the 1930s had abandoned the practice of photomontage as the emblematic Modernist medium. It traces the ways photomontage was adopted by the totalitarian modes of expression associated with the Stalinist regime. I will discuss how magazine designers used photomontage as a technical tool that allowed them to organize visual material in a dynamic, yet also concise and economic manner. I will suggest that, while the regime rejected the radical photomontage language of the 1920s, the technical and visual flexibility of the medium and photography's allegedly objective fixation of the visual facts (hailed at the time as "documentary quality") were regarded as useful and beneficial, in spite of the controversial associations with past experimental artistic modes.[18]

In the illustrated press Soviet readers encountered different modes of photography — photo-essays, photo-reportage, photo-portraits, and pictorial photography — as well as painted portraits, graphic illustrations, images reprinted from books and foreign sources, and reproductions of paintings created by Soviet and some nineteenth-century artists. From 1923 magazines introduced two- and sometimes three-color printing on their covers. Also certain details within the magazines' layout, such as flags or kerchiefs on women's heads, were printed in color. From 1927 fine art reproductions were featured both on the cover and as part of the interior layout. From the mid-1930s, they appeared as complementary supplements printed in full color and on higher-quality paper. Drawings and watercolors accompanied serial novels, letters from the readers, and

[18] For an overview of the discussion on the documentary quality of photography in the 1930s in the Soviet context see Margarita Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph, 1924-1937* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). Also see Valerii Stigneev, *Fotografiia: problemy poetiki* [Photography: issues of poetics] (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi institut iskusstvoznaniia, 2008).

thematic articles. [19] Publication of artworks and culture-related material in the popular media was an important component of the Soviet cultural program that was oriented towards the construction of a unified Soviet culture that would be shared by all. Accordingly, my study explores the ways fine arts and photography and photomontage were employed in the process.

In addition to the visual and textual analyses of the magazines, I explore the backstage process of the magazines' production. I review professional publications for editors and printers, the journalistic periodicals, as well as archival sources such as transcripts of the discussions held by the editorial boards of periodicals and publishing houses, correspondence with contributing artists and printing houses, contracts and financial records reflecting artists' compensations, records of image acquisition and copyright procedures, as well as artists' complaints and proposals to improve the system of financial compensation. This information helps to uncover the issues confronting illustrated magazines and, by extension, affecting their readers.

The archive of *Vsesoiuznyi komitet po delam iskusstv* [The All-Union Arts Committee], which, since 1936, assumed financial control over all art production, contains records of numerous meetings dedicated to rather pragmatic issues concerning the art world operation mentioned above.[20] Since the editorial archives of *Rabotnitsa* and

[19] Graphic illustrations, drawings and watercolors appearing in the magazines deserve careful consideration. They remain beyond the scope of this dissertation constituting a subject for future research.
[20] For example, "*Stenogramma soveshshaniia po ustanovke tarifov na izo-raboty*" [Minutes of meetings regarding establishing tariffs for visual artworks],"and "*Soveshchanie so skulptorami i grafikami po voprosam tarificatsii*" [Meeting with sculptors and graphic artists on issues concerning payment rates]. RGALI, *Komitet po delam iskusstv* [The All-Union Art Committee] (Fond 962, opis' 6, delo 193). For an in-depth discussion of the financial issues involved in Soviet art production see Galina Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika: khudozhnik v gody pozdnego stalinizma* [Art, money and politics: the artist in the years of late Stalinism] (Perm: Perm State University, 2007). Iankovskaia's article on the subject appeared in English as Galina Iankovskaia and Rebecca Mitchell, "The Economic Dimensions of Art in the Stalinist Era: Artists' Cooperatives in the Grip of Ideology and the Plan," *Slavic Review* 65, no. 4 (2006).

*Krestianka* were lost during the Second World War,[21] I used an intact archive of an art magazine for children, *Iunyi khudozhnik* [Young artist], as a comparative case. It was published in the same period and was subject to similar dynamics.[22] The archives of the publishing association *Ogonek* [Flame] and of Stalin's prime minister, Viacheslav Molotov, who in the 1930s was in charge of printing press matters, also contain information directly and indirectly related to the study of the illustrated press.[23] Archival research substantiated my postulate that while editorial, theoretical, and artistic preferences and the ability to attract professional designers and artists defined the visual character of the magazines, the quality of design and the illustrational content of these publications were equally subject to available technical equipment and financial budgets.

I situate my study in the period of 1929-1939, which deviates from the typical time frame of the majority of studies dealing with Soviet culture. Usually art historians start in the early 1920s (with the apogee of the Russian avant-garde), and culminate either in 1932 (with the dissolution of all independent cultural organizations and increasing attacks on formal experimentation) or in 1934 (with the announcement of Socialist Realism as the only Soviet style). I join the increasing ranks of scholars that insist that such periodization may be misleading by implying an abrupt discontinuation of all previous artistic practices; in reality, most of the artists continued to work during Stalin's

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[21] The Assistant Director of the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History [cited thereafter as RGASPI], Iurii Nikolaevich Amiantov, whom I interviewed on April 10, 2008, explained that the major part of the archives I was looking for had disappeared during World War II. They were loaded onto a ship for evacuation, but the ship sank in the Moskva River. In addition, Amiantov explained that, from the surviving materials only accounting, personnel, and employment information was preserved in RGASPI. According to Amiantov, the magazines' layout mock-ups, minutes of editorial meetings and correspondence were destroyed since they were not considered worthy of archival preservation.

[22] RGALI preserves the accounting and personnel office files, a number of mock-ups, sketches for magazine covers, editorial board meeting minutes, correspondence with the artists and writers, and reproduction permission requests. RGALI, *Iunyi khudoznik* (Fond 1901, opis' 1).

[23] GARF, *Ogonek* (Fond A299, opis'1, ed. khr. 29); and RGASPI, *V. M. Molotov* (Fond 82, opis' 2, ed. khr. 990).

regime. While they had to adjust their style to Socialist Realist requirements, they continued to use artistic ideas from the 1920s — the period of experimentation. By choosing a wider time frame, I hope to get a better understanding of the scope of artistic and cultural changes experienced and expressed by the periodical press. The beginning of the selected time frame — the year 1929 — is associated with the ultimate consolidation of Stalin's power and implementation of the First Five-Year Plan that mobilized the country for industrialization and collectivization. The programs established under the plan directly affected the readership of the magazines under consideration as the large number of recruits to new construction sites and collective farms were women. At the same time historically, women were the most resistant to "sovietization" and were important targets of Soviet political and cultural propaganda.[24] My study ends in 1939, when the onset of the Second World War marked the end of the early Stalinist period and its cultural discourse.

My study contributes to the better understanding of the ways in which the Soviet mass-media were not only the main vehicle of political indoctrination but also the main source of cultural instruction.[25] Scholars now acknowledge that in the eyes of Soviet authorities, artistic production was not limited to ideological propaganda but was consciously utilized as a means to teach new social skills to people.[26] Artistic production

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[24] Women displayed particularly strong opposition to collectivization, which gathered momentum in late 1929. On this subject see Bonnell, *Iconography of Power;* Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986), Ch. 7; Lynne Viola, "Bab'i Bunty and Peasant Women's Protest during Collectivization," *Russian Review* 45, no. 1 (1986); and Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola, eds., *Russian Peasant Women* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[25] For an overview of the existing studies dealing with this issue see Thomas C. Wolfe, *Governing Soviet Journalism: the Press and the Socialist Person after Stalin* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 1-33.

[26] Reid noted that magazines introduced to the public the new skill of consumerism. Reid, "All Stalin's Women," 142. In her study of Soviet advertising, Randi Cox emphasized that designers took on for

also reflected the ambitions of the new party elite class to attain a higher quality life.[27] The growing field of cultural history looks closely at popular cultural traditions and interpretations of historical experience. In this vein, historians Catriona Kelly and Vadim Volkov attempted to understand the actual mechanics behind the formation of cultural norms or, as Volkov called it, the "Stalinist civilizing process" that transformed former peasants and urban dwellers into Soviet citizens.[28] These scholars traced the origins of the term *kul'tura* [culture] back to the 1870s, when it came to be understood as a value that could be accumulated and transferred to the backward masses. In the 1930s, the Soviet administration started to promote a new attitude towards *byt* or "everydayness."[29] *Kul'turnost'* [cultured-ness] came to be connected to new, higher standards of individual consumption since it provided a way to legitimize concerns about social positions and

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themselves educational and propagandist roles, while, simultaneously, advertising constituted a special forum that taught citizens about trade and industrial goods that provided the physical environment for modernity. Randi Cox, "All This Can be Yours! Soviet Commercial Advertising and the Social Construction of Space, 1928-1956," in *The Landscape of Stalinism: The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space*, ed. Evgenii Dobrenko and Eric Naiman (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003), 125-26. Karen Kettering was among the first to study the Soviet printed media debates concerning interior decorations, consumer culture, and Soviet strategies for cultivating good taste. Karen Kettering, "'Ever more Cozy and Comfortable': Stalinism and the Soviet Domestic Interior, 1928-1938," *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997). She noticed the shift from the asceticism of the 1920s to the indulgence of the 1930s. For more on the subject of consumption see Jukka Gronow, *Caviar with Champagne: Common Luxury and the Ideals of the Good Life in Stalin's Russia* (Oxford, UK and New York: Berg, 2003).

[27] The emergence of the new classes in the Soviet State is discussed extensively by Sheila Fitzpatrick in Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The Russian Revolution and Social Mobility: A Reexamination of the Question of Social Support for the Soviet Regime in the 1920's and 1930's," *Politics and Society* 13, no. 2 (June 1984). The interest of cultural producers to cater to this specific public is evident in the design of the magazine, *USSR in Construction*. See Wolf, "When Photographs Speak."

[28] Catriona Kelly and Vadim Volkov, "Directed Desires: Kultur'nost' and Consumption," in *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution, 1881-1940*, ed. Catriona Kelly and David Shepherd (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also see Volkov's separate essay on the same subject: Vadim Volkov, "The Concept of Kul'turnost': Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process," in *Stalinism: New Directions*, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (London and New York: Routledge, 2000). I am grateful to Dr. Christina Kiaer for pointing out that Volkov was the first to introduce this concept.

[29] *Byt* is an important term, which is difficult to translate directly. It means everyday life, daily routine, regular lifestyle. The 1930s cultural discourse was involved in differentiating the "old *byt*" from "new/Soviet *byt*." For a discussion of this term and an analysis of its representation see Gutkin, *The Cultural Origins*; and Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). Also see Christina Kiaer and Eric Naiman, eds., *Everyday Life in Early Soviet Russia: Taking the Revolution Inside* (Boomington, ID: Indiana University Press, 2006).

status that had been rejected as bourgeois in the early years of the Revolution.[30] According to Volkov, *kul'turnost'* met at least "two complementary objectives, pragmatic and ideological: to discipline the new masses by means of shaping everyday behavior in accordance with uniform social (cultured) norms and to justify inequalities by integrating the lower strata into a system of quasi-elitist consumption values."[31] In order to become cultured, among other activities one was expected to visit exhibitions, or to read about them in the magazines and newspapers. Accordingly, my study discusses the ways popular periodicals promoted *kul'turnost'* to the population.

I join the growing number of scholars attempting to explore cultural canons and formulas by focusing on Soviet architecture, painting, cinema, celebratory rituals, and public arts.[32] Since the opening of Soviet archives, scholarship on Socialist Realism has seen an increase in contributions to the field. Socialist Realist imagery had received considerable attention from sociologists and historians interested in the processes of cultural production. Historian Jan Plamper's study, for example, explored the formation of the patronage system in the Soviet art world and uncovered the valuable context of

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[30] Vera Dunham was the first to underscore the importance of the concept *kul'turnost* (culturedness) for Soviet Society. (Vera Dunham, *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979).) Volkov proposed to differentiate *kul'tura* from *kul'turnost'*; the latter became especially prominent in the discourse starting in 1935. Volkov, "The Concept of Kul'turnost'," 213.

[31] Volkov, "The Concept of Kul'turnost'," 216.

[32] See a mammoth collection of essays by international scholars Hans Günther and Evgenii Dobrenko, eds., *Sotsrealisticheskii kanon* (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2000). Also see the catalogue of the exhibition produced to accompany a 1993 exhibition at the P.S.1 Museum in New York: Miranda Banks, *The Aesthetic Arsenal: Socialist Realism under Stalin* (Long Island City, NY: Institute for Contemporary Art, P.S. 1 Museum, 1993). Other collections of essays focusing on Socialist Realist imagery were published in conjunction with exhibitions in St. Petersburg (Hubertus Gassner and Evgenia Petrova, eds., *Agitatsiia za schast'e/Agitation zum Glück: sovetskoe iskusstvo stalinskoi epokhi* [Agitation for happiness: Soviet art of Stalin's epoch], 2nd updated ed. (Diusseldorf and Bremen: Interarteks and Temmen, 1994); Boris Grois and Max Hollein, *Traumfabrik Kommunismus: die visuelle Kultur der Stalinzeit / Dream Factory Communism: the Visual Culture of the Stalin Era* (Ostfildern and Frankfurt: Hatje Cantz and Schirn Kunsthalle, 2003).

artwork production.[33] Most recently, art historian K. Andrea Rusnock published her study of Socialist Realist painting that contextualized art production within the history of the realist tradition in Soviet art, art education, and exhibition practices.[34] Scholars have researched visual material and a wide range of high and mass art topics.[35] Literary historian Jeffrey Brooks investigated the Party organ *Pravda,* the central Communist party newspaper, as the particular medium in which Socialist Realism appeared to society. He suggested that the press contributed to the creation of the "new public culture," and that the Soviet reader was eager to learn the "new language of public life."[36] Studies of visual culture have shown that, in order to understand the visual message offered by Socialist Realism, the viewer similarly had to learn the new system of signs

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[33] Jan Plamper, "The Stalin Cult in the Visual Arts, 1929-1953," (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2001), 30. Plamper reconstructed critical and inter-artist discussions of this period and looked into the forms of the Soviet patronage system, in which various sectors of the arts had specific protectors among the party elite. Also see Jan Plamper, *Alkhimiia vlasti: kul't Stalina v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve* [Alchemy of power: Stalin's cult in visual art] (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2010). An English version, *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).

[34] K. Andrea Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting during the Stalinist Era (1934-1941): the High Art of Mass Art* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010). Other studies that focus on Socialist Realist painting include Matthew Cullerne Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Matthew Cullerne Bown, *Art under Stalin* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1991); and Gleb Prokhorov, *Art under Socialist Realism: Soviet Painting, 1930-1950* (East Roseville, Australia: Craftsman House: G + B Arts I, 1995).

[35] Hans Günther, *The Culture of the Stalin Period* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990); Hans Günther et al., *Sovetskoe bogatstvo: stat'i o kul'ture, literature i kino* [Soviet wealth: essays on culture, literature, and cinema] (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2002); Thomas Lahusen and Evgenii Dobrenko, *Socialist Realism without Shores*, Post-contemporary interventions (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); and Evgenii Dobrenko and Eric Naiman, *The Landscape of Stalinism: the Art and Ideology of Soviet Space* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003). For a great review of the past and current trends in the studies of Soviet culture see Hans Günther, "Puti i tupiki izucheniia iskusstva i literatury stalinskoy epokhi" [Paths and dead-ends in the studies of art and literature of the Stalinist epoch], *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 95 (2009), http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2009/95/gu23.html.

[36] Jeffrey Brooks, "Public and Private Values in the Soviet Press, 1921-1928," *Slavic Review* 48, no. 1 (1989): 21. Also see Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank you, Comrade Stalin!: Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). Matthew Lenoe focused on the newspapers in the early period of Stalin's regime. Matthew Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses: Stalinist Culture, Social Revolution, and Soviet Newspapers*, vol. 95 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). For the post-Stalinist period see Wolfe, *Governing Soviet Journalism*. Evgenii Dobrenko also addressed questions concerning public perception and navigation within the ideology imposed by the regime: Evgenii Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Reader: Social and Aesthetic Contexts of the Reception of Soviet Literature*, trans. Jesse M. Savage (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997).

used in Socialist Realist artworks. The role of the illustrated magazine as a vehicle aiding this learning process is one of the main concerns of my research.

My work was inspired by art historian Susan Reid's study of the *Industriia Sotsializma* [Industry of Socialism Exhibition] (1939), in which she attempted to reconstruct the experience of the exhibition visitor, taking into consideration not only the artworks but also the ways they were exhibited and discussed.[37] Reid analyzed the exhibition's catalogue, guidebooks and the texts for the exhibition guides and showed that the period of the 1930s laid down the foundations for the universal ideologization of the people and oriented them toward supporting and serving the interests of State power.[38] Reid uncovered the crucial context in which iconic as well as obscure Socialist Realist paintings were produced. Since *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* reproduced many of these works, my study of these illustrated magazines adds to Reid's exploration of the ways Socialist Realist artworks were "packaged" for the public.

Since the visual content of the Soviet press was affected by the situation in the art world, my study addresses the issue of the transformation and disappearance of the avant-garde during the 1930s. Scholars agree that the departure from the highly experimental practice of the Russian avant-garde was closely linked to the re-establishment of figurative painting dominance after the Civil War. The majority of traditional, academically-trained artists did not actively support the Bolshevik Revolution, to say the least. Some, in fact, were openly against it. After the victory of the Soviet republic and the beginning of the normalization of everyday life, traditional easel painters resumed

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[37] Susan Reid, "Socialist Realism in the Stalin's Terror: *The Industry of Socialism* Art Exhibition, 1935," *Russian Review* 60, no. 2 (2001).
[38] Ibid., 181-3. In addition to that, Reid looked into the publicity campaign and public response to the exhibition.

their activities, finding themselves in conflict with experimental artists who rejected figurative easel painting as retrograde. Artistic production for experimental artists was seen as a critical device that transformed reality rather than captured its likeness. The abstract or objectless art movement (*bespredmetnoe iskusstvo*), promoted by Suprematists gathered around Kazemir Malevich, and the Constructivists affiliated mostly with the *LEF* (Levyi Front Iskusstv [The Left Front of Arts]) rejected the methods employed by earlier art. In this they were in many ways close to the vision expressed by the organization Proletkult, according to which the proletariat will create essentially a new culture that will have nothing to do with the old bourgeois past.[39] As art historian Paul Wood pointed out, the problem was that Proletkult condemned *LEF's* art practice itself as "bourgeois" because it was not produced by the proletariat and was notoriously incomprehensible to the working class, and because of its origins in pre-revolutionary time and its European roots.[40] In addition, *LEF's* ideas were rejected and ridiculed by practitioners of traditional arts, most aggressively by Assotsiatsiia Khudozhnikov Revolutsionnoi Rossii [Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia] or AKhRR (1922-1928), later known as AKhR, Assotsiatsiia Khudozhnikov Revolutsii [Association of Artists of the Revolution] (1928-1932). This organization staged a very strong opposition to experimental practices, calling for direct and comprehensible imagery that was "to depict the present day" in "the style of heroic realism."[41] The appeal of such

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[39] The literature discussing Proletkult and the cultural discourse of the early years of the Revolution is extensive. For an overview see Vitalii Manin, *Iskusstvo i vlast': bor'ba techenii v sovetskom izobrazitelnom iskusstve 1917-1941 godov* [Art and Power. The struggle between different movements in Soviet visual art 1917-1941] (St. Petersburg: Avrora, 2008).

[40] Paul Wood, "Realisms and Realities," in *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art between Wars* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1993).

[41] AKhRR, "Deklaratsiia" (Declaration), 1922. Reprinted in Ivan Matsa, ed., *Sovetskoe iskusstvo za 15 let: materialy i dokumentatsiia* [Soviet art in 15 years: materials and documentation] (Moscow and Leningrad:

images to workers was acknowledged by leftist art critic Nikolai Punin, who in 1919 observed a "psychological" affinity between the Soviet masses and the "coarse, naïve" realism, and noted that the art of the future, namely leftist art, had almost no popular appeal.[42] AKhR was also active in the campaign against *Formalizm* [Formalism], a term related to Russian literature and art theory, staged by proponents of the representational tradition in cultural spheres and supported by the government. In the late 1920s, "Formalism," as a concept, acquired a strong pejorative meaning as it became associated with artistic practice that focused on technique and form rather than content.[43]

Art historian Brandon Taylor defined the AKhR aesthetic position as the reworking of "nineteenth-century painting within the framework of a class-conscious engagement with contemporary Soviet reality."[44] AKhR continued the nineteenth-century Russian Social Realist practice of the art group *Peredvizhniki* [Wonderers] and produced popular and accessible imagery in a realistic style aiming to capture typical characteristics in the subject and to generalize specific motifs. They embraced the traditional value of technical competence that enabled the artist to create illusionistic space. [45] In the 1920s AKhR introduced the new practice of thematic exhibitions, which became the dominant way of exhibiting art in the 1930s. Paintings produced in connection with these exhibitions visualized Soviet revolutionary history and other

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Ogiz-Izogiz, 1933). Translated in John E. Bowlt, *Russian Art and the Avant Garde* (New York: Viking Press, 1976), 266-7.

[42] Nikolaii Punin, "Proletarskoe Iskusstvo" [Proletarian art], *Iskusstvo komunny* [Art of the commune] 19 (April 13, 1919).

[43] For discussion of the anti-formalist campaign related to painting of the late 1920s and early 1930s see Jane Friedman, "The Artist Brigades, the Anti-Formalist Campaign, and the Soviet Avant-Garde," *Zimmerli Journal*, no. 3 (Fall 2005).

[44] Brandon Taylor, "On AKhRR," in *Art of the Soviets: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in a One-Party State, 1917-1992*, ed. Matthew Culerne Bown and Brandon Taylor (Manchester, UK and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 55-6.

[45] For a history of *Peredvizhniki* and their legacy during the Soviet period see Elizabeth Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1977). Also see Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting*, Ch. 2.

important themes in Soviet iconography. In subsequent years these paintings were often reproduced in the press as substitutes for non-existent photographic material on similar subjects.

In cultural circles the artistic production of AKhR was criticized for the inferior quality of the majority of works, yet it found immediate popularity with the Trade Unions and Red Army officials.[46] Art historian Brandon Taylor noted that, in spite of official approval and patronage, AKhR's approach to art was not directed by the Party.[47] The inauguration of the First Five-Year Plan in 1928 and consolidation of power in centralized State institutions incited aggressive media competition. The State became the only provider of financial support, and the struggle of artistic ideas was uncompromisingly married to the struggle for recognition of the State. Extensive public debates scrutinized the potential of painting, photography, and photomontage for propaganda and agitation in attempts to determine which media were best suited to express the spirit of Socialist construction. A look at the illustrations appearing in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* indicated that in these periodicals AKhR's vision clearly gained an upper hand.

The investigation of the illustrated magazines helps to establish how the well-known motto of the Soviet period, namely "Bringing art to the masses," was put into practice. Igor Golomstock in his foundational study of totalitarian art mentioned that most Socialist Realist artworks were subject to subsequent mass reproduction. They were

[46] For example, most of the paintings from AKhR's third exhibition (1922) were purchased by the Trade Unions' administration and formed into a new Museum of Labor. For a discussion concerning AKhR's reception in cultural circles see Taylor, "Art of the Soviets," 55-6.
[47] Ibid., 68.

duplicated and sent to local museums or traveled in exhibitions.[48] They were also reproduced as postcards and appeared as supplements to the illustrated press.[49] In her study of the periodical press coverage of the art exhibitions, Reid observed that various magazines popularized these artworks and pointed out the need for a thorough comparative study of the art coverage in the popular magazines mentioned.[50] My dissertation is a step in this direction.

Overall, in today's scholarship and especially in art history, the study of popular mass media remains a marginalized subject, continually overlooked as not aesthetically substantial enough to merit sustained attention. Only *USSR in Construction* has attracted considerable scholarly scrutiny.[51] A notable exception to this trend is the Russian collection of essays *Sovietskaia vlast i media* [Soviet power and media] (2006), which explores the impact of the new mass media on the social discourse of the 1920s and 1930s.[52] Scholars contributing to the collection have established that the interrelation between radio, cinema, and printed media created a powerful "communication space"

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[48] See Igor Golomstock, *Totalitarian art in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy and the People's Republic of China* (New York: Icon Edition, 1990), 95-100, 220.

[49] Andrea Rusnock's research revealed how paintings of collectivization "worked" for Soviet citizens through exhibitions and reproductions of oil paintings in the form of postcards and posters. Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting*, 156-8. For the collection of Socialist Realist paintings reproduced as postcards see A. L. Rubinchik, *Zhivopis' sotsrealizma v sovetskikh otkrytkakh* [Socialist Realist paintings in Soviet postcards] (Moscow: OOO Magma, 2008).

[50] Reid, "All Stalin's Women," 173.

[51] Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitsky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 169; Erika Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*: From Avant-Garde to Socialist Realist practice," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1999); Erika Wolf, R. Hassner, and P. Osterlund, eds., *USSR in Construction 2006 No. 1 An Illustrated Exhibition Magazine* (Sweden: Fotomuseet Sundsvall, 2006); and Julian Rodriguez, "Red Issues," *The British History of Photography* (1992): 17.

[52] Hans Günther, ed., *Sovetskaia vlast' i media: sbornik statei* [Soviet power and the media] (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2006). This publication is an outcome of an international conference held at Bielefeld University (Germany) in 2003. Most recently an exhibition held at The Art Institute of Chicago explored the application of avant-garde design principles in mass media. M. Witkovsky et al., *Avant-Garde Art in Everyday Life: Early Twentieth-Century European Modernism* (New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

shared by the entire country.[53] In this publication, photography and photomontage were directly considered to be the material of the mass media. In discussing the function of photography in daily newspapers, Russian scholar Galina Orlova established that photography became one of the most prioritized ways for reflecting the utopian aspect of the Socialist construction and that beginning in 1933 not only illustrated magazines, but also major newspapers adopted a format inundated with photographs. She further explained that, in the media competition to represent the "new face of the Soviet land," photography won over other modes of representation.[54] In the same collection of essays, film historian Maya Turovskaia compared two of the most popular weeklies of this time — the Russian *Ogonek* and the German *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and their role in shaping the visual landscape of the period. Her analysis focused on the subjects covered by the magazines in the course of the formation of the two totalitarian systems, leaving open the questions of style and graphic design.[55] The essays in *Sovetskaia vlast i media* focused mostly on Soviet photography, cinema, and radio, while graphic arts and painting were not included in this study. Yet, traditional arts continued to play a central role in the cultural landscape of the 1930s. My dissertation explores the ways magazines provided a

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[53] In her review of the *Sovetskaia vlast' i media*, Jana Klenhova observed that electricity (and the process of electrification) in the Soviet Union was a complex universal "metamedium," a medium behind media that was a heavily charged instrument in the rhetoric and practices of the Soviet State ideology. Jana Klenhova, "Book review," *Art Margins* (2008), http://www.artmargins.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=107%3Asoviet-power-and-the-media&Itemid=104#ftn_artnotes1_3. The importance of electricity in the Soviet mythology is discussed in Elena Zheltova, "Elektifikatsiia v Rossii (1921-1928): mifologicheskie aspekty" [Electrification in Russia (1921-28): mythological aspects], *Voprosy istorii estestvoznaniia i tekhniki* [Issues in history of natural sciences and technology], no. 1 (1996).

[54] Galina Orlova, "'Voochiiu vidim.' Fotografiia i sovetskii proekt v epokhu ikh tekhnicheskoi vosproizvodimosti" ['Voochiiu vidim.' Photography and the Soviet project in the period of their technical reproducibility], in *Sovetskaia vlast' i media* (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2006), 192.

[55] Maya Turovskaia, "Legko na serdtse, ili Kraft durch Freude" [Light in heart or Kraft durch Freude], in *Sovetskaia vlast' i media: sbornik statei* [Soviet Power and the media] (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2006).

stage for both mechanical and handmade types of images to contribute to a more comprehensive approach to the Soviet media-scape.

In addition to the exploration of the women's magazines visual language and artistic media choices, I also discuss their attention to the work of women artists, whose professional status, as Reid had shown, was extremely problematic at the time.[56] Scholars typically focus on the careers of women associated with the left avant-garde, and, as a result, with the exception of Reid's exploration of the subject, scholarship concerning women artists belonging to other artistic groups and working in the 1930s is virtually non-existent. While Reid discussed the situation of many female artists, her study dealt with more general issues of gender representation and its function in Soviet society. She mentioned *Rabotnitsa's* coverage of women artist exhibitions, yet the magazine's cultural role and its representation of the women-artists was not the focus of her work. My dissertation specifically deals with the question of how women's magazines, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka,* represented women artists and shows that this practice provided women artists with income and also aimed to strengthen their professional status.

In addition, the magazines presented information and reproduced works of the amateur artist — another understudied participant in Soviet cultural production. In current research only Russian scholar Nadezhda Musiankova looked into the institutional history of the amateur arts movement,[57] and an overview of the amateur visual arts was included in a three-volume Russian publication dedicated to the history of the amateur

[56] Reid, "All Stalin's Women."
[57] Nadezhda Musiankova, "Khudozhniki i institutsii: samodeetel'noe tvorchestvo v SSSR 1920-1930" [Artists and institutions: Amateur art practice in the USSR 1920-1930], (Doctoral Candidate Thesis, Moscow State Institute of Art History, 2008).

movement.[58] In English, Rusnock's is the rare study that brought into discussion the production of this important artistic movement. Rusnock mostly focused on the amateur artist exhibitions as a means of making art accessible to the population.[59] My discussion reviews the magazines' attention to amateur artists and suggests that reproducing their works was a way of legitimizing artistic occupation as a proper leisure time activity for the working class. Art production parallel to its consumption was a crucial aspect of *kul'turnost'*, hence my study brings attention to the ways in which magazines promoted the amateur arts and artists helping to blur the line between "high" and "low," which was an integral aspect of the Soviet myth of culture shared by all.

As the most popular and long-lived women magazines, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*. were part of various studies dealing with representations of women in the Russian media. *Rabotnitsa* became a subject of two American dissertations[60] and was studied by the Sovietologist Lynne Atwood who worked on the role of press in constructing the image of a "New Woman" in Russia.[61] Scholars analyzing women's magazines concentrated mostly on their literary content, while the visual aspect of the

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[58] K. G. Bogemskaia, "Izobrazitel'noe i dekorativno-prikladnoe iskusstvo" [Visual and decorative-applied arts], in *Samodeiatel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: ocherki istorii 1917-1932* [Amateur art in the USSR. Historic essays, 1930-1950], ed. K. G. Bogemskaia and L. P. Solntseva (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2000); and K. G. Bogemskaia and P. R. Gamzatova, "Samodeiatel'noe izobrazitel'noe i dekorativno-prikladnoe iskusstvo" [The amateur visual arts and decorative-applied arts in the USSR], in *Samodeiatel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: ocherki istorii, 1930-1950* [Amateur art in the USSR. Historic essays, 1930-1950] (Moscow: Gos. institut iskusstvoznaniia, 1995).

[59] Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting*, 179-85.

[60] Natasha Tolstikova, "Reading *Rabotnitsa*: ideas, aspirations, and consumption choices for Soviet women, 1914-1964," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2001). Tolstikova is a journalism historian and her study focused on the multivalent content of *Rabotnitsa* and the magazine's struggle to serve women's needs in the overtly political context of the time. Nancy Glick Vavra, "Rabotnitsa, constructing a Bolshevik ideal: women and the new Soviet state," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Colorado, 2002). Vavra is a Russian history scholar, and her study reviewed the early years of the magazine's operation.

[61] Lynne Atwood, "Rationality versus Romanticism: Representation of Women in the Stalinist Press," in *Gender in Russian History and Culture*, ed. Linda Edmondson (Houndmills, UK and New York: Palgrave, 2001). Atwood, *Creating the New Soviet Woman:*;

publication was rarely a focus of discussion. The exception is the work of Russian scholar Tatiana Dashkova in which she explored the process of formation of the Soviet visual canon in women's magazines of the 1930s, including *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*. [62] A valuable iconographic analysis, her study did not go beyond a mere classification of images, and, as a result, overlooked the stylistic and theoretical connections with the artistic discussions of the period. In addition, I disagree with Dashkova's observation that Soviet magazines were strictly oriented towards their particular readership and that *Rabotnitsa* dealt exclusively with representation of women workers, and *Krestianka* with that of peasants.[63] Analysis of *Rabotnitsa* provides clear evidence that the magazine was seriously concerned with the representation of peasant women and collectivization in general, and, even more so than *Krestianka* in the period of forced collectivization (1929-1932). By connecting the visual content of the magazines with artistic and socio-historical developments of the time, I hope to cover interdisciplinary gaps in the studies of the Soviet period.

*Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* dutifully covered Stakhanovites movement, reported from the party congresses, and visualized the new construction sites. In this dissertation I focus on the magazines' representation of Soviet celebrations, which played a significant role in the dissemination of political and cultural ideas and received the most elaborate treatment is press. After the October Revolution, the new Bolshevik regime needed to establish its own distinctive identity as well as legitimize its ideology. The most important celebrations were two major Soviet holidays — May Day (celebrated on May

[62] Tatiana Dashkova, "Ideologia v litsakh: formirovanie vizual'nogo kanona v sovetskikh zhurnalakh 1920-1930 godov" [Ideology in faces: formation of the visual canon in Soviet magazines 1920s-1930s], in *Vizual'naia anthropologia* [Visual anthropology] (Saratov: Nauchnaia kniga, 2007).
[63] Ibid., 128.

1st) and the Anniversary of the October 25th Revolution (which became known as October Anniversary and celebrated on November 7th due to the switch from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian in 1918). Like all new regimes, Bolsheviks were engaged in the production of myths and the deployment of symbols to illustrate and reinforce those myths. By establishing new Soviet holidays, the regime created a new pattern of social time, a new rhythm for work and leisure.[64] Soviet people were enticed to measure their time, plan their future activities, and remember their past in terms of a Soviet time scale fixed around new days of celebration.[65] The success in the transformation of society was reflected in the acceptance of the new ritual system.[66]

Western and Russian scholars agree that the celebratory festivals were used to orchestrate the support of the regime and constituted an important aspect of Soviet existence.[67] Celebrations were part of the societal symbols that contribute to a perception

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[64] The papal bull of February 1582 decreed the calendar change that was eventually accepted by Catholic and Protestant countries. The Greek Orthodox countries did not change their calendar until the start of the 1900s. In Russia it did not happen until 1918, when the switch from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian introduced an important shift in calendar and life-cycle ceremonies. The switch was a conscious attempt to break away from the dominance of the Orthodox Church. By the end of the 1918 festivals directly connected with Tsarism were outlawed, but local Soviets were allowed to turn up to ten and later eight religious festivals into rest days. Some of the Soviet holidays had already been celebrated by Marxists before the October Revolution, May Day (since 1899) and Working Women's Day (since 1910) were among them. See Christopher Binns, "The Changing Face of Power: Revolution and Accommodation in the Development of the Soviet Ceremonial System: Part I," *Man* 14, no. 4 (December 1979): 588.

[65] Festivals were part of a general effort to reshape the calendar, and, more broadly, to reorganize time. The new calendar established a purely Soviet order of time though the festivals continued to parallel the older holidays, reinforcing the new civic rituals. For example, May Day was close to Easter. First Sundays and other days of religious celebrations were canceled, yet the anti-Sunday calendar was later abandoned. Malte Rolf, "Constructing a Soviet Time: Bolshevik Festivals and Their Rivals during the First Five Year Plan. A Study of the Central Black Earth Region," *Kritika: Exploration in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 448-50. In the long run, the routinization of the events and their cyclical repetition year after year strengthened the acceptance of the Soviet holidays by the population. See Richard Stites, "Festivals of Collusion? Provincial Days in the 1930s," *Kritika: Exploration in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 476.

[66] According to Rolf, in 1929 obeying the church calendar was no longer a sign of backwardness but that of disloyalty to the regime. Malte Rolf, "Constructing a Soviet Time: Bolshevik Festivals and Their Rivals during the First Five Year Plan. A Study of the Central Black Earth Region," ibid.: 455.

[67] Several Soviet studies addressed the issue of celebrations from anthropological, sociological, and historic perspectives. See Anatolii Mazaev, *Prazdnik kak sotsialno-khudozhestvennoe iavlenie* [Celebration as socio-artistic phenomenon] (Moscow: Nauka, 1978); Oleg Nemiro, *V gorod prishel prazdnik* [A festival

of identity of both an individual and a collective nature. In the Soviet Union, just as in pre-revolutionary Russia collective experience shared by all individuals was essential aspect of social ideology. While the task of the Orthodox Church was to realize the unity between God and Man, and, by extension, Tsar and People (*narod*), Stalinist political rituals aimed toward the realization of unity between Leader and People, Past and Present, doctrine and power.[68] Participation in celebratory rituals became a central component in the experience of community and the notion of belonging.

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came to a city] (Moscow: Avrora, 1973); V. A. Rudnev, *Sovetskie prazdniki obriady ritualy* [Soviet holydays, rites, rituals ] (Leningrad: Lenizdat 1979); and V. G. Sinitsina and V. V. Zaykin, eds., *Nashi Prazdniki* [Our Holidays] (Moscow: Politicheskaia Literatura, 1977). For recent Russian studies of Soviet celebrations see C. B. Adonieva, "Pervomai: performans i ritual" [May First: peformance and ritual], in *Morphologiia prazdnika* [Morphology of a celebration], ed. V.Ya. Propp Center, *Morphology of a holiday* (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University, 2006); and V. V. Glebkin, *Ritual v sovetskoi kul'ture* [Ritual in Soviet culture] (Moscow: Yanus-K, 1998). For studies in English see Binns, "The Changing Face of Power."; and Christel Lane, *The Rites of the Rulers: Ritual in Industrial Society: the Soviet Case* (Cambridge UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). For material on celebrations of the first years of the Revolution see Richard Stites, "The Origins of Soviet Ritual Style: Symbols and Festivals in the Russian Revolution," in *Symbols of Power. The Esthetics of Political Legitimation in the Soviet Union & Eastern Europe,* ed. Claes Arvidsson and Lars Erik Blomqvist (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1987); and James Von Geldern, *Bolshevik Festivals, 1917-1920* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). 1930s Soviet carnivals in the Parks of Rest and Culture have been explored by Rosalind Sartori, "Stalinism and Carnival: Organization and Aesthetics of Political Holidays," in *The Culture of the Stalin period* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990). Celebrations associated with the Women's Day have been studied by Choi Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women: Gender, Festival Culture, and Bolshevik Ideology, 1910-1939* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002). German scholar Malte Rolf studied Soviet celebrations in the provinces. See Malte Rolf, *Das sowjetische Massenfest* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006).; Russian translation Malte Rolf, *Sovetskii massovyi prazdnik* [Soviet Mass Festival] (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2009). American scholar Karen Petrone also studied the celebratory discourse and argued that the quality of Soviet cadres profoundly affected the state's ability to convey its ideology, and that the Soviet people were able to exploit the celebrations as sites for undermining ideology. This perception challenges the traditional view that regarded Soviet citizens' participation in celebratory rituals as an exercise of the acceptance of the regime. See Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous.* The majority of the scholars acknowledged the role of the press in shaping and promoting the celebratory discourse, but none of them focused on the specific ways in which the celebrations were visualized in the illustrated press. The exception is Simpson's study of the representation of women in *fizkultura* parades, yet her study dealt with the WWII period. See Pat Simpson, "Parading Myths: Imaging New Soviet Woman on Fizkul′turnik's Day, July 1944," *Russian Review* 63, no. 2 (April 2004). For an in-depth study of the representation of physical culture celebrations in the arts see Michael John O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR: Physical Culture - Visual Culture,* London: Reaktion, 2006. *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*'s representation of the physical culture parades is a subject for future research.

[68] For an elaboration on the development of these symbolic dichotomies see Lars Erik Blomqvist and Claes Arvidsson, eds., *Symbols of Power. The Esthetics of Political Legitimation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe* (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1987), 14.

*Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* were filled with photo-reportages, thematic posters and illustrations, special cover designs, and elaborate double-spread photomontages that visualized celebrations. Similar to other popular magazines, they played a particularly influential role in disseminating visions of festivals and in the canonization of celebratory iconography; however, the ways these images were packaged for the audience remain understudied.[69] Contemporary scholars have noted the intensification of a festival-focused content in the mass media during the 1930s and have associated this with the narrowing of a cultural canon characterized by the reduction of covered topics and a growing preoccupation with officially accepted core cultural features.[70] The celebration of Soviet holidays, demonstrations, and public parades as well as reading newspapers and journals, and listening to the radio all entailed an engagement with the public sphere by both representatives of the State and citizens, and resulted in the creation of new identities. By participating in the public sphere, citizens were expected both to consume propaganda and display their familiarity with the State code of behavior. The subject of a number of recent studies, mass celebrations open up the way, as historian Malte Rolf pointed out, for an understanding of "how culture in the USSR became Soviet."[71] My study of the representation of the celebratory discourse by illustrated magazines aims to enhance our understanding of this process.

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[69] Rolf noted that photographs shaped the image of the ideal parade as they represented bodies in disciplined, synchronized movement. This reflected the new aesthetic of Stalin's time that turned gatherings into ordered parades. Malte Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors: Sovietizing Culture under Stalinism," *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (2009): 608. In 1927 German intellectual Siegfried Kracauer discussed the aesthetics of the carefully orchestrated movement of the masses as "the Ornaments of the Masses." Siegfried Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament," in *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1995). First published as "Das Ornament der Masse" in Frankfurter Zeitung, July 9 and 10, 1927.

[70] Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors," 604.

[71] Ibid., 602.

*Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* used various artistic media in their issues dedicated to the celebrations, enlisting expressive capabilities of painting, graphic arts, and photography. One of the striking features of their design is the continuous use of photomontage in the period usually associated with a rejection of formal experimentation in general, and of this medium in particular. In my study, I review various ways in which photomontage was utilized in the magazines in an attempt to explain its persistent appearance at the time. I also explore the context of the use of photomontage through analysis of the publishing industry literature and the period's artistic discussions. The examples of photomontage's appearing in illustrated magazines indicate that, in addition and parallel to photomontage convenience as a method of organization of visual material, the periodicals took full advantage of the medium's cinematic capabilities to condense time and space, and to produce continuity and narrative with carefully constructed juxtapositions. Composed as photographic spreads, such photomontages related the central tropes of Soviet iconography: the transformation from past to present (*tak bylo-tak est'* [then versus now]); the advantages of the Soviet way of life compared with the capitalist experience (*u nas-u nikh* [us versus them]); and the presentation of events taking place simultaneously in different parts of the country (*po strane* [across the country]). The spreads were used for presentation of general themes glorifying the advantages of Soviet life (industrialization, collective farming, motherhood, childhood, etc.) and especially for the visualization of celebrations.

In my study I take a wide approach to photomontage, defining it not only as a cut-and-paste method of radically cropped images, simultaneously opposing views and the juxtaposition of scale and angles, but also as arrangements of intact or minimally cropped

images combined together with careful consideration of their content and composition. The montage effect in such arrangements is created as a result of the interconnection between the images and between images and text and approximates work on a movie script, in which carefully composed images are orchestrated into a symbolic and compositional whole.

Historically, photomontage has been connected with the socio-political situation established at the end of the 1910s, first in Germany and shortly thereafter in Russia, which created particularly favorable conditions for the embrace of the medium by offering a way to deconstruct conventional representation and, at the same time, juxtapose various pieces of information. [72] The tension inherent in photomontage's potential to provoke the critical capacity of the beholder and its power as an ideological weapon ensures its controversial position in Western culture to this day. Manipulation of this juxtaposition was supposed to ensure "proper" interpretation by the audience of these relationships, rendering photomontage utilizable equally for advertisement and mass culture, avant-garde critiques of society, and totalitarian propaganda.[73] Until recently scholars concentrating on Soviet art almost exclusively focused on an avant-garde use of the medium and overlooked the vernacular practice of photomontage. In the "Introduction to the First International Dada Fair" of 1920, Wieland Herzfelde traced the

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[72] An early attempt to summarize the history of photomontage with a heavy emphasis on Dada and Surrealist contributors is the exhibition catalog Richard Hiepe, *Die Fotomontage: Geschichte und Wesen einer Kunstform* (Kunstverein: Ingolstadt, 1969). Dawn Ades wrote a general photomontage history in 1976 that included a chapter on the Soviet practice. Dawn Ades, *Photomontage*, 2nd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986). German studies of photomontage rarely discuss Soviet or National Socialist practice. Annegret Jurgens-Kirchhoff focused on photomontage in capitalist countries. Annegret Jurgens-Kirchhoff, *Technik und Tendenz der Montage in der Bildenden Kunst Des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ein Essay* (Lahn-Giessen: Anabas Verlag, 1978). The Exhibition "Montage and Modern Life" (1992) and the exhibit catalogue with a collection of essays was a significant contribution to photomontage history. See Maud Lavin and Matthew Teitelbaum, eds., *Montage and Modern Life, 1919-1942* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

[73] Pointed out in Michael Davidson, "Montage and Modern Life, 1919-1942. Book review," *Modernism/Modernity* 2, no. 2 (1995): 106.

medium's origins in advertisement and popular culture.[74] Nevertheless, the application of photomontage in mass-culture graphic design remains in the shadow of "high culture's" use.[75] Art historian Maud Lavin emphasized that cultural studies should be directed to the areas where art and mass culture intersect, instead of focusing only on the ways mass culture influenced fine artists. [76] She applied such an approach in her study of the *ring neue werbegstalter* (Circle of New Advertising Designers) — a group of avant-garde artists that worked in advertisement design in Germany in the late 1920s and in her study of German artist Hannah Höch.[77] In addition to Lavin, Robert Sobieszek and Sally Stein traced the history of photomontage in the context of the history of photography and the history of emerging advertising technology,[78] and more recently Brigit Doherty discussed the vernacular uses of the medium.[79] For many Western scholars the most problematic aspect of Soviet avant-garde photomontage was that it indicated the move away from experimentation towards politically engaged and — because of its association with totalitarian regimes — ideologically problematic art. Though their reasoning varies,

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[74] Reprinted and translated in Rose-Carol Washton Long, ed., *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 272-74. Also reprinted and translated in Brigid Doherty, "Wieland Herzfelde. Introduction to the First International Dada Fair," *October* 105 (Summer 2003).

[75] In the Western art historical approach to Soviet art production, the totalitarian model and an almost exclusive focus on the experimental practices of the early years of the Revolution dominated the scholarly discourse longer than in literature, sociology, and history. Camilla Grey's pioneering study in 1962 initiated the interest in the "avant-garde": Camilla Grey, *The Great Experiment: Russian Art, 1863-1922* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1962). After that, the historical avant-garde and its Russian component was discussed by scholars Christina Lodder, Benjamin Buchloh, Yve-Alain Bois, Rosalind Krauss, and others. For an overview of their writing in relation to Soviet photography and photomontage see Natasha Kurchanova, "The Soviet Photograph, 1924-1937 (Review)," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 1 (2000).

[76] Maud Lavin and Matthew Teitelbaum, "Photomontage, Mass Culture, and Modernity. Utopianism in the Circle of new Designers," in *Montage and Modern Life, 1919-1942* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

[77] Ibid; Maud Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993).

[78] Robert Sobieszek, "Composite Imagery and the Origins of Photomontage. Parts I and II," *Artforum* (1978); Stein, "The Composite Photographic Image." Stein more specifically addressed the origins of photomontage in advertising techniques, yet her study remains an exception.

[79] Brigid Doherty, "Dada: Berlin," in *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington, DC: National Gallery, 2006).

scholars generally agreed in interpreting the changes in style as the result of the avant-garde's submission to pressure from the Stalinist regime, and, for that reason, disregarded photomontage production in the late 1930s.[80] By exploring the use of photomontage in the Soviet popular press during the 1930s, I hope to remedy this imbalance.

Art historian Christina Lodder, in her 1983 path-breaking monograph on Russian Constructivism, discussed the Constructivist experiments with the medium that started in the early 1920s.[81] Lodder and scholars following in her footsteps emphasized that the Constructivists embraced photography because of its intrinsic documentary value as an unaltered slice of reality and truth. It manifested the ultimate rejection of painting and traditional artistic practice, yet, at the same time, marked the return to representation. The use of machine-made materials (the product of the photo-camera), the mechanical nature of photomontage's construction (the use of glue, scissors, and other technical tools), and the play of textures (a consequence of the juxtaposition of different materials) appealed to Constructivist artists who, since the Revolution, were fascinated by machine aesthetics and the idea of artist-as-engineer.[82]

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[80] Some scholars asserted that the abandonment of avant-garde ideas was, in many cases, a pragmatic, "skin-saving" necessity, as claimed by Yve-Alain Bois in the case of Lissitsky: Yve-Alain Bois, "El Lissitzky: Radical Reversibility," *Art in America*, no. 4 (April 1988). Buchloh felt that Soviet photomontage artists willfully participated in the process of shaping Soviet ideology during the years of the Stalin regime because, in general, they did not see any rupture between their ideas and those of the State. Benjamin Buchloh, "From Faktura to Factography," *October* 30 (Fall 1984): 117. Boris Grois went further and presented an argument that Stalinist culture was a direct outgrowth of the 1920s avant-garde: Boris Grois, *The Total Art of Stalinism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[81] Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983).

[82] See Jaroslav Andel, ed., *Art into Life: Russian Constructivism, 1914-1932* (Seattle: Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, 1990). For a more recent discussion of Russian Constructivism and a literature overview see Christina Kiaer, *Imagine No Possessions:The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); and Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

Lodder was among the first art historians to trace the influence of Russian cinema on the photomontage practice.[83] In the 1920s the theory of cinematic montage developed into different schools in which the film directors Sergei Eisenstein represented the idea of the contrasting montage, Dziga Vertov emphasized montage as a rhetorical device whereas Lev Kuleshov underlined the syntactic nature of montage and the principle of juxtaposition.[84] The vision of the latter became dominant in the 1930s as it corresponded better with the Socialist Realist mentality. The theory of montage had a major influence on other artistic groups and was not limited to those working in photographic media alone. By the late 1920s the use of the montage method impacted other art practices, such as theater, painting, graphic art, and literature.[85] In my study, I show that cinematic influences were also felt in the popular media design. *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka's* use of cinematic devices, both visual and conceptual, support the idea expressed by film historian Maya Turovskaia that the illustrated magazine as the medium "played the role of a future small film screen, [and was in fact] its direct predecessor."[86]

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[83] Christina Lodder, "Promoting Constructivism: Kino-Fot and Rodchenko's Move into Photography," *History of Photography* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2000).

[84] Dziga Vertov produced his Kino-Pravda and published his manifesto, "My" (We), in 1922 (Dziga Vertov, "My" [We], *Kino-fot* 1 (1922). Eisenstein published his ideas on montage in 1923 (Sergei Eisenstein, "Montazh atraktzionov" [Montage of attractions], *LEF* 3 (1923). Kuleshov's book, *Iskusstvo kino* [The art of cinema], was published in 1929, yet by that time many of his ideas were already known in cultural circles and appeared in LEF (Lev Kuleshov, "Ekran segodnia" [[Cinema] screen today], *Novyi Lef* 4 (1927). Many photojournalists started their careers as cinematographic camera operators, for example Boris Ignatovich and Dmitri Debabov.

[85] For a discussion of the influence of cinema and the theory of montage see Annette Michelson, "The Wings of Hypothesis: On Montage and the Theory of the Interval," in *Montage and Modern Life, 1919-1942* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992). Victor Margolin discussed the cinematic aspect of Maiakovskii's poetry and Rodchenko's montages for *Pro Eto*. Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia*, 106-07. In Russian culture, literary montage was not influenced by cinema alone and has its roots in nineteenth-century Realistic and Symbolistic prose. Noted in Tomi Huttunen, "Montage Culture: The Semiotics of the Post-revolutionary Russian Culture," in *Modernisation in Russia Since 1900*, ed. M. Kangaspuro and J. Smith, *Studia Fennica Historica* (Helsinki: SKS, 2006), 190.

[86] Turovskaia, "Soviet Power," 242.

In his 1984 essay, "From Faktura to Factography," art historian Benjamin Buchloh argued that, by 1927, Soviet photomontage gradually turned away from interest in the indexical quality of the image and looked instead towards its iconicity. [87] The increased emphasis on the legibility of the image replaced the earlier attention to the tactile qualities of the object with emphasis on the interrelationships of the fragments that Buchloh called the stage of *faktura*.[88] He saw this process as the move into a stage of factography, characterized by active engagement with the informational and communicative components of artistic practice.[89] According to Buchloh, by at least 1931 the goals of factography had been abandoned in favor of "the awe-inspiring monumentality of the gigantic, single-image panorama." This third phase, described as "the sheer adulation of totalitarian power," Buchloh left open for discussion, while his division of photomontage practice into major paradigmatic phases became canonical.

Art historian Margarita Tupitsyn continued Buchloh's periodization of photomontage and offered to use the term "mythography," in relation to the third stage of the medium's development, which she dated to 1932, the period of the Second Five-Year Plan (not, as Buchloh did, to 1931).[90] According to Tupitsyn, mythographic photomontage was characterized by the downplaying of photography's documentary role in favor of the idealization of the State and its leaders. Similar developments in Soviet montage were observed by Hubertus Gassner, who noted that in 1932 Constructivist

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[87] Buchloh, "From Faktura to Factography."
[88] According to Buchloh, Soviet experimental artists used photomontage only until 1924 as a continuation of their exploration of *faktura*, in which a pictorial conception was centered on preserving and emphasizing the marks of the construction process as well as texture. Ibid., 103.
[89] Ibid., 106.
[90] Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph*, 128.

montage, built on the use of opposites and discontinuities, was replaced by "painterly polished delusions welded into uniformity of reality by one single will."[91]

The main goal of mythography, to use Tupitsyn's term, was to instill an artificial sense of unity on all fronts (ethnological, technological, and cultural) in order to convey to the Soviet masses and to foreigners an image of the Soviet Union as a unified, colossal, industrial power headed by a strong and unconquerable leadership.[92] According to Tupitsyn, this was achieved through the seamless integration of fragments into a unified "organic" whole. She borrowed the term "organic work of art" from Peter Burger's *Theory of the Avant-garde* (1984) and explained the move towards such works as the means by which the political regime in the Soviet Union could successfully simulate the collective unity and wholeness of the State and the Nation. [93]

Tupitsyn's definition of the 1930s photomontage as an "organic" work of art corresponds with the literature of the time serving editors and graphic designers. The seamless or, as it was called at that time, "synthetic" montage was discussed as suiting better the ideological need, yet it was also considered to be of a higher artistic quality and was preferred to the ruptured combination of images because it was able to create narrative, suggesting a temporal development of events (approximating the effect produced by cinema).[94]

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[91] Hubertus Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship, 1931-1932," in *John Heartfield*, ed. Peter Pachnicke and Klaus Honnef (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992), 274.
[92] For a discussion of the "mythographic montage" see Margarita Tupitsyn, "From Factography to Mythography," in *Kultur im Stalinismus: sowjetische Kultur und Kunst der 1930er bis 50er Jahre*, ed. Gabriele Gorzka (1994).
[93] Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph.*
[94] "Fotomontazh kak novyi vid agitatsionnogo iskusstva: diskussiia" [Photomontage as a new kind of art of agitation: discussion], *Literatura i iskusstvo* [Literature and art] 9-10 (1931). For an overview of this discussion in English see Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship."

Most of the discussions concerning photomontage scholarship rely on the examples produced by four major photomontage artists: Gustav Klutsis, Sergei Senkin, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and El Lissitsky. There is very little mention to other photomontages appearing at the time. While emphasizing the importance of the context for the appearance of photomontage, and the fact that, by creating their work for mass media, the above named artists adopted the role of anonymous designer, Tupitsyn mostly overlooked the context nor did she discuss the popular practice of photomontage and the works of anonymous designers, in spite of her announced intent to move away from a monographic approach.[95] The stardom approach also limits the work of the design historian Victor Margolin who studied the graphic design careers of Rodchenko and Lissitsky along with Hungarian Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, without situating these within the larger context of the design practices of the period.[96]

The attention paid to "avant-garde" photomontage is justifiable, considering the fact that artists brought the medium to its full potential. However, exclusive focus on artists who experimented with montage undermines the ways in which the medium was used in the wider socio-cultural landscape by creating an incomplete if not a distorted view of the period. The major limitation of Buchloh's, Tupitsyn's, and other existing studies of photomontage is that scholars often isolate photomontage from other forms of cultural production and continuously disregarded the medium's functional aspect as a graphic design device.

[95] Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph*, 15-16.
[96] Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia.*

Art historian Erika Wolf corrected this approach in her exhaustive study of the magazine *USSR in Construction*.[97] Wolf's study followed the development of the photo-essay on the pages of the magazine throughout the 1930s, and, while correcting many misconceptions regarding Soviet photo-journalistic and design practice, added important information concerning the system of commissions and editorial procedures of this trend-setting, but very expensive and, thus, exclusive periodical.

The high quality and participation of the prominent artists in the *USSR in Construction* explains the interest the magazine received in Russia and in the West, especially in the past decade.[98] Expanding the analysis offered by Wolf and other scholars, I further examine the ways in which *USSR in Construction* helped shape the Socialist Realist narrative by reviewing two previously unexamined issues published in 1932 and 1939. These two issues dealt with collectivization, which, together with Industrialization, was the major component of the Socialist program. The visualization of collectivization in Soviet media has not been studied sufficiently, so my discussion of the ways this subject was treated in the cheap popular illustrated magazines for women as well as in the expansive and exclusive *USSR in Construction* aims to remedy the situation. Overall, through careful consideration of the diverse visual media appearing in the popular illustrated press and the study of the design features and context of the

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[97] Wolf, "*USSR in Construction.*"

[98] Wolf, "When Photographs Speak." In recent years the magazine was part of several exhibitions. For example, "Rise of the Picture Press: Photographic Reportage in Illustrated Magazines, 1918-1939" at the International Center of Photography, NY (2002); "USSR in Construction exhibition" at the Tate Modern (2006) (See review by Hayley Card, "The Tate Modern's *USSR In Construction*," *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 8, no. 1 (2007).); USSR in Construction at Fotomuseet Sundsvall, Sweden (2006) (See Wolf et al., *USSR in Construction 2006.*). Also see the facsimile edition of the magazine's issues in Boris Grois, Erika Wolf, and Alexander Lavrent'ev, *'SSSR na stroike': illiustrirovannyi zhurnal novogo tipa* ['USSR in Construction': An illustrated magazine of a new type] (Moscow: WAM and Agei Tomesh, 2006).

images' reproduction, this dissertation hopes to offers a more balanced and comprehensive investigation of the Soviet visual language of the 1930s.

I have organized this study as follows:

Chapter One considers important practical issues affecting the visual content and design of Soviet periodicals. I look into the history of the illustrated press and of design education in Soviet Russia and review the technological conditions of the Soviet graphic printing industry or *poligrafia* (printing design and technology). [99] I consult literature of the period in order to explicate the role played by the illustrated press in Soviet society and highlight some theoretical as well as financial issues relating to the design of the illustrated press, in general, and women's magazines in particular. I review the archive of the magazine *Iunyi khudozhnik*, which offers a relevant case for comparison as it was published in the same period and was subject to similar dynamics. This chapter helps to establish the pragmatic context of the illustrated magazines' operation, which leads to a better understanding of how they fulfilled their role of bringing culture to the masses.

Chapter Two focuses on paintings and art-related articles published in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* in order to explore the specific ways in which magazines carried on their educational and cultural roles. I give special attention to the role of women artists, since the magazines served the female audience. I also discuss representation of amateur artists, who together with women constituted an essential component in the construction of the Socialist Realist myth of a unified Soviet culture shared by all. This chapter also focuses on exploring the ways in which works of fine art functioned in the magazines. The discussion of specific examples helps to differentiate between their use as text

[99] In Russian, the term *poligrafia* (polygraphy) defines the full range of the printing industry, including the design and production of books, posters, the periodical press, advertisements, etc.

illustrations and as elements independent of the magazines' content. In addition, I uncover some issues that determined publishing choices, featured artists, and specific paintings and subject groups in light of Soviet cultural discourse, the art establishment, financial practices, and the development of the Socialist Realist doctrine. This chapter substantiates the claim that illustrated magazines were central in introducing and promoting new cultural norms, and in familiarizing the masses with the new visual language of Socialist Realism.

In Chapter Three, I place the illustrated magazines within the context of the photography and painting competition for primacy in the pantheon of Soviet art. I show that while handmade illustrations were an integral part of the magazines' design, photography was a preferred visual medium, while photomontage was an indispensable tool for organizing and presenting material. After analyzing the 1920s and 1930s debates on the visual content of the periodical press, I review the various types of photo-based illustrations appearing in magazines in relation to the way they were discussed in the professional literature for periodical press practitioners. My discussion reveals the choices available to the designers' when they had to select type and layout of the illustrations and suggests that, for these magazines, photography was essential not only because of its association with allegedly objective representation of the physical world but also because it was a cheap and relatively easily reproduced medium. I also show that photomontage was used to ensure an efficient and eye-catching presentation of the Socialist Realist message.

Chapter Four focuses on the photo-essay — the major vehicle by which the magazines presented photographic material to its readers. Since the 1920s, the photo-

essay played an essential role in shaping the Soviet cultural landscape. Defined as a montage of several illustrations constructed together with text, the photo-essay in the 1930s served as a good form of propaganda, especially for less educated readers served by *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*. Acknowledging the centrality of *USSR in Construction's* role in the development of the photo-essay in the Soviet popular illustrated press, I analyze the full-length photo-essays appearing in this periodical. In addition, balancing the scholarly fixation on this exclusive publication and continuing the exploration of the lower end of graphic design, I examine photo-essays published in inexpensive mass periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka,* which served ordinary individuals.[100] I uncover the ways in which montage elements together with text were used to construct meaning and to promote the state ideology and policies and contest the association of the late 1930s with the abandonment of photomontage practices. I show that the cinematic montages of individual frames as well as the cut-and-paste arrangements of croped fragments were continuously used throughout the decade.

The use of photomontage in periodical press design is discussed further in Chapter V that culminates the discussion of the visual language of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* by focusing on the ways in which Soviet mass media visualized Soviet celebrations discourse —a major aspect of Soviet ideology. I analyze the magazines' covers and inner double spreads in those issues dedicated to May Day and the October Revolution Anniversary, and trace the development and changes in the ways the Soviet printed media visualized the celebrations. I engage in the visual analysis of the holiday issues, and contemporaneous discussions concerning celebrations as well as current research dealing with the Soviet celebratory rituals. While tracing iconographic and

[100] For statistics representing prices and print numbers see Wolf, "When Photographs Speak," supplement.

stylistic developments in the representation of holidays, I emphasize how the ideological climate and editorial preferences conditioned the visual character of the magazines and, by extension, their audiences' experience of the holidays. I show that designers embraced all media of illustration in order to render an ideal celebration while photomontage's ability to condense time and space and to suggest narrative and continuity was used in order to create an illusion of the unified Soviet body sharing the celebration ritual.

## Chapter I. Some Issues Affecting the Illustrated Press Design

Historically, illustrated printed media reached the masses (predominantly the illiterate or poorly literate population) in the form of popular prints, known as *lubok*, distributed in fairs and markets. By the end of the nineteenth century, the periodical press in Russia, though numbering only a few illustrated magazines, was in the process of a rapid development in spite of technical and political impediments.[101] The first decade of the twentieth century saw the establishment of multiple mass-oriented newspapers, so called *Gazeta-kopeika* [Penny-newspaper], serving the urban population in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In addition to being cheaper than other periodicals — 1 penny vs. 5 pennies — the *Gazeta-kopeika* provided free supplements, advertisements, and entertainment sections. Such newspapers became very popular and hundreds of thousands of copies were published. They had their own printing plants, which became the property of the Soviet government following the nationalization act performed after the October Revolution of 1917.[102] During the first year of the Revolution and the Civil War (1918-1922), the printing industry was crippled by a shortage of materials and dysfunctional or destroyed machinery, which led to a halt in the production of the illustrated press and the loss of the very ability to reproduce images.

The Soviet government realized the huge potential of the illustrated press and put forward enormous efforts to overcome the technical limitations resulting from the

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[101] Their number proliferated significantly following the 1905 February Revolution, though for a short time. The number was cut back by the return of censorship after the February Revolution's failure.

[102] See M. M. Kozlova, *Istoriia sredst massovoi informatsii* [History of the mass information media] (Ulianovsk: Tekhnicheskii Universitet, 2000), 73-74.

Civil War devastation. [103] Financial improvement brought by the New Economic Policy (NEP) (1922-1927) allowed for reconstruction and re-equipment of the publishing houses. In 1925 the Soviet Union published 589 periodicals; four years later, by 1929, the number had risen to 1700.[104] Writing at the end of the 1920s, editor V. R. Kugel noticed that newspapers began to publish illustrated supplements and that the need of the masses for "*kartinka* [little picture] became a natural phenomenon in the publishing business."[105] As a means of mass persuasion popular magazines were considered less important than newspapers and the Party devoted more funds to newspapers as the more efficient tool in transmitting political information. Illustrated magazines were published less frequently and with a "lighter" tone than newspapers as they were intended for the slower reading style of the "new readers," the majority of whom were non-Russian ethnic groups, peasants, and women.[106] As a result, magazines acquired an especially significant role in the cultural and political education of the masses.

During the NEP that allowed a partial return to the capitalist system and free market, the majority of periodicals was published by private enterprises and enjoyed greater popularity than magazines published by the State. After 1927, most of these magazines and journals ceased to exist as a result of political pressure and financial impediments imposed by the state, which wanted to reduce the influence of private

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[103] "Tsyrkul'ar Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Partii ot 4 Aprelia 1921" [Circular of the Central Party Committee of April 4, 1921], in *O partiynoi i sovetskoi pechati, radioveshchanii i televidenii* [On the Party and Soviet press, radio, and television] (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1972), 70.
[104] Ovsepian, *Istoriia noveishei otechestvennoi zhurnalistiki*, 43.
[105] V. R. Kugel, *Ocherki izdatel'skogo dela* [Essays on the business of publishing] (Moscow and Leningrad: Ekonomicheskoe iz-vo, 1931), 141.
[106] See ibid., 23. Though not published on a daily basis like Pravda or other major newspapers, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* appeared 2-3 times a month on average. In 1931 *Rabotnitsa* was published as a weekly. From 1932 till 1940 it appeared three times a month. While issues were typically planned in advance, magazines also had to react quickly and incorporate real-time material. As a result not everything was published with a thoughtful and well-conceived design.

publications on the population. The remaining periodicals received State subsidies and saw an increase in circulation.[107] Among these survivors were two magazines for women, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*.

Soviet Design Education, Theory, and Practice

The shortage of professional artists and designers trained in journalism and *poligrafia* was a serious problem for the Soviet illustrated press.[108] Graphic design education did not exist in Russia prior to the October Revolution in any structured form and layout artists were usually graduates of schools of fine arts. Organized by L. Ye. Vladimirov in 1905, the earliest known courses for publishing industry professionals were short lived due to the political upheavals of that year.[109] In 1920 the department of Philology and Literature of the Leningrad State University presented a course of lectures entitled "*Teoriia i praktika gazetnogo dela"* [The theory and practice of the newspaper business] and taught by the historian and professor of historiography [?] Il'inskii. The same institution established, though for a short time, *Otdel gazetnogo dela* [Department of newspaper production] that among other issues dealt with design.[110]

The first specialized design education was provided by Moscow's Rossiiskoe telegrafnoe agenstvo [Russian State Telegraph Agency] or ROSTA. Organized in 1918,

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[107] Hopkins, *Mass Media*, 94.

[108] Zincography was the most common way of reproducing an illustration. Due to the absence of the proper educational means to the study of zincography, technicians who specialized in reproductions in color were, for the most part, self-taught. Kugel, *Ocherki*, 148, 66.

[109] The 1905 Russian Revolution consisted of a wave of massive political unrest throughout vast areas of the Russian Empire. The protests ranged from liberal rhetoric to strikes, and included student riots and terrorist assassinations. These forced the government to establish a consultative *duma* and introduce some reforms. By 1907 the revolution was repressed, and the czar promulgated the Fundamental Laws, under which the power of the *duma* was limited. See Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: A Short History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).

[110] See Genadii Zhirkov, "Peterburgskaia shkola podgotovki zhurnalistov: tri modeli vypusknika" [Peterburg's school of journalists preparation: three models of a graduates], (2008), http://new.jf.pu.ru/about/203.html?wr=2.

the agency offered courses for newspaper technicians. Based on this initiative, 1921 saw the establishment of the Institut krasnykh zhurnalistov [Institute of Red Journalists], better known as GIZH for Gosudarstvennyi institut zhurnalistiki [The State institute of journalism].[111] In addition to Moscow's GIZH, similar colleges were organized in Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, and other major cities.[112]

GIZH's curriculum of 1923 included a twelve-hour course "*Oformleniie i proizvodstvo gazety"* [Newspaper layout and production] taught by Professor K. P. Novitskii, the first director of the Institute. Similar classes were taught by Professor S. N. Sredinskii, a prominent figure in the journalist profession. In 1925 graphic design was taught as part of the "*Osnovy gazetnogo dela"* [Foundations of the newspaper business] course offered in the second year of college. Students acquired hands-on experience by publishing the Institute's daily newspaper the *Vechernie novosti* [Evening news]. Another newspaper, *GIZH'ovits*, was published by the Institute's typesetting laboratory managed by M. I. Shchelkunov, where a scientific approach to newspaper production was tested. From 1929, Shchelkunov directed a special research section that was organized with the goal of "developing standards" in Soviet newspaper design. In the 1930s, graphic design was no longer taught as a separate course due to a reduction of hours

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[111] The Institute was renamed several times—as the Moscow Institute of Journalism (MIZH), the State Institute of Journalism (GIZH), and the All-Union Communist Institute of Journalism in the Name of "Pravda" (VKIZH or KIZH). For the history of the Institute see Irina Fateeva, "Eto nashey istorii stroki. K 85-ti letiyu pervogo v Rossii zhurnalistskogo vuza" [These are the lines of our history. The 85th anniversary of the Russian Journalist Institute], *Mediascope* 1 (2007). A research center for Newspaper Studies was created in GIZH. The plan was to create the Science Institute of Newspaper Studies. The center published a collection of essays, "Issues in Newspaper Studies" (Moscow 1930), and several other books on the subject. Later on, the center was closed and the Newspaper Studies institute was dismissed. For more information see Irina Fateeva, "Istoriia moskovskogo instituta zhurnalistiki" [History of the Moscow Institute of Journalism], in *Mediaobrazovanie: teoreticheskie osnovy i opyt realizatsii* [Media-education: theoretical foundation and experiense of realisation] (Cheliabinsk: Cheliabinsk State University, 2007).

[112] See Moscow State University Department of Journalism, "Istoki zhurnalistkogo obrazovaniia v MGU," http://www.journ.msu.ru/about/history/journalism.php. By June 1938 GIZH was closed, and education of journalists and periodical press workers was given to other institutions of higher education.

dedicated to special disciplines. This reduction was part of the general rejection of scientific approaches to cultural products, in general, and newspaper production, in particular.[113]

From 1924 graphic design and newspaper production courses were also offered in Moscow by Kommunisticheskii institut narodov zapada [Communist university of the peoples of the West]. This school housed the Editorial and Publishing Institute that, similar to Shchelkunov's laboratory, conducted studies on perception and readership.[114] The visual aspect of design was at the center of attention in these institutions, specifically from psychological and physiological perspectives and not as an artistic discipline. More practice-oriented graphic design education was offered by Uchitel'skie kursy [Workshops for teachers] organized by AKhR and workshops led by other artistic groups (for example Izo rabochei molodezhi [Art of the working youth] or IZORAM). Redaktorskii i izdatel'skii institute [The institute for editors and publishers] operated in the OGIZ publishing system included Khudozhestvenno-oformitelskii fakul'tet [Art and design department].[115] For those interested in the specifically artistic implications of design the only school defined as providing such education was Vysshie khudozhestvenno tekhnicheskie masterskie [The Higher Artistic Technical Workshops] or VKhUTEMAS.

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[113] I am grateful to Dr. Irina Fateeva for providing this information in an e-mail correspondence. A similar fate affected *Institut Khudozhestvennoi Kul'tury* [The Institute of Artistic Culture, (1920-1924)] or INKhUK that was a dominant force in the development of Soviet art, architecture, and design in the 1920s. On the history of INKhUK, see Gough, *The Artist as Producer*; Selim Khan-Magomedov, "Vozniknovenie i formirovanie INKhUKa" [The creation and formation of INKhUK], *Problemy istorii sovetskoi arkhitektury* [Issues in history of Soviet architecture] 2 (1976); and Selim Khan-Magomedov, *Inkhuk i rannii Konstruktivizm* [INKhUK and early Constructivism] (Moscow: Arkhitektura, 1994).

[114] Department of Journalism, "Istoki zhurnalistkogo obrazovaniia".

[115] Small in scale, Redaktsiono-izdatel'skii institut (The Editorial and Publishing Institute) began functioning from the late 1920s, and was merged with the Polygraphy Institute in 1941. "Fakul'tet izdatel'skogo dela i zhurnalistiki" [Department of publishing business and journalism], (2002-2011), http://mgup.ru/fidij/history.

Defined as a "specialized educational institution of advanced art-technical training created to prepare highly qualified master artists for industry as well as instructors and directors of professional-technical education," VKhUTEMAS was formed in October of 1920.[116] As a cultural and educational institution, VKhUTEMAS served multiple, sometimes contradictory purposes. On the one hand, it was a hub for most daring and untested innovation and experimentation, on the other as a major art and design school, it was supposed to prepare younger generation of artists to work in industry. Graduates of the school were in demand by the State to fill work positions in which they were expected to put into practice skills acquired in the school.[117]

According to the VKhUTEMAS program, Soviet graphic design depended on the skills acquired by graduates of the Graficheskii fakul'tet [Graphic department], which, in spite of numerous structural changes, always remained part of the school. The Graphic department specialized in printing techniques and book design and was divided into three sections: lithography, metallic engraving, and book printing which included typography and book design).[118] The objective of the department was to "develop the students' artistic culture and at the same time acquaint them with the details of printing skills."[119] There was an evident confrontation between practical, industry oriented

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[116] V. I. Lenin's decree of November 29, 1920. Cited in A. V. Abramova and Z. N. Bykov, "Vkhutemas-Vkhutein: 1918-1930," in *Moskovskoe vysshee khudozhestvennoe uchilische (byvshee stroganovskoe) 1825-1965* [Moscow's Higher Art College (formerly Stroganov's) 1825-1965] (Leningrad: 1965), 40.

[117] For a history of the school see Selim Khan-Magomedov, *Vhutemas: Moscow 1920-1930* (Paris: Editions du Regard, 1990). In the early years of VKhUTEMAS's existence, leftist artists associated with the INKhUK led the school in the direction of radical, non-representational experimentation. In an attempt to turn the school into a more practical and industry-oriented institution, it was restructured and renamed VKhUTEIN (Higher Art Technical Institute) in 1926. Several subsequent reforms failed to solve the contradictions, and, in 1939, all departments were reorganized and transferred to other educational institutions, leading to the Institute's closure.

[118] It is interesting to note that Rodchenko, regarded as one of the founding fathers of Soviet graphic design, taught in the Metal and Woodworking Workshop, not in the Graphic Department.

[119] RGALI, Fond 681, opis' 2, ed. khr. 93, list 368-9 and ed. khr. 65, list 74. Cited in Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 116.

*proizvodstvenniki* [productionists] and *chistoviki* [purists] forces within the Graphic Department. In 1923, artists and intellectuals associated with the Left Front of Art group (*LEF*) despaired over the "purist" orientation of the Graphic Department and criticized the lack of attention to mass-oriented, machine-made forms of printing. [120] In spite of vigorous attempts by the productionists to change the course, the purists prevailed and the Graphic Department, from beginning to end, maintained a more traditional orientation.[121] The typography section of VKhUTEMAS succeeded in producing several publications, such as *Arkhitektura VKhUTEMASa* [Architecture of VKhUTEMASa] (1927). However, the Graphic Department of the school apparently was unsuccessful in fulfilling the task of producing sufficient number of professional designers and illustrators for the press.

VKhUTEMAS's failure to provide an adequate amount of periodical press artists was an acute issue. In 1929, in an open letter to *Zhurnalist* [Journalist], the journal for publishers and press professionals, journalist I. Izgoev pointed out the evident lack of polygraphy artists and reprimanded the educational institutions for their failure to prepare "the new generation" of artists.[122] In the published reply to Izgoev's letter, P. Novitskii, the director of VKhUTEMAS turned the blame away from the Institute and onto the artists themselves, charging them with failure to recognize the importance of periodical

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[120] "Графический факультет, один из важнейших в ряду производственных, выделен особо и приравнен к факультетам "чистого" искусства, при чем главный упор на кустарные, ручные (т.-н. "творческие") отрасли - офорт, гравюра, а массовые, машинные, современные работы - в загоне." "the graphic department, one of the most important of the productionist [departments], is especially segregated and equated to the departments of "pure" art, at which the main emphasis [is placed] on handicrafts, manual (so to speak "creative") branches – etching [and] engraving, but mass-[oriented], machine-made, modern works –[are] stored away" Osip Brik, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and Anatolii Lavinskii, "Razval VKhUTEMASa: Dokladnaia zapiska o polozhenii VKhUTEMASa" [The breakdown of the VKhUTEMAS: Report on the situation in VKhUTEMASa], *LEF*, no. 4 (1923): 27-28.

[121] For the history of the Graphic Department see Natalia Adaskina, "Sovremennyi dezain i nasledie VKhUTEMASa. Iz istorii poligraffaka VKhUTEMASa" [Contemporary design and the legacy of VKhUTEMAS: From the history of poligraphy department], *Tekhnicheskaia estetika* [Technical aesthetics] 34 (1982).

[122] I. Izgoev, "O gazetnoi grafike i sprose na khudozhnikov. Pis'mo" [On newspaper graphic illustration and demand for artists. A letter], *Zhurnalist* [Journalist], no. 1 (1929): 4.

press design and illustration. According to Novitskii, artists "looked down at newspaper graphic design seeing in it a work of momentary value," while they strove "to create for eternity" and "to serve as spirits of pure arts and of pure – not applied – graphic arts." Novitskii stated that the artists "differentiate[d] between *byt* [everydayness], political struggle, industry and arts and at the end simply fail[ed] to work as newspaper graphic artists."[123] Other contributors to the discussion similarly blamed the artists for their lack of interest in the "everyday" and the political moment.[124]

One participant in the *Zhurnalist* discussion, the earlier mentioned editor V. R. Kugel, criticized VKhUTEMAS specifically for the poor education of polygraphy artists, though he remarked that the lack of technical equipment in the school led to a situation in which students produced all work manually and, thus, had no opportunity to acquire technical experience reflecting real press production.[125] The issue became so acute that, in 1930, the Moscow Polygraphy Institute, focusing specifically on training specialists for the printed media industry, was opened. The Polygraphy Institute specialized in the engineering and technology of printed media production. Graphic design was included in the curriculum of the Institute's Graphic Department, but it inherited problems earlier plaguing VKhUTEMAS. In 1931, artist Gustav Klutsis stated that the Polygraphy Institute failed to provide proper graphic design education and harshly criticized the school's ways of teaching photomontage. In Klutsis's opinion, the result of the poor professional training of photomontage-artists led to a situation in which mass periodicals

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[123] Pavel Novitskii, "O gazetnoi grafike i sprose na khudozhnikov. Otvet" [On newspaper graphic illustrations. An answer], ibid.
[124] In 1923 *LEF* imposed similar criticism on the Graphics Department. Brik et al., "Razval Vkhutemasa," 27. See note 119.
[125] V. R. Kugel, "Svobodnye khudozhniki" [Free artists], *Zhurnalist* [Journalist], no. 5 (1929): 141. The discussion continued over several issues.

practiced, as he called it, "vulgar" photomontage.[126] Overall, the education of designers was unsatisfactory both from traditionalist and from leftist perspectives throughout the 1920s and the early 1930s.

The 1929 criticism of the situation pertaining to designers' education expressed in *Zhurnalist* revealed an additional issue that affected the periodical press. In most cases, after completing their education artists went out of their way in order to remain in Moscow and St. Petersburg. They rejected the benefits of full-time employment in provinces, choosing to lead, as Izgoev saw it, "*khalturnaia zhizn* [an easy, odd-job existence]." In reality, it meant meager income based on occasional commissions and working for several publishers and journals simultaneously. According to Izgoev, local newspapers were in desperate need of caricaturists, portraitists, draftsmen, engravers, and designers. Izgoev vividly described the desperate editor from Vladivostok (located on the Pacific coast of Russia) attempting to entice an artist to join his newspaper and ready to "tempt him [the artist] with whatever [one] wants – the climate, sea, proximity to Japan, China."[127] The case of the Vladivostok newspaper clearly indicates that the concentration of periodical press artists in Moscow and St. Petersburg and the deficiency of professional illustrators and designers in newspapers and magazines published in areas removed from major cities turned the All-Union periodicals, produced in Moscow and St. Petersburg, into especially potent visual resources for the population.

To remedy the lack of professional designers, numerous manuals and guidelines were published. These publications attempted to establish design standards for periodical

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[126] According to Klutsis, even the best mass magazines utilized the method of photomontage often without the qualified practitioners, which led to the "vulgarization of the montage. Gustav Klutsis, "Fotomontazh kak novyi vid agitatsionnogo iskusstva" [Photomontage as a new kind of art of agitation], *Literatura i iskusstvo* [Literature and art] 9-10 (1931): 92-93.

[127] Izgoev, "O gazetnoi grafike," 44.

press production.[128] The professional literature for publishers extensively discussed issues involving the periodical press's design and illustrations. Published manuals for editors and press technicians included discussions of layout principles, the visual function of illustrations and text, color effects, etc.[129] These manuals emphasized the importance of technical knowledge of printing processes and principles of design.

Specialized publications were written in the 1920s-1930s by prominent representatives of the profession, the majority of whom taught in GIZH and VKhUTEMAS, and had established publishing careers before the Revolution.[130] The subjects ranged from discussions of perceptual physiology and theories of design to technical advice for local newspaper editors. Reflecting the period's obsession with science, in the 1920s serious consideration was given to the theoretical foundation of newspaper design. GIZH Professor Sredinskii in *Znachenie tsveta v pechati: analiz vospriiatiia tsveta v prilozhenii k typografskoi praktike* [Significance of color in the press:

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[128] For the bibliography of primary sources see A. Grabel'nikov and O. D. Minaeva, *Istoriia russkoi periodicheskoi pechati (1703-2003). Bibliograficheskii spravochnik* [History of the Russian periodical press (1703-2003). Bibliographic reference.], 2 vols. (Moscow: RIP-holding, 2004). Also available at Ekaterina Aleeva. *Evartist*. http://evartist.narod.ru/text6/50.htm

[129] See Boris Viazemskii and Mikhail Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety* [The technical layout of newspaper], Communist Institute of Journalism (Moscow and Leningrad: Gos. izdat. legkoi promyshlennosti, 1933); C. A. Kalugin, *Grafika v statistike* [Graphic arts in statistics] (Petrograd: SovPartShkola, 1923); S. N. Sredinskii, *Razbor nekotorykh teorii po oformleniiu gazety, knigi* [Discussion of some theories of a newspaper and book design] (Baku: Azerbadzhan State University, 1929), Izvestiia pedfaka; Sredinskii, *Znachenie tsveta v pechati: analiz vospriiatiia tsveta v prilozhenii k typografskoi praktike* [Significance of color in the press: analysis of color perception in relation to typographic practice] (Baku: Azerbadzhan State University, 1929); Sredinskii, *Khudozhestvennoe oformlenie gazety i knigi: ritm, simmetriia i proportsyonal'nost' v proizvedeniiakh pechati* [Art design of a newspaper and book: rythm, symetry and proportions in printed productions] (Baku: Azerbadzhan State University, 1929); Brylov, *Illustratsiia v knige*; V. A. Artemov, *Rol' izucheniia vospriiatia pechatnoi produktsii pri standartizatsii oformleniia* [Role of perception studies of the printed products in standardization of design] (Moscow: OGIZ, 1932); T. Draudin, *Ocherki izdatel'skogo dela v SSSR* [Essays about editorial business] (Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe sots-ekonomicheskoe izdatelstvo, 1934); D.[Dmitrii?] B.[Borisov?], "Fotografiia na sluzhbe u grafiki" [Photography in the service of the graphic arts], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] 5 (May 1935); and Boris M. Kisin, *Grafika v oformlenii knigi* [Graphic (arts) in book design] (Moscow: Gizlprom, 1938).

[130] For example Igor Starobogatov, the author of *Kak verstat' gazetu* [How to layout a newspaper] (1930), was a member of the editorial board of the famous publishing house of Ivan Sytin. I. D. Sytin, "Polveka dlya knigi: 1866-1916. 50-let tipografii I.D. Sytin'a" [Half a century for a book 1866-1916. Dedicated to 50-years of publishing business of I.D. Sytin], (1916), http://www.rulex.ru/rpg/portraits/22/22273.htm.

analysis of color perception in relation to typographic practice] (1929) presented "analyses of factors conditioning the perception of printed products."[131] He discussed the significance of color in printing as a means to "direct the feelings of the masses into this or another direction, to create this or that mood, to intrigue, to call attention," and claimed that by relying on theory and science this goal could be approached better than by relying on practice and individual experience.[132] The author mentioned European and American as well as Soviet studies of perception. For example, to explain why the addition of red pigment to titles or initials results in "the printed pages literally com[ing] to life," he referred to Sofia Beliaeva-Ekzempliarskaia's study *Ob illuzii vystupaiushchikh vpered tzvetov* [On the the illusion of projecting colors] (1924). A specialist in the psychology of perception, Beliaeva-Ekzempliarskaia discussed the ability of some colors (red and yellow) to project from the surface, resulting in the appearance of volume.[133] Publications concerning design theory continued to appear in the late 1930s (see Boris Kisin's 1938 *Graphic [art] in book design* discussed below), however attempts to institutionalize the theoretical studies of the newspaper business failed, and preoccupation with research, so characteristic of the 1920s, practically ceased to exist already in the early 1930s.[134]

In addition to theoretical treatises, there were several publications focusing on practical aspects of periodical press production. The most influential textbook for

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[131] Sredinskii, *Znachenie tsveta v pechati*, 85.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Sofia Beliaeva-Ekzempliarskaia, "Ob illuzii vystupaiushchikh vpered tzvetov" [On the illusion of the projecting colors], *Zhurnal psikhologii, nevrologii i psikhiatrii* [Journal of psycology, neurology and psychiatry] T.V. (1924). Cited in Sredinskii, *Znachenie tsveta v pechati*, 91.
[134] Irina Fateeva, "Pervaia teoretiko-zhurnalistkaia shkola v Rossii" [The first theoretical school of journalism in Russia], in *Kommunikatsii v sovremennom mire: materialy vserossiiskoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii* [Communication in the modern world: materials of the all-Russia scientific-practical conference], ed. V. V. Tulupov (Voronezh: Voronezh State University, 2007).

periodical press practitioners and students appeared in 1933, followed by numerous subsequent editions. Written by Boris Viazemskii and Mikhail Urlaub, both professors at the GIZH, the manual provided practical advice with an overview of previously published resources. It should be noted that, in the 1933 and 1934 editions, these publications were acknowledged, yet in the 1940 and all subsequent editions the names of the earlier mentioned sources disappeared together with the name of co-author Urlaub, who, in the late 1930s, was "purged" and convicted to serve fifteen years in labor camps. Though he returned from the camps and continued to teach in the 1960s, his co-authorship was never reinstalled.[135]

Echoing the party line, the manual stated that the first and foremost task of the technical design of the Soviet newspaper was to provide typeset, printing and design that organized the readers' attention and gave most prominence to the materials, that were dedicated to the important political questions.[136] In compliance with the anti-Western rhetoric of the time, Viazemskii and Urlaub attacked "bourgeois" theories of design. Nonetheless, the very mention of these theories proves the comprehensive professional expertise of the authors and their awareness of international trends. In their 1933 attack on Western design theories, the authors dwell on the alleged lack of a correlation between design and political content. Without providing direct references to any specific Western theoretician, they dismissed what they called the "Western" vision of design as a concept "ruled by inner 'laws,' dictated by the nature of the typographic material, by the 'laws' of

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[135] For biographical information see M. Bekova and E. Travina, "Glazami zhurnalista" [Through the eyes of a journalist], in *History* (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University, 1969); and N. Podshivalov, "Legenda kafedry: nash MiKo" [Legends of the department: our MiKo], (2004), http://new.jf.pu.ru/museum/271/293.html; also published in N. Podshivalov, *Klassnyi oformitel* [Great Designer] (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University, 2004), 12-14.

[136] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 7-8.

newspaper aesthetics, and by consideration of the readers' convenience."[137] They vigorously attacked the "rule of the golden section" and the "law of symmetry and contrast," which, according to the Western theory they criticized, dictated the format of the paper, illustrations, headings, and all other elements of newspaper design.[138] Since these "laws" imply some kind of divine order they could not be taken seriously by Soviet designers who were supposed to perceive life through the lens of "dialectical materialism."

While most Western theoreticians of design remained anonymous to Soviet readers, the German graphic designer Jan Tschichold, who dedicated special attention to the "golden section" as a ruling concept of design in his influential theory was singled out in Viazemskii and Urlaub's criticism of Western theories. A Soviet regime sympathizer, Tschichold, one of the founding fathers of modern typography, was closely associated with the Constructivists and with El Lissitsky. Several chapters from his book, *New Typography*, published in 1928 in Germany, appeared in 1929 in the Soviet magazine for printing professionals, *Poligraficheskoe proizvodstvo* [Polygraphic industry].[139] As the attacks on Formalism increased, his theories were rejected since he was placed in the same camp with other Constructivists. For that reason, Viazemskii and Urlaub refer to him as a "bourgeois theoretician" and criticized Tschichold and his followers for their "attachment to the placement of titles on the left side of a page," which they exercised,

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[137] Ibid., 8-9.

[138] During the Renaissance, a body of literature was developed on the aesthetics of the golden ratio (2:3, 1:√3).

139 Jan Tschichold, Die neue Typographie [The new typography] (Berlin: Des Bildungsverbandes Der Deutschen Buchdrucker, 1928). The Russian version appeared as Tschichold, "Novoe oformlenie pechatnogo proizvedeniia" [New design of a printed product], *Poligraphicheskoe proizvodstvo* [Polygraphy industry], no. 6, 7, 8 (1929): 15-19;13-20; 15-21. Tschichold planned to publish a full Russian translation of his book. For more on Tschichold see Christopher Burke, *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography* (London: Hyphen, 2007).

according to Viazemskii and Urlaub, due to their incorrect belief that such placement created a "more revolutionary" layout.[140]

After rebuking Westerns theories, Viazemskii and Urlaub reproached "native" Formalism for reducing the "revolution in newspaper design to the revolution of form only," resulting, in the authors' opinion, "in the disconnection of design from revolutionary content."[141] However, one cannot help but notice that, in presenting their own design rules, the authors utilized the very same principles practiced by the West after restating them in more pragmatic and politicized terms. For example, they welcomed as practical the "law of contrast" — the use of lighter fonts next to bolder fonts — since it helped to "enhance the accent on certain material."[142] They rebuffed the Formalist rejection of symmetry "for the sake of 'naked' asymmetry elevated to the law," yet recommended asymmetrical layout as more suitable for Soviet newspapers because it is more expressive and flexible. They insisted that symmetrical layout should be restricted to cases where it was conditioned by the material, and warned that symmetrical arrangement implied similarity, which could be misleading when used for material with diverse political actuality.[143]

Similarly close attention to graphic design and illustration is found in the book design theorist Boris Kisin's *Grafika v oformlenii knigi* [Graphic [arts] in book design] (1938). Serious consideration is given by Kisin to the critique of the Constructivist approach to design, indicating that the denunciation of Constructivist theories was still

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[140] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 10.
[141] "*Misticheskii estetizm*" [Mysterious Aestheticism] and "*Tekhnitsizm*" [Technicism] were also criticized in similar terms without any details or specific definitions. Ibid., 10-11.
[142] In passing, the authors mentioned that, in spite of false theories, the Western press is successful in serving the needs of the capitalist society. Ibid., 8-9.
[143] Ibid., 69.

relevant in 1938, thus indirectly attesting to the great importance of the movement. Compared to Viazemskii and Urlaub, Kisin's emphasis on the political connotation of the various layouts was much calmer in tone, though he, too, criticized turning asymmetry into a rule calling it: a "narrow-mindedness of Constructivism."[144] And, similar to Viazemskii and Urlaub, Kisin recommended asymmetric arrangement as the only way to deal with a "layout on the margins" (for magazines and fiction in order to allow for larger illustrations.[145] In other words, criticized as formalist/constructivist obsession, the asymmetrical layout nevertheless remained the most recommended for periodical press design.

Overall the differences between the Western and the Soviet formalist approach to design and that proposed by Viazemskii and Urlaub lay in the definition of the concepts rather than in the concepts themselves. The Soviet authors' bottom line is that design fulfills its role when political importance defines the placement of material and the layout is the "most beautiful, technically correct, and comfortable to read."[146] (So much for their dismissal of the bourgeois' "reader convenience" principle.) According to the authors, newspaper design had to consider proper organization, systematization and proper differentiation of material to insure easy navigation for the politically "weak" as well as novice reader. This orientation echoes the Party's Central Committee resolution of April 4, 1921 in which the periodical press designers were required to produce layouts that would allow the reader to comprehend with maximum ease all material offered by the newspaper."[147] In many subsequent documents special emphasis was placed on the

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[144] Kisin, *Grafika*, 31.
[145] Ibid., 72.
[146] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 11.
[147] "Tsyrkul'ar Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Partii ot 4 Aprelia 1921," 70.

importance of the layout in establishing a connection with the reader and in structuring political meaning.[148]

Apart from the frail theoretical novelty and politicization of the definitions, Soviet manuals provided sufficiently clear practical information and instruction. Viazemskii and Urlaub warned of producing a "blind newspaper," characterized by monotonous titles (identical thickness and style of fonts), or the opposite – motley titles that employ multiple fonts and visual elements. The authors explained that the employment of dozens of fonts and graphic elements did not solve the problem, but was distracting and made reading difficult. The correct approach required the placement of articles or pieces of information in locations "exactly corresponding to their [articles'] political importance." Viazemskii and Urlaub also emphasized that different types of design had to be used depending on the audience's socio-political and cultural levels as well as the intended purpose: "simplicity for the collective farm newspaper, sophistication for workers' periodicals."[149]

Viazemskii and Urlaub dedicated a special discussion to the illustrational material. They saw it as an essential element of newspaper and magazine design, and emphasized that a proper layout would bring out the full potential of the illustrative material. They criticized other Soviet authors for their failure to see the political importance of the visual content, regarding it merely as a method to enliven the newspapers' appearance.[150] For example, Igor Starobogatov's *Kak verstat' gazetu* [How

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[148] See "O gazetnoi tekhnike i bespechnykh redaktorakh" [About newspaper technique and irresponsible editors], *Pravda*, March 14 1937. Cited in V. V. Popov and S. M. Gurevich, *Proizvodstvo i oformlenie gazety* [Production and layout of the newspaper] (Moscow: Vysshaia shkola, 1977 ), 8-9.
[149] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 61.
[150] Specifically mentioned publications: Nikiforov's *Raionnaia gazeta* [Regional newspaper], *Fabrichno-zavodskaia gazeta* [Factory newspaper] (no publishing information) and V. Pavlov and A. Garri, *Kak*

to lay out a newspaper] (1930) was ridiculed for establishing poetic parallels between the role of the illustration in the newspaper and that of color in drawing."[151] Repeating the official directive, Viazemskii and Urlaub saw illustration foremost as a weapon in class struggle inseparable from class meaning. For them, a photograph, for example, was not just an objective document, but also a strong means of agitation, of propaganda, and of organization of the masses. Selection of the plot, layout, and presentation of the subject all had to speak the language of the classes.[152] The same rhetoric was typical of the period, and is characteristic of both Left- and Right-wing politics.

Technical Issues

*Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* featured a great variety of illustrational material, including reproductions of photographs, drawings, watercolors, lithographs, and paintings.[153] The most distinguished treatment was given to color images appearing on the covers and in special supplements or inserts. Paintings were also published as black-and-white reproductions with a clear distinction of their artistic quality via a credit-line mention of the artist's name and status, and the medium, as well as with the distinct positioning of the image within the page layout. Editors also used paintings as illustrations of events or stories related by the magazines. In these cases, the content of the artwork overrode its artistic association. The artist's name was often printed in a tiny font so as not to interfere with the message or it was omitted altogether. In some cases, artworks were used in illustrated spreads together with photographs. A closer look at

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*nuzhno delat' gazetu* [What is needed to make a newspaper] (Moscow: Izogiz, 1928). See Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 61.

[151] Igor Starobogatov, *Kak verstat' gazetu* [How to lay out a newspaper] (Moscow: Ogonek, 1930). Cited in Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 61.

[152] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 172.

[153] See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the use of painting within the magazines' layout.

some examples undertaken in the following chapters shows that when used this way, they represent historical facts (or fictions), and their artificiality was completely overlooked.

The proliferation of illustrations in the Soviet press should not be taken for granted. After the Civil War (1918-1921), the technical capacity of the Soviet printed media was practically destroyed and the regaining of the very ability to reproduce images required significant efforts. After the restoration of photomechanical reproduction capacities in 1923, not a single issue of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* was published without images. However, incorporating photomechanical reproduction within a text involved considerable cost and labor. For illustrations to appear beside the relevant text, images had to be cut separately, set in and glued to the binding edges of the adjacent pages.[154] To achieve fine quality reproductions of the illustrations, the images had to be printed using the halftone reproduction process on expensive, coated stock separately from the conventional rough stock used for letterpress printing of the text.

As supplements of the *Rabochaia gazeta* and *Krestianskaia gazeta*, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* benefited from the technical support provided by these largest non-party daily newspapers in circulation (such as printing presses and polygraphic supplies).[155] Around 1929 *Pravda* "swallowed" the printing plant earlier belonging to *Rabochaia gazeta* and became the mother-company of *Rabotnitsa*. In the 1930s, *Pravda* and *Krestianskaia gazeta* had the most powerful printing capacities and were among a few newspapers printed on offset machines.[156] They were capable of offset printing, which together with rotogravure were the only technologically advanced processes enabling the

[154] Sally Stein noted that similar difficulties were apparent in Western mass periodicals of the period. See Stein, "The Composite Photographic Image," 43.
[155] According to Kugel, 65% of the periodicals in the late 1920s existed as daughter companies of the main daily newspapers. Kugel, *Ocherki*, 23.
[156] Ibid., 152.

print production of a huge number of copies that was required for mass circulation. In fact, *Pravda* published the largest number of periodical supplements (a total of 14), yet still had difficulties in satisfying the demand to produce its newspapers and magazines in a timely manner. A similar situation existed at *Krestianskaia gazeta*.[157]

The importance of images in popular magazines is evidenced in the photo-essay, "Kak delaetsia zhurnal *Rabotnitsa*" [How the magazine *Rabotnitsa* is made], in which special attention is given to the reproduction process.[158] The text puts a strong emphasis on how printing on rotogravure machines allows for the reproduction of "high quality, softer and more naturalistic images." In fact, with the improvement of printing capacities the magazines significantly increased their number of reproduced artworks. The quality of the reproduced illustrations also depended on paper and ink supplies whose quality was often inadequate in relation to the technical requirements. Printers complained that printing supplies were not standardized, resulting in a discrepancy between expectations and results. Later in the decade, the situation improved with the purchase of new machines, yet tension continued to exist between editorial demands and printing press capacity.[159] At the same time, the majority of authors discussing the periodical press agreed that the poor quality of the printed products was rarely caused by inadequate printing capacities, but by editorial neglect of design issues.[160]

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[157] The government organs, *Izvestiia* and *Gudok*, had similar printing capacities. Ibid., 34.
[158] G-y, "Kak delaetsya zhurnal 'Rabotnitsa'" [How the journal "Rabotnitsa" is made], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 17 (1929).
[159] Kugel, *Ocherki*, 146. Discussions held in *Zhurnalist* (Journalist), *Poligraphicheskoe delo* (Polygraphy business), *Sovetskaia pechat* (Soviet press), and other magazines reveal a continuous exchange between editors and printing houses, each blaming the other for the poor quality of the publications.
[160] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 58.

Financial Issues

In addition to the technical issues, the illustrated press was also subject to copyrights, royalty payments, work distribution, and other aspects of cultural politics. The fact that the periodical press lay within the realm of mass (and, therefore, "low") culture did not actually avert Soviet professional artists from actively looking for ways to contribute to it. They readily provided cover designs, interior illustrations, caricatures, fashion patterns, and embroidery designs. To explain why professionals were so eagerly interested in working for the magazines, one must look into the financial system of arts support. As a result of the complete state control of art production and financing established in the early 1930s, Soviet artists were subordinate to the political system.[161] However, their artistic life depended less on ideological or aesthetic issues of the time and more on a hierarchic system that divided artists and certain established norms and expectations in the areas of production, distribution, and evaluation of artwork. In such a situation, the exalted rhetoric concerning the "high calling" of the artist in Soviet society that prevailed in professional artistic circles contrasted harshly with the material reality of the art world, which, in part, conditioned many Soviet artists to seek mass-media commissions for higher financial compensation.[162]

While artists' participation in cultural production for the masses was proof of their loyalty to the regime thus serving an ideological purpose, the major impetus for artists to work for the press had to do with financial reward. The average earning of professional

[161] Private patronage existed in a very limited way. For a discussion of the private patronage system see Plamper, *Alkhimiia vlasti*, 211-38. English version Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power* (forthcoming).

[162] Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*, 126, 41. Adherence to a "high calling" and a lack of desire to lower artistic status to that of newspaper artists is evident from the discussion in *Zhurnalist*, mentioned earlier in this Chapter. Editorial, "Prodolzhenie diskussii po pismu Izgoeva" [Continuing discussion concerning the letter of Izgoev], *Zhurnalist* [Journalist], no. 7 (1929).

artists was comparable with the salary of an engineer with average qualifications.[163] A typical source of income was the sale of copies of original paintings, yet painters received only 5% from such sale.[164] Under these circumstances, magazines provided venues for additional income as they frequently held competitions and offered commissions for cover designs and illustrations. Some artists worked for the periodical press as staff designers. In search of higher income many worked for several magazines and publishing houses at the same time.[165] Ekaterina Zernova, an established artist of the period, recalled that, at the beginning of her career, high-art painting provided practically no monetary compensation. In 1928, after graduating from VKhUTEMAS, she produced mostly graphic illustrations and earned a stable income from book and magazine illustration commissions.[166] Many artists continued to supplement their earnings in this way even after they had achieved a certain degree of recognition.

Clearly, work for the press ensured a minimal but stable income. In the 1930s, payment for the reproduction of a painting or drawing in a newspaper was about eight rubles, and fifteen rubles in a book or magazine.[167] Rules and tariffs had adjusted over time and, in 1937, a magazine was required to pay about fifty rubles for a small drawing

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[163] M. P. Lazarev, "Problemy tsenoobrazovaniia na prizvedeniia izobrazitelnogo iskusstva v SSSR. Popytka analiza" (Some issues in the process of appraising works of art in the USSR). Unpublished paper. Cited in Plamper, *Alkhimiia vlasti*, 435.

[164] Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*, 139-40.

[165] A record of the meeting of the All-Union Arts Committee dedicated to the establishment of pay rates contains artists' comments that this practice often led to work of a poor quality. "*Stenogramma soveshshaniia po ustanovke tarifov na izo-raboty*" (Transcript of the meeting regarding the establishment of tariffs for visual artworks)," RGALI: Fond 962, opis' 6, ed. khr.193, list 2-8 (1937).

[166] Ekaterina Zernova, *Vospominaniia monumentalista* [Memoirs of a monumentalist] (Moscow: Sovetskii Khudozhnik, 1985), 44. Aleksandr Zhitomirskii, the prominent photomontage artist of the Second World War period, recalled that, in his youth, he worked as a caricaturist for several magazines and newspapers. Aleksandr Zhitomirskii, *Iskusstvo politicheskogo fotomontazha* [The art of political montage] (Moscow: Plakat, 1983), 12.

[167] The publishing house *Iskusstvo* was in charge of providing payments. "Zasedanie moskovskogo komiteta grafikov i khudozhnikov knigi" [Meeting of the Moscow committee of graphic and book artists], RGALI, *Komitet po delam iskusstv*.

to be used within the text and 300 rubles for a front-cover illustration. For a commissioned cover design, a magazine could pay in the range of 300-350 rubles.[168] Established artists, or the so-called IIIrd category, were paid four times more for the same work. With such prices, many periodicals could not afford to commission high-quality reproductions from established artists, and cost-cutting considerations could condition the selection of a lower value or even the rejection of an illustration. Mass periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, usually restricted commissioned images to graphic illustrations of serial novels and short stories, preferring cheaper photo-based illustrations in regular issues. Editors also used secondary sources and recycled images that had appeared in history books and other periodicals. In addition, they reprinted copies of paintings, posters, and postcards that had been reproduced for mass circulation.[169]

*Iunyi Khudozhnik:* a Case for Comparison

As mentioned in the introduction, *Rabotnitsa*'s and *Krestianka*'s editorial office archives did not survive the Second World War.[170] Fortunately, an intact archive of the magazine *Iunyi Khudozhnik* offers a relevant case for comparison. This was an art magazine for children published from 1936 until 1941. The magazine focused on the fine arts; thus, publication of artwork was its prime goal and responsibility. Although this was not the case of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, published during the same period and subject to similar dynamics, *Iunyi Khudozhnik* provides a valuable insight into the operation of an editorial office of the time.

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[168] *Iunyi khudozhnik* agreed to pay 750 rubles for two versions of text-based covers for the 20th October Anniversary issue. RGALI, *Iunyi khudoznik*. See note 173

[169] For illustrations of historical subjects, such as the history of the Paris Commune or of the Civil War, the editors often used history books.

[170] See note 18.

Artist Evgenii Goliakhovskii, serving as a staff designer, produced most *Iunyi Khudozhnik* covers and layout designs. On special occasions the magazine commissioned additional submissions from out-of-house artists. The preparation of issues dedicated to special occasions or celebrations, such as the October Anniversary, involved additional efforts and resources. An editorial meeting held on May 26, 1937 reveals the process involved in making design decisions. The discussion concerned the issue to be published that year celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution. The meeting established that all articles and illustrations would express a "happy mood." Discussion of the options for the cover evolved around "approved" portraits of the leaders and politburo,[171] portraits of Lenin and Stalin, "some kind of revolutionary emblem" or a sculpture. It was decided that staff designer Evgenii Goliakhovskii would create two versions of the cover design. One version would include the text "*20 let Velikoi Oktiabrskoi Revolutsii*" [20 years of the Great October Revolution] without illustrations, while another would incorporate a "*kompozitsia velikikh masterov na temu*" (composition of great masters on the subject). Simultaneously, it was decided to commission a text-based cover from artists [?] Schwartz and [?] Echiotov.[172] The exclusion of images from the commission might be explained as a saving consideration. At the end, however, the magazine used a drawing by Peter Vasilev, entitled *V. Lenin i I. Stalin s krasnoarmeitsami v Smol'nom v 1917godu*

[171] Publication of photographs as well as hand-drawn portraits of Stalin required direct approval of his secretariat. A number of images had received official approval, and were permitted to be reproduced in various publications. See correspondence with Stalin's personal secretary, P. Poskrebyshev. RGASPI, Fond. 558, opis' 11, delo 1499 and 1475.

[172] RGALI, *Iunyi khudoznik*, ed. khr. 2; list 131.

[V. Lenin and I. Stalin with the Red Army soldiers in Smolny in 1917]. Echiotov's design was rejected as poor.[173]

The attention given to the design of the holiday issue is not surprising considering the importance of celebration rituals in Soviet culture. The editorial board tried hard to attain the design that best fitted the occasion. At the same time, the desire to commission a variety of cover versions may be explained in connection with censorship procedures. Each issue of the periodical had to be approved by the Censoring Agency *Glavlit* and by the publishing house.[174] It was wise to have back-up versions in case of rejection.

When a magazine desired to publish an existing image instead of commissioning a new one, a certain bureaucratic procedure had to be followed. To reproduce a museum painting, the editorial board had to receive permission from the publishing house Iskusstvo, which held the copyrights to museum images. Simultaneously, the board had to request the image or permission to photograph the original from the owning institution. Multiple image requests were sent to the Tretyakov Gallery. The Gallery had a photo-laboratory and an image archive that included not only images from its collection but from other museums as well. On October 10, 1936 *Iunyi Khudozhnik* requested photographs of three paintings by Aleksandr Gerasimov, the major Socialist Realist artist of the period. Apparently the Tretyakov Gallery archive did not have one of the images, *Tovarishch Stalin na XVI s'ezde* [Comrade Stalin in the XVI Congress] and *Iunyi*

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[173] In July of 1937, instead of two "highly-artistic cover designs" Echiotov submitted only one version, which was rejected as "poor." In accordance with his work contract, the artist received partial compensation of 200 rubles, instead of the full amount of 750 rubles. Ibid., ed. khr. 3, list 141. It is unknown if Schwartz submitted any designs.

[174] For a detailed discussion of the approval process of polygraphic production see Klaus Waschik and Nina Baburina, *Iskusstvo russkogo plakata XX veka: real'nost' utopii* [The art of the Russian poster: Reality of the utopia] (Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2004). Also see T. M. Goriaeva and Z. K. Vodop'ianova, *Istoriia sovetskoi politicheskoi tsenzury: dokumenty i kommentarii* [History of Soviet political censorship: documents and comments] (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1997).

*Khudozhnik* promptly directed another request to the owning institution — Lenin's Museum. On August 27, 1936, editors wrote to Lenin's Museum, requesting the Museum to provide for their October issue of that year "reproductions or in case of their absence, to allow for the photographing of the paintings and engravings …."[175] After asking for permission to photograph the painting, *Iunyi Khudozhnik* promised to return the negative to the Museum.[176] This correspondence suggests that institutions carefully safeguarded their possessions and were not very flexible in supplying images nor in easing copyright procedures.

The Tretyakov Gallery appeared to be notoriously uncooperative in regard to image supply. The editors had to repeat requests several times, and, in some cases resorted to the application of official pressure. A letter from October 1, 1936 from *Iunyi Khudozhnik* to the Tretyakov Gallery reminded the latter of the official permission they had received from the publishing house Iskusstvo, and insisted that the required images be photographed in an urgent manner.[177] In 1937 the editors petitioned the All-Union Arts Committee to provide advance payment to the Tretyakov Gallery in the sum of 500 rubles, necessitated by the refusal of the Gallery's photo-laboratory to process orders prior to receiving payments. The pre-payment credit was needed because banks did not allow the processing of small monetary transfers, preventing the magazine from satisfying the museum's requirement.

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[175] Редакция просит предоставить для октябрьского номера журнала репродукции или в случае отсутствия таковых – разрешить произвести засьемку с картин и гравюр по прилагаемому списку. RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 3

[176] Other paintings were *Portret Voroshilova* (Portrait of Voroshilov) and *Peizazh-dozhd'* (Landscape – Rain). RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 6

[177] "согласно разрешению издательства Искусство просим срочно заснять и сделать 2 копии с двух эскизов Тропинина к портрету Пушкина." RGALI, Fond 1901, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 6

Overall, editorial office correspondence reflected the stressful side of the magazine's existence — technical problems, submission delays, impediments caused by censors, printers, and institutions providing images. On one occasion the magazine sent a telegram to the Russian Museum in Leningrad stating that they were "alarmed by not having received photos of Venitsianov requested by letter of April 23," and frantically asking for "immediate information regarding the status of the request."[178] According to this telegram, the upcoming issue of the magazine was in jeopardy as the layout and content were organized in direct relation to the discussed image. In some instances, lack of technical personnel led to a failure in fulfilling image requests. In 1937, Feodosia's Art Gallery could not organize the photographing of paintings requested by *Iunyi Khudozhnik* "because all [local] photographers were busy on works [related to] the [agricultural] season."[179]

Equally problematic was the acquisition of images from important art exhibitions. In 1939 *Iunyi Khudozhnik* wanted to publish drawings from Peter Vasil'ev's series "V. I. Lenin" exhibited at that time at the *Tsentralnyi Muzei Krasnoi Armii* [Central Museum of the Red Army] or TsMRKA. A letter to the museum's director contains several handwritten notes added in the margins that reveal curious details of the occasion. Someone named Grekova, probably the person in charge of the exhibition, was given an order to allow the photographing of the drawings. The removal of the drawings from

[178] "Обеспокоенны неполучением фото Веницианова заказаных письмом 23 апреля. Срывается номер. просьба немедленно сообщить положение заказа." RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 19-20

[179] "На просьбу Вашу о высылке снимков с картин, сообщаем что не смотря на все наши попытки организовать фотосьёмку картин на пластинках указаного Вами размера нам не удалось, так как все фотографы города заняты сезонной работой." Signed: Director (signature). RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 58

their display boards was prohibited, which impeded the photographing process.[180] Photographer I. Pavlov left a note in which he explained that he did not have time to photograph some of the artworks "since guided tours had started and [he] was asked to stop working." The photographer added that "missing photographs could be received from the Photo-Chronicle [Agency] since the exhibition was photographed by photographer Shirokov."[181] This incident suggests the confusing state of communication and frequent lack of cooperation between various institutions. The anxiety expressed in letters dealing with image requests hints to the probability of competition among the periodicals as each strove to be in the forefront by publishing the most current material.

Analysis of the art-related material appearing in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* reveals many affinities with *Iunyi Khudozhnik*, ensuring the relevance of the proposed comparison. It should be noted that *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* can hardly be expected to have exerted the same level of effort in obtaining images for their publications. After all, these were popular magazines for general audiences and did not specialize in the arts. Nevertheless, the magazines highlighted their role to create a bridge between the masses and high culture as important part of their mission, thus images published in these magazines carried very serious educational and cultural connotations. As was shown in this chapter, the illustrated magazines design methods and character and quality of the illustrations were affected by changes in socio-economic conditions, censorship, and the early twentieth-century theoretical artistic discourse. The magazines were also subjected

[180] "тov. Грекова. Допустить к сьемке. Рисунки со щитов снимать не разрешаю". RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 42

[181] He even provided Shirokov's phone number. "Ленин и Ворошилов – не успел снять, так как начались экскурсии и меня попросили прекратить работу." И. Павлов. То же с N. 9 "Сталин и Ворошилов проважают Ткачева." Не достающие снимки можно получить в фото-хронике. Эта выставка заснята фотографом Широковым. Т.4-54-37." RGALI, Fond 1901`, opis' 1, ed. khr. 4; list 42

to the technological capabilities of the publishing industry, the availability of professional designers and artists, as well as many, often pragmatic, editorial concerns.

## Chapter II. Art and the Masses

Historians have documented several stages in the cultural politics of the Soviet State.[182] The end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s were dominated by the concept of proletarian culture and the ideal of the ascetic, self-sacrificing worker. In the mid-1930s, the former ideals of revolutionary asceticism and social egalitarianism gave way to the emergence of a new hierarchy and a new system of social order, one that allowed for a more individualistic way of life. As historian Jukka Gronow had noted, the changed social order allowed and promoted art consumption, which is specifically relevant for this discussion.[183]

As noted in the introduction, the process of art consumer formation was connected to the policy of *kul'turnost'*, which aimed to discipline new masses by shaping everyday behavior in accordance with uniform social norms, and to integrate the values of the lower strata with those of the elite.[184] This was a program to introduce and popularize behavioral practices predominantly to new social groups such as shock-workers, *stakhanovites*, and the new managerial elite. The first period of *kul'turnost'* (1934-1936) was associated with personal hygiene, the use of proper language, and the material environment. In 1936-7 it came to signify a certain level of cultural knowledge.

Russian scholar Galina Iankovskaia emphasized that the politics of promoting the arts to the masses involved the importation of practices typical of the privileged strata of

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[182] For a recent discussion of the periodization of Stalinist culture see Catriona Kelly and David Shepherd, eds., *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution, 1881-1940* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also see Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Stalinism: New Directions* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

[183] For an extended discussion of the cultural context of consumption see Gronow, *Caviar with Champagne*.

[184] See Kelly and Volkov, "Constructing Russian Culture," 295; Volkov, "The Concept of Kul'turnost'."

pre-revolutionary society into the class of workers and peasants.[185] The consumption of art (visiting exhibitions, collecting images in albums, framing illustrations, and purchasing paintings, graphic arts, sculpture, etc.) belonged to the category of "conspicuous consumption" and served as a social filter.[186] These were activities associated with cultured, "civilized" life that marked one's belonging to a socially privileged group.[187] In addition, there were new social practices associated with art consumption — for instance, the new mass audience for art had to master a new visual language. The "New Soviet Person," developing from a former peasant or worker, had to master new modern visual language used in caricature, photography, and painting, which differed substantially from the traditional visual expression of folk art, icons, and the *lubok*. The popular periodical press served as an important aid in this process.

The majority of paintings found in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* belong to a type of representational imagery with clear, comprehensible messages that reflected the aesthetic vision promoted by AKhR.[188] AKhR artists aggressively promoted the "heroic realism" style as the only acceptable style for Soviet art, and their take on artistic vision corresponded with the Socialist Realist doctrine developing at that time across cultural fields.[189] Most of the artists published in the magazines were associated with this

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[185] Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*, 157. Also see Marina Magidovich, "Pole iskusstva kak predmet izucheniia" [Field of art as a scholarly subject], *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie* [New literary overview] 60, no. 2 (2003): 64-65.

[186] The term was introduced by Veblen (Thorstein Chase Stuart Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: an Economic Study of Institutions* (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/833/833-h/833-h.htm, 1899).) For a history of consumption and historiography of the term see Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1999).

[187] For an extensive discussion of art consumption in the USSR see Iankovskaia and Mitchell, "The Economic Dimensions of Art in the Stalinist Era," 770. Also see Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*.

[188] I am using the acronym, AKhR (rather than AKhRR), since that is how the organization was called in the period under consideration.

[189] Clement Voroshilov's patronage enabled AKhR to gain its power, and to keep it after all artists' groups were disbanded. Stalin also expressed a favorable attitude towards AKhR, according to the artists' accounts of their meeting with Stalin in 1933. Allegedly, in that meeting, Stalin indicated that their version of

organization, which was referred to by art historian Brandon Taylor as "arguably the most powerful art group" of the early twentieth century in Russia.[190] By the 1930s AKhR had developed the widest network of local branches, organized the largest number of exhibitions, and took over the main official positions within the art establishment. Following the 1932 decree of the dissolution of all art groups, AKhR members managed to fill practically all the managerial positions in artistic institutions, and, as a result, monopolized the governance of art.[191] Consequently, the visual content of the mass media was also subject to AKhR's control.

Probably as a result of AKhR's politics, artists belonging to other art groups were rarely published in the mass magazines. A notable exception is the publication of Aleksandr Deineka's painting *Oborona Petrograda* [Defense of Petrograd] (1928) in a 1928 issue of *Rabotnitsa* (Figure 1). Deineka was one of the founders of Obshchestvo stankovistov [Stander's Society] or OST), organized in 1925. OST shared AKhR's philosophy that emphasized easel-painting and figurative style, yet they rejected the realist style of the *Peredvizhniki*.[192] *Defense of Petrograd* is an early monumental picture depicting a historic-revolutionary event. In the magazine it was used to illustrate an article entitled "*Pod Leningradom Iudenich*" [Iudenich is near Leningrad], which

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realism should become hegemonic. According to Russian historian, Vitalii Manin, this encouragement provoked these artists to aggressively campaign for their vision, and to take control over the art education system in the Leningrad Academy of Arts in 1933-34. See Vitalii Manin, "Istoriia iz istorii" [A story from history], *Tvorchestvo* [Creativity], no. 7 (1989): 12.

[190] Taylor, "Art of the Soviets," 51.

[191] In 1926 a group of artists sent a letter to Stalin voicing their opposition to the exclusive support of AKhR by the government. No reaction followed. Then, in 1935, another attempt led to the same result. See Oleg Naumov and Andrei Artizov, *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: dokumenty TSK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VChK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953* [Power and artistic intelligentsia: The document of TSK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VChK-OGPU-NKVD concerning cultural policies 1917-1953] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond "Demokratiia", 1999), 60-1; and Goriaeva and Vodop'ianova, *Istoriia sovetskoi politicheskoi tsenzury*, 479-80.

[192] For more on OST see Manin, *Iskusstvo i vlast'*. For more on Deineka see Christina Kiaer, "Was Socialist Realism Forced Labour? The Case of Aleksandr Deineka in the 1930s," *Oxford Art Journal* 28, no. 3 (2005).

described the defense of Leningrad during the Civil War. The painting is prominently placed at the center of the page with a caption not only crediting the artist but also explaining the composition: "*Vverkhu-s fronta. Vnizu – na front*" [Upper part – from the front-line. Lower part – to the front line]. The magazine makes no reference to the group to which the artist belongs, unlike those other artists whose membership in AKhR was usually mentioned.

The mid-thirties also saw the restoration of the Academy of Arts (1933) with its emphasis on such academic values as excellent technical skills, admiration for works of old masters, and the hierarchy of genres. History genre and large-scale thematic painting known as the *kartina* became the most prestigious mode of painting. Cultural and artistic debates of the period, such as the infamous anti-formalist campaign, affected the popular press. Selection of featured artists, exhibitions, and paintings had to be done in accordance with official policies, yet these were subject to interpretation, allowing for a certain freedom of choice.

## Women Artists in Women's Magazines: a Frail Attempt to Promote Women Artists

A popular media for general audiences, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* in most cases selected artworks and artists based on their official approval. At the same time, these were women's magazines with an understandable interest in highlighting works of women artists. However, the number of women artists featured in the magazines was very low, which corresponds with the general situation of women artists during the 1930s.

As art historian Susan Reid has shown, the success that women artists enjoyed in the 1920s faded when conservative tendencies prevailed and easel painting regained its

cult status in the mid-1930s. [193] At that time, Stalinist art discourse restored a gendered conception of art-making that identified artistic creativity with masculinity.[194] Women's exclusion from, or very limited representation in, major exhibitions and art literature also resulted from the general loss of commitment to women's equality that characterized the period.[195] Even those who graduated from art school often failed to make careers as artists. Given the failure of the Soviet state to deliver on its promises to liberate women from their enslavement to domestic chores, many women artists found that it was nearly impossible to keep up with the sustained, concentrated work demanded by a professional artistic career. Only a handful of well-known women artists were privileged to maintain studios, clear signs of professional recognition. In accordance with this situation, the magazines featured works of only few female artists — in spite of the obvious objective to highlight the achievements of women at large. It is also not very surprising that the featured women belonged to the category of the above-mentioned few who enjoyed professional recognition.

In *Krestianka*'s review of the exhibition *Zhenshchina vostoka v iskusstve* [A woman of the East in art], staged in 1928 as part of the ten-year October Anniversary, the participation of women sculptors was discussed as a "notable success in the field of arts."[196] The magazine proudly reproduced Vera Mukhina's *Krestianka* [Peasant

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[193] See Reid, "All Stalin's Women," 160.

[194] According to Reid, the brief ascendance of women artists had been supported by the Constructivist demystification of creativity, the critique of the notion of genius, and the leveling of the class and gender-based hierarchy of fine and utilitarian arts, all of which, in the bourgeois art world, sustained male dominance. Ibid., 159.

[195] Only seven women artists were included in the Soviet Pavilion of the 1937 Paris Exposition, while there were about one hundred male artists. Ibid., 158-9.

[196] "Zhenshchina vostoka v iskusstve" [A woman of the East in art], *Krestianka*, no. 6 (1928 ). The exhibition opened in January 1928 in Moscow. 136 artists showed 230 artworks with at least 13 women artists among them. The names were listed in the catalogue. "Vystavka khudozhestvennykh proizvedenii k desiatomu iubileiu Oktiabr'skoi revolutsii" (Exhibition of Artworks dedicated for the Tenth Anniversary of

woman] (1927), which was the first-prize winner, while works of SarraLebedeva, *Krestianka-partizanka* [A Peasant-woman – Partisan], Tatiana Smotrova, and Olga Somova, who also received prizes for their sculptures, were mentioned in the text. Women artists received attention in *Rabotnitsa* in 1934 (Figure 2), and women architects, in 1935 (Figure 3).[197]

In Russia handicrafts traditionally were seen as typical women's work and were increasingly promoted as such in the second part of the 1930s. [198] Accordingly, *Rabotnitsa* presented an illustrated article, "*Iskusstnye rukodel'nitsy*" [Skillful craft-women], about a 1936 exhibition of works by wives of Red Army commanders from the Kiev region (Figure 4). In January of 1937 *Rabotnitsa* emphasized the craft work in its review of the exhibition held on the occasion of the All-Union congress of the wives of Red Army commanders and at the end of August 1937, reported on an exhibition of work by housewives that included artificial flowers, embroidery, lace making, and cookery.[199] In 1939 an embroidery, *Lenin i Stalin u karty grazhdanskoi voiny*" [Lenin and Stalin [standing] by the Map of Civil War Fronts]" was featured in a manner similar to

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October) (1928) and included: O. L. Della-vos-Kardovskaia, M. A. Denisova. S. D. Lebedeva, T. L. Lilovaia, V. I. Mukhina, Iu. L. Obolenskaia, M. D. Ryndziunskaia, S. V. Riangina, B. Iu. Sandomirskaia [T. F.] Smotrova, O. K. Somova, M. M. Strakhovskaia, N. A. Udal'tsova. V. G. Azarkovich, R. R. Badin, and V. I. Burdina, *Vystavki sovetskogo izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva: spravochnik* [Exhibitions of Soviet art: reference guide], ed. E. Butorina, 4 vols. (Moscow: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1965), vol.1, p.249. Following that show, Mukhina's career started to grow. Sarra Lebedeva continued to enjoy success under the Soviet regime, and was among the few women representing the USSR in the 1937 Paris Exposition. See RGALI, Fond 962, opis' 6, ed. khr. 154, 11, list 49-52. Cited in Reid, "All Stalin's Women," note 84. All that is known about Smotrova is that she graduated from VKhUTEMAS in 1926, and exhibited in the "15 Years of the RKKA." exhibition in 1933. See *15 Let RKKA* [15 Years of the RKKA.] (Moscow: Vsekokhudozhnik, 1933).

[197] The featured women artists included (in this order) N. Goldberg, Z. Ivanova, Kaplan, E. G. Blinova, Zinberg, N. V. Krandievskaia, Kovarskaia, A. N. Kuznetsova, Somova, Z.C. Rakitina (the editor of Rabotnitsa from 1923 till 1927), T. F. Smotrova (all sculptors), N. F. Korotkova (painter), E. L. Klochkova (textile), N. V. Poluektova (textile), N. S. Manannikova (painter), Sarra Lebedeva (sculptor), Sandomirskaia (sculptor). Mentioned architects were Bykova, Maria Komarova and Olga Zaichikova.

[198] This was also noted in Reid, "All Stalin's Women," 160.

[199] A. Ashmarina, "Vystavka talaintlivykh rabot," *Rabotnitsa*, 1937, no. 1: 19; I. Lavrova, "Vstrecha-vystavka" [Encounter-exhibition], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 26 (1937): 12.

reproduction of a painting would be used. The caption emphasized the craft origin of the work by stating that the embroidery was produced collectively by wives of teachers and students of the military academy named after Mikhail Frunze (Figure 5). The work of professional women artists was acknowledged in the magazine's review of *The First Exhibition of Women Artists* mounted in 1938.[200] This was also the earliest instance of the magazine dedicating a whole page to a review of a Soviet art exhibition; before this only museum exhibitions of nineteenth-century art deserved such attention. The text by an established Soviet artist, Serafima Riangina, was illustrated by a large-scale photograph of the general view of the exhibition and by reproductions of two paintings displayed in the show: Olga Ianovskaia's sketch *Slushaiut doklad* [Listening to a report] and a fragment from a mural (no title is given) produced by Z. Vasil'eva in cooperation with A. Troskunov (Figure 6). Notably, *Krestianka* did not even mention this significant event in the history of women artists.

Riangina was one of the most successful women in the Soviet art world and *Rabotnitsa* featured her works more frequently than of any other individual artist. [201] In 1929 *Rabotnitsa* reproduced two paintings by the artist in its section entitled "*Iskusstvo*" [Art] on the occasion of the AKhR eleventh exhibition, though no information about the show itself was included (Figure 7).[202] The paintings were two genre scenes, *Otbrosy* [Waste] and *Zhena* [Wife], painted in 1928 and 1929, respectively. These works are characteristic of the artist's early career, when she focused on detailed representations of

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[200] Serafima Riangina, "Pervaia vystavka zhenshchin khudozhnits" [First exhibition of women artists], ibid., no. 10 (1938 ). The exhibition did not attract any serious attention and was practically a failure. For a detailed discussion of this exhibition see Reid, "All Stalin's Women."
[201] For biographical information see R. S. Kaufman, *Serafima Vasil'evna Riangina* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1948); and S. V. Razumovskaia, *Serafima Vasil'evna Riangina* (Moscow: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1957).
[202] V. Lobanov, "Khudozhnik S.V. Ryangina" [The artist S.V. Ryangina], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 24 (1929).

everyday life, [203] and were especially relevant to the magazine's readership. *Waste* depicts alcoholics in the city slums — a serious problem faced by Russian society, and *Wife* refers to a situation facing many peasant families. The male breadwinner of the family, who moved to the city in search of work to support his family, often eventually abandoned his wife and children. In *Wife*, a woman and her child arrive from the countryside in search of their husband and father only to find him living with another woman. The subjects of both works are explained in the text to ensure their proper interpretation.

Later, in 1935, a cropped figure from Riangina's *Uzbechka v parandzhe* [Uzbek-woman in veil] accompanied an article entitled *Osvobozhdennaia: s'ezd schastlivykh* [Liberated: Congress of the happy ones] (Figure 8). The painting was produced during her earlier trip to Samarkand, in 1926, in preparation for AKhR's eighth exhibition *Zhizn' narodov SSSR* [Life of the Peoples of the USSR]. This work, later hailed as the first breakthrough of the artist into truly Soviet subject matter, was hardly noticed by the critics, although it was reproduced in the catalogue of the AKhR's exhibition.[204] The selection of the image suggests that Riangina might have been in charge of the magazine design.

In 1936 Riangina's depiction of Karelia's tourist attraction, the waterfall Kivach, illustrated the cover of *Rabotnitsa* with an explanatory essay written in co-authorship with her husband, Boris Iakovlev, on the inner cover (Figure 9). That year Riangina returned from her trip to Karelia, undertaken as an assignment for the *Industry of*

[203] Razumovskaia, *Riangina*, 23.
[204] Ibid., 77.

*Socialism* exhibition.[205] According to her letters, she produced several watercolors, including a depiction of the waterfall Kivach, presumably the one reproduced on the cover.[206] The exploration of nature as well as landscape painting gained high importance in Soviet culture of the late 1930s, and the magazines' choice of subjects accurately reflect this tendency.[207]

In the following years Riangina continued to supply cover illustrations and art reviews. In 1938 she reviewed the aforementioned *First Exhibition of Women Artists* (Figure 6). In the same year, her review of the *20 let RKKA* [Twentieth Anniversary of the Red Army] Exhibition was accompanied by several reproductions of artworks from the show (Figure 10). Her own success as a professional artist was acknowledged in Dariia Shpirkan's 1938 essay, "*Khudozhnitsy*" [Women-Artists] (Figure 11).[208] The essay was accompanied by several illustrations, among which was Riangina's *Lesoruby* [Lumber-cutters] (1937) — a painting prepared during the same trip to Karelia for the *Industry of Socialism Exhibition.*[209]

While Riangina was promoted (or rather self-promoted) by *Rabotnitsa*, *Krestianka* more frequently featured a prominent sculptor, Zinaida Rakitina. In 1931, the article "*Protiv imperialisticheskoi voiny*" [Against the Imperialist War] was illustrated with Rakitina's sculpture *V otvet interventam* [In response to Interventionists] (Figure

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[205] The *Industry of Socialism Exhibition* was an important step in the direction of defining Socialist Realism. It was initiated in 1935 and was to be opened in 1937, yet it was delayed until 1939. Many canonical works of Socialist Realism were produced for this exhibition. The historical significance of this show, as Reid pointed out, lay not only in its contribution to the formation of the Soviet style and iconography, but also in establishing, on an unprecedented scale, the system of a planned production of art under State patronage. For the in-depth discussion of the exhibition see Susan Reid, "De-Stalinization and the remodernization of Soviet art: The Search for a contemporary Realism 1953-1963," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1996).

[206] One of the letters is reprinted in Razumovskaia, *Riangina*, 35.

[207] See Mark Bassin, "'I Object to Rain That is Cheerless': Landscape Art and the Stalinist Aesthetic Imagination," *Ecumene* 7, no. 3 (2000).

[208] Shpirkan was a film director and a contributor to *Rabotnitsa*.

[209] Razumovskaia, *Riangina*, 37.

12), while her bas-relief of the influential German Communist and fighter for women's rights, Clara Zetkin, appeared on the back cover of the 1934 Spring issue (Figure 13). In 1935, two of her sculptures received distinct treatment as independent full-page illustrations without any explanatory text except for the caption, "*Raboty skulptora Z. S. Rakitinoi*" [The works of sculptor Z. S. Rakitina].[210]

Olga Ianovskaia, another success story of a female artist of the period, made an appearance in *Krestianka* in 1934. Her painting *Zanimaiutsia* [Studying] illustrated an article about the growing importance of reading on the collective farm (Figure 14). She joined the AKhR in 1929, yet it was her participation in the *Paris International Exhibition* of 1937 that enhanced her prominence as an artist. Following this event, her work appeared in both magazines of that year. Dariia Shpirkan mentioned Ianovskaia's work in the aforementioned 1938 article about women artists in *Rabotnitsa*, which included, as one of the illustrations, a reproduction of her painting, *V lozhe Akademicheskogo Teatra* [In the lodge of Academic Theater] (1937) (Figure 11). This painting became a canonical work of Socialist Realism after it was exhibited in the *Industry of Socialism* Exhibition with the title *V lozhe udarnikov v Bolshom Teatre* [In the shock workers' box at the Bolshoi Theatre].[211] Even following her success, Ianovskaia continued to work with *Rabotnitsa* and supplied a number of cover illustrations, the subjects of which were representative of Socialist Realist iconography. For example, her

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[210] These were *Rabfakovka* [*Rabfak* student] and *Podmoskovnaia kolhoznitsa* [Collective Farm Woman from the Moscow Region]. *Krestianka*, no. 8 (1935).From 1923 till 1927 Rakitina worked as as an editor in *Rabotnitsa*. This was mentioned in the article "Zhenshchiny-Khudozhnoki" *Rabotnitsa* no.6 (1934), 23. See Figure 2.

[211] Reid discussed this painting in terms of the regime's representation of women as the exemplary audience and chief beneficiaries of the regime, manifested through access to education and high culture. Reid, "All Stalin's Women," 172.

watercolor, *Stalin i deti* [Stalin with children], depicting the "father of all people" shaking hands with two young boys, illustrated the cover of the June 1938 issue (Figure 15).

Vera Mukhina, one of the most famous Soviet artists and a prominent member of the art establishment, was noticed in the previously mentioned 1928 review of a sculpture exhibition. In spite of the fact that Mukhina's career became successful as a result of that exhibition, she received further attention from women's magazines only in 1937 when her iconic piece, *Rabochii i krestianka* [Worker and peasant], created for the Soviet Pavilion of the *Paris International Exhibition* of 1937, appeared on the covers of both magazines (Figure 16a and 16b). The success of the sculpture provoked *Rabotnitsa* to follow up with a special article, also by Shpirkan, dedicated to the artist (Figure 17).[212] Typically for the rhetoric of the period, the author highlighted the connection between Mukhina's ability to fulfill her talent within the possibilities offered by the Soviet regime.

Less prominent women artists made occasional appearances in both magazines. In the same issue, next to the article about Mukhina, *Rabotnitsa* presented works by women artists S. M. Shor and A. I. Iakusheva (Figure 17). Both women were working on paintings for the Industry of Socialism Exhibition. Shor's portrait, short biography, and a reproduction of her painting *Osoaviakhimovtsy* [Osoaviakhim members] appear on the right side of the page next to Shpirkan's text. Below these appear a photograph of Iakusheva standing next to her easel and a sketch for the painting, *Severnyi polus budet nash* [The North Pole will be ours]. She is shown with palette and brushes — the artist's attributes — in her hands. It should be noted that the header for this material uses the word *khudozhniki,* meaning "male artists," despite the fact that both artists are female.

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[212] Dariia Shpirkan, "Skul'ptor s mirovoi slavoi" [A sculptor with world fame], *Rabotnitsa,* no. 29-30 (1937).

The phenomenon of the masculinization of women's work in literature and art criticism was typical of the period, and many women artists referred to themselves as "*khudozhnik*" refraining from the feminine form, "*khudozhnitsa.*"[213]

*Krestinaka* reproduced Olga Della-vos-Kardovskaia's painting *Tov. Voroshilov obuchaet rabotnits strel'be (1905 god)* [Comrade Voroshilov teaching women workers to shoot (1905)] as an illustration for an article about the Civil War (Figure 18). Della-vos-Kardovskaia was an established member of the Russian art world prior to the Revolution. She studied in Ilia Repin's studio and in 1916 received the designation of Academician by the Council of the Academy of Arts (together with Zinaida Serebriakova, Anna Ostroumova-Lebedeva, and A. Schneider). This would have been the first time in the history of the Academy that such a distinction was awarded to women artists. Unfortunately, the 1917 session of the Academy scheduled for the awards ceremony was canceled because of the outbreak of the February Revolution.[214] After the Revolution Della-vos-Kardovskaia remained in Soviet Russia, and became a professor at the Academy of Arts in 1922. Her initial style was close to Symbolism and Cezanne-ism, as the approach of the followers of Cezanne's style was called, yet she participated in AKhR's exhibition in 1923. She also participated in the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Red Army Exhibition in 1933. The subject and style of her work published in *Rabotnitsa* show conformity to the period preference for a thematic history painting (*kartina*) in a strictly figurative style. The contributions of other women artists' were usually confined

[213] For further discussion of the topic see Reid, "All Stalin's Women."
[214] See V. Lapshin, *Zinaida Evgenievna Serebriakova* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1969), 15; and Alison L. Hilton, "Zinaida Serebriakova," *Woman's Art Journal* 3, no. 2 (Autumn, 1982 - Winter, 1983): 35.

to watercolor cover illustrations.[215] The names of these artists are virtually unknown in the West, and very little information is available in Russia.

Amateur Artists in Women Magazines: Popularizing Professional Arts

Another group of artists relevant for *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* belonged to the amateur artists' movement. Amateur art, or *samodeiatel'noe iskusstvo* (literally translated as "self-active" or "self-made" art), was promoted by Soviet ideology as yet further proof of the regime's success. Amateur activities also included production of the *samouchki* artists [self-taught] that differed from *samodeiatelnye* artists in that they did not receive any training, while *samodeiatelnye* usually studied in the clubs for visual arts. In both cases, images of happy Soviet life painted by the very people who supposedly lived that life were the best confirmation of its reality. Amateur art practice carried special significance in the context of the 1920s when it was marked by political activism, agitational pathos, and a striving for the creation of the most original artistic forms for the new order of life. *Samodeetel'nost'* as such became a major driving force of the Revolution and of the cultural direction of the period.[216] *Komitet po politecheskomu*

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[215] Book illustrator Olga Deineko, had her painting, *Doiarka* (Milk-woman), published in *Krestianka*, no. 26 (1935): cover; Olga Semenova's *Park osen'iu* (Park in the Fall) appeared in *Krestianka*, no. 27 (1936): cover; E. Levina, *Portret* (Portrait), in *Rabotnitsa*, no. 24 (1938): cover; T. Pokrovskaia, *Vystuplenie Lenina na mitinge* (Lenin's Appearance at a Meeting), in *Rabotnitsa*, no. 31 (1938): 16-17; Tatyana Shevchenko, *Zima* (Winter), in *Rabotnitsa*, no. 36 (1938): cover; Ariadna Magidson, *Portret* (Portrait), in *Rabotnitsa*. no. 13 (1937): cover; Magidson and A. Kuznetsova, *Odnodnevnyi dom otdykha* (One-day house of rest), in *Rabotnitsa*, no. 16 (1937): cover.

[216] Professional artists worked in close contact with amateur movements in music, the theater, and the visual arts. The union of professional and amateur arts developed as a result of multiple utopian principles of the cultural practitioners of that period. At the same time, many professional artists worked in amateur theaters and on decorating committees for holiday celebrations and parades. During the devastating years of the Civil War these jobs provided them with a chance to earn money or, in most cases, some material supplies, such as bread or fuel. For many artists such participation was also a way to prove their loyalty to the regime. See S. Yu. Rumiantsev and A. P. Shul'pin, "Nekotorye teoreticheskie problemy i khudozhestvenno-esteticheskie osobennosti samodeetel'nogo tvorchestva 1920-kh godov " [Some theoretical issues and aesthetic distinctions of the amateur arts of the 1920s ], in *Samodeetel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: ocherki istorii 1917-1932 gg*, ed. K. G. Bogemskaia and L. P.

*prosveshcheniiu* [The Political-Enlightenment Committee], headed by Lenin's wife and advisor, Nadezhda Krupskaia, regarded amateur artistic activities as one of the main fields of the Cultural Revolution. Artistic education and cultural education were seen as essential for political enlightenment. Accordingly, the Committee developed a massive plan of cultural education and propaganda that aimed to educate the masses about the arts and classical cultural heritage.[217]

The desire to study the arts was great and massive in scope.[218] The earliest amateur artists' exhibition to take place in the provinces of Russia was in 1918. The artistic "occupation" was regarded as advancement upwards towards more prestigious spheres in life and society. In the early years of the Revolution, leftist artists took the lead in organizing and directing the amateur movement.[219] However, while Constructivist teachers in amateur studios wanted the student workers to produce innovative, agitational, and productivist art, the student workers themselves wanted to create paintings in a style that was familiar to them from pre-revolutionary postcards and magazine illustrations. They preferred to paint genre scenes, portraits, and landscapes.

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Solntseva (S.-Peterburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2000), 12. The rhetoric of the 1930s required professional artists to repay their debt to society by building a proper cultural taste among the masses and fulfilling the social order. For more on this subject see Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*, 107, 12.

[217] Rumiantsev and Shul'pin, "Samodeetel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo," 36.

[218] During 1918-1920, 106 visual art studios functioned in Moscow and Petrograd, and about 100 amateur artists participated in exhibitions. Lidiia Pinegina, *Sovetskii rabochii klass i khudozhestvennaia kul'tura, 1917-1932* [Soviet working class and artistic culture] (Moscow: Moscow State University, 1984), 111.

[219] In the early 1920s amateur artists worked on agitational propaganda producing designs for slogans and wall newspapers. The main goal was to prepare cultured viewers and listeners, and to transform the environment (*byt*) by the means of art. The emphasis was placed on the integration of cultural club activities with the political and educational program of the workers' clubs. The tasks provided by visual arts studios encompassed stage design, wall newspaper illustration, the production of posters and slogans, and the decoration of clubs. For discussion of the educational program in workers' clubs see Bogemskaia, "Samodeetel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR," 427. The activities of the amateur artists were subjected to the needs of political and production campaigns since they were expected to produce visual propaganda for international politics, revolutionary celebrations, industrial production, as well as to contribute to the needs of specific clubs. Frequently, participants of the artists' studios were overloaded with requests to decorate clubs, factories, and other facilities, to the extent that they did not have time for studio activities. For more see ibid.

The complex theories and abstract design principles of Constructivists (or 'Futurists, as they were more frequently called at the time) were distant from their own artistic interests and strivings.[220]

By 1929 AKhR took over the amateur artists' organizational issues.[221] The author of a 1933 study of the amateur artist movement, A. Chetyrkin, observed that the amateurs had a dominant desire to visualize stories they read in newspapers and in literature. In their letters to the editors of the magazine *Za proletarskoe iskusstvo* [For proletarian art], where Chetyrkin worked, amateur artists often "narrated" their paintings and defined their goal to create convincing "picture-stories."[222]

By the early 1930s, a centralized and state-controlled system of cultural production was engaged in the development of a unified "socialist" culture. The model of Stalinist culture attempted to collect and direct all cultural activities into one effectively controlled system, the so-called *obshenarodnaia* [all-peoples] culture. The myth of such a culture was promoted at all levels of society. The components of this myth included the advancement of talent from the low stratus of society to the very top,

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[220] Ibid., 405. By 1929 the network of studios had narrowed down, while demand was growing. This is according to a statistic study of the visual studio-clubs in the Moscow region produced in 1929. See Faina Roginskaia, "Bolezni izo-klubnoi raboty" [Diseases of the visual arts club work], *Iskusstvo v massy*, no. 7 (1929): 16. Cited in Bogemskaia, "Samodeetel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR," 431. Bogemskaia suggested that dissatisfaction with teaching methods and the lack of material support led to the decline of amateur art studio activities.

[221] In 1927 *Obshchestvo khudozhnikov samouchek* (Society of Self-taught Artists) or OKhS was formed. In the first exhibition of the Society in 1928, at least 97 participants showed their works. In 1928 it counted 126 members; in 1929, 227; in 1930, 218 members. AKhR started to supervise the Society beginning in 1929. For statistics see RGALI, Fond 645, opis' 1, ed. khr. 413, list 5-6. Cited in Pinegina, *Sovetskii rabochii klass*, 223.

[222] A. Chetyrkin, *Rabochie khudozhniki* [Workers-artists] (Moscow and Leningrad: Izogiz, 1933), 16. Also see Bogemskaia, "Samodeetel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR," 432.

the creative cooperation of professionals and amateurs, and the merging of phenomena different in their origins and artistic ranks.[223]

In accordance with this myth, the amateur visual arts were gradually transformed into a studio-type production with an emphasis on easel painting and sculpture, and with evaluation criteria conventionally applied to professional arts.[224] Amateur artists were regarded as popularizers of the professional arts, and the art education system was directed to teach the rules of Socialist Realism to everyone who wished to express him- or herself visually.[225] Amateur artists workers were discussed as people who solved "the contradiction between intellectual and physical labor."[226]

If the amateur arts developed more or less spontaneously before 1934, by 1935-36 the system of control was in place by means of methodological literature and instructors, organization of competitions through newspapers, professional training of club workers, and consultations provided by professional artists. In 1935 a program mirroring the program of professional education was distributed among *izo-kluby* [visual arts clubs]. In Leningrad, for example, members of the Electric plant's visual arts club, consisting predominantly of the shock workers, attended daily art classes that met from four to eight p.m. in the evening. They went regularly to museums to copy the drawings of Renaissance masters, reflecting the official direction to incorporate the "old" culture into

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[223] K. G. Bogemskaia, *Samodeiatel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: ocherki istorii, 1930-1950* [Amateur art in the USSR. Historical essays, 1930-1950], 2 vols. (Moscow: Institut iskusstvoznaniia, 1995), 23. v.1.

[224] Professionalization of amateur activities took place in other areas, such as amateur music productions. Local authorities promoted a classical repertory for folk instrument orchestras. Any performance of serious classical music was considered a cultural advancement. L. Robin C LaPasha, "From Chastushki to Tchaikovsky: Amateur Activity and the Production of Popular Culture in the Soviet 1930s," (Ph.D. Diss., Duke University, 2001), 9.

[225] Bogemskaia and Gamzatova, "Samodeetel'noe izobrazitel'noe," 164.

[226] *Tvorchestvo*, no. 4 (1936): 11. Cited in ibid., 176.

Socialist Realism.[227] In 1936 *Tsentral'naia khudozhestvennaia studiia* [The Central Art Studio] was opened in Moscow. The faculty included some very prominent members of the Soviet art world, including Konstantin Yuon, Sergei Gerasimov, and Vera Mukhina. The course of study was intense with classes taking place five times a week for four hours each. For many young workers, participation in an *izo-klub* provided an opportunity to get into art schools and become art teachers or club workers, which were more prestigious professions.

In 1935 *Pervaia vserossiiskaia vystavka kolkhoznykh khudozhnikov samouchek* [First All-Russia exhibition of collective-farm amateur (self-taught) artists] took place in the Museum of Visual Arts in Moscow, where 214 artists showed 657 artworks.[228] *Krestianka* featured a painting exhibited in the show entitled *Devushka u okna* [A young girl at the window] by T. Okhnichenko, a teacher in a collective farm in the Ukraine (Figure 19). Dressed in a puffed-sleeved blouse reminiscent of the Ukrainian folk costume, the girl in the painting is looking downwards with a slightly sad, melancholic gaze, paying no attention to the book she is holding in her idle hands. The dress is especially relevant when the context of the painting's placement is considered. It shares a page with an article describing the success story of one Ukrainian collective farm woman Lusha Levchenko. According to the article Levchenko — a *kulak's* servant before the revolution — rose to the position of the chairwoman of her village's soviet and was "best [chairwoman] in the region, and probably in the whole Ukraine." After describing Levchenko's success, the essay provides details of the village wealth. While the romantic tone of Okhnichenko's painting may not directly reflect the theme of the

[227] *Klub*, no. 5 (1934): 61. Cited in ibid., 167.
[228] In the same year, an exhibition of the *Artists Collective Farmers* took place in major industrial centers of Sverdlovsk, Donbas, and Archangelsk as well as in the Moscow region. See ibid., 180.

glorification of Soviet life, such signs as the book held by the girl, her festive dress, and the brightly lit interior with a large window indirectly attest to the benefits of life under Soviet regime. After all, the girl is able to read, she has free time to sit by the window, and she lives in a pleasant house. The painting visually confirms the idea of a wealthy and successful collective farm existence — especially if one is willing to see it this way.

Several issues later, *Krestianka* used another amateur artist painting to promote the myth of the wealthy and cultural environment of the Soviet countryside. Entitled *V izbe chuavasha-kolkhoznika* [In the house of a Chuvash collective farmer], it was painted by another collective farm teacher, Tolstov, who also happened to be a supervisor of the *izo-klub* of his village in the Chuvash republic (Figure 20). This work is positioned next to an article describing the establishment of an exemplary dining room in a collective farm in Georgia. Though this time unrelated to the text even geographically, the artwork depicts a large, brightly-lit interior, containing several chairs and a table covered with a white tablecloth. Two large windows are fitted with curtains, and houseplants rest on the windowsills. Portraits of Lenin and Stalin are placed above the windows at the right side of the composition. Such interior details were frequently discussed in the literature of the period as symbols of civilized life associated with *kul'turnost.'*[229] Even if indirectly, the artwork helped visualize the text of the article in which organized closets, white-washed walls, curtains, and tablecloths were mentioned in the dining room description.

For editors, it was important to emphasize that amateur artists produced such depictions since it helped to confirm the myth of Soviet success. Reviewers of the *First All-Russia Exhibition of Collective-Farm Amateur Artists* discussed it in light of Stalin's

[229] Kelly and Volkov, "Constructing Russian Culture," 295.

statement, "Life has become happier, life has become more joyful."[230] Amateur painting practice as such, as well as the subjects of the paintings — i.e. landscapes and still-lifes depicting the produce of collective farms, "*vydaiushchiesia po svoim kachestvam"* [remarkable in its qualities] — were seen by one of the reviewers as proof of this statement.[231]

As proof of this happier life, *Krestianka* featured large-scale reproductions of the painting *Domoi posle rodov* [Home after [baby] delivery], painted by the self-taught male painter [?] Morozov (Figure 21). Additionally, the text that appears below the painting promotes the new 1937 constitutional law providing for financial support to mothers with many children, and should be seen as part of the anti-abortion campaign undertaken by the magazine. The text delivered statistics reflecting the growth in the number of delivery rooms, daycare centers, and schools. The painter presents a collective farmer couple returning home with their newborn, where they are greeted by a school-age boy, indicating that they have other children. The artwork fits perfectly within the official requirements for artists: it is painted in "happy tones," and depicts the happy, "laughing faces of satisfied people."[232] This time the editors emphasized the fact that the artist is self-taught (*samouchka*) by pointing out that Morozov did not receive any training. In

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[230] Joseph Stalin, *Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, delivered November 17, 1935* (Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of foreign workers in the USSR, 1935). Translated in Joseph Stalin, "Speech at the First All-union Conference of Stakhanovites, Delivered November 17, 1935," in *Problems of Leninism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976 ).

[231] A. Gushhin, "Kolkhoznaia khudozhestvennaia samodeetel'nost" [Amateur arts activities of collective farms], *Iskusstvo* [Art], no. 2 (1935): 8. See also *Pervaia vserossiiskaia vystavka rabot kolkhozykh samodeetel'nykh khudozhnikov* [First all-Russia exhibition of works by collective-farms' amateur artists] (Moscow: Center of the amateur arts named after Nadezhda Krupskaia, 1935). Reviewed in Sobalevskii, N. "Raboty Khudozhnikov-samouchek" [Works of amateur artists], *Tvorchestvo*, no. 3 (1935):120; Chetyrkin, "Massy vydvigaiut khudozhnikov" [Masses Promote Artists], *Iskusstvo*, no. 6 (1935): 120 and Chetyrkin, "Khudozhniki bol'shoi i radostnoi zhizni" [Artists of the Large Happy Life], *Iskusstvo* (1936): 119. Cited in Bogemskaia and Gamzatova, "Samodeetel'noe izobrazitel'noe," 176.

[232] N. Sobolevskii, "Samodeetel'nye khudozhniki" [Amateur Artists], *Tvorchestvo*, no. 1 (1938): 22. For more on the subjects of paintings and exhibitions see Bogemskaia and Gamzatova, "Samodeetel'noe izobrazitel'noe," 178-79; and Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting.*

previous cases, artists were defined as "self-active" (*samodeetel'nyi*), implying that, while art was not their profession, they attended *izo-klub*. It is possible that the self-taught nature of Morozov's practice provided greater sincerity to the subject, and made it more genuine and independent of official propaganda.[233]

The intense schedule of the art clubs and the amount of time amateur painters spent in training help to explain the very limited participation of women in amateur art activities. Since the Soviet regime did not liberate women from housework as it had promised, for women workers, especially married women, it was impossible to spend several hours practicing art after work since they were required to take care of the household and their children who returned from daycare. Nevertheless, artistic activities were part of the liberation myth, and magazines used every opportunity to mention amateur women artists.

In 1928 *Rabotnitsa* placed a photograph of a woman working on a large-scale portrait drawing on an easel (Figure 22). The caption simply states that it is "a woman worker [attending a class] in a circle [section of a club] of visual arts," yet the dignified appearance of the woman, her focused face, and the highly-skilled drawing appearing on the easel clearly project the importance and value of her occupation. The photograph should be seen in the context of movement towards the professionalization of training and the preference for easel painting developing at the end of the 1920s. In 1934 *Krestianka* published a short review of the amateur artists' exhibition in Shchelkovo,

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[233] The campaign against abortion and promotion of in-hospital delivery was in full swing at that time. See Janet Evans, "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Women's Question: The Case of the 1936 Decree 'In Defense of Mother and Child'," *Journal of Contemporary History* 16 (October 1981). Also see N. B. Lebina, *Povsednevnaia zhizn sovetskogo goroda: normy i anomalii 1920-1930 gody* [Everyday life of the Soviet city: Norms and anomalies 1920-1930s.] (Helsinki and St. Petersburg: Kikimora and Neva, 1999), 264-94.

located in the Moscow region, and illustrated the review with a landscape painted by a female collective farmer named [?] Dmitreeva (Figure 23). The mediocre quality of the painting did not prevent the editors from choosing it, first because most amateur paintings were of a mediocre quality, and second because not only was the landscape among the most valued genres inherited from the nineteenth century but this was one produced by a woman.

Indeed, magazines tried their best to find women artists for their publications. The 1936 October Revolution anniversary issue of *Krestianka* featured an article, "*Strana rastet talantami*" [The Country grows with talents], that was illustrated by a self-portrait drawing of a collective-farm woman, who was identified as the self-taught sculptor M. N. Shiyanova (Figure 24). The text typically contrasted the pre-revolutionary life of women (who had no opportunity to develop creative talent) with Soviet life (where women could undertake various artistic careers). The same rhetoric was used in discussions concerning professional female artists. On the back cover of the following issue, *Krestianka's* editors reproduced a drawing by a collective farm woman named Chirkova (Figure 25). The slogan "*Liubliu chitat' proizvedeniia Pushkina*" [[I] love to read the works of Pushkin surrounds [?] Chirkova's portrait of the poet, which, according to the caption bellow, was produced in honor of the Pushkin Centennial celebration.[234] Once again, *Krestianka's* emphasis on the collective farm woman's artistic response to the highly important cultural event, helped to confirm the growing cultural level of collective farmers, and specifically women.

[234] For an in-depth discussion of the Pushkin Centennial celebration see Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*, Chapter 5.

Covers and Color Supplements: Bringing Art to the Masses

In addition to providing some representation of women artists and the amateurs' movement, the magazines functioned as vehicles of cultural instruction that familiarized the readers with the visual language of Socialist Realism. The limited printing capacities, discussed in Chapter I, prevented popular periodicals from having quality color reproductions within the magazine's layout. The most direct way in which *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* dealt with the distribution of art to the masses was in the form of color inserts and supplements printed on better paper that were included periodically in the magazines. Color artworks also appeared on the covers. Typical subjects included portraits of Soviet leaders and important Soviet paintings, as well as nineteenth century artworks. In *Rabotnitsa* such color supplements appeared from 1927 until about 1930 — the very end of NEP, through the first years of the Five-Year Plan. The table of contents announced the inclusion of such a color supplement, which often sounded like an advertisement rather than the presentation of an art object.[235] The tone was intended to attract readers to the magazine by emphasizing its added value, while a short blurb with information about the artist and artwork's meaning provided cultural instruction. Later, *Rabotnitsa* stopped publication of artwork reproductions as supplements, replacing them with supplements featuring embroidery and fashion patterns, children's activities, and cooking, household, and other practical advice.

In *Krestianka*, on the other hand, artworks as supplements were not included prior to 1936, when they started to appear in every other issue. *Krestianka*'s reproductions also came with explanatory text placed on the verso of the cover or in the back of the

[235] An announcement usually read as follows: "This issue comes with a free supplement: a reproduction of a painting. . . ."

issue. *Krestianka's* delayed inclusion of high-quality reproductions could be explained by the fact that rural areas during the First Five-Year Plan were undergoing the process of forced collectivization. At that time, propaganda efforts were directed against resistance to the process and there was little concern with bringing the fine arts to peasants. A similar delay in delivering high culture to rural sites was experienced in other areas of cultural activity, such as music, for example.[236] Yet, when collectivization was over and propaganda focused on a deeper ideological involvement of the peasantry in the Soviet mode of life, the periodical press addressing rural areas responded by expanding its cultural content. After all, for peasants, just as for workers, involvement with art and cultural activities was a marker of positive changes associated with socialism.

The appearance of higher-quality reproductions in *Krestianka* could be attributed to the differences of cultural conditions in urban and rural areas. By 1936 regional town centers had their own local museums where copies of major paintings were displayed. City dwellers enjoyed traveling exhibitions, and received relatively better supplies of art products, such as posters and artwork reproductions. In rural areas the situation was different: mass media continued to be a major source of cultural information and art-related materials.

Interior Illustrations: Giving Socialist Realism its Visual Form

One of the ways in which an artwork appears in the magazines' layout is exemplified by the publication of Konstantin Yuon's *Lenin v Smol'nom* [Lenin in Smolny] on the first page of *Krestianka*'s October Anniversary issue of 1930 (Figure 26). Reproduced in black and white, and thus less impressive than a color reproduction,

[236] For the discussion of amateur music activities see LaPasha, "From Chastushki to Tchaikovsky."

Yuon's painting still holds a distinct position in the magazine because of its size (half of the page) and because of the minimal amount of text surrounding the reproduction. As a type of illustration, it constitutes a typical example of the use of an artwork to illustrate a specific historic moment. The painting depicts Lenin's speech at the Second Congress of the Soviets in Petrograd in October of 1917. A short, yet large-font text printed underneath the artwork — a quote from Lenin starting with the words, "On October 21st, Lenin had been saying…" — further enhances the image's weight in the layout. The credit line for the artwork in a much smaller font is placed between the image and the quote without disrupting the visual connection between them. Such isolated reproductions typically appeared on the first page of the magazine and were usually combined with a quote from Lenin or Stalin's speech, a poem, or some other theme-setting text.

The publication of Yuon's painting deserves closer attention as it represents an interesting case where overlooked material in the mass media reveals the complexities and imperfections of the Soviet control system. A multi-figure composition depicting Lenin speaking in front of a large crowd was known as one of the artist's largest paintings. In October 1935 Yuon mentioned a painting with a slightly different title in his article, "*Stil' epokhi pretvorit' v zhivopis'*" [Turning the style of the epoch into painting], which was published in *Pravda*. Yuon wrote: "I am completing my work on a big painting that is close to a theme required by the exhibition *Industry of Socialism.* This is 'The First Appearance of Lenin in Smolny.' It is done at the request of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute."[237] The painting was also mentioned in 1936 in the petition for

[237] Konstantin Yuon, "Stil' epokhi pretvorit' v zhivopis'" [Style of the epoch to turn into painting], *Pravda*, October 9 1935.

Yuon's decoration with the Order of the Red, and was reviewed in the art journal *Iskusstvo* as a painting "restoring the correct historic details" of the event, including the details of the building and positions of the members of the audience and presidium.[238]

Recent research produced by Russian scholars reveals that the above-mentioned information concerning an artwork depicting Lenin's appearance at the Second Congress of Soviets refers to the second version of the artwork, painted in 1935 (Figure 27a).[239] In this version Stalin, Molotov, and other members of the Stalinist circle are depicted standing at the right side of the composition. None of these individuals, however, participated in the event that took place on October 25, 1917.[240] And none of them is depicted in the painting reproduced in *Krestianka*. In fact, *Krestianka*'s image is from an early version painted in 1927 that was recently re-discovered in the storage facility of the State Russian Museum (Figure 27b).[241] It was commissioned by the *Soviet Narodnykh Kommissarov* [the Council of People's Commissars] or Sovnarkom, and exhibited in the show dedicated to the tenth Anniversary of October (1927). In preparation of this work, Yuon very seriously considered the historic details of the event, and even requested

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[238] A. Bakushinskii, "Lenin v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve. Raboty 1933-1937" [Lenin in the visual arts. Works of 1933-1937], *Iskusstvo* [Art], no. 6 (1937).

[239] T. G. Koloskova and O. V. Kitashova, "Vozhdi revolutsii. Zabytaia kartina K. F. Yuona" [The leaders of the Revolution. A forgotten painting by Yuon], in *1917 god. Mify revolutsii* [Myths of the Revolution], ed. Sergei Mironenko (Moscow: State Archive of the Russian Federation, 2007), 13. The second version was found in 1998 in a storage room in the Museum of Lenin. It was listed in the records from 1935 as "K. F. Yuon, 'II Congress of Soviets', canvas, oil. 260-290 cm. No. K 178."

[240] The falsified history of the 1935 version reflected the changes underwent by society. The majority of the earlier depicted leaders were either dead, removed from power, or prosecuted. Congress itself was not even mentioned in the canonized version of the history of the Revolution, *The History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (1938), which was compulsory reading for Soviet citizens of all walks of life between 1938 and 1956.

[241] K. F. Yuon, *Pervoe poiavlenie V. I. Lenina na zasedanii Petrosoveta v Smol'nom 25 oktiabria 1917 goda* (The First appearance of Lenin during the session of Petrosovet in Smol'ny on October 25th, 1917), 1927, canvas, oil. 1320191. GRM. ZhS-1981. In *Krestianka* the image is cropped from all sides. The original composition is more spacious and included more figures on the left and right.

information from the participants.[242] His desire to be truthful led to a very unorthodox representation of Lenin, who, in the painting, is shown without his canonic beard. The artist explained this by the historic fact that "Lenin just returned from exile and traveled incognito. That is why he was clean shaven and wearing a wig which (in the picture) he just took off."[243] In spite of Yuon's efforts, the 1927 painting received a harsh critical reception from the art world as well as from the party. It was criticized as "a grotesque representation of the historical moment" resulting from "a very ambitious composition" and "a lack of historical distance" from the event.[244] Especially harsh, even threatening, was the reaction of the party committee, "*Uvekovechivanie pamiati Lenina*" [The perpetuation of Lenin's memory].[245] I. P. Tovstukha, a member of the committee, wrote: "In my opinion, for such vulgarity (*pokhabshhina*) [we] should first put Yuon and AKhR's administration in Butyrki [jail] for two weeks; second, all members of the SNK [Sovnarkom] commission [in jail] for one month, the chair of the commission for two months; third, the painting [must be] destroyed."[246] Another member of the committee, A. S. Enukidze, wrote: "Worthless! Worst caricature of the first day of the Second Congress [of Soviets]."[247] Following such a negative reception, the painting was kept from the mass reproduction for which it was originally intended. It was transferred to the Narkompross's [People's Commissariat for Education] fund for arts, and temporarily held at the Tretyakov Gallery (from 1929 until 1930). In 1931 it was exhibited for the last

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[242] He requested such information from one of the party's old-timers, Emelian Iaroslavskii. Cited in Koloskova and Kitashova, "Vozhdi revolutsii," 15.
[243] Yuon, "Otchet raboty za 1926 -1927 god." RGALI. Fond. 941, opis' l, delo 746, list 37. Cited in ibid.
[244] Iakov Tugendkhol'd, "Smotr iskusstva" [Parade of art], *Pechat' i revolutsiia* [Printed press and the revolution] 2 (1928). Cited in Koloskova and Kitashova, "Vozhdi revolutsii," 16.
[245] The commission was organized in 1924 in order to coordinate Lenin's burial and commemoration. It was first headed by Felix Dzerzhinsky, then by Leonid Krasin. See Plamper, *Alkhimiia vlasti*, 47.
[246] RGASPI. Fond 6, opis' 627, list 54. Cited in Koloskova and Kitashova, "Vozhdi revolutsii," 16.
[247] RGASPI. Fond 6, opis' 627, list 56. Cited in ibid.

time in Yuon's one-man show. Eventually it ended up in the State Russian Museum, where it was placed in closed storage.[248]

Researchers of Soviet culture note the powerful function of censorship and self-censorship leading to the alteration and destruction of banned or controversial images from books and other publications.[249] Curiously, when *Krestianka* reproduced the work in 1930, it had already been disapproved and retained in the Tretyakov Gallery. The negative reception, however, did not prevent the editors from using this work to illustrate the October Anniversary issue of that year. Censors apparently missed or, for some reason, did not mind the depiction of Leon Trotsky, who at that time was in exile, in the midst of a group of Bolsheviks (far right). He was already proclaimed the enemy of the people, and in the May parade of the same year his figure was used to personify the villain of the Revolution. In the end, the truthful depiction of history was buried away from the viewer's eye; the historic event was retold and re-painted in the new falsified version by the artist of his own will.[250] Yet, the original version still reached the wider public as a magazine illustration, and the initial, truthful depiction of the story was preserved and distributed across the country. In other words, the publication of this painting in 1930 exposes the imperfection of the Soviet censoring machine, and suggests that popular mass periodicals could be a mine of such transgressions.

Individual images were also published in association with articles and essays. In the majority of cases, the artwork did not illustrate the specific narrative of the text; but

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[248] For an account of the painting's history see ibid.

[249] The literature on Soviet censorship is extensive. For a discussion concerning the censoring of photographs see Leah Dickerman, "Camera Obscura: Socialist Realism in the Shadow of Photography," *October* 93 (2000); and David King, *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1997).

[250] For an account of history's alteration by Stalin's regime see David Brandenberger, "The 'short course' to modernity: Stalinist history textbooks, mass culture and the formation of popular Russian national identity, 1934-1956," (Ph.D. Diss., Harvard University, 1999).

rather, it set a tone and provoked association. In some cases it simply filled in a space on the page. In one of the earliest instances of a painting reproduction in *Krestianka* in 1928, Nikolai Terpsikhorov's *Uchatsia gramote* [Acquiring literacy], was published in conjunction with an article by Krupskaya about the Cultural Revolution in the countryside (Figure 28). In addition to her position as an old Bolshevik and Lenin's widow, Krupskaya was also a renowned public education activist. The painting takes up half of the page, which ensures its prominence and visibility. The subject of the painting illustrates a reading lesson in a village, and refers to the literacy campaign, which was a main aspect of the Cultural Revolution discussed by Krupskaya. By visualizing this essential program the artwork indirectly supports the message of the text, in spite of the fact that it was painted separately.

Images appearing in the illustrated press help to see how regime propaganda actively used artworks to shape public consciousness, especially in relation to new Soviet celebrations. In the late 1920s *Krestianka* and *Rabotnitsa* participated in an anti-religious campaign and the promotion of a new Soviet celebration over traditional religious holidays.[251] The anti-religious aspect of the Soviet holidays was especially prominent in *Krestianka* since the magazine was oriented towards rural, and, typically, more religious, women. The May Day issue of 1929 featured the article "*Dva prazdnika*" [Two holidays], which, after swiftly ridiculing the religious concept of resurrection and salvation associated with Easter, went on to explain the meaning of the May Day celebration. (May Day always fell close to Easter, often coinciding with it, as it did in

[251] The press stressed the existing confrontation between the two traditions which is evident from such articles as P. Viazankin, "Za bolshevitskuiu podgotovku k 1 Maia. Protiv popovskogo prazdnika Paskhi" [For the Bolshevik preparation of May First. Against the priest's holiday Easter], *Kommuna* 96 (1932). Cited in Rolf, "Constructing a Soviet Time," 454, note 27.

1929, 1932, and 1937). At the center of the page a reader encountered a Chinese-style drawing depicting a figure in a landscape with hieroglyphic text on the left (Figure 29). A small blurb underneath the drawing "*Khristos po kitaiski*" [Christ in Chinese] elucidated: "To subordinate Chinese people to the Catholic religion, missionaries (priests) were not ashamed to ascribe the features of a Chinese saint to Christ. In the picture: Christ in the garden of Gethsemane."[252] Once again, there is no mention in the text of the drawing, yet, for a Russian, the thought of a Chinese-looking Christ would have been ridiculous; the drawing reinforced the mockery of the article. At the same time, and obviously unintentionally, the editors provided their readers with an opportunity to see the Chinese visual style.

A combination of text and image is found in the 1934 issue of *Krestianka*. Here, a painting by Taras Gaponenko, *Vykhod brigady na rabotu* [The brigade leaving for work] (1933) is placed next to a letter from a female collective-farm writer (Figure 30).[253] The facsimile of the woman's signature underlines the documentary character of the text. The third element of the page design is a large slogan, "To the higher technical and political literacy of active [female] builders of socialist society!"[254] The painting depicts a group of women striding forward towards the right of the picture plane. A slim woman with short hair, suggesting a "new woman" type, is at the front leading the group. A woman in the back row ties a kerchief under her chin, in a peasant manner, while

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[252] "Для того, чтобы подчинить китайцев католической религии, миссионеры (попы) не постеснялись придать Христу вид "китайского святого". На снимке: Христос в Гефсиманском саду." Neither artist's name nor date of the artwork is provided.

[253] The title and the name of the artist were placed below the artwork. Painted in 1933 the artwork was purchased by the Tretyakov Gallery. This may explain its selection for publication. The title *Vykhod kolkhoznikov na rabotu* (Collective farmers march to work), as it appeared in the museum catalogue, was changed to *Vykhod brigady na rabotu* (A brigade marches to work) probably to better match the subject of the letter.

[254] "за высокую техническую и политическую грамотность активных строительниц социалистического общества!"

others have kerchiefs tied at the back of their necks, connoting a more modern look. A robust-looking woman on the left and the leader carry working tools and compositionally frame the group. They march on an unpaved road in a rural setting suggesting countryside.

The text of the letter discusses the situation of women in collective farm brigades, and is critical in nature. It recounts the difficulties one woman faced as an unacknowledged chairwoman of a brigade. While she performed all duties of a chair as well as the work of a regular brigade member, all credit went to the official chairman who did not properly perform his duties. The letter was published as part of the campaign against the snubbing (*zatiranie*) of women from managerial positions initiated by the magazine earlier on. Yet, the optimistic and reassuring stride of women in the painting overwrites the negative content of the text, turning the letter into a singular incident that, though in need of fixing, does not mar the positivity of real-life conditions. Such perception is reinforced by the slogan in the right margin that highlights the positive achievement of placing women in managerial positions. The vertical alignment of the slogan and the lower-right-corner positioning of the painting visually leave the letter "behind" them, suggesting that the described situation is a matter that will have no place in the socialist future.

History Illustrated

While photography was a preferred method of illustration in the periodical press of the time, for the illustration of historic events that had taken place in the past, editors often had no choice but to rely on painting and graphic illustrations. Available historic photographic material was not sufficient to depict history in a comprehensive and

exciting way that would be suitable for the popular media serving working and peasant populations. To begin with, there were not enough photographs capturing the key moments of revolutionary history. Also, most of the existing photographs, in spite of their historic value, possessed little artistic power. Many paintings recreating and mythologizing the history of the Revolution, the Civil War, and the Red Army were produced in connection with exhibitions dedicated to the tenth and fifteenth Anniversaries of the Revolution (1927 and 1932) and of the Red Army (1928 and 1933). The increased use of history paintings in the magazines is also connected with changes in the art world. By the mid-1930s, easel painting and, specifically, the history genre had re-established their positions as the dominant and most esteemed art forms; accordingly, publication of these paintings had special value.

As the magazine addressing a rural population with lower levels of literacy, and, thus, in higher need of visual propaganda stimuli, *Krestianka* frequently used paintings in the depiction and interpretation of history especially after collectivization was over and the country entered the second Five-Year Plan. Winter issues dedicated to the anniversary of Lenin's death (he died in January of 1924) were inundated with numerous artworks depicting moments from the leader's life and work. In 1935 an image depicting Lenin's arrival in Russia on March 2 1917 illustrated an editorial article written by Simon Uritzkii, the editor of *Krestianskaia gazeta* (Figure 31). The caption explained the subject of the work without providing the name of the artist.[255] Lenin's arrival in Petrograd was a key moment of the Revolution, and paintings depicting this event were

[255] The full caption reads, "Приезд Ленина в Россию. 2 марта 1917 года на Финляндском вокзале в Петрограде рабочие, солдаты и матросы восторженно встречали своего вождя" [Lenin's arrival in Russia on March 2nd 1917; at Finland Train Station workers, soldiers, and sailors excitedly greeted their leader].

often selected for publication.[256] On the following pages additional images depicting the leader's life were juxtaposed with the following printed in bold slogan: "Every worker, every female worker, every collective farmer [and] female collective farmer, all the young people must know the life and work of the great leader."[257] An article discussing the ways collective farmers should work on fulfilling Lenin's legacy was illustrated by a small-scale reproduction of a sculptural group *Smert' vozhdia* [The leader's death], created by the prominent sculptor, Sergei Merkurov (Figure 32).[258] The group of people carrying the coffin with their leader's body visually reinforces the message of carrying on the leader's legacy. In this case, the sculptor received full credit as did the artist, Ivan Dubasov, whose painting, *Khodoki-krestiane u Lenina* [Peasants-petitioners [visiting] Lenin] illustrated Krupskaia's memoirs published in the same issue (Figure 33). In another example, Boris Ioganson's painting, *Khodoki-krestiane v gostiakh u Lenina* [Peasant-petitioners visiting Lenin], illustrated Stalin's article dedicated to the leader (Figure 34). Ioganson's prominent position in the art establishment might explain the fact that no other artist besides him received credit for his work in that issue, and all other images on that page remained anonymous. All of the images depict Lenin's revolutionary activities: *V. I. Lenin na vtorom Kongrese Kominterna* [Lenin during the second Congress of the Comintern], *V. I. Lenin na podpolnom sobranii* [Lenin in the

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[256] In 1936 a similar painting depicting "Greeting Lenin in Petrograd in 1917" (*Vstrecha Lenina v Petrograde v 1917 godu)* was used to illustrate Emelian Iaroslavskii's text, "*VKPb peredovoi otriad trudiashchikhsia*" [VKPb is a vanguard of the working people]. This time, however, the painting is credited to the artist Sokolov." (*Krestianka*, no. 30 (1936): 5). Iaroslavskii was a party ideologue, the author of *Kratkaia istoriia VKP(b)* [The History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) - Short Course] (1938).

[257] "Жизнь и деятельность великого вождя должен знать каждый рабочий, каждая работница, каждый колхозник, колхозница, вся молодежь."

[258] The image of this sculpture was used many times by both magazines. For example it appeared as an illustration for a fragment from Nikolai Ostrovskii's novel, "*Kak Zakalialas Stal'* [How the Steal was Tempered] (1932-34). See *Krestianka*, no. 2 (1936), 21

Underground Meeting], *Lenin v Smol'nom v 1917 godu* [Lenin in Smolny in 1917]. Placed on the same page as Ioganson's *Peasant-petitioners, Lenin in Smolny in 1917* was created by Nikolai Khvostenko and had been published in the earlier issue of *Krestianka* with full credit information (Figure 35).

In fact, a number of artworks appeared more than once through the years. In some cases, the relevance of the subjects conditioned their reuse, and, in others, the availability of the reproduction material. Considering that the acquisition of a reproduction was not a simple matter, recycling of images available for the publication was a typical practice. Hence, Nikolai Gorelov's painting, *Osada pomeshchechei usad'by krestianami* [Siege of landowner's estate-house by peasants] (1920), appeared in 1931 as an anonymous picture illustrating the story of the Revolution of 1905 (Figure 36a). The same artwork appeared in 1935 as a color supplement, this time with full credit information (Figure 36b).[259]

In the same vein, Mikhail Avilov's painting, *Priezd t. Stalina v pervuiu konnuiu armiiu* (1919) [Comrade Stalin's arrival at the First Cavalry Army], was published in *Krestianka* in 1934 (Figure 35) and in 1936 (Figure 37). *Maiovka v 1891 godu* [May-Day gathering in 1891], painted by the history painter Ivan Vladimirskii in 1923, appeared in the inner part of *Krestianka's* 1931 May Day issue cover as an individual artwork (Figure 38). Here, the credit line, "*Maiovka* [May Day) painting, the illegal meeting of workers' from the painting by artist Ivan Vladimirskii," repeats the word "painting" twice, emphasizing the artistic nature of the object. This painting appeared again in 1936 as an unrelated illustration, sharing the page with an article by F.

[259] Full credit line reads "Цветное приложение: 'Нападение крестьян на помещичью усадьбу в 1905 году'. С картины художника Н. Горелова (1920))" [Color supplement: 'Peasants' Assault on a Landowner's Estate-house in 1905'. From the painting by artist N. Gorelov (1920)].

Mikhailov entitled "*Pechat'- organizator mass*" [The press is the organizer of the masses], published on the occasion of May 5th, which was designated as the Day of the Printed Press (Figure 39). The May Day gathering depicted by Vladimirskii symbolized an early event in the organized workers movement, and the editors selected this painting to emphasize the role of the press in the organization of the workers. Ye. Mashkevich's painting *Volochaevskii boi* [Volochaevsk battle] was reproduced in both magazines, in the middle of the picture spread in *Krestianka* in 1934 (Figure 35), and as a separate illustration in a 1939 issue of *Rabotnitsa* (Figure 40).[260]

*Rabotnitsa*'s use of history paintings differed little from that of *Krestianka*. Many paintings appeared in both magazines in different years. It also followed the trend of publishing anonymous and fully credited images without any clear pattern. The fact that both magazines were inconsistent in providing information about certain artworks or their artists suggests that in such cases painting functioned as a pseudo-documentary illustration of historic moments rather than as an aesthetic object that would require higer degree of accuracy and attention to the artist credit information. While for editors to use artworks already available and ready for print was in many cases a matter of convenience, their readers were conditioned to deal with a specific visual vocabulary associated with certain subjects and themes. The reuse of artworks in the same periodical as well as in between magazines and newspapers contributed to the unification and homogenization of the visual language in the Soviet period.

While individual artworks illustrating history were used by both magazines, *Krestianka* differed in its use of paintings in double-page spreads in issues dedicated to

[260] This painting was exhibited in a travelling exhibition to the Far Eastern Museum in Vladivostok in 1933, where it received special attention as the first monumental work dedicated to the region. See "Dve khudozhestvennye vystavki" [Two art exhibitions], *Tikhookeanskaia zvezda*, September 15, 1933.

Soviet celebrations. For example, the 1934 October Anniversary issue of *Krestianka* featured an illustrated spread filled with paintings depicting historic moments of the Revolution and the subjects related to it (Figure 35). These included the aforementioned *Lenin in Smolny* by Khvostenko, *Volochaevsk Battle* by Mashkevich, (with a slight modification of the title to *Boi pod Volochaevskom* [A Battle near Volochaevsk]), *Arrival of Stalin at the First Cavalry Army* by Avilov (1919), as well as *Dopros komunistov (v shtabe u belykh)* [Interrogation of Communists (in the Whites' headquarters]) painted by Boris Ioganson in 1933. In this spread the picture frames are arranged in a vertical manner without any of the radical cropping typical of spreads with photographs published in celebration issues.[261] The only exception is Ioganson's *Interrogation*. A circular frame crops this work to single out the figures of two Communists and their interrogator seated in an armchair, eliminating other figures and details of the interior. Interestingly, the magazine's caption included the phrase "In the Whites' headquarters" after the usual title, "Interrogation of Communists" leading one to wonder if such addition was necessary in the 1930s when, in the context of Stalinist's repression, the interrogation of Communists was not exclusive to the pre-Revolutionary past.

## Selecting Cultural Heritage for the Masses

When editors wanted to represent life before the Revolution, they typically used paintings of nineteenth-century Realist (usually Russian) artists as a way to visualize the past. The selection focused on images depicting social injustices, hardships, and other negative aspects of nineteenth-century reality. *Rabotnitsa* used Sergey Ivanov's painting *Smert' pereselentsa* [On the road, the death of a resettler] (1889), to illustrate the article,

[261] See Chapter 5.

"*Boi s pustynei*" [Struggle with the desert] (Figure 41). While the dates of paintings produced in the Soviet period are usually omitted, the date of Ivanov's painting is specified to underline the bygone quality of the event. In a similar way, Vasilii Pukirev's *Vzyskanie nedoimok* [Collection of arrears] (1869) was published in *Krestianka* in 1933, at the end of the horrific period of collectivization, as an attempt to project the idea that, while collectivization had its negative effects, life under cruel landowners was even worse.[262]

The comparisons and juxtapositions of visual facts requiring textual explanation are representative of the general rhetoric of the regime immersed in the dichotomization of the Soviet experience in terms of "us versus them" and "before and after." Dichotomies were typical in the pre-revolutionary period, especially in *lubok*. The contrasting formula continued in Soviet times, as Soviet identity was created against an imagined European identity both capitalist and fascist, while Soviet accomplishments were repeatedly contrasted with the shortcomings and deficiencies of the more "advanced" countries of Western Europe.[263] Constant comparison with the past reminded the citizens that no matter how hard were their living conditions at present, they were better now than they were in the past. Nineteenth-century paintings depicting the hardships of childhood were often used in "now versus then" dichotomy. In its May Day issue of 1935, *Krestianka* used the paintings *Svidanie* [A visit] (1883) by Vladimir Makovskii and *Troika* [Coach-and-three] (1866) by Vasilii Perov to illustrate the text comparing the lives of children before the Revolution in Russia with present conditions in capitalist countries (Figure 42). Typically, the text makes no mention of the paintings

[262] *Krestianka*, no. 16 (1933): verso cover.
[263] Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women*, 138.

or their subjects, leaving it to the images to tell their stories. The caption under Perov's work, however, explains that "Sorrow, misery and unbearable labor – [was] the fate of the children of the workers and peasants in pre-revolutionary Russia."[264] Consistent with the "us versus them" formula, these paintings are contrasted with the advantages of Soviet motherhood and childhood depicted on the following page of the magazine (Figure 43). Here the "our future" theme is illustrated with a vertical portrait-montage of smiling children and with a poster by the artist Zavialov, *Ves' mir budet nash* [The whole world will be ours). On the poster a healthy, chubby child holds a red-star flag and a globe while a book and a toy car are placed nearby, suggesting that education, technology, and control over the world are in the child's future.

*Rabotnitsa* remained more faithful to photomontage and did not publish spreads consisting predominantly of works of painting. However, the magazine featured more elaborate coverage concerning art and cultural history, artists, and museums. In 1928 *Rabotnitsa* introduced its readers to the French artist Gustave Courbet and illustrated an article about him with his painting *The Stonebreakers* (1849) (Figure 44). Selected for his connection with the Paris Commune, socialist political views as well as for his Realist style, Courbet was among only a handful of western artists approved by Soviet officialdom and thus incorporated into the program of cultural enlightenment.[265] In other instances, the magazine's recipients could read about historic buildings and sights, new Soviet monuments and architectural projects.[266] In 1929 *Rabotnitsa* featured Nikolai

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[264] "Горе, нужда, непосильный труд – вот участь детей рабочих и крестьян в дореволюционной России."

[265] Publication of the material about French artist Courbet in *Rabotnitsa* is a very rare instance. Another artist featured in the women magazines and discussed later in this dissertation was German Kathe Kollwitz. More research of the popular magazines representation of the foreign artists is needed.

[266] Examples: "*Pamiatniki stariny. Selo Kolomenskoe"* [Ancient Monuments: Village Kolomenskoe], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 21 (1929); "*Po dvortsam I usad'bam, selo Archangel'skoe"* [Palaces and Estates. Village

Kasatkin, the first artist to receive the title of "narodnyi khudozhnik" [people's artist] (Figure 45).[267] That was the earliest material dedicated to an individual Soviet artist. Later in the decade *Rabotnitsa* published information about some major art museums or emphasized art-related displays within other museums. For example, in 1938 the magazine illustrated an article about Kirov's Museum in Leningrad with views of the museum's room "*Kirov v proizvedeniiakh iskusstva*" [Kirov in works of fine art] (Figure 46).

As mentioned earlier, *Krestianka* joined the Soviet quest for the cultural enlightenment of the population only in the second half of the decade when it started to publish information on the museums and other cultural subjects. In 1937 one of its spreads dedicated to Stalin's Museum in Gori (his birthplace) was illustrated by artworks from the museum's collection of paintings.[268] Both magazines responded to the Pushkin's Centennial celebration by publishing multiple artworks depicting the "great Russian poet."[269] From 1936 both magazines featured material about art of the nineteenth-century. *Rabotnitsa* dedicated a column, "*Sokrovishcha Muzeev*" [Museums' treasuries], usually written by the Tretyakov Gallery educator, V. Vert.[270] In the following years similar articles familiarized readers with major Realist artists canonized

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Archangel'skoe], *Rabotnitsa,* no. 22 (1929); "*Molodost starogo goroda. Ill: proekt postroiki doma promyshlenosti na meste zariad'ia v Moskve*" [Youth of an ancient city: construction project of the House of Industry in Zaryad'ie, Moscow], *Rabotnitsa,* no. 23 (1935).

[267] N. G., "*Khudozhnik-obshchestvennik*" [Artist activist], *Rabotnitsa,* no. 15 (1929): verso cover.

[268] *Krestianka,* no. 3 (1937): 11-12.

[269] In *Rabotnitsa,* an article, "*Genial'nyi russkii poet*" [Russian genius poet], was illustrated by several art works in *Rabotnitsa,* no. 4 (1937): 5-7. *Krestianka* published a drawing by the 8th-grader, which was prepared for an exhibition dedicated to the poet See *Krestianka,* no. 3 (1937): 27). A portrait of the poet and several other artworks by the nineteenth-century artist, Nikolai Tropinin, appeared in *Krestianka,* no. 3 (1937). For an in-depth discussion of the Pushkin Day celebration see Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous,* chapter 5.

[270] The Tretyakov Gallery was the main collection of nineteenth-century Russian art, and the research center of the Gallery was occupied with historiography and the redefinition of *Peredvizhniki* and the roots of Socialist Realism. For an in-depth discussion of the exhibitions and publications produced by the Tretyakov Gallery see Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art*, 175-78.

by the Soviet regime.[271] These articles were illustrated with major works of the artists discussed, usually in black and white. In some cases a color illustration was placed on the magazine's cover. In *Krestianka* works of Russian nineteenth-century artists were featured in color supplements with a short explanatory text usually placed on the magazine's last page. While very simple in content, these essays provided basic art historical information, and created a cultural foundation shared by the majority of the Soviet people.

A review of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* reveals diverse visual material. Most frequently paintings were used to visualize history and certain contemporary events. As such, the treatment of paintings differed little from that of photography. Credit information was supplied sporadically for the most part, and, artists' rights were treated as secondary. In general, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* placed relatively little value on the formal quality of the artworks, privileging instead their content. Yet, publication of high-quality reproductions was an important component of the magazine's cultural program, and editors exerted considerable effort to provide rich visual content along with articles containing cultural information. The rural population served by *Krestianka* received more high-quality reproductions that could be collected in albums or framed and hung on walls. In areas remote from urban centers, illustrations and information published in *Krestianka* served as an alternative to a museum visit. *Rabotnitsa* offered to its readers materials with slightly deeper educational value. Urban women served by this magazine

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[271] V. Vert, "*O kartinakh Repina*" [About Repin's paintings], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 31 (1936): 17-18; "Rembrandt," *Rabotnitsa*, no. 2 (1937); *Khudozhnik Surikov"* [Artist Surikov], *Rabotnitsa,* no. 5 (1937): 16-17; "*Zhenskaia dolia v Tsarskoi Rossii: po proizvedeniiam russkikh khudozhnikov*" [Women's fate in Tsarist Russia: works of Russian artists], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 6-7 (1937): 12-13; *Khudozhnik Perov*" [Artist Perov], *Rabotnitsa*, no. 20 (1937): 17; "Kiprenskii" *Rabotnitsa*, no. 25 (1938): 17; "I. I. Levitan," *Rabotnitsa*, no.27 (1938): 15.

had more options to visit actual art exhibitions and encounter original (or hand-copied) artworks.[272] Where the art of the nineteenth century was concerned, in most cases both rural and urban women read about the same artists and looked at the same paintings. In addition to providing a classical cultural education, the magazines made some attempts to promote women and amateur artists on condition that both groups promote the myth of the regime's success. The visual content of the magazines under consideration here actively contributed to this myth. At the same time, analysis of artworks appearing in the magazines in the 1930s suggests that the Soviet censoring machine was not monolithically perfect: there were cases of transgressions, though hardly intentional. Overall, the readers of both publications and (and, by extension, members of their families), shared the same cultural landscape, and were exposed to a unified visual language.

[272] Significant paintings exhibited in major shows were hand copied and distributed to local museums or institutions. See Reid, "Socialist Realism."; Iankovskaia, *Iskusstvo, den'gi i politika*.

## Chapter III. Photo-Based Illustrations in Women's Magazines

Magazines relied heavily on handmade visual media to shape the Soviet mass consciousness, yet photography, despite its many limitations in relation to painting, was equally and often the most important form of illustration reproduced in mass periodicals. Press photography primarily had to be "documentary," meaning that it was expected to represent an unaltered piece of the physical world.[273] At the same time, in accordance with Socialist Realist practice, images appearing in the press were to "expose the universal in detail" and capture "political and social topicality."[274] In order to succeed in expressing these goals, it was necessary to overcome the limited capabilities of an individual photograph and, as I hope to show in this chapter, photomontage offered a way to achieve this. The following examination of specific types of photo-based illustration underscores the various ways the printed press utilized photography and explores the formal and ideological capabilities of photomontage in its mass-media application. To classify various types of photo-based illustration, I borrow the terminology (including the term "photo-based illustration") from the professional literature published in the 1930s that served the press practitioners, as it offers a way to approach printed media design from the period's perspective.

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[273] The issues of the Soviet regime's complex relationships with photography were discussed in Dickerman, "Camera Obscura."; and Brandon Taylor, "Photo-power: Painting and Iconicity in the First Five Year Plan," in *Art and power: Europe under the dictators 1930-45*, ed. Dawn Ades (London: Hayward Gallery, 1995).

[274] Alexei Fedorov-Davydov, "Voinstvuiushchee iskusstvo" [Militant art], *Brigada khudozhnikov* [The artists brigade], no. 1 (January 1932): 37.

Illustrated Press and "Photography versus Painting" Debate

Lenin's directive of 1922 to use photographs that are "interesting for propaganda" with corresponding (*sootvetstvuiushchimi*) subtitles, was frequently cited in literature and the press.[275] The idea that the Soviet Union was a new and modern media society was propelled by the development of radio and sound cinema as well as by photo-reproductive technologies that facilitated the growth of the illustrated press. cCultural producers privileged photography because of its ability to "speak" in the most direct manner, and hailed it as a new media language able to express the immediacy of everyday experience.[276]

From the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, the Soviet printed press was at the center of the dispute between painters and photographers over the superiority of their respective medium in Soviet visual culture and arts. Despite the embracing of photography by the mass media, in Russia, the situation in the photographic profession differed significantly from that of painting and other fine arts. Easel painting was the most respected form of art since the late eighteenth century, while photography began to take a prominent place in Russian culture only in the 1880s. Russkoe fotograficheskoe obshchestvo [The Russian Photographic Society] was organized in 1894 in Moscow, 1897 in St. Petersburg, and in the early 1900s in other major cities. By the early 1900s numerous photographs on a variety of subjects (mostly portraits, social events, and landscapes) inundated the illustrated press.

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[275] The exact quote reads: "нужно показывать не только кино, но и интересные для пропаганды фотографии с соответствующими надписями." Vladimir Lenin, "Letter to Vice People's Commissar of the Education Comrade Litkens," January 27, 1922. Cited in Editorial, "Lenin i fotografiia" [Lenin and photography], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] 2, no. 35 (1929): 1.

[276] For a discussion of radio, cinema and photography as the new media in Soviet culture see Günther, *Sovetskaia vlast' i media*.

According to Russian scholar Valerii Stigneev, the First World War was the major impetus for the development of photo-reportage (an impartial registration of unmediated events of historic, social, or political importance) in Russia, though photographic depictions of the political events appeared earlier.[277] Photography received the immediate attention of the new political power in the early years of the Bolshevik Revolution. Vysshii institut fotografii [The Higher Institute of Photography] was established in 1918 in Petrograd with several short-term courses offered to city teachers. The Commissar of Enlightenment Committee Anatolii Lunacharskii expressed the official position towards photography in 1918: "For us [it is] important to deliver the benefits of photography into the very depth of the masses, to place it [photography] into the hands of all people."[278] Yet, as was shown in Chapter I of this dissertation, during the Civil War photography was rarely used in the periodical press due to the destruction of and shortages in reproduction technology.

A 1924 photographic exhibition held in Leningrad indicated that photography, especially the genre of photo-reportage was quickly recovering, which coincided with the recovered ability of the illustrated press to print images. Assotsiatsiia Fotoreporterov [The Association of Photo-Reporters] formed in 1926 united photographers working for the press, and created a platform for the future professionalization of photojournalism.[279] In 1924 the Association organized two major exhibitions dedicated to photo-reportage, and held numerous discussions concerning press photography.

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[277] Valerii Stigneev, *Vek fotografii, 1894-1994: ocherki istorii otechestvennoi fotografii* [Century of photography, 1894-1994: Essays on history of the fatherland's photography] (Moscow: Gos. in-t Iskusstvovedeniia, 2005), 26-27.
[278] Lunacharskii, "Rech" [Speech] (1918) in *Vestnik fotografii i kinematografii*, 1 (1923): 3. Cited in ibid., 30.
[279] Ibid., 34.

Stigneev had noted that compared to painting, and, especially to literature, Soviet photography had a delayed start in the ideological implications of its methods.[280] In 1928, however, the situation had changed, and photography found itself in the midst of the class war initiated by the regime during the First Five-Year Plan. The resolution of the fourth All-Union Conference of Workers-correspondents held in December 1928 subjected the photographic practice of the country to an ideological function by directing all amateur activities, and, by extension, all photographic production into serving the social cause.[281] As for the press, the worker photo-correspondents were the main suppliers of images registering Socialist construction efforts and social changes. Founded in 1926, the journal *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] became the guiding force of the growing ranks of amateur photo correspondents.[282] Yet the magazine was not able to provide truly professional training for photo reporters. In fact, such training was not offered by any educational institution in the 1920s.[283] The lack of professional and well-trained photographers was acutely felt by the press that had no choice but to publish images of poor artistic and technical quality. In 1929 photographer Arkadii Shaikhet even called for a campaign to improve the quality of press photography.[284] Despite all the efforts, by the end of the decade the illustrated press still suffered from the poor state of photographic illustration.

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[280] Ibid.
[281] Vsesoiuznoe Soveshchanie Rabselkorov [All-Union Conference of Worker Correspondents], December 1928. Printed in *Sovetskoe foto*, no. 1 (1929): 3-4. Cited in ibid., 47. Also see ibid., Ch. 6.
[282] For the role of *Sovetskoe foto* as an educational platform for Soviet photographers see Natalia Zakovyrina, "Sozdanie i evoliutsiia zhurnala 'Sovetskoe foto' (1926–1931)" [The creation and evolution of the journal 'Soviet foto' (1926-1931)], *Izvestiya Ural'skogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* [News of the Ural State University] 56 (2008).
[283] Most of the established Soviet photojournalists were either self-taught or received their training as assistants to older photographers.
[284] Arkadii Shaikhet, *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] 23 (1929).

In the early 1930s, Soviet photography was in the midst of the growing tension between Modernist photographers who, by this time, had united as members of the Association Oktiabr' [October] organized in 1928 and headed by Aleksandr Rodchenko, and practitioners of the more conventional photo-reportage approach who, in 1931, formed Rossiiskoe Ob'edinenie Proletarskikh Fotoreporterov [Russian Society of Proletarian Photo-reporters] or ROPF, headed by Simon Fridliand. Antagonism between the two groups developed within the context of vicious attacks on Formalism. ROPF joined the anti Formalist campaign, calling in 1931 for the "presentation of facts in [a form that would be] supremely simple, easily accessible, and, at the same time, supremely impressive to any viewer."[285] Eventually, the privileging of social and political content over formal experimentation prevailed, corresponding to the general shift of preferences in the Soviet visual arts.

While Oktiabr' and ROPF contested the superiority of their vision, the limited nature of single-shot photography was clearly recognized by both groups. It was obvious that, in spite of its claim to objective representation, photography was limited as an information carrier since it depended too much on its contextual frame and was

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[285] Arkadii Shaikhet and Simon Fridliand, *Fotovystavka zhurnala 'Ogonek'* [Photo-exhibition of the journal 'Ogonek'] (Moscow: Ogonek, 1930), 3-4. Also see F. Konnonov and Y. Tsirrelson, "Vystavka Oktyabria" [Exhibition of October], *Iskusstvo v massy* [Art into masses] 7, no. 15 (1930). Hubertus Gassner reviewed the debates on Formalism in relation to photomontage whose practitioners had to prove the relevancy of their media to Soviet society under the growing recovery of painting and traditional graphic arts. Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship." Also see Margarita Tupitsyn, "From Politics of Montage to the Montage of Politics: Soviet Practice 1919 through 1937," in *Montage and Modern Life* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 91; and Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," Ch.1. An especially detailed account of the vigorous discussion taking place in 1931 and 1932 is provided in Stigneev, *Vek fotografii*, 79-94. Since all of the above cited sources deal with photography's history only few of them mention the concurrent debates concerning painting and the graphic media, which were important aspects of the media competition. For primary sources see Komakademia, *Voprosy razvitiia proletarskogo iskusstva: materialy diskussii* [Issues in the development of the proletarian art: materials of the discussion] (Moscow: Kommunisticheskaia akademiia, 1931). For the Soviet account of the media debates see V. N. Perel'man, ed., *Bor'ba za realizm v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve 20-kh (dvadtsatykh) godov* [Struggle for realism in Soviet visual art in the 1920s] (Moscow: Sovetskyi khudozhnik, 1962).

frequently politically manipulated.[286] Those who insisted on the self-sufficiency of photography attempted various ways to overcome the limitations of a single photographic fact, and to open up photography's capacity to narrate. Photomontage was one of the ways. In addition, in 1928 Rodchenko famously proposed to remedy the deficiency of one image with the production of a photo-series.[287] Such a method was regarded as more capable of registering the dramatic changes of Soviet life. A series of single shots presented together were used to produce a chain of visual stimuli that would condition the viewer to interpret this information as a story. Another typical way to overcome photography's limitation was to support an image with text.

The importance of text as an element accompanying images was realized by Soviet cultural practitioners as well as by political leaders. As was shown in Chapter One, the Soviet mass media experienced a delay in its capacity to publish periodicals in which text and images were printed simultaneously. Yet, when it finally regained this capacity in the late 1920s, individual photographic illustrations as well as images within photomontages were usually accompanied by captions. Such *foto-lito-montazh* [photo-text-montage] was discussed by Viazemskii and Urlaub as considerably more fitted to the periodicals with a "less qualified" readership than photomontage on its own, since it

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[286] For a discussion of photography and photomontage in Germany in the 1930s see Sabine Kriebel, "Photomontage in the Year 1932: John Heartfield and the National Socialists," *Oxford Art Journal* 31, no. 1 (2008). Also see Andrés Mario Zervigón, "Persuading with the Unseen? "Die Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung," Photography, and German Communism's Iconophobia," *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation* 26, no. 2 (2010).

[287] This idea was expressed by Rodchenko in 1928. Aleksandr Rodchenko, "Protiv summirovannogo portreta za momental'ny snimok" [Against the Synthetic Portrait, For the Snapshot], *Novyi LEF* 4 (1928). Translated in Christopher Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913-1940* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Aperture, 1989), 238. In Soviet practice Rodchenko is known as an author of the earliest photo series, "Gazeta" [Newspaper], published in the magazine, *30 Dnei* [30Days] (1929). There 25 photographs documenting the process of a newspaper production. Sergey Tretyakov adopted and developed this idea. Sergei Tretiakov, "Ot fotoserii - k dlitelnomu fotonablyudeniyu" [From the Photo-Series towards the Protracted Photo-Observation], *Proletarskoe foto*, no. 4 (December 1931).

"speaks briefly and crisply."[288] By the end of the decade, the photographic spreads combined with text were regarded as a great form of propaganda in which text and photo contributed equally to the clarity of the message, especially if the artists succeeded to produce "one organic whole; one clear and precise composition."[289]

In the early 1930s, a series of informational booklets gave instructions to photo-correspondents on not only what and how to photograph, but also what and how to write in the accompanying captioning to the photographs. In 1932 photojournalist Boris Zherebtsov, in his brochure "*Tekstovka k fotokadru"* [Text for a photograph], made a distinction between text that supported a photograph and an actual caption. The former could include information concerning the photographed object, place, or person that was not evident from the image, while the latter simply stated what is photographed.[290] In reality, the early captions were very inconsistent in style, and ranged from a dry recitation of the content of the photograph to a poetic description of the theme suggested by the image.

In 1931 Stalin stated that human labor was superior to technology, declaring that everything depends on cadres. As a result, the appreciation and even admiration for individual achievements became very popular in the following years.[291] In accordance with the new directive, the caption was required to include the exact location, names and

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[288] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 177-78.
[289] Boris Viazemskii, *Oformleniie i proizvodstvo gazety: prakticheskoe rukovodstvo dlia gazetnykh rabotnikov* [Layout and production of a newspaper: practical guide for newspaper workers] (Moscow: Gos. Izdat. legkoi promyshlennosti, 1940), 76.
[290] Boris Zherebtsov, *Tekstovka k fotokadru* [Text for a photograph] (Moscow: Photo-correspondent, 1932), 18. Also, for a discussion of text for photographs see Sergei Morozov, *Rabota gazetnogo fotokorrespondenta: lektsii dlia zaochnogo obucheniia* [The work of a newspaper photoreporter: Lectures for the distant learning] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1937), 8.
[291] In Soviet literature the theme of "Struggle with Nature," associated with the early years, was transformed from the presentation of industrial projects and technological achievements to the presentation of individual heroism. Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (2000 (1981)), 100-01. Also see Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia*, 168.

ranks of the represented individuals, specifics of their achievements, and the reasons they were photographed. In most cases, text was needed to explain what is photographed, and the necessity of captions was indisputable for such periodicals as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*. It insured single and "proper" reading of the visual information, something that Soviet ideology demanded from the mass media.

Artistic debates taking place during the period of the First Five-Year Plan continuously contrasted the ability of an artist to capture the "essence of a moment" in just a few lines with the photographer's dependence on the mechanical indifference of the camera, which "slavishly captured everything in view with no regard to the importance of details."[292] A typical example of the rhetoric of the period is expressed in the essay entitled "The decline and rebirth of lithography," which appeared in *Brigada khudozhnikov* [Artists' brigade] (a journal published by AKhR) in 1931.[293] The author unapologetically proclaimed the superiority of graphic illustration in graphic design. He compared the role of illustration with that of murals: "If a monumental work of art serves thousands of viewers, editions of graphic artworks serve a giant audience as well and for this purpose should be implemented into everyday life (*byt*)."[294] Defending lithography as the most artistic method of reproducing original artworks, the author dismissed the photomechanical process on the grounds that "even the best photograph would never be called a work of art."[295] The use of photomechanical reproduction was to be tolerated only when the graphic or watercolor copy of an original oil painting could not be produced, and then only "under supervision of an artist [presumably the artist who

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[292] Kisin, *Grafika*, 206.
[293] Rosenfeld, "Vyrozhdenie i vozrozhdenie litografii" [The decline and rebirth of lithography], *Brigada khudozhnikov* [Artists' brigade] 4-5, no. 11-12 (1932): 69.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.

produced the original].”[296] Other artists and intellectuals of the time agreed with this approach, though in less radical terms.[297]

In the media competition, the importance of color and spontaneity of execution were powerful arguments against photography. Recalling in 1939 his work assignment during a 1936 meeting of the wives of army commanders with party and government leaders, photographer Fedor Kislov remembered how strongly he regretted the unavailability of color photography, noting that it would have been significantly easier for a painter to capture the multi-coloredness of the event.[298] Overall, 1930s professional literature for periodical press practitioners agreed that, in spite of its enormous importance as a means of mechanical reproduction of images, photography was not able to compete with the freedom and artistic quality of traditional media. Nevertheless, photography’s ability to document the immediate physical reality was unquestionable, and the indexical power of photography continued to play an especially important role in Soviet propaganda.

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[296] Ibid., 71.
[297] Brylov, *Illustratsiia v knige*, 36.
[298] “Unforgettable picture! Three thousand women in elegant dresses [holding] bouquets of flowers in their hands, standing together with women pilots and parachute-divers filling all the passageways, all enthusiastically applauding. Cinema light-projectors further emphasized this bright, polychromatic picture. I stood stunned and could not start shooting at once. It was never so pitiful that we have yet to apprehend the techniques of color photography. Having noticed my hesitation, comrade Voroshilov asked me: “And how will it [the scene] turn out in a photo?” I answered that, to the artist-painter, it would have been much easier than for me [as I] lack the opportunity to render all the colorfulness of this picture on film.” “незабываемая картина! Три тысячи женщин в нарядных платьях, с букетами цветов в руках, стоя вместе с занявшими все проходы зала летчитцами и парашютистками, горячо аплодировали. Прожекторы киносвета еще более усиливали эту яркую многокрасочную картину. Я стоял ошеломленный и не мог сразу приступить к съемке. Как никогда было жаль, что мы еще не овладели техникой цветного фотографирования. Заметив мое замешательство, товарищ Ворошилов спросил меня: “а как получится на фото?” Я ответил, что художнику-живописцу было бы значительно легче, чем мне не имеющему возможности передать всю многокрасочность этой картины на пленке.” Fedor Kislov in Yurii Prigozhin, ed., *Zapiski fotoreporterov* [Notes of photoreporters] (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939), 18.

In addition to the theoretical debates concerning the nature of representation, painters demanded higher payment for their creative work, and, compared to the difficulties involved in the publication of works of fine art, photographs were far easier and cheaper to acquire.[299] Photographers' rates were also much lower than those of painters. Large periodicals hired their own photo-reporters on a full-time basis.[300] Soiuz-foto [the Union-photo] agency organized in 1931, and an amateur photo-correspondent movement supplied a wide range of photographic images on every possible theme. Several courses and guidebooks advised the local photo-correspondents on a variety of topics, from composition and selection of the theme to submission guidelines.[301] The most popular subjects, especially portraits of Party leaders and famous people (prominent shock-workers, aviation heroes, scientists, *stakhanovites*, etc.) were even sold in the form of *clichés* (a printing plate cast), ready for printing.[302] In 1937, for example, the Press-Cliché agency planned the publication of thematically arranged collections of images covering "subjects of All-Union significance, foreign chronicles

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[299] For a discussion of the issues involved in artwork reproduction and artist fees see Chapter 2.

[300] In 1936 *Ogonek's* photo reporter received 400 rubles (with the norm of 100 original photos per month; plus commissions for special orders (10-20 rubles, 50% for urgency); salary of the assistant – 300 rubles (300 reproductions); salary of the designer – 500 rubles." GARF, *Ogonek*, list 137-41.

[301] U. K. Laubert, *Tekhnika ispol'zovaniia fotograficheskikh snimkov v presse* [The technique of using photography in the press], Central photographic courses (Moscow: KinoPhotIzdat, 1936); M. A. Gorodnitskii, "Reproduktsionnie protsessy" [Reproductional processes], in *Poligrafiia i izdatel'stvo* [Poligraphy and publishing] (Leningrad: Gosizdat, 1934); Morozov, *Rabota gazetnogo fotokorrespondenta*; and Sergei Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete. V pomoshch redaktsionnym rabotnikam* [Photo illustration in newspaper: Helping publishers] (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939).

[302] A *cliché* or "a stereotype" is a term historically used in printing for a printing plate cast from movable type or a combination of images and type. The price of a *cliché* depended on its size and quality, ranging from four to twelve rubles. For a one-column line drawing – 4 rubles; for a one-column tonal drawing – 6 rubles; for a two column line drawing – 8 rubles; for a two-column tonal drawing – 12 rubles. For orders of more than 10 clichés – free shipping. Processing took 15 days from the day the order was received. See *Obraztsy klishe-portretov vypushchenykh press-cliche Soiuz-photo dlia raionykh polit-otdelov i fabrichno-zavodskikh gazet* [Samples of cliche-portraits produced by Press-Cliche for the regional political departments and newspapers on the factories and plants] (Moscow: Press-Cliché Soiuz-photo, 1937).

and caricature."[303] In short, the affordability and availability of photographs and readymade *clichés* for reproduction purposes buttressed the editorial preference for photography as a main visual medium.

While photographers and artists contested the primacy of their media in Soviet art, professional literature for editors reiterated the meaninglessness of the media competition in graphic design since photographers and artists performed complementary though different tasks.[304] In addition to theoretical and aesthetic considerations, there were technical reasons for such a union. Ironically, the publication of photographs required the work of an artist-retoucher. Heavy censorship often guided by political paranoia definitely was an important factor in the practice of image altering, yet critics of the Stalinist regime underestimate the fact that, in addition to official pressure, most photographs had to be retouched due to their poor quality or because of the faulty reproduction process. Often, when an original photograph was in too poor a condition to be reproduced or in the absence of photo-reproduction equipment, a photograph was used as the basis for an illustration that would look like a line drawing (*shtrikhovoi risunok*) (Figure 47). Due to the heavy involvement of the artist-retoucher in the translations of photographs into magazine reproductions, the visual quality of the reproduced images often merged both media—photography and graphics—into an indivisible alliance.[305]

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[303] Ibid. *Zhurnalist* criticized the periodical press for its failure to employ this option, and, as a result, for publishing poor quality portraits. The same article remarked that Press Cliché often submitted lower quality illustrations to the provincial newspapers. (Editorial, "Prodolzhenie diskussii.") In this situation, the State-sponsored press, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, reproduced higher quality images, therefore playing an important cultural role beyond the mere transmission of information.

[304] Kisin, *Grafika*, 203-6. Also see B.[Borisov?], "Fotografiia na sluzhbe u grafiki."

[305] Technical manuals for editors and layout designers provided precise instructions for producing such translations. The subject was also discussed on the pages of *Soviet foto*. B.[Borisov?], "Fotografiia na sluzhbe u grafiki," 38.

Photomontage in Graphic Design

For the printed media, photography offered a number of advantages as a cheap and relatively easily reproduced medium that enabled efficient presentation of material. In the midst of the rivalry between painting and photography, photomontage also manifested the ultimate unity of photography and graphic art, as it incorporated both the indexical power of photography and the synthesizing capacity of painting and drawing. Scholars generally agree that, in the post Civil War climate, those Modernist artists that gathered around *LEF* (The Left Front of Art) magazine realized the need for imagery that would be able to reach the masses in order to instruct them about the goals and importance of the Socialist construction process. For *LEF's* artists, photomontage and photography provided a way to communicate their message, avoiding painterly realism. In 1924, *LEF* published an anonymously written text entitled "Photomontage" that underscored the documentary and *agitatsionnyi* [agitational] function of the method.[306] Art critic Nikolai Tarabukin emphasized in his 1925 book, *Iskusstvo dnia* [The art of the day] the strong agitational capacity of the photomechanical process of reproduction, and appealed for the employment of photo-posters, photo-advertisement, and photo-caricature.[307]

The illustrations produced by the prominent Constructivist artist Aleksandr Rodchenko for Vladimir Maiakovskii's poem, *Pro Eto* [About it] (1923), exemplify the earliest use of photomontage in Soviet book design and illustration. In 1930-1931 Gustav

[306] "Fotomontazh" [Photomontage], *LEF*, no. 4 (1924). Translated in Phillips, *Photography in the Modern Era*, 211. The text most likely was written by Osip Brik. For a discussion of the authorship see Natasha Kurchanova, "Against Utopia: Osip Brik and Genesis of Productivism," (Ph.D. Diss., City University of New York, 2005), 169.

[307] Nikolai Tarabukin, *Iskusstvo dnia* [The art of the day] (Moscow: Proletkult, 1925). Reprinted and translated in Rosamund Bartlett and Maria Gough, "Nikolai Tarabukin, The Art of the Day (1925)," in *October* (2000).

Klutsis, an experimentalist and an acknowledged innovator of political photomontage, claimed that he experimented with the technique in 1919, yet his photomontages appeared in print only in 1924 in the journal *Molodaia gvardia* [Young guard].[308] These montages commemorated the leader of the Revolution, Vladimir Lenin, who died in January of 1924, and were published along with Sergei Senkin's and Aleksandr Rodchenko's photomontages on the same subject. The work of these artists represented one of the earliest applications of the Constructivist idiom in photomontage to appear in the periodical press.[309] Overall, during the NEP, photomontage was used extensively in book, periodical press, advertisement, and poster design but the theoretical discussions of its political potential lay dormant until 1929, when the militants of the Cultural Revolution were unleashed, and any cultural activity had to prove its relevance to the regime. Photomontage became a subject of elaborate discussion taking place within the media debates developing in the early 1930s.[310]

As a result of these debates, by the end of the First Five-Year Plan radical cut-and-paste photomontage techniques were rejected as formalist and incoherent. An

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[308] Klutsis, "Fotomontazh." Tupitsyn foregrounded Klutsis as the inventor of the political montage, while Rodchenko and Lissitsky, in her view, were working in an "advertisement mode." Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph*, 28-29. She relied mostly on Klutsis's personal writing published in the 1930s, yet a visual analysis and investigation of other sources do not thoroughly support such differentiation. Closer analysis reveals that Rodchenko's illustrations were charged with content more than usually realized. A comparison of Klutsis's illustrations for *Lenin and Children* (1924) with those of Rodchenko for *Pro Eto* reveals some formal similarities that Tupitsyn downplayed in her argument that Klutsis developed a political form of photomontage while Rodchenko was interested in formal experimentation. Both artists used photomontage to reflect the content and form of the texts they illustrate. Admittedly, while Rodchenko produced montages for the mass media, he was significantly less active than Klutsis in promoting photomontage as a main medium of political propaganda.

[309] In his later writing, Klutsis referred to these montages as photo-slogan-montage, defined as a combination of photo and text: Klutsis, "Fotomontazh." The term "photo-slogan" was also used in M. Vostrogin, *Chto i kak fotografirovat' rabkoru* [What and how a worker correspondent should photograph] (Moscow: Ogonek, 1929). Vostrogin illustrated the concept of "slogan with photo illustration" with a photograph of a screaming woman worker together with the text, "Long Live the international day of working-women." These words are seen coming out of the woman's mouth, revealing a strong connection to Rodchenko's advertisement poster *Knigi* [Books] (1925).

[310] See Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship."; Tupitsyn, "From Politics of Montage to the Montage of Politics," 91; Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," Ch.1; and Stigneev, *Vek fotografii*, 79-94.

alternative was the "synthetic photomontage," which, according to the important art critic of the time, Aleksei Fedorov-Davydov, could employ free compositional arrangements of photographs juxtaposed and unified in one image of various points of view, multiple planes, and a rich play of various scales of different fragments. [311] Unlike Constructivist montage that emphasized fragmentation and the constructed nature of the representation, the synthetic montage could produce the required continuity. Another author of the time saw the value of synthetic montage in the way it combined the individual fragments into a coherent and legible whole.[312] Later in the decade, Kisin differentiated the "contemporary, highly artistic photomontage," in which "all elements constitute one *organic* [emphasis mine] whole, one sharp and clear compositional scheme without amassment of separate elements," from the "early montage," which was used "in a mechanistic way."[313] The seamless/synthetic montage was utilized as it suited the objective of representing reality in its positive interpretation as required by the Socialist Realist doctrine, usefully defined by Tupitsyn as "mythography." Yet, the mythographic

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[311] Fedorov-Davydov, "Voinstvuyushchee iskusstvo," 37.

[312] L. P., *Proletarskoe foto*, no. 3 (1932 ): 14. Cited in Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship," 269-70.

[313] Kisin, *Grafika*, 206. As an example of the artistic photomontage, Kisin reproduced John Heartfield's *Der friedfertige Raubfisch* [The Peaceful Fish of Prey] and *Wollt ihr wieder fallen damit die Aktien stiegen* [Should he fall again for the stock to rise?]. A "disorganized photomontage" was illustrated by Hannah Höch's *Hochfinanz* [High Finance] (1923), which was reproduced without credit information. Hanah Höch's image was most likely taken from László Moholy-Nagy, *Malerei, fotografie, film* [Painting, photography, film], Bauhausbücher (München: Albert Langen, 1927). In 1929 this book was published in Russian as László Moholy-Nagy, *Zhivopis' ili fotografiia* [Painting or photography] (Moscow: Ogonek, 1929). Heartfield's images were available in Russia after his exhibition in Moscow in 1932. In 1931 he gave a lecture at the Polygraphic Institute in Moscow. (The transcript can be found in John Heartfield, der Schnitt, Entlang der Zeit: Selbstzeugnisse, Erinnrungen, Interpretationen, ed. Roland Maerz (Dresden:VEB Verlag der Kunst, n.d.):286-89.) Curiously, in both cases Kisin relied on foreign examples of photomontage. It is not clear why he did not use an example of Soviet montage to criticize the incongruity of formalist methods. It is possible that, in the climate of the 1936-1939 purges, orchestrated by Stalin as a series of campaigns of political repression and persecution in the Soviet Union, the author did not want to make any references that could endanger the reputation and, more seriously, the life of any Soviet artist as well as his own. Stigneev noticed that after 1937 the heated debates of the earlier period took a semi-lethargic twist as the discussants avoided placing any labels on each other. At this point, former Constructivists sought vigilantly to disassociate themselves from any formalist concerns, and prove that, for them, form was not more important than content. Stigneev, *Vek fotografii*, 135.

practice was by no means confined to the illusionistic montage of cut out images. Photographic spreads composed of individual frames employed montage that relied on the interrelation of images (akin to cinematic montage)to produce similar effect.

By the mid-1930s photomontage as a method of design had received relatively high artistic status, and in press design it co-existed with painting and graphic illustration.[314] While Soviet artists and critics were involved in formulating the theoretical implications of photomontage, by 1933 editors and publishing practitioners endorsed photomontage primarily as a way "to combine on the same visual surface a number of various photographs unified by the same content and a specific compositional arrangement."[315] Photography was chosen as the most objective of representational modes while photomontage helped to organize visual information and to suggest continuity and narrative. In other words, photomontage was an indispensable technical tool that facilitated the organization of the visual content of magazines in a dynamic, yet also concise and economic manner.

The photomontage illustrations appearing in the magazines vary in degree of complexity and their role in the layout. In fact, any combination of photographs or photographs with text and/or graphic images was regarded as photomontage, and was a welcomed graphic design solution.[316] Viazemskii and Urlaub offered more precise

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[314] Also noted by Dickerman in Dickerman, *Building the Collective*, 34. In 1937 photomontage artists (*fotomontazhisty*) requested a separate payment scale and recognition of photomontage as an individual category of illustration. See "*Stenogramma soveshshaniia po ustanovke tarifov na izo-raboty*" [Transcript of the meeting regarding establishing tariffs for visual artworks]," Komitet po delam iskusstv [The All-Union Art Committee], The Russian State Archive of Literature and Art [cited thereafter as RGALI], Fond 962, opis' 6, delo 193, list 2-8;

[315] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 174. Also see Kisin, *Grafika*, 206.

[316] Art critic Ivan Matsa, in his overview of the discussion of Klutsis's paper on photomontage in 1931, specifically emphasized the advantages of such media combination. Ivan Matsa, "Fotomontazh kak noviy vid agitatsionnogo iskusstva: diskussiia" [Photomontage as a new kind of art of agitation: discussion],

categorization, differentiating photo-based illustrations and simple montage, which combined only a few photographic and/or graphic elements, from "complex" or "artistic" photomontage.[317] A closer analysis of some representative as well as of some exceptional examples helps to gain a better understanding of the photography and photomontage operation within the magazine's design.

"Simple" Montage: Compensating Poor Quality and Enhancing Expressivity

The combination of photography and handmade graphic elements was part of the general practice employed to compensate for poor reproduction quality, and to enhance the expressivity of the photographic images. The examples of composite design elements range from minor enhancements, such as the addition of clouds, smoke emanating from chimneys, flags, and text imprinted on banners held at demonstrations (a handmade industrial landscape for example was drawn behind a photograph of a crowd in *Krestianka* 1934 (Figure 48)); to the direct combination of drawing and photography (as in *Krestianka's* 1931 cover where, at the lower left, a photograph of a demonstrating crowd was added to the otherwise graphic cover (Figure 49)). Overall, photo-based illustrations appearing in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* vary in character and quality of execution, reflecting the level of experience as well as the personal talent of the executing artist.

In recent scholarly discussion, the montage method is typically associated with photography or a combination of "photo" and "graphic" elements, but in the 1930s the montage produced by drawing alone was also acceptable and was even welcomed by

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*Literatura i Iskusstvo* [Literature and art] 9-10 (1931): 99. Also see Kisin, *Grafika*, 207; Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 178.

[317] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 178.

some authors as an efficient method of illustration. [318] Responding to this idea, periodicals occasionally featured drawings that looked like montage. Even without the documentary quality provided by photography, montage-drawing preserved the capacity to present various aspects of the same event in a condensed yet digestible manner. The examples range from artworks incorporating montage principles, such as the depiction of several female collective farmers in a portrait submitted to *Rabotnitsa* in 1934 by the artist [?] Il'insky (Figure 50), to montage-drawings serving as borders around articles. One of these, *My stroim sotsializm* [We build socialism], is dedicated to Lenin, and is composed of an iconic image of Lenin facing a landscape of smoking chimneys and collective farm fields developed by tractor (Figure 51).

Montage of graphic and photographic elements was often incorporated into elaborate headers, graphic borders, vignettes, and inserts that produced enriching visual details. Magazines consistently featured "composite headers" that combined text with images. Interestingly, in the design booklet produced by the newspaper *Komsomolskaia pravda*, such details were regarded as suitable for magazines only, while newspapers were recommended to use more standardized and reserved titles.[319] It seems that illustrated magazines took full advantage of their relative design freedom.

In early 1929, the front page of *Krestianka* employed an elaborate composite header with the photograph of a woman guiding a horse-drawn plow (Figure 52). A hand-drawn chain of tractors stretches across the horizon with a view of a field and houses, to the right. Apparently, the image of horse-plowing did not fit the First Five-Year Plan ideal of new, technically equipped farming. In *Krestianka*'s 1929 October

[318] Ibid., 174-77.
[319] B. Belogorskii and S. Volk, *Gazetnyi udar* [A newspaper strike] (Moscow: GosIzdat, 1930), 68.

Anniversary issue, instead of horse plowing the header contained an image of a man on a tractor, on the left, moving towards factories, on the right (Figure 53). *Rabotnitsa* followed the trend and featured various headers and footers with stylized images on industrial, architectural, or abstract geometric themes. Composite cliché titles were used predominantly for texts of fiction, yet occasionally they appeared in regular reportage. In subsequent years both magazines moved towards increased simplification of header design and preferred typeset titles.

Reflecting the need to legitimize Soviet myth *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* frequently included reproductions of the original documents and signatures of their correspondents within the page layout. On one occasion, editors of *Krestianka* reproduced a facsimile letter from Nadezhda Krupskaia — Lenin's wife and advocate for women's rights — together with a letter from renowned writer Maksim Gorky adjacent to photographic portraits of the authors as if to prove both the factual existence of the authors and of their letters (Figure 54). Combination of images and a document can be found in a 1933 *Krestianka* cover that shows a typical image of a grain procuring campaign (Figure 55). Two men from a collective are loading and transporting sacks of grain. The receipt from "a grain collection agency," states the amount of grain submitted by this collective, substantiating the success of the collectivization campaign.

In another 1933 example, the presentation of a "document" took quite elaborate form when a letter from collective farm shock-workers was presented on a full spread within a heavily retouched photomontage frame that includes images of new houses and a day care center as evidence of the improved living conditions in the country side described in the letter.(Figure 56). A disembodied hand on the right of the spread, holds

the letter, providing it with physical materiality. The text is typed in cursive suggesting a handwritten quality, while signatures at the bottom appear in facsimile to enhance their documentary effect.

Charts, diagrams, and other statistic calculations represent an additional common use of composite images. They were especially popular at the time as they helped to enhance the euphoria of growth and progress of Socialist production.[320] In 1923, printed press theoretician S. A. Kalugin described various ways that imagery could enhance the perception of numeric data. He proposed to embrace any method that "makes numbers lively and vocal."[321] The manuals also proposed to use picture diagrams and *kartogram* (the combination of a map with images).[322]

On important occasions, the magazines dedicated special spreads for the representation of statistic data.[323] Often such presentations combined text with graphic images or photographs. In 1930 *Krestianka* presented the 1931 program for the "*Rost promyshlennosti i selskogo khosiaistva na 3-m godu pyatiletki*" [Growth of industry and agriculture in the third year of the Five-Year Plan]. This photomontage combined extracts from the program with line charts and photographs directly or indirectly illustrating the text (Figure 57). For example, "coal mining" at the upper left, was illustrated with an image of two women pushing a coal cart, while the "grain-sowing area" was visualized with a harvesting scene (third image on the right). In 1933

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[320] For a discussion of statistic reports in poster design see Dickerman, *Building the Collective,* 29.
[321] Kalugin, *Grafika v statistike*, 10.
[322] Kisin, for example, differentiated "illustrational diagrams" constructed with images from those that offer statistical data with an image as the background. Kisin, *Grafika*, 202.
[323] *USSR in Construction* also practiced a sophisticated display of visual statistics, which was influenced by the ISOTYPE figures of Otto Neurath. In 1930 Neurath came to Moscow to found Izostat (*izobrazitel'naia statistika),* an institute for art-in-statistics. For an account of Neurath's influences on Soviet propaganda see Clive Chizlett, "Damned Lies and Statistics: Otto Neurath and Soviet Propaganda in the 1930s," *Visible Language* 26, no. 3-4 (Summer/Autumn 1992). Also see Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia,* 169.

*Krestianka* featured a photomontage by the artist Volkonskii entitled *Iz strany agrarnoi v stranu industrial'nuiu. Rezul'taty pervoi piatiletki* [From a rural into an industrial country. Results of the First Five-Year Plan] (Figure 58).[324] In this arrangement, text citing the production data was combined with full-frame photographic images of different types of machinery. In another issue of the same year, *Krestianka* published photo-diagrams by the artist Kuleshov that combined cropped photographs with histograms (Figure 59). Here, a photograph of a woman intensely writing at the table visualized the "growth of women students in schools for the liquidation of illiteracy," while an image of a woman holding a globe related the "relative density of women in *FZU* (*Shkola fabrichno-zavodskogo uchenichestva* [School for factory students])."[325] In 1934 *Krestianka* presented the State's production program for that year, with numbers superimposed directly on images (Figure 60). These montages visualized selections from the text of the plan printed in the center of the spread with emphasis on the magazine's audience interests and concerns. The text describes the planned increase in the production of coal mining, heavy industry, and agriculture. The artists, however, skipped the first two as less relevant to the peasants, and dedicated their attention to the representation of agriculture related details. Grain, cotton, linen, sugar beet, sunflower, and potato production mentioned by the text in passing each receive a separate photogram.

While printed press practitioners regarded composite design elements combining text with graphic and photographic images as types of photo illustration, they considered

[324] A relatively rare example when credit information specified the names of the photo-diagram artist.
[325] The third image in Kuleshov's montage showed "the growth [in the number] of women studying in educational institutions [whose purpose to] prepare the cadres." Here, the artists used a drawing, not a photo, of a woman with a compass and a triangular in her hands, exemplifying that photomontage, indeed, did not exclude the use of hand-drawn images.

it separately from photomontage as an illustration type. In addition, the 1930s literature for polygraphy professionals differentiated between "*prostoi montage*" [simple montage], which was used as a design method to produce "illustrations constructed from several photographs, sometimes in combination with drawing and text,"[326] and "*khudozhestvennyi* [artistic]" photomontage, which required specific artistic training, and was often the product of both artist and photographer.[327] The "simple" photomontage presented an arrangement of a number of images unified by one subject and combined in one printed cast (cliché/stereotype). The same method was used to combine parts from separate images into one when the details were undesirable or "when the quality of some areas of photographed material appeared better in different photographs taken from the same point."[328] Viazemskii and Urlaub, for example, explained that simple montage was practical for showing the "speech of an orator and a general view of the meeting."[329]

Indeed, in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* such a combination was a favorite way to illustrate articles describing various meetings and congresses (Figure 61a and 61b). In 1935 *Rabotnitsa's* covers employed simple montages as one, combining views of the presidium and auditorium in 1935 (Figure 62). Sometimes simple montage was used to illustrate a relationship between an individual and a certain location. It would combine a portrait of the person with a building or place (Figure 63).

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[326] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 174.
[327] Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 108. Also see Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 178.
[328] Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 106.
[329] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 174. Same in Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 106.

Montage of Portraits: "Unintended Surrealization" [330] or a Practical Design Solution?

Paradigmatic use of the photomontage method occurs with the presentation of groups of portraits. The inclusion of individual portraiture became extremely important after 1931 when official rhetoric shifted from glorification of the masses to praising individual achievement in the Socialist construction. The appreciation and eventual veneration of the best workers became a typical iconographic trend in these years. Worship of heroes became extremely important following 1935 Stalin's statement — "Cadres decide everything" — that initiated the *Stakhanovite* movement.[331] The major *stakhanovits* acquired a superstar status that was eagerly promoted by the mass media.

In mass periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, the montage method was the most helpful in the presentation of numerous "everyday heroes"— *Stakhanovits*, delegates to the State conferences, pilots, and so forth. The pages of both periodicals frequently featured portrait-montages in varying degree of complexity. The quality of the montage depended on the skills of the artists and on the specifics of the assignment. Writers and critics of the period pointed out the importance of the correspondence of proportions and lighting of individual portraits, explaining that, when the portraits were photographed under different lighting conditions, the resulting montage had an unnatural

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[330] Expression used by Tupitsyn and discussed below. See Margarita Tupitsyn, "Back to Moscow," in *El Lissitzky - Beyond the Abstract Cabinet: Photography, Design, Collaboration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 47.

[331] Stalin's address to the Graduates of the Red Army Academies. (4 May 1935); (Variant translation: Human resources solve all!) Joseph Stalin, "Address to the Graduates from the Red Army Academies. (4 May 1935)," in *Problems of Leninism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), 772. On September 1, 1935, *Pravda* reported that a Donbas miner named Stakhanov had extracted 102 tons of coal in a six-hour shift, exceeding the norm more than fivefold. Thus began the Stakhanovits "movement" -- a campaign urging workers to emulate this and other alleged feats of super-productivity. For more on Stakhanovism see Lewis Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity in the USSR, 1935–1941*, vol. 59, Cambridge Russian, Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Ch. 6.

appearance, looking "motley" and "artificial."[332] Still, many visually crudely-assembled montages could have been smoothed out by an experienced retoucher.

The proliferation of portrait montages in the printed media has been noticed by scholars working on the illustrated media as a "puzzling phenomenon."[333] According to Tupitsyn, the early appearance of the portrait-montage compositional prototype, in which separate bodies of people appear in close physical proximity, was first introduced by Klutsis in 1931 in his poster, *SSSR udarnaia brigada mira* [The USSR is the world-shock brigade] (Figure 64).[334] However, a Soviet prototype of the "heads montage" was produced much earlier, in the widely distributed album *Oktiabr'* [October] (1920), dedicated to the Second Congress of the Communist International. There, revolutionary leaders from different countries appeared together in the form of a portraits montage (Figure 65).[335] In 1930, Lissitsky used a similar design in his cover for a prospectus of the Soviet Pavilion at the *Hygiene Exhibition* in Dresden. Even earlier prototypes of such presentation of multiple portraits can be found in the practice of André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri who in 1863 patented a type of *carte-de-visit* called "*Mosaique"* that constituted a composite image of overlapping circular or otherwise shaped photographs of people belonging to a certain group identity, such as members of the International Postal Committee or Royal Family.[336] Before this, in 1856, Scottish photographer George

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[332] Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 108.
[333] Dashkova, "Ideologia v litsakh," 452.
[334] Tupitsyn, "El Lissitzky," 47.
[335] Print run of 100, 000 copies. Reproduced in King, *The Commissar Vanishes*, 77.
[336] Elizabeth Anne McCauley, *A.A.E. Disdéri and the Carte de Visite Portrait Photograph* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 94. I am grateful to Dr. Geoffrey Batchen for providing me with this reference.

Washington Wilson created montage portraits of his hometown, Aberdeen, and the North East's notables.[337]

Tupitsyn called the placement of the heads shoulder to shoulder "unintended surrealization," ignoring that this placement of heads was rather a practical solution to a problematic design.[338] The issue of space rather than aesthetic or political considerations, often conditioned the placing of the portraits "shoulder to shoulder."[339] Viazemskii and Urlaub's manual, for example, explained that while each portrait may take 25-30 lines in a page layout, two portraits combined in montage would only take up 30-50 lines.[340] Combined portraits were glued together and sent to zincography as one image, thus simplifying the process of reproduction.[341] It was a space-saving as well as visually appealing and dynamic way to deal with otherwise repetitive and boring images. Moreover, such arrangements were welcomed since it allowed for the inclusion of multiple visual facts without sacrificing much space in the issue.

A representative example of portrait montage found in *Krestianka's* March 1933 issue flanks an article featuring The International Women's Day (March 8th) celebration (Figure 66). Captions at the bottom of the page carefully document the name, title, and work place of each woman. It is unclear if the credit line — "photo [by] Mikhniuk" — refers to the photomontage artist or to the photographer of the original images. Though Mikhniuk was a photographer by profession, judging by the fact that all images show different places and women posed in a different manner, it is plausible that he designed

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[337] Roger Taylor, *George Washington Wilson, Artist and Photographer, 1823-93* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press in association with the University of Aberdeen, 1981), 27.
[338] Tupitsyn, "El Lissitzky," 47.
[339] Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 108.
[340] Viazemskii and Urlaub, *Tekhnicheskoe oformleniie gazety*, 174.
[341] Zincography, the process of engraving on zinc printing plates, was the most typical process of image reproduction.

this montage using stock-images.[342] Later in the decade, probably reflecting copyright struggles, credit lines started to specify both the name of the photomontage artist as well as the photography source.[343] Nevertheless, compared to photographers or illustrators, photomontage artists rarely received any acknowledgement.

Throughout the decade, the assembly of portraits often took complex forms, turning into more than just space-saving devices. Portrait montages of political and new working-class elite appeared on the covers and in interior spreads (Figure 67a, 67b, 67c, 67d.). An additional way in which the portrait montage was used is evident in the spread, *Rastet stakhanovskoe dvizhenie* [Growing *Stakhanovite* movement], published in *Krestianka* in 1936 (Figure 68). Heads of the most prominent *stakhanovits* are shown next to their respective field of work. For example, at the upper left, Aleksei Stakhanov (the coalminer and the namesake of the movement) is superimposed against a mining industrial landscape. Below him, Maria Demchenko (the collective farmer who established a record beet harvest) has a (supposedly) beet field behind her. Pasha Angelina, glorified as one of the first female tractor operators, appropriately has a tractor behind her. As was mentioned earlier, s*takhanovits* portraits were distributed by the Press-Cliché agency and were available in ready-made cliché format. This explains why identical images appeared in various montages of various levels of complexity (Figure 69a, 69b, 69c). The same portraits of Stakhanov, Demchenko, Angelina, and other major *stakhanovits* were so widely circulated in the mass media and celebratory parades, and were so well known to the population that they acquired an iconic status comparable to

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[342] Mikhniuk also designed a photo-diagram that appeared on page 11 of the same issue. Similarly, the caption referred to it as "photo," not as "photo diagram."

[343] Credit lines read: "V. Andreev (montage), Soiuzphoto (photography), "*Byt sovetskikh shkol'nikov*" [*Byt* of Soviet Schoolchildren], *Krestianka*, no. 22 (1938):7; V. Andreev (photomontage), Shishkin (photography), "*zazhitochnaia zhizn'*" [Wealthy life], *Krestianka*, no. 26 (1938):1.

that of Christian saints and clearly did not require identification. These images were charged with a hieratic quality supported further by a hieratic scale.[344] (For example, Stakhanov, as the initiator of the movement, is usually larger than others.)

"Artistic" Montage: Striving for Seamlesness in Graphic Design

The previously discussed example of the portrait montage belongs to the category of the "*khudozhestvennyi*" [artistic] photomontage that required careful execution and advanced technical expertise on the part of the designer. According to Sergei Morozov, a photo correspondent of *Pravda* and author of the 1939 guide, such montage involved the meticulous gluing of photographic parts and retouching of joining lines in order to avoid their appearance in the published image.[345]

Artistic montage combining only a few details was often used to illustrate thematic poems or essays. Such a photomontage illustrating Andrei Khutorianin's poem, "Collective farm harvest," appearing on the first page of *Krestianka* in 1930, consists of three images combined in a relatively seamless way, thus contesting Buchloh's chronology, according to which such montage appeared only after 1932 (Figure 70).[346] The montage contains an image of a man with a heavy sack on his shoulders standing over a pile of other sacks, though his smile and straight pose deny the weight of his burden. The middle image shows a flow of grain from a combine. Since the receptacle is not in view, the grain flow is picked up by a procession of horse-driven carts. The front cart is carefully cropped out and placed on the white background of the magazine's page.

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[344] For a more detailed discussion on the hieratic function of the portraits and influence of icons on Soviet art see Ulf Abel, "Icons in Soviet Art," in *Symbols of Power: The Esthetics of Political Legitimation in the Europe*, ed. Claes Arvidsson and Lars Erik Blomqvist (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1987).
[345] Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 106.
[346] See photomontage historiography discussed in the Introduction.

The artist cared to add shadows of the horse and cartwheels, further enhancing the spatial integration. The overall composition is effectively combined with geometric elements, providing a kind of scaffolding for the individual segments, and, thus, enhancing the unity of the composition.

By far a less skillful and, as a result, less artistic/seamless montage is found in another issue of *Krestianka* in 1935 (Figure 71). Photographed by photo correspondent Milovanov, the images representing various departments of the Peskovskii department store are combined in a single *cliché*. However, white spaces clearly separate each image and destroy the seamlessness of representation. Earlier in 1933, a similar subject relating to consumer goods revealed a much smoother integration of images (Figure 72). It goes without saying that the poor retouching process has nothing to do with the Constructivist's emphasis on the constructed nature of the image in order to provoke the critical capacity of the beholder. However, the example of the Peskovskii department store discussed above indicate, that even in the mid-1930s, when Stalin's regime was at its mightiest, the production of organic/mythographic images faced a serious obstacle in the trivial lack of skillful photomontage artists.

Clearly, the mass periodical press could hardly satisfy the demanding standards of "artistic montage" when cultural theoreticians required not only a higher degree of retouching but also the use of photographs with identical qualities. For example, Kisin regarded the combination of black-and-white with sepia photographs as unacceptable as was the use of photo prints together with clips from magazines or books (though the use of such secondary sources was encouraged for other types of illustration).[347] In their day-

[347] Kisin, *Grafika*, 206.

to-day operation, magazine designers deliberately employed a vast scope of imagery sources.

The growing number of photo correspondents and an extensive image database supported by the Soiuz-Photo and Press-Cliché Agencies (renamed Photo-Cliché TASS in 1939), made it possible for photographs appearing in other publications to be republished in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*.[348] Posters were also re-used as design elements. For example, Klutsis's poster *Vyshe znamena Marksa, Engel'sa, Lenina i Stalina* [Higher Banners of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin] was widely distributed via the periodical press.[349] The early version of the poster (1933) appeared on the first page of *Krestianka* in 1934 (Figure 73). Published before the Stakhanovits movement produced its iconic heroes in 1935, this version does not include portraits of Stakhanov and Demchenko. In the later (and much larger) edition of 1936, their faces, by this time familiar to the whole country, were inserted at the lower right. However, it was the first version of this photomontage that became familiar to a large portion of the population not as a large-scale poster on the wall but as a much more intimate image on the magazine's page.

A 1934 *Krestianka* cover recycled the photomontage, *Nasha partia nash rulevoi* [Our party is our steersman] produced by Klutsis for the May Day celebration of 1933 (Figure 74).[350] The issue was dedicated to the XVII Party Congress, thus a montage glorifying the Party leadership suited the subject well. The February 1935 cover of

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[348] Newspapers often used illustrations cut out from other newspapers and magazines. Morozov, *Fotoillustratsiia v gazete*, 106. Regional periodicals often subscribed to packages of 75-350 images supplied by the Press-Cliché Agency. Ibid., 21.

[349] The poster first appeared in an edition of 50,000, and was reissued shortly afterwards in an edition of 30,000. The 1936 revised edition was issued in 250,000 copies in more than twenty different languages.

[350] The same design was used in the October Day celebration of the same year. Hubertus Gassner and Roland Nachtigäller, eds., *Gustav Klucis: Retrospektive* (Stuttgart: G. Hatje, 1991).

*Rabotnitsa* presented a similar portrait montage dedicated to the VII Congress of All-Union Soviets held in January-February 1935 (Figure 75).[351] In both montages, the portrait of Valerian Kuibyshev, head of the *Gosplan* [State Planning Committee) is placed in the second row among other members of the Politburo. Kuibyshev died on January 25 of 1935; on the cover of a 1935 *Rabotnitsa* his head is set off by a black border — a sign of mourning in the Russian culture. It is unknown who adjusted the image, Klutsis himself or the designer of the magazine, but, in any case this was a brilliant solution to avoiding a major alteration of the original montage.

The work of El Lissitsky, another prominent artist associated with the avant-garde, appeared in *Krestianka's* January issue of 1934.The right-side margin montage supported the article, "*Vypolniaia zavety Lenina my stroim sotsialism* [Fulfilling the tasks of Lenin (we) build socialism]." Stalin's portrait, at the lower right, is taken from *USSR in Construction*,dedicated to Dneprostroi (construction of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station) and designed by Lissitsky in 1932 (Figure 76). In the original, it was part of a double-page spread featuring Stalin's portrait superimposed over an image of the dam, while a disembodied hand is pulling the electric switch (Figure 77). The switch did not make it to *Krestianka* since the photomontage artist used only one side of the original spread. There is a possibility that other photomontages in the 1934 *Krestianka*, such as the one accompanying the two articles, "As a gift to the 17th Congress we'll prepare 500 of the best tractor drivers" and "Collective farm women! Master agri[cultural] machines!" (Figure 78), were also produced by Lissitsky on *Krestianka's* commission or were simply re-used by the magazine. The seamless integration of several photographs depicting women drivers and machines in the fields into a C-curve composition, diagonal

[351] Based on its strong formal similarity, it was probably also provided by Klutsis.

placement of the details, close-ups views, and change of planes, as well as the freedom of execution, reveal the hand of an artist not foreign to the avant-garde approach to the medium and support the postulate that Soviet mass-circulated magazines featured highly artistic montages associated with "high" culture production.

As was mentioned earlier, by mid-1930s the organic fusion of elements was established as a standard artistic criterion of photomontage. Indeed, the seamless combination of individual details, such as the one appearing on a *Krestianka* cover in 1936, became typical (Figure 79). The image on the cover shows two women standing in front of an airplane, with a harvester prominently visible in the background. The montage nature of the image is evident from the barely visible contour lines surrounding the women's figures, the slightly cartoonish additions of the airplane, at the upper left, and a parachutist, at the upper right. The caption introduces women as the collective farmers attending courses for pilot training. The combination of their images with the airplanes, parachute, and harvester in a "synthetic montage" satisfied the need for a depiction that reflected the unity of man and technology, and, by extension that of the individual and society, the masses and the party leadership. Also typically, the credit line states that the image is a "Photo by N. Shestakov," neglecting to mention the name of the *photomontage artist*, and, as a result obscuring the composite nature of the image. Gassner sees, such montage as a working method that deprives the viewer of his competence as a producer of meaning, since, similar to Socialist Realist painting, it creates a polished "delusion" instead of exposing the constructed nature of representation.[352] However, such orthodox Modernist approach limits the function of any representation to the critical only, rejecting the possibility of other purposes.

[352] Gassner, "Heartfield's Moscow Apprenticeship," 274.

The majority of photomontages appearing in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* appear to confirm that, in the later 1930s, "the brush of the retoucher replaced the scissors" and "Constructivist" photomontage "was forced to assimilate itself to painting."[353] Yet the magazines also show that the period was not as homogeneous as it seems, suggesting that the "seamless" versus "constructed" may not be an operative distinction. In this light, an interesting example of photomontage that did not conceal its constructed nature appeared in a 1937 issue of *Krestianka* (Figure 80). The title of the photomontage cited Stalin's slogan, "Life became better, comrades, life became joyful, and when life is joyful, the work is better," while the images visualized some major aspects of Soviet "happiness."[354] The artist used seven photographs, laying them out in a symmetrical composition suggesting a circle or a wheel that is turned into motion by a woman on a large-scale cropped photograph at the center. She holds a rifle in a manner akin to the way one would hold the lever of a huge machine. The importance of culture and folklore is suggested by the top image showing dancing couples and a balalaika player. Below, on the left, is an image of the intensely focused faces of a woman and a boy wearing an *uzbek* yarmulke holding a book, which give a visual form to the advances in literacy acquisition among ethnicities. Then, on the right, women in swimsuits celebrate physical culture and sports. The pair below includes (on the left) an image of a smiling woman whose pose suggests haymaking (a haystack is visible at the corner). Her smile projects the pleasure of labor. The image on the right of the pair presents nicely dressed people

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[353] Ibid.

[354] Joseph Stalin, "Rech' na Pervom Vsesoiuznom Soveshchanii Stakhanovtsev 17 noyabrya 1935 goda" [Speach athe the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovits. November 17, 1935], in *I.V. Stalin. Sochineniia* (Moscow: Pisatel, 1997), 85. Variant translation: "Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous. And when life is joyous, work goes well." Translated in Stalin, "Speech at the First All-union Conference of Stakhanovites," 783.

enjoying meaningful leisure activities outdoors. The lower register depicts several women behind wheels, referring to both mechanization of the countryside and women's equality within the Socialist construction.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the prominent status of Klutsis and Lissitsky in Soviet culture, their works were published without credit to the artists. This montage, however, is an example of a case where photomontage was treated as an independent artwork with appropriate credit information: "Photomontage G. Ginzburg." Yet Ginzburg was also the magazine designer and his choice to identify himself as the artist of this photomontage (and other photomontages in *Krestianka*) coincided with his ability to do so. In any case such identification claimed an independent artistic ranking for his photomontage production and corresponded with the professionalization of the artistic practice taking place in other fields.[355]

The Early Photo-Essays in the Soviet Press: Generating Socialist Realist Narrative

When a series of photographs was combined together with captions to relate a pre-conceived narrative, such montages belong to the category of the photo-essay. The term "*fotoocherk*" [photo-essay] started to appear in connection with photographic spreads composed of five to six images combined with text explaining the images and the connections among them. One of the earliest examples appeared in *Ogonek* in 1923. It was called "*Bytovoi fotoocherk*" [Photo-essay about the everyday], and consisted of four photographs representing the life of women in a factory dormitory.[356] Until the mid-

[355] See Chapter II for the discussion of this phenomenon in amateur and folk art production.
[356] V. Saveli'ev, "V zhenskom rabochem obshchezhitii. Na prokhorovskoi manufacture" [In women's workers dorms. Prokhrov's manufacture], *Ogonek*, no. 20 (1923). Cited in V. A. Nikitin, "Fotoocherk v sovetskoi presse: stanovlenie zhanra, voprosy teorii i zhurnalistskogo masterstva" [Photo-essay in the

1930s, a photographic spread with or without text could be called *fotomontazh* [photomontage], *foto-lito-montage* [photo-text-montage], as well as *fotoocherk* [photo-essay]. Only in the mid-1930s did the term "photo-text-montage" disappear from use replaced, in most cases, by "photo-essay" when applied to a photo spread narrating a certain story, and "photo-montage," when the spreads presented events taking place in different locations simultaneously (such as holiday parades, discussed in Chapter V) or treated general themes of Socialist construction.

Despite the limited capacity for the use of photo illustration in *Rabotnitsa* thematic photo spreads appeared as early as 1924. For example, the May issue of that year presented a reportage about various daycare centers of Moscow as a photo-essay (Figure 81). From 1927 onward, nearly every issue of *Rabotnitsa* featured a photo-essay, and the term was consistently included in the magazine's table of contents. The format was usually limited to a single-page or double-page photographic spread. To appeal to a female audience, notable subjects were motherhood, day care, and the everyday life of women. In 1928, however, similar spreads were often called photomontages rather than photo-essays; as in case of an arrangement of several photographs depicting the second session of VTsK (*Vsesoiuznyi Tsentral'nyi Komitet* [All-Union Central Committee]) published in a 1928 issue of *Rabotnitsa* (Figure 82a). As was customary for that period, the spread combined photographs of individual participants with group portraits as well as general views of the meeting that was held in an auditorium. Two issues later, a visually very similar photographic spread, depicting a May Day parade in Moscow, was called a "photo-essay" instead of "photomontage." (Figure 82b). These discrepancies

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Soviet press: History of the genre, issues of theory and journalist craft], (Doctoral Candidate Thesis, Leningrad State University, 1985), 36.

suggest that while the photo-essay was the dominant form of photojournalistic practice in the 1930s, its terminology and format were still in the process of formation. The photo-essay often employed photomontage techniques, yet refrained from radical cut-and-paste methods and more often relied on the arrangement of individual frames in a certain meaning-generating order characteristic of cinematic montage.

It may be concluded that its struggle for power, the Soviet regime actively sought modern, eye-catching, and aesthetically pleasing visual language. Mass periodicals such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* used all possible means — photography, graphic arts, paintings, and images from other published sources — to convey the ideological atmosphere of building Socialism. Montage provided an excellent design method for combining these different elements. In spite of its problematic associations with rejected Constructivist formal experiments, photomontage continued to play a significant role in Soviet graphic design and in a measured form the medium was practiced continuously throughout the decade. Following the Socialist Realist doctrine's insistence on highlighting a celebratory mood in every aspect of Socialist construction, editors consistently relied on the designer's skill to use photomontage to condense and heighten the emotional impact of images. The medium's technical and visual flexibility ensured its longevity in graphic design. Throughout the 1930s, photomontage was utilized one way or another in the service of the masses.

## Chapter IV. The Photo-Essay in the Soviet Illustrated Press

This chapter focuses on the photo-essay that in the 1920s was established as the most popular and effective form of journalism in the popular media. The strong visual character of the genre made it an important component of the period's visual language and an essential participant in shaping the Soviet cultural landscape of the 1930s. Scholars acknowledge the photo-essay as an important milestone in the development of twentieth-century photography, yet discussion regarding the specific ways in which photography functioned in a photo-essay is still limited.[357]

The close contextual reading of images in photo-essays in relation to the general discourse of the time undertaken in this chapter, uncovers the ways in which the juxtaposition and layout of images together with text were used to construct desired meaning and to promote State ideology and policies. My discussion suggests that photo-essays published in the popular press sent ideologically "correct" messages in a subtle manner, avoiding blunt propaganda. By presenting the "master" narrative by way of specific stories of specific people, factories, collective farms, or other institutions, Soviet photo-essays exploited the documentary power of photographic images to make it difficult for the reader to realize the contrived nature of these stories. Life in the Soviet Union bore little resemblance to the one enjoyed by the prosperous, smiling people featured in the magazines. Yet, no matter how far the viewers' existence actually was

[357] The only research dedicated specifically to the development of the photo-essay in the USSR is Nikitin, "Fotoocherk v sovetskoi presse." Written before Perestroika and the opening of State archives, it is marked by its adherence to the Soviet ideological line. For a more comprehensive discussion of the history of the photo essay as part of the general history of photography see Stigneev, *Vek fotografii*, 96-111. For a similar discussion in English see Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," Ch. 2.

from that which was visualized in a photo-essay, their individual experiences appeared to be unrepresentative, and thus did not contradict the reality presented in the photo-essay.

Soviet photojournalists faced the struggle to adhere to the Socialist Realist doctrine (which insisted on a mediated representation of life) and, at the same time, to preserve the objectivity of their medium. The caption of a Socialist Realist photograph was especially problematic in nature, as it fulfilled the essential role of contextualizing an image, but was also central in manipulating its meaning. Already in 1931 Walter Benjamin realized the primacy of the caption as the mode of description in photography's development, since without it "all photographic constructions must remain arrested in the approximate."[358] In his classic text "The Rhetoric of the Image" (1964) Roland Barthes noted that the text of the photographic caption serves as a means of control since "the text directs the reader through the signifieds of the image, causing him to avoid some and to receive others."[359] Photographer Tim Gidal in his history of photojournalism written in 1973, observed that the objectivity of a photograph caused the viewer to be less critical, allowing him to be greatly influenced by a caption, which could either explain and elucidate the picture or falsify its statement.[360] The analysis of the full-length photo-essays appearing in *USSR in Construction* and single-spread examples, more typical of the mass periodicals exemplified by *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* provided in this chapter helps to see how that was certainly the case with the Soviet periodical press.

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[358] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography (1931)," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, et al. (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA and London, England, 1980). For a critical overview of the literature dealing with Benjamin's writing on photography see Jeannene M. Przyblyski, "The Afterimage of Walter Benjamin," *Afterimage* 26, no. 2 (September-October 1998).

[359] Roland Barthes, "The Rethoric of the Image (1964)," in *Image Music Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977).

[360] Tim Gidal, *Modern Photojournalism: Origins and Evolution, 1910-1933* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1973), 26.

Photo-Essay in *USSR in Construction*

Photo-spreads appearing in popular illustrated magazines in the early 1920s were often called photo-essays even though they very modest in their ambition to show a developed narrative. "A Day in the Life of a Moscow Working-Class Family," which appeared in 1931 in the German Communist paper, *Arbeiter illustrierte Zeitung (AIZ)*, is usually regarded as the first full-length Soviet photo-essay. It showed a sequence of allegedly typical events in the day of allegedly typical working-class family, the Filipovs (hence, the series became known as the Filipov series). The series received official approval when *Pravda* called it exemplary photographic propaganda.[361] Contemporary historians often overlook the fact that, only after the series had created great resonance and had been widely discussed in the Soviet Union and abroad, it was reprinted in the Soviet journal *Proletarskoe foto* (a.k.a *Sovetskoe foto*) with significant changes in sequence, captions, and emphasis.[362] For example, in *AIZ* the cover image showed Filipov's daughter and her friend with tennis rackets, signifying the prosperity and leisure activities of the working class. In *Proletarskoe foto*, however, this image was not included, complying with the austerity measures that characterized the first period of the Cultural Revolution. (This will change, and images of the women with tennis rackets would appear later in the decade in *Krestianka* (1936) and other magazines as a symbol of newly achieved prosperity and culture by the peasantry.)[363] In the end, the "day-in-

[361] Editorial, "24 chasa iz zhizni moskovskoi rabochei sem'i. 'Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung' (AIZ) 'Rabochaia illustrirovannaia gazeta'" [24 hours in the life of a Moscow working family], *Pravda*, October 24 1931.
[362] There was confusion in the order of the editions. Tim Gidal incorrectly referred to the AIZ edition as a "reprint from a Russian magazine," and claimed that the idea was seized upon by others and adapted to German conditions. Gidal, *Modern Photojournalism*, 26.
[363] *Krestianka*, no.13 (1936). For a comprehensive discussion of the Filipov series see Inka Greve, "'Glazami klassa' versus 'Novoe videnie' k vystavkam sovetskoi fotografii v Berline," in *Moskva-Berlin/Berlin-Moskva, 1900-1950,* ed. Irina Antonova and Iurii Merkert (Moscow and Munich: Galart and

the-life" format of the photo-essay popularized by the Filipov series remained common throughout the decade, and the illustrated press — including women's magazines — made frequent use of it.

The next major step in the development of the photo-essay took place in the illustrated monthly *USSR in Construction*. This magazine was conceived in 1928 out of the utopian belief that emphasizing the "good" and concentrating on the positive would, in the words of its general editor Maksim Gorky, enable society to build "new morality, new rules of conduct that will compel it to experience a deep feeling of joy from [living] a creative life."[364] Photography was chosen as the most objective of representational modes to highlight a positive image of Soviet ideology, both to advertise the achievements of the nation's industrialization campaign and to conceal the backward state of Soviet technology and work ethics. During the first few years of publication, the magazine illustrated a variety of state projects (developments in the textile and chemical industries, in Soviet machinery, and in the Soviet press, to name a few), which it usually treated in a catalogue-like manner. Beginning in 1932, the format was changed and each issue was dedicated to a single topic that centered on the themes of national unity, heroic achievement, and the success of industrialization. The latter was rendered through photo-essays dedicated to some of the now-famous, gigantic projects of the period (such as the

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Prestel, 1996); Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 110-17. Also see Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph*, 85-99. Wolf noted that Tupitsyn's examination of the Filipov series is incomplete since she based her conclusions on the version reproduced only in Proletarskoe foto. Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 85, note 13. In the Soviet Union many critical comments were mainly directed to the fact that several episodes from the Filipov series were not representative of the reality (for example one shot picturing a half-empty tram would most likely be inaccurate since all forms of public transportation were notoriously known for being overcrowded). The main point of the criticism was "a lack of typicality" in the representation of a typical worker's family. For a discussion of the series' reception see ibid., 110-17. Overall the series was regarded as a great success, which served as a jumping off point for the future development of narrative photographic representation.

[364] Maksim Gorky, "O malen'kikh liudiakh i velikoi ikh rabote" [About small people and their great work], *Nashi Dostizheniia* [Our Achievements] 1 (1929): 1.

*Magnitostroi* and the White Sea Canal). The magazine also featured the theme of Collectivization, to be discussed later in this Chapter.

As mentioned earlier, average Soviets read cheap mass periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, which often recycled images from *USSR in Construction*. In 1932 *Krestianka* illustrated an article, "*Geroii velokoi stroiki*" [Heroes of the great construction], with a photograph of a man named Viktor Kalmykov taken, as was stated in the caption, "from *USSR in Construction*" (Figure 83). Acknowledging the source, *Krestianka* did not, however, mention that the photograph was produced by photo-reporter Max Alpert, and originally had appeared as part of the full-length photo-essay, "The Giant and the Builder," dedicated to the construction of the Magnitogorsk Steel Plant, published in the January 1932 issue of *USSR in Construction* (Figure 84). This example allows exploring the connection between high- and low- end of Soviet design practice. Building upon Wolf's study that observed critical details concerning the conception and execution of this photo-essay, I emphasize the importance of a contextual reading of individual details within the photo-essay and show how the severing from its original placement in "The Giant and the Builder" affected the nature of the image.[365]

The construction of the Magnitogorsk plant started in 1929, and was part of the First Five-Year Plan, implemented in 1928. A young volunteer worker, Victor Kalmykov, the subject of Max Alpert's photograph, arrived at the construction site in the same year. By 1931 he was a shock-worker and a Communist, which is why he was selected for the photo-essay. Alpert and Aleksandr Smolian, a journalist then living in *Magnitostroi*, co-authored the narrative of "The Giant and the Builder" which

[365] This phenomenon was typical for the Soviet cultural discourse, and may be connected to the developing self-referentiality of Soviet culture discussed by Malte Rolf in Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors."

documented moments from Kalmykov's life, tracing his transformation from a backward Russian peasant in 1929, into a literate and progressive Soviet worker in 1931.

One of the often-reproduced photographs captures Kalmykov's arrival at *Magnitogorsk* in 1929 (Figure 85). Yet it is known that Alpert had never been in Magnitogorsk prior to December of 1931, when he arrived to produce the series. All photographs were taken during the four days of his stay in 1931.[366] Based on Kalmykov's oral account, Smolian sketched a scenario, and Alpert photographed the necessary moments, including those that took place in the past. The final photo-essay design was produced by a VKhUTEMAS graduate, Nikolai Troshin.

To emphasize the theme of transformation it was very important to show Kalmykov at the beginning of his arrival at *Magnitostroi*. As Alpert explained later in his life: "a shot was needed that would make him a symbol of the transformation of the human essence, the reincarnation of yesterday's peasant into a builder of a socialist society." To achieve such an image, the photographer asked Kalmykov to wear the peasant bast-shoes (*lapti)* "in which he had arrived at the construction site a long time ago," and to carry a travel chest similar to those that villagers made to hold their belongings when they traveled. After that, Alpert photographed him in a railway wagon "exactly analogous" to the one in which Kalmykov had arrived.[367]

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[366] Photojournalists G. Petrusov and N. Vladimirtsev contributed to the photo-essay. For a discussion of the circumstances surrounding the selection of the Kalmykov as the main protagonist and for Kalmykov's wife's recollection of the shooting session see Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 139-40.

[367] The full quote reads: "Показать его сегодняшний день не составляло особого труда. Нужен был, однако, какой-то кадр, который стал бы символом преображения человеческой сущности, перевоплощения вчерашнего крестьянина в строителя социалистического общества. Я попросил Виктора надеть лапти в которых он когда-то приехал на стройку, взять в руки сундучок (в деревнях чемоданов, разумеется, не было, и если деревенский житель отправлялся в дальнюю дорогу, роль чемодана выполнял такой вот самодельный сундучок), и сфотографировал его в точно таком же вагоне, в котором он совершил свое путешествие из деревни." Maks Alpert, "Dorogie serdtsu kadry" [Dear to one's heart [photo] shots], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo], no. 9 (September 1981): 26.

Wolf pointed out that the staged nature of these and the other shots in "The Giant and the builder" provoked the harshest criticism because it was an obvious violation of the law of documentary reportage. [368] She also noted that the image of Kalmykov was disassociated from the original photo-essay and became an independent symbol of the *Magnitostroi*.[369] To this observation I would add, that while the staged nature of this photograph and its "incorrect" dating were well known it was frequently reproduced, even in the recent publications, as captured in 1929. As a 1929 picture, it was published in *Soviet Photography* (1984) and in 1989 appeared in the Soviet magazine *Yunost'*[Youth] as *Stroitel' Magnitki* [The Builder of Magnitka] (1929)[370] Tupitsyn mentioned the whole series as a 1929 production[371] and journalist Anne Williamson speculated that Kalmykov's story was traced by Alpert "over a period of years," and illustrated her essay with the same photograph as of 1929. [372]

I would like to point out, the context in which the images originally appeared in *USSR in Construction* conditions the proper reading of the Kalmykov series. The above mentioned sources that reprinted the photographs of Kalmykov did so from the original negative, not directly from the image as it appeared in the magazine. In its initial publication, the young man's figure is cropped out of the photograph, enlarged, and placed against the flat white background of the magazine spread (Figure 86). The presence of the figure was further enhanced by the smaller size of the other photographs

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[368] For a discussion of the reception and quotes from primary sources see Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 140-47.
[369] Kalmykov's actual personality soon became irrelevant. His disappearance as an "enemy of the people" six years later did not affect his symbolic function.
[370] Sergei Morozov and Valerie Lloyd, *Soviet Photography: An Age of Realism* (New York: Greenwich House, 1984), 14; Editorial, "70," *Iunost'* [Youth], no. 3 (1987): 4.
[371] Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph*, note 35.
[372] Anne Williamson, "Broken Promises: Seeing through Soviet Propaganda Photography," *Art and Antiques* 9, no. 2 (1992): 60.

appearing on the spread. Moreover, the shot showing Kalmykov's arrival was conceived as part of the sequence, thus the original meaning of this photograph was defined by its place in the photo-narrative and in the magazine layout. At the beginning of the photo-essay, the newcomer to the construction site — the Kalmykov "peasant" — is shown looking to the right as if inviting the viewer to turn the page and witness his transformation. At the very end of the photo-essay — where the time of the narrative turns into the present — the viewer encounters a compositionally similar spread, but this time Kalmykov is shown in boots, signifying his transformation into a worker. Larger than life, he turns to the left, towards the just completed story of his transformation (Figure 87). While the Kalmykov peasant anticipates the future, the Kalmykov worker proudly reviews his past. Disassociating any of these images from their context suspends and ultimately falsifies their meaning.

The Kalmykov story was created in the context of heated debates on the nature of Soviet photography. In the early 1930s ROPF launched an attack against Oktiabr's "fetishistic attachment to technology and the machine," and its inability to show "the heroic aspect" of the relationship between man and his surroundings. ROPF advocated for comprehensible content, and blamed Oktiabr' for its alleged attachment to purely formal experimentation.[373] However, both groups realized the deficiency of a single photograph, which "rips out a little piece of life" and, thus, "does not provide necessary representation" of real-life occurrences.[374] They saw themselves not only as reporters but as active participants in history, that not only documented but also interpreted events in

[373] It should be noted that Oktiabr' and ROPF both worked to achieve the same political end, and were equally committed to Soviet policy.
[374] Semen Uritskii and Pavel Kazimov, "Rabochie zhurnalisty i pisateli o filipovskoi serii" [Workers correspondents and writers on Filipov series], *Proletarskoe foto* [Proletarian photo] 4 (1931): 9. Cited in Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 106.

Soviet life, and their interpretation was preconditioned to be positive and optimistic. Both groups actively searched for solutions to photography's deficiencies.

Mastering of the method of 'photo observation' (*fotonabludenie*) was promoted by the leftist photographers affiliated with Oktiabr', as essential for the ultimate effectiveness of photo-series.[375] The term was introduced by Sergei Tretiakov in his 1931 essay, "From the Photo-Series towards Protracted Photo-Observation."[376] Tretiakov proposed that an accumulation of photographs of the same subject taken over a period of time was a way to counter the shortcomings of the arbitrary and momentary nature of a single photograph. Yet, this method was subject to some serious complications: an author could not be in control of his subject; and the need to trace the subject over an extended period of time was a definite inconvenience. The Filipov series was an attempt to use the extended observation method in one day only, and it displayed the limitations of that approach.

Unlike the Filipov series, "The Giant and the Builder" showed a longer period and the progression of time, and relayed the transformation of a person participating in a construction project parallel to the transformation of the construction site itself. According to a contemporaneous review, the series provided "convincing material showing this growth, and, thus, the possibility to understand why, … the proletarian develops in this way, and not in another way." [377] Thus, according to the reviewer, while the Filipov series told "how" the Soviet worker lives, "The Giant and the Builder" photo-

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[375] Lev Mezhericher, "Za operativnuiu bol'shevitskuiu fotoseriiu. Ovladet' seriinoi s'emkoi - politicheskaia zadacha fotografii" [For an operative Bolshevik photo-series. The conquest of serial shooting [is] the political task of photography], *Proletarskoe foto* [Proletarian photo], no. 4 (December 1931).
[376] Sergei Tretiakov, "Ot fotoserii - k dlitelnomu fotonablyudeniyu" [From the Photo-Series towards the Protracted Photo-Observation], ibid.
[377] "Мы имеем (…) убедительный материал. Показывающий этот рост и таким образом, дающий возможность понять, почему именно пролетарий развивает так и не иначе." Simon Fridliand, "Po vertikali" [On a vertical], *Proletarskoe foto* [Proletarian photo] no. 7-8 (July-August 1932): 11-12.

essay showed — why. To do so, the creators had to employ staged photography, yet, in spite of the controversy surrounding this practice, the message of the series was accepted as proper and necessary by all sides.

Alpert rejected the accusation of departing from the laws of photo-reportage, claiming that he photographed only what was possible to see.[378] In other words, he insisted on the authenticity and truthfulness of his photographs. In Alpert's opinion, the reality of Kalmykov's existence and the reality of the *Magnitostroi* construction site assured the reality/documentality of his photographs. He called his method the "restoration of fact," and promoted it as a way of avoiding the inconvenience and lack of predictability involved with Tretiakov's method of photo-observation.[379]

There was no consensus among Soviet photo journalists regarding the issue of the restoration of facts.[380] During the 1930s, photography was seen as a medium of truth and accuracy, and was accepted as a universal means of communication. Respect for the printed image was conditioned by its seeming credibility. Photography's ability to illustrate/document the immediate physical world was unquestionable. However, painting was seen as the only medium capable of providing a complex, synthetic analysis of reality and to represent the past or imaginary events. Alpert's approach clearly violated the "documentary" nature of photography. Yet, the "restoration of fact" helped to overcome such an obvious limitation of photography. In addition, as was pointed out by a journalist named Narskii in 1932, as a photo-essay "The Giant and the Builder"

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[378] Maks Alpert, "Sotsialism pereplavliaet cheloveka" [Socialism reforges a man], ibid.: 8.
[379] Ibid.
[380] For example Arkadii Shaikhet who was a prominent member of ROPF rejected the method as inappropriate for photojournalism. Arkadii Shaikhet, "Zakonen li metod vosstanovleniia fakta" [If the method of "restoration of fact" is lawful], ibid.: 11.

successfully triumphed over the single shot "fragmentation, lack of connection, chance, lack of planning… and the inability to show the living person."[381]

From an historical perspective, Alpert did not invent the idea of "restoration of fact." The first great reenactment of an historical event took place in 1920 with the staging of "*Shturm Zimnego Dvortsa*" [The Storming of the Winter Palace] in which thousands of people took part. The majority of the "actors" had been actual participants in the October 1917 event. In 1927, a similar spectacle was produced in the form of the film *Oktiabr'* [October], by the avant-garde film director, Sergei Eisenstein. Composed as a montage of essential moments and selected episodes, the film showed people, streets, buildings and weapons of the Revolution as remembered by those who witnessed them ten years previously. This material became the document of the Revolution, and little attention was put to its, strictly speaking, "fake" nature.[382]

Wolf pointed out that "The Giant and the Builder" employed photographic montage based on cinema throughout the magazine's design.[383] In addition, the story of Kalmykov was "performed" by the actual participants, Kalmykov himself, his wife, and co-workers. Rodchenko attempted such employment of actual participants back in 1923 in his photomontages for Maiakovskii's poem, *About it*. The illustrations for *About it* were from photographs of the poet, his lover, Lili Brik, and even Rodchenko himself. In spite of the imaginary nature of the poem's narrative, the use of straight photography manifested interest in the documentary power of the image. As I show elsewhere, in

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[381] Narskii, "Gigant i stroitel" [The Giant and the Builder], *Zhurnalist* [Journalist], no. 6 (February 1932): 8. Cited in Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 144.
[382] For more on the production of this film see Frederick Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 189-96.
[383] For a discussion of the "The Giant and the Builder" relation to cinema see Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," 137.

*About it* the belief in the relevance and even the necessity of the documentary to the new society was taken to an extreme.[384] The content of the resulting creation championed a specificity and intimacy that were unacceptable in 1923, but turned out to be more appropriate in 1932.

It should be emphasized that, while ultimately serving the needs of the totalitarian regime, neither the "restoration of fact" method nor staged photography in general was imposed on the artists by the State. In his Kalmykov story, Alpert aimed at documenting reality, responding to the left avant-garde practice of the "fixation of facts" that had been discussed since the mid- 1920s.[385] Yet, he also wanted to create an epos of an "ordinary hero," of a (supposedly) typical worker laying down the rails of the future Socialist reality. With such an ambition in mind, he had to transform the "matter-of-factness" of Kalmykov's existence into epic symbolism. Once Kalmykov became a symbol, his actual personality was no longer relevant, and the photographs restoring his past were no longer seen as such. Their initial staged nature was dismissed as irrelevant. The disassociation of the image of Kalmykov's arrival from the context of its original appearance within the photo-essay led not only to confusion in dates of its production. It omitted the initial conception of the image as a pictorial/symbolic restoration of a historic event. As a result, the Kalmykov series acquired the quality of documentary imagery,

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[384] See Katerina Romanenko, "Pro Eto: Mayakovsky and Rodchenko's Groundbreaking Collaboration," (Master's Thesis, Brooklyn College, 2003). The most aggressive disapproval of Maiakovskii and Rodchenko's work came from *LEF* member Nikolai Chuzhak, who blamed Rodchenko for imposing the naturalism of the poem by showing the poet himself as a hero, claiming that "the small naturalistic helplessness that the confused poet failed to conceal from the general consumer (as the consumer has no interest in it) the artist (Rodchenko) only increased by his unprincipled participation." Nikolai Chuzhak, "Ot illyuzii k material'nosti" [From illusion to materiality], in *Revizia Levogo Fronta* [The revision of the Left Front], ed. V. Pertsov (Moscow: Proletkult, 1925), 115, 16.

[385] For more on the factography movement see Devin Fore, "The Operative Word in Soviet Factography," *October* 118 (Fall, 2006). For the role of the Left Front of Art in the factographic movement see Leah Dickerman, "The Fact and the Photograph," *October*, no. 118 (Fall 2006).

denoting the rhetoric of immediacy and truth. In this way the Kalmykov photograph was used in *Krestianka* in 1932, only a few months after the original story had been produced. The representation of history turned into history itself, and the 'restored' fact was no longer distinct from the real one.[386]

The storm of controversies over the Filipov series and "The Giant and the Builder" prompted the editors of *USSR in Construction* to refrain from questionable photographic practices. In subsequent years, Soviet photojournalism in general avoided using staged shots as directly and declaratively as in the 'restoration of fact' method. Staged photography, however, continued to be practiced in a veiled form of so-called "*snimok s uslozhnennym siuzhetom*" [shots with more complex content]. Morozov, (earlier mentioned photojournalist and the author of several practical guides) introduced the term in his guide for worker photo-reporters published in 1937. [387] Morozov defined "shots with more complex content" as requiring a "detailed dissection of content" and "advance preparation for the shooting session." He vehemently differentiated the "shot with more complex content" from the "staged shot" on the grounds that the latter was theatrical and not documentary. Morozov explained the nature of "shots with more complex content" in the following example. Supposedly, a photographer needed to photograph collective farmers enjoying their free time in the collective farm park. Due to the workday hours, he found the park empty when he arrived. Ideally, according to the manual, he should wait until the next weekend when the park would be filled with people. In case the photographer could not wait, the author advised him to ask a group of

[386] While many authors focused on the political and social dimensions of photography, I did not find research dedicated specifically to the study of cases in which photographic representation functioned as history *per se*.
[387] Morozov, *Rabota gazetnogo fotokorrespondenta*, 18.

young people to come to the park after work. If, for some reason, such arrangement was not possible, the guide instructed him to cancel the shoot altogether or change the theme of the photo-reportage.[388] In the second half of the 1930s, most of the published photo-essays relied on "shot with more complex content," which provided, in the view of most professionals, a constructive solution to the existing limitations of photo-reportage. In the same publication Morozov mentioned that the staged photograph was suitable only for photomontage or for a "*photo-kartina* [photo-picture]" but was unacceptable in the practice of the photo-reporter."[389]

Taking shots "with more complex content" became a regular practice in Soviet photojournalism and in *USSR in Construction*, which continued to set examples of photo-essay formats and design. Collectivization — another major component of the Socialist program — was the focus of two issues of *USSR in Construction*, those appearing in February 1932 and December 1939. The 1932 "Collective Farms" issue combined the innovative photography championed by Oktiabr' that aimed to transform the appearance of ordinary things through the lens and camera viewpoints, and the "content oriented" approach promoted by ROPF. Such editorial choice reveals an attempt to cultivate the unified cultural front even prior to the "April decree" that dismissed all independent cultural organizations in the Soviet Union and put an official end to the rivalry between various artistic groups.[390] In subsequent photo-essays production ROPF's vision had evolved into the dominant method.

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[388] Ibid. In reality, especially if the photographer was on assignment from an important newspaper, a "group of young people" could (and most likely would) be arranged by the collective farm officials with no regard to the hour of the day, since the periphery always wanted to "look good" in the eye of the "center."
[389] Ibid., 28.
[390] "On Restructuring Literary-Artistic Organizations," Decree of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) 23 April 1932.

In addition to the works of professional photographers, many pictures for the 1932 issue were taken from the huge collection of thematic images maintained by the Soiuz-foto agency. In the Soviet printed media it was not the first attempt to represent collectivization. *Sovetskoe foto* regularly announced thematic competitions on agrarian subjects, and was overwhelmed with submissions from professional as well as amateur photographers.[391] In 1931 the magazine called amateur photographers from collective-farms and villages to enter a competition "*Fotografia v bor'be za Kollektivizatsiu*" [Photography in the struggle for collectivization] and it promised valuable awards for their submissions of "vigorous and diverse forms of photo-propaganda of collectivization."[392] The enthusiasm with which photographers from the countryside responded proves that collectivization was not always met with resistance, and that a large population did join collective farms voluntarily — sometimes for pragmatic reasons, sometimes to avoid prosecutions, but often with an honest effort to build a new life.[393]

The 1932 "Collective Farms" issue came out immediately after "The Giant and the Builder." Thus, the presentation of the largest industrial project and the successful transformation of the backward Russian peasant into a progressive Soviet worker, shown

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[391] Other newspapers announced similar competitions and published the results. For example, around 1927 *Krasnaia Tatariia* [Red Tatariia] published results of the competitions "Soviet City" and "Soviet Village." See Valerii Stigneev, *Phototvorchestvo v Rossii* [Photofraphic creativity in Russia] (Moscow: Planeta, 1990), 27.

[392] Editorial, "Konkurs" [Call for entries], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo], no. 6 (1931). For a history of *Sovetskoe foto* see Zakovyrina, "Sozdanie i evoliutsiiaa zhurnala 'Sovetskoe foto'."

[393] Sheila Fitzpatrick, "From Krestianskaia Gazeta's Files. Life Story of a Peasant Striver," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 24, no. 1-2 (1997). Great differences existed in the collectivization practices of different regions. Some Russian regions were used for collective forms of farming even before the Revolution. Yet, in the Ukraine, for example, there existed a traditional family farming practice with a strong sense of privacy and independence. For the history of collectivization see Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*. For a specific account of collectivization in the Ukraine see Andrew Gregorovich, "Black Famine in Ukraine 1932-33. A Struggle for Existence," Forum: A Ukrainian Review, http://www.infoukes.com/history/famine/gregorovich/index.html.

in "The Giant and the Builder," was followed by the similar Socialist project, whose aim was to show the successful transformation of the backward individually owned countryside into progressive Soviet collective farming. For the editorial board of the *USSR in Construction*, which included several very highly positioned officials, it was not a coincidence, but a logical choice.[394] The entire issue was devoted to collective farming in general, without reference to any particular collective farm or any particular "hero."

The designers of the "Collective Farms" issue consciously avoided complicated cut-and-paste arrangement of the photographs. Nonetheless, photomontage principles are generously applied in the layout of images. Typically, the spreads present "then and now" dichotomies by comparing the old and new ways of living and working. For example, manual and mechanical labors are effectively contrasted in a remarkable assemblage of four photographs by Oktiabr member Eleazar Langman (Figure 88). Taken from dynamic angles and closely cropped, these images engage the viewer in an active interpretative process. In another spread, more straightforward images convey a similar idea: non-mechanical, individual land development, represented by a downward movement of the lone farmer, in the upper left, is contrasted with the optimistic upward diagonal formed by several collective farm tractors, in the upper right (Figure 89). Also at the right, well-maintained collective farmhouses and a group of farmers able to dedicate time to learning (as stated in the caption) are contrasted with the image of a skeletal horse and unroofed structures, on the left, which allude to poverty in the individual households. The accompanying text clarified the message of the photographs, thus ensuring their proper interpretation.

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[394] The editorial board included Maksim Gorky, G. L. Piatakov, editor-in-chief, and E. S. Ezhova (wife of N. Ezhov, head of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, who carried out the terror in the 1930s in a period that was nicknamed after him - '*ezhovschina*'.)

Cropping and a dramatic change of angles and proportions were used in moderation, yet *USSR in Construction* designers regularly relied on the interconnection of images, creating spreads in which the photomontage principle was manifest in the careful selection and juxtaposition of individual frames. A photomontage-driven condensation of time and space was achieved in an effectively laid out spread combining the wide curve of marching collective farmers (photograph by Arkadii Shaikhet) with a procession of loaded horse carts (photograph by Milovanov) (Figure 90). The space of the spread is treated in a unified manner, not limited to juxtapositions only. Visually the spread creates a dynamic S-curve while conceptually it shows the beginning of the sowing season (collective farmers march in a bare landscape and carry various work tools) and culminates in the transportation of grain after a supposedly rich harvest. This image was published by *Krestianka* in 1933 in its flopped version on the verso of the magazine's cover (Figure 91). This time the curve of the marching peasants is montaged with another photograph of tractors in the field. The crude retouching process suggests that the image was taken from the reproduction in the *USSR in Construction* rather than from the original print providing an additional example of image recycling and popular magazines' continuous borrowing from the *USSR n Construction*.

Despite the attempt to present a unified artistic front by combining various artistic approaches the 1932 "Collective Farms" issue suffered from inconsistent design that may be the result of difficulties relating to the subject. Heartbreaking descriptions of horrors associated with the confiscation of grain, deportations, and prosecutions of the individual peasant households hardly correspond with the presented picture. Forced collectivization resulted in one of the most terrible famines in history that affected the Ukraine, the Volga

region of Southern Russia, and part of Kazakhstan. Yet, in direct correspondence with the ideological request to concentrate on the good, *USSR in Construction* highlighted a positive image of the transformations taking place in the Soviet countryside.

When *USSR in Construction* returned to the theme of collectivization in 1939 in its photo-essay entitled "*Kolkhoz imeni Stalina*" [Stalin's Collective Farm], the atmosphere in the country had changed. The issue appeared several years after Joseph Stalin announced the completion of collectivization at the 1934 Seventeenth Party Congress. The Great Purges of 1936-1937 that had sowed confusion and demoralization in society were mostly over, economic conditions improved, and the Socialist Realist consciousness of Soviet society was much stronger and more universal than in the early 1930s.

The 1939 photo-essay was dedicated to a specific collective farm named after Stalin and located in Southern Ukraine. "Stalin's Collective Farm" was designed by Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, an accomplished artist in her own right and Rodchenko's companion and frequent collaborator. In compliance with editorial attempts to improve quality, the magazine employed professional writers and designers whenever possible. It should be noted that Rodchenko, the major figure of Soviet design, started to work as a designer for *USSR in Construction* only after his successful début as photographer and designer of the 1933 issue devoted to the White Sea and Baltic Canal. Like other professional artists, Rodchenko actively sought commissions from important mainstream publications.[395]

[395] By 1939 Rodchenko and Stepanova had designed many issues, only one of which was based on Rodchenko's own photographs taken at the White Sea- Baltic Canal construction. See Wolf, "*USSR in Construction*," Ch. 5.

The text for the 1939 issue was written by Gabriel El-Registan, a professional journalist who later became known as co-author of the lyrics to the Soviet National Anthem written in 1943. While Rodchenko and Stepanova were credited as creators of the issue, the photographs were actually commissioned by Rodchenko from photo-reporter Gregorii Zelma.[396] Collaboration between photographers and graphic designers was a typical practice, and has been compared to the work of film directors, script writers, and camera operators. Designers of *USSR in Construction* planned new issues, taking into consideration future juxtapositions of close-ups with panoramic views and other design details. Then they would order necessary shots from photo-reporters. Many photographs were taken based on precisely drawn compositions that had been prepared in advance.[397] Such images clearly belong to the category of "shots with complex context," and are a far cry from Rodchenko's adherence to the "objective," unmediated photography. In any case, Rodchenko and Stepanova refrained from re-constructing/restoring anything from the past.

The content of the 1939 issue is presented in the form of a photo-essay, recreating a traditional "one day in the life…" of a collective farm, supposedly representing a typical Soviet collective farm and typical Soviet farmers. The editors could not escape the urge to make this day of special significance, so they chose the first day of the harvest. The photo-essay starts from early morning, the beginning of the work day, and then proceeds to present different activities associated with work and leisure, culminating with the celebration of the harvest.

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[396] For biographic information on Georgii Zelma see Steve Yates, "Georgii Zelma," *Photo/Video* (2003-2011), http://www.foto-video.ru/art/portfolio/19813/.

[397] Aleksandr Lavrent'ev, "Rodchenko v "SSSR na stroike"" [Rodchenko in USSR in Construction], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo], no. 1 (1981): 39. Similar information is provided by photomontage artist Aleksandr Zhitomirskii in Zhitomirskii, *Iskusstvo politicheskogo fotomontazha*, 13.

The particular collective farm in the issue bears the name of Stalin. Reflecting the blooming cult of Stalin's personality, the opening of the magazine leads to the introductory text, to Stalin's portrait, and quotes from Stalin and about Stalin (Figure 92). Stalin's portrait is in fact the work of a Soviet gardener, A. D. Zykov, who created it from different types of grain —a concept related to the agrarian theme of the issue. The portrait floats above the grain pattern of the background, an effect achieved by the placement of a white rectangle between the grain pattern and the bottom part of the portrait. This rectangle also functions as a podium for Stalin's bust portrait, conveying a sculptural effect that produces a three-dimensional presence for an otherwise flat and overtly decorative work.

The next page features Stalin's image again, but this time with a quotation of his own words about the successful establishment of collectivization as the only form of farming that brings prosperity and happiness. Reverence for Stalin does not end here. It resounds loudly throughout the magazine, mostly in the text. Stalin is present visually, as a portrait on the wall in one of the photographs, and symbolically, in the picture of the old collective farmer and his wife reading the *Kratkaia istoriia VKPb* [Short History of VKPs] (1938). In this book, Soviet history was re-written to present Stalin as a main figure of the Revolution.[398]

After paying tribute to the "Father of all Peoples," as Stalin was referred to in the media, the designers highlighted the historical importance of the collective farm under consideration (Figure 93). Three diagonal strips present the transition of time. The top one refers to the pre-Revolutionary past, which appears almost pre-historical in the

[398] For more on the rewriting of the history of the Revolution see Brandenberger, "The 'short course' to modernity."

presence of a sculpture of an ancient idol facing bare unplowed land. The middle strip shows a panoramic image of the Perekop battle that took place in 1920 during the Civil War. Decisive for the fate of the Revolution, the Perekop battle is a sign of the historical triumph of the Soviet State, and is particularly relevant to this collective farm due to its geographical proximity to the historic site. The final strip is about the happy present: a smiling female collective farmer proudly observes the rich wheat field. Her posture and placement, on the left, repeats that of the ancient idol, in the upper strip, alluding to the historical transformations that have taken place.

An analysis of the magazine layout reveals the application of many design elements developed by Rodchenko and Stepanova in the course of their professional practice. A Constructivist approach to the design of *USSR in Construction* is evident in the calculated compositions, interrelated elements, and figuration supported by geometric forms. The design of each page consistently varies. An interchange of gray, blue, and brown colors creates a visual dynamism that actively engages the viewer. According to art historian Aleksandr Lavrent'ev, Rodchenko was the first to introduce color variation in the tints used in the printing process into graphic design.[399] The use of different color tints is paralleled by the complex arrangement of photographs on each page. Full-page images, on the left, with several small pictures, on the right, are followed by a more symmetrical layout. At the same time, these calculated formal arrangements are interspersed with design details, such as flowers added to the layout of several spreads, which hardly correspond to Constructivist philosophy developed by Rodchenko and Stepanova in the early 1920s. The spring blossoms flank the images that are supposed to visualize the first day of the harvest, which takes place in the summer when the flowers

[399] Lavrent'ev, "Rodchenko," 38.

no longer bloom (See Figures 94, 96). Flowers were typical iconographic motifs in Socialist Realist painting symbolizing the growth, and, in Russian context, paradise and royalty.[400] In this case, designers included flowers to heighten the celebratory mood of the issue, believing that they were emphasizing the "blossoming" success of the Soviet collective farm.

The lower right section of one particular spread represents the early morning when farmers are heading to work (Figure 94). A closer look reveals that the arrangement of the photographs on each page presents a complex, carefully considered content. Images at the bottom are arranged with escalating cinematic effect. Rows of women march on the diagonal leading to the left, while another row of workers creates a diagonal directed to the right, and then a row of bicyclists counterbalances this movement by turning the diagonal to the left. The right side echoes the directions of the left, at the same time typifying different means of transportation available on the collective farm: mechanical, horse-powered, and pedestrian. The bottom elongated and overlapping frame, depicting official controllers arriving to supervise the work of farmers, closes up the projecting diagonals of the upper frames. This frame introduces a psychological element implying that enthusiasm and love for work would move hand in hand with control and supervision.

The pages of the 1939 issue are treated in a unified way, presenting the seamless integration of fragments associated with "synthetic" photomontage. Rodchenko and Stepanova reduced the radical cropping, but they continued their experiments with some of the effects of simultaneity and space condensation. The artists relied on bold layouts, unusual positioning of frames and imaginative cropping of borders. In his earlier

[400] Brooks, *Thank you, Comrade Stalin!* I am grateful to art historian David Lewis for this reference.

designs, Rodchenko had often integrated black lines drawn with a ruler and pieces of plane paper cut in geometrical angular, forms (Figure 95). These abstract elements functioned as compositional devices for animation, unification, the creation of different depth planes, and accentuation. In the 1939 issue spread depicting rest time, geometrically drawn diagonal lines interact with the horizontally placed frames, arranged in a triangular ladder creating a three-dimensional effect resulting in an animated presentation that engages the viewer, drawing his attention to the overall design, and also to each frame individually, creating an effect of simultaneity (Figure 96). The designers employed sequencing characteristic, and succeeded in providing a glimpse of the collective farm's different locations in a single moment. Flowers, placed in a split-screen view, at the center, and flanking the images, on the left and right, decorate this spread in an especially elaborate way, implying that leisure time was the most celebrated achievement of Socialism.

Since the late 1920s, Rodchenko was heavily criticized for the formalist tendencies in his art. In 1935 he was compelled to publicly declare his move away from "placing the formal solution for a theme before the ideological solution." [401] Having learned from the lesson of being accused of formalism, designers made sure to spell out the ideological content practically in every detail. In this short cinematic sequence, almost every aspect of the happy Soviet life is depicted with humor and sentimentality: after a morning's hard work an ideal Soviet farmer takes a good midday rest; an ideal

[401] In the continuation of the attacks on Formalism the formalist and naturalist tendencies in photography were discussed in a special issue of *Sovietskoe foto*. See Editorial, "O formalizme i naturalizme v fotoiskusstve" [On formalism and naturalism in photographic art], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] 4 (1935). Rodchenko's essay appeared as Aleksandr Rodchenko, "Perstroika khudozhnika" [Reconstruction of an artist], *Sovetskoe foto* [Soviet photo] 5-6 (1936). Reprinted in Aleksandr Rodchenko, *Opyty dlia budushchego: dnevniki, stat'i, pisma, zapiski* [Experiments for the future: diaries, articles, notes] (Moscow: Grant 1996).

technician stands with the attribute of his profession — the agrarian machine, behind him; an ideal communal dining scene; an ideal Soviet family; pleasure of intellectual life, courtship, happy womanhood, and happy childhood. In the last image, on the right, the designers make reference to the outside world: a farmer's son serving as a border-patrol soldier comes home for a visit.

Military alertness was an important theme in 1939. The family reunion is charged with additional meaning. Since the threat of war was in the air, adding the soldier communicates the military alertness of the country. The emphasis on the fact that the soldier serves on border patrol duty also signifies that the borders of the Soviet state are constantly guarded, which further denotes that the collective farm along with the rest of the country are protected from any invasion. The soldier's coming home for a leave implies that there is no immediate emergency that would prevent him from leaving his post, thus relieving any anxiety the reader might have about tension existing in any international relationships.

On several spreads of the 1939 issue, the artists relied on the compositional power of single shots in addition to layout variations. For example, a "worm's eye" shot of a tractor moving out of the picture plane, on the left, is placed above the image of the bulls on the road moving towards the faraway horizon (Figure 97). The designers juxtaposed the sturdy solidity of the tractor movement and the slow progression of the bulls with the vibrant and swift motion of horses, on the right side of the spread. In another spread, Rodchenko and Stepanova again employed a formal device to invigorate and reinforce the message expressed in the photo-essay. The collective farm celebration of the "First Day of the Harvest," captured by Zelma in photographs, is presented by designers in a

bold diagonal layout that catches the spirit of the joyful occasion (Figure 98). The emphasis on folkloric dance and costumes is significant since it reflects one of the paradoxes evident in the cultural situation of the late 1930s. Aggressive collectivization purposefully destroyed traditional peasant ways, yet, after basically achieving its goal, the Soviet government initiated the integration of peasant folklore into official culture.[402] References to Ukrainian folk traditions frequently appear in the 1939 issue. Collective farmers wear embroidered shirts during the hard work day, resting girls occupy themselves with chitchat and embroider, and several culminating spreads are dedicated to the folk festival celebrating the harvest.

Obviously, the narrative of the "Stalin's Collective Farm" photo-essay is not limited to the specifics of one day. Rather, the magazine presents every possible positive aspect of collective farm life, including access to entertainment, education, and leisure. According to the photo-essay, the second half of the day was spent by "a group of collective farmers … in the neighboring *Askani Nova* [botanical garden]." On subsequent pages, emphasis is on the chess and soccer tournaments that took place as part of the celebration. The image of a chess-playing collective farmer was very popular at the time, as it was viewed as the most potent way to represent the "new peasant," whom the Socialist enlightenment turned into sophisticated and cultured person.

Reflecting the changes taking place in the ideological message of the regime that placed emphasis on individual achievement, the "Best of the Best" spread appears at the end of the issue (Figure 99). Rodchenko and Stepanova choose a rectangular format for each person, identifying and listing occupations. Some of the photographs catch an

[402] For a discussion of several paradoxes associated with the period in Soviet history see Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values*, Ch. 5. Hoffmann notes that the restoration of folkloric traditions is evident across Europe during the interwar period as a means of uniting populations in support of their common heritage.

individual at the moment of performing an actual activity, reflecting Rodchenko's disdain for posed photography, an approach evidently shared by Zelma. This spread functions similar to the credit lines that appear in a film, turning the whole issue into a Socialist-Realist fiction-movie about a supposedly typical collective farm. From the cover to the final page, the design stimulates attention and engages the reader with the constructed narrative.

Photo-Essay in Women's Magazines

The 1939 "Stalin's Collective Farm" issue gives the magazine the impression of its being a glamorous entertainment magazine, advertising the enjoyable resources of a certain region. Emphasis on the "luxuries" of collective farm life, such as travel, education, entertainment, and vacationing at a seaside resort, supports Wolf's insistence that the magazine catered, in general, to the political and managerial elite of the Soviet audience and was not limited to the propaganda abroad.[403] As I will demonstrate further, for an ordinary Soviet citizen, such fairytale pleasures were visualized in a much more modest way by cheaper periodicals, the magazines for women among them.

As discussed in Chapter Three, thematic photo-spreads appeared in women's magazines as early as 1924 and, from 1927 onward, they were a permanent element of the magazine content. While format and the layout of images could differ, the essential component of any photo-essay was the narrative. It had to present a story. Such narrative photo-spreads became characteristic of the later 1920s and are exemplified by 1928 *Rabotnitsa's* photo-essay entitled "*Dom besprizornoi materi* [Shelter for a homeless mother]" (Figure 100). The photo-essay begins with an image of a shelter building, in

[403] Wolf, "When Photographs Speak," 71-75.

the upper left corner. The caption indicates the location of the building, and while it does not give an exact address (only the name of the street, 2nd Tverskaia-Yamskaia Street, and the city, Moscow), the photograph and text together serve as physical evidence of the shelter's existence, implying that anyone could look for and find this building on the given street. Other images present various rooms of and activities taking place in the shelter. The photographs are kept intact with minimal overlapping. Each image contains human figures: children given a bath (in the far lower right) or their mothers at work (lower center). Characteristic of the early year of the First Five-Year Plan, captions emphasize the activity without naming the individuals. Also in the spirit of the time, the emphasis in the essay is on the cultured and hygienic conditions available in the shelter, which are expressed through the photographs revealing a high ceiling, a large bedroom, babies being bathed, as well as the text itself. A caption for the image (appearing at the lower left towards the center) reads: "During the day children are in the nursery. Here there is a lot of air and light." The underlying message aims to contrast the conditions in the shelter to the pre-Soviet unhygienic conditions in which children were typically raised. The previously mentioned photograph of mothers at work also implies that, under the wing of the Soviet State, these women become independent and contributing members of society.

The layout of the spread develops strategically from general to particular; namely, it starts with the exterior view of the building, passes through various rooms and culminates with close-ups of the breastfeeding mother, at the center of the spread, and the bathing scene, at the lower far right. The images overlap, guiding the viewer's eye to move from picture to picture in the proposed order. Finally, as the viewer prepares to

turn over the page, she glimpses at the image of a healthy, smiling baby emphasized by a white border surrounding it. This baby is the ultimate proof of the shelter's successful operation.

The text under the photograph of one of the breastfeeding mothers informs the reader that this woman will live in the shelter for several months "until she recovers," and then will be directed to work, and "may even be given an apartment" (a huge benefit in the overpopulated city). The text does not explain from what the woman is expected to recover, but, in the context of the food shortages, wide spread prostitution, and high disease rates, the reader hardly needed such details. Clearly, the photo-essay catered to women whose sympathy the Soviet State still needed to secure. For those experiencing the horrific living conditions in overcrowded cities, where hunger and homelessness were the dire circumstances of many, such an environment as the one described in the photo-essay, must have looked like a safe haven which only the State could provide. The documentary power of photography helped to visualize the propagandistic concept that only those who supported the Socialist cause would be taken care of by the State, and would achieve better living conditions — a message that the editors would have wanted to resonate with the magazine's readers.

Photo-essays in the women's magazines by no means were limited to female subjects. *Rabotnitsa,* for example, published "*Byt i ucheba krasnogo boitsa*" [The everyday life and studies of a Red [Army] soldier], dedicated to soldiers' activities in the army (Figure 101). The images in this photo-essay represent a relatively simple layout that preserved the integrity of the individual frames. The composition develops diagonally, juxtaposing various geometric shapes: several rectangular frames stretch from

upper left to lower right, and the two circular ones are placed at the lower left and upper right corners. Typically a caption under each frame explains the depicted event, focusing on activity rather than on the participants. Images present the process of soldiers training (for example, "Study of the cavalryman: taking the barrier," upper right, or "Gas attack," below) but also highlight how the State cared for its service men by preparing them for life after the army. One of the images shows that before their discharge, soldiers study how to drive a tractor, to acquire skills they could use upon return to their collective farms. For the audience composed of females, who were sending their sons off to the army, this message was of a great importance.[404]

The benefits of collectivization and condemnation of resistance to it appeared in *Rabotnitsa*'s photo spread entitled "*Zernovaia fabrika za uborkoi urozhaia"* [The grain factory at harvest] in 1930 (Figure 102). This example helps to further explicate the interconnection between individual photographs as well as between photographs and text in photo spreads. It also shows that carefully arranged juxtapositions were not exclusive to *USSR in Construction* but were a widely-practiced design strategy in other periodicals.

The "Grain factory at harvest" visualizes the benefits of collectivization as a powerful union between technology, agriculture, and communal labor. The layout combines several photographs unified by theme and captions. As in the previously discussed examples, the 'montage' aspect of this spread is not limited to the layout of images. At the center, three photographs are arranged in a symmetrical layout reinforced

[404] It is significant to mention that during forced collectivization subjects related to collective farming and its benefits were more prominently featured in *Rabotnitsa* than in *Krestianka*. The state needed the support of the working class; hence many propaganda efforts were aimed at presenting collectivization to the urban population served by *Rabotnitsa* in a positive light. (See Bonnell, *Iconography of Power*, 112-113) This should be seen in the context of urban antagonism toward the peasantry, which was regarded as retrograde and hostile; *Krestianka* refrained from employing a flamboyant and often militaristic propaganda tone, and focused on explanations of collectivization's benefits.

by the symmetrical composition of the images: diagonal from left to right for the top-left image and diagonal from right to left for the top-right image. This dynamism is enhanced even further by the frontal approach of a tractor and a combine on the sides. The upper image represents the "maintenance of the combine in the Soviet State farm *Gigant*, [Giant]. It shows two men focusing on the machine. The spiral gleaner on the foreground directs the viewer's gaze towards the image in the lower right, where the harvest machine is shown at work. The caption explains that grain is processed continuously without interruption.

Juxtaposed with this epitome of efficiency is the photograph, at left, which shows a woman working alone in the fields. She is lifting a sheaf of wheat towards the top-right corner in this image and visually towards the men working on the machine in the upper photograph. If seen in isolation, her gesture is not clear, and even can be interpreted as celebratory because of its upward direction. The caption, however, explains that this is the harvest of a peasant woman unaffiliated with any collective farm. With this caption, her pointless and suddenly helpless gesture gains a different meaning: alone in the fields, she is without any technical or emotional support. The workers in the top image are preoccupied with the machine and pay her no attention. The diagonals of the composition within the three photographs suggest a circular movement; the tractor in the lower left is turned towards the lone woman. This diagonal line is picked up by the sheaf of wheat in the foreground of the photo at left as if pushing the woman towards the workers on the top image. Thus, the communal effort of the workers results in an efficient harvest, and the only way to avoid individual manual labor would be to become part of this communal effort.

The captions are crucial for the "correct" interpretation of the images. The photographs are accompanied by framed quotes from the XVI Party Congress Resolution of 1930. The selected text clarifies the message provided by the visual material. On the left, where the reader encounters "the bread train," represented by a mammoth tractor dragging the cars loaded with grain, the quote recounts the amount of grain that is required to be collected from collective farms. The tractor then implies the probability of a bountiful harvest with the assistance of mechanization provided by the Soviet State. The right-hand photo shows a lineup of horse-driven carts, while the caption describes them as "agricultural machines on the way to *sovkhoz Gigant* to aid in the harvest." Before the viewer realizes the contradiction, the quote below the image announces that, for a while, both mechanical power and horse power will be used in combination. It is important to note that the tractor on the left is moving into the viewer's space, while the horses on the right are facing away from the picture plane, cleverly suggesting that horsepower is moving into the past.

Finally, the central combination of images visualizes the text in the central box as it demonstrates the existing division of the rural population between those who participate in a collective farm and those who do not. The quote, however, expresses strong confidence that those undecided few will soon join the collective farm. The lone, helpless woman in the photo at left, above the quote, suggests that stragglers will soon have no choice but to convert.

Beginning in 1936, the efforts of the mass media were directed to the promotion of the new Constitution and to Stalin's dictum, "Life has become happier, life has become more joyful." Magazines were bursting with materials directly and indirectly

reflecting the new direction in social policy. A typical example of such ideologically charged content is the photo-essay "*Den' v Chapaevke* [A day in Chapaevka]" published in *Krestianka* in 1936 (Figure 103). Composed as a "day-in-the life," the text describes a day spent by the proponents in a Soviet collective farm in the Ukraine. The text is placed in the inner part of the spread while the images flank it from both sides. Additional text explaining the photographs is placed at the bottom left. Written by journalist M. Leipunskii, the story is told from the perspective of the chairwoman, Natalia Krivitskaia, who allegedly takes her visiting friend on an excursion around the village of Chapaevka. On the way, they see agricultural industries of the collective farm, an electric station, a beauty parlor, a school, a pharmacy, and the newly-built maternity hospital. Then Krivitskaia takes her friend to dinner at the private home of one of the collective farmers. (Details of the copious menu offerings are carefully registered in the text. Interestingly, Krivitskaia did not invite her guest to her own house, which would have been more logical but would not have been helpful in showing a "typical" collective farmer dinner since Krivitskaia, as a chairwoman, was expected to have privileged access to food and supplies.) The day ends in the House of Culture, where they watch an evening performance of the amateur artists of the collective farm.[405]

Photo reporter Milovanov, who also contributed to the previously discussed 1932 issue of *USSR in Construction* on Collectivization, produced the photographs. One of the images portrays the alleged story-teller Krivitskaia (top right), others show some of the places mentioned in the narrative. With the exception of the upper image, where a building displays the sign "Apteka" [Pharmacy] all four pictures on the left side depict

[405] For more on the amateur artists' movement see Bogemskaia, *Samodeiatel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR*. On amateur artists' exhibitions see Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting*, 179-85.

unidentified buildings; without the short text placed below the main article, one would not recognize their function. Unlike regular captions, which are usually short and factual, this text describes what is represented in each picture in elaborate detail, with information not mentioned in the main narrative.

Statistical data concerning livestock, the number of specialists with higher education, the number of children in school, and the number of pregnant women in Chapaevka infuses the text. The mentioning of the latter, together with an image of the newly-built maternity hospital, is significant as it reflects the media's response to the "The Decree in Defense of Mother and Child" of June 1936. It declared that the economic situation in the USSR had changed fundamentally, and that Soviet women now lived in a society free from the need for abortion.[406] The State banned abortion in all cases, except when the mother's life was in danger. Propaganda responded with a renewed emphasis on the family as the foundation of society, showcased new improved conditions of hospitals and day care centers, and called for an anti-abortion campaign. In addition to the picture of the maternity hospital (at left), the images of the Chapaevka photo-essay include a photograph of an anonymous mother and child (at right). They are not mentioned in the text, which make their appearance seem somewhat out of place. Yet, in the context of the anti-abortion campaign and exaltation of motherhood ideals, it

[406] In 1920 the Soviet Union became the first country to legalize abortion. While hailed by the progressive international community as a major step in the liberation of women, in the absence of contraceptives for Soviet women it constituted the only means of birth control. In the harsh economic conditions of the post-revolutionary years, it brought very important relief to women and their families. However, abortion clinics received no local, regional, or national funding and operated under a policy of *khozrashchet* (economic accountability), which meant they had to be fully self-supportive. Proceeds from abortions went to improving women's and children's clinics, and maternity wards run by the *Okhrana Materinstva i Mladenchestva* (Defense of Mother and Child Health Agency [OMM]). Paula A. Michaels, "Motherhood, Patriotism, and Ethnicity: Soviet Kazakhastan and the 1936 Abortion Ban," *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 2 (2001). The 1936 decree was officially titled "On the Ban of Abortions, Increasing Material Assistance to New Mothers, the Establishment of State Assistance to Mothers of Large Families, and the Expansion of the System of Maternity Wards, Nurseries, and Kindergartens." See Evans, "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Women's Question." Also see Lebina, *Povsednevnaia zhizn*, 264-94.

fits with other pictures depicting collective farmers enjoying a newly wealthy and cultured life. The access to culture as a privilege given to people by the Soviet State is emphasized in the last picture of the photo-essay, which captures the building of the House of Culture, where the narrator takes the visitor at the end of the day in Chapaevka.

Unlike Rodchenko's 1939 *USSR in Construction* photo-essay, which was photographed according to a preconceived scenario, *Krestianka's* "A Day in Chapaevka" reveals no such orchestration since the authors of the *Krestianka* photo-essay had to settle with photographing separate buildings and available people, producing a limited stock of images. Still, the influence of cinema is evident not only in the designers' choice to position the photographs vertically as in a film strip but also in the addition of the sprocket holes to the sides of the image columns. This design element suggests a cinematic succession of images, helping to create an illusion of the flow of time and space possible only in film. A similar design was used in the same year in the spread dedicated to the anniversary of Lenin's death (Figure 104). Here, the actual stills from Dziga Vertov's movie, *Tri pesni o Lenine* [Three Songs of Lenin] (1934), were used in combination with several poems dedicated to the leader. Cinema was the most popular medium at the time, and this design trick helped the magazine's designer to transgress the inherently static nature of the printed press and to present the individual images as a mini-film. Nevertheless, the "day-in-the life" format continued to be a challenge because of its fragmentary and limited nature.

The 1936 *Krestianka* photo-essay, "Sem'ia Tolmachovykh" [The Tolmachev family], also exemplifies a way of promoting the new official line directed against abortion (Figure 105). Yet, it avoided the limitations of "day-in-the-life" format by

rendering the story of one family without confining it to a specific time frame. Photographed by photo reporter Arkadii Shishkin,[407] the top left image introduces the "protagonists" of the photo-essay – mother and father, Maria and Vasilii Tolmachev. The text occupies two wide columns on the spread. After providing specific factual details (the collective farm name — "*Imeni 8-go Marta*" [Named after March 8th] and its location — in the Tambovskii district of the Voronezhskii region), it describes the family with heavier focus on the mother, who "does not know abortion" (meaning that she had not had any). The text cheerfully announces that she gave birth to sixteen children, of whom ten are alive, and that the woman is pregnant again (too cheerfully, considering that almost half of her children died). Then the reader learns something about each child. The essay concludes with an account of the financial aid the family receives from the State in the form of child support and awards, and ends with flamboyant slogans: "Veneration and respect to multi-children mother!" and "Greetings to the friendship-united Soviet family!"

The spread is laid out as a photomontage of portraits of all ten children that develops, once again, diagonally, growing from left to right. Each child is placed within a genre setting in a clearly staged photograph. The full-frame format of the bottom images serve as a foundation for the upper images. The latter are cropped in various ways for better integration within the space of the spread, yet the captions are placed in a separate box, in the upper right, as this was technologically a simpler format. A reading of the captions and close examination of the images uncover the direct as well as implied meanings of the montage.

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[407] For information about Shishkin see Aleksandr Fomin, *Fotoreporter Arkadii Shishkin* [Photo reporter Arkadii Shishkin] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1969).

Hence, the anti-abortion message —the subject of the essay —is transcended via subtle details, such as a picture of a breastfeeding woman on the cover of a magazine held by the seven-year-old Petia (fourth from the left in the upper row). Next to him, a younger boy, Iura, offers the viewer a plate with cherries. Referencing the summer season (the time of the publication of this issue), the image also metaphorically suggests that children are the fruits of life. Other images emanate similarly important ideas integral to Soviet ideology. By showing "the best student in her school," Taisia, with a book in her hand (last in the upper row), the photomontage exploits the typology of a "good student." The book title, intentionally made visible, reveals that Taisia reads *Zanimtel'naia astronomiia* [Entertaining Astronomy] published in 1929 by a prominent scholar and popularizer of science, Iakov Perelman.[408] The subject of the book reflects the period's fascination with the exploration of space, and helps to cast Taisia as a girl with progressive interests, characteristic of the new generation of Soviet women. It also caters to the myth of women's equality in choosing their future occupation, since theoretically the girl could become a scientist. From the caption we also learn that Taisia received a complementary voucher to stay in a Young Pioneers camp, a type of reward for children achievers. While this Soviet girl enjoys access to knowledge and leisure unimaginable to girls of pre-revolutionary times, the fifteen-year old Fedya (below Taisia), embodies an ideal Soviet young man. Future defender of the Motherland, he is captured performing physical exercise — an implication of the cult of sports and physical fitness, which was another fervor of the time, experienced also in Europe.

[408] See Natalia Karpushina, "Yakov Perelman: shtrikhi k portretu" [Yakov Perelman: (some) lines to a portrait], *Matematika v shkole* [Math in school], no. 5 (2007).

The condensation of time and space, and the combination of multiple symbols into a unified representation were exploited in *Krestianka's* 1938 May Day issue in a assemblage of individual frames illustrating a short essay entitled "*Nasha Rodina*" [Our Motherland] (Figure 106).[409] The text of the essay typically reiterates the greatness of the USSR, and glorifies the achievements of Socialism. In a way, this text serves as an extended caption for the photo-spread placed on the next page that visualizes this glory. The photographs on the spread are numbered, and the text refers to these numbers, requiring the reader to flip the page back and forth in the process of reading. Similar to the parade representations, the spread is dominated by the large bird's-eye view of the Red Square parade placed at the upper left corner. Taking up two thirds of the spread, this image is surrounded from the right and at the bottom by several smaller images identical in format and size. In accordance with established iconography, the large image of Red Square, and, as described in the text, "the ruby stars of the Kremlin towers [that] light up for the workers of the whole world," establish the sacredness of Moscow as the symbolic center of the country and the heart of the world revolution.[410] The smaller images reiterate other central subjects of Soviet iconography: no 2 is a photograph of four *Papanintsy* at the upper right, referring to the Arctic expedition of Ivan Papanin that became symbolic of the north conquest;[411] no. 3 shows military and merchant fleets (located in "the seaport of Kaldin, Murmansk area"), which continue the theme of the

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[409] The text referred readers to the next page for comments on the illustrations. Curiously, all images, in spite of their obvious photographic nature, were referred to as "*risunok*" [drawing] in the text.
[410] About the sacredness of Moscow in Soviet iconography see John E. Bowlt, "Stalin as Isis and Ra: Socialist Realism and the Art of Design," *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 24 (1999).
[411] In 1937-1938 Papanin was the head of the famous expedition, North Pole-1. Four researchers, Ivan Papanin, Ernest Krenkel, Evgenii Fedorov, and Petr Shirshov, landed in an airplane flown by Mikhail Vodopiianov on drifting ice-floes in the Arctic. For 234 days in the near Polar zone, the Papanin team carried out a wide range of scientific experiments until they were taken back by two icebreakers, "Murmansk" and "Taimyr." All members of the expedition received the title "Hero of the Soviet Union", and were nicknamed "*Papanitsy*."

northern frontier, while adding hopeful tone of economic success and security. The Neva riverfront of the second capital, Leningrad (no. 4), is an interlude with the theme of historical heritage, since Leningrad was the cradle of the Revolution and the "window to the West." An image of "the street in Khabarovsk, Far East" (no. 5) exemplifies an older city, and highlights the process of Modernization brought about by the Revolution. Geographically this image adds the eastern expanse of the Soviet State to the picture. The beaches and resorts, such as the "resort of Gurzuf, Crimea" (no. 6), introduce the theme of rest and leisure that became especially prominent following the introduction of the Stakhanovits movement.[412] Mention of the Crimea adds the fourth compass point — the South. The Crimea was also the last site of the Civil War, hence the reference to this location is a reminder of the victory of the Soviet State. Each of these images represents a side of the compass, and together they highlight the sheer size of the country. The images at the bottom (no. 7) visualize for the reader the major construction site of the Second Five-Year Plan: the Volga-Moscow Canal, which is also a reference to the development of transport and travel across the vast spans represented by the images on the right. It should be noted that the selected photograph shows the "arrival of ships from the Volga area to Moscow," suggesting the move towards the center, thus re-enforcing Moscow's sacredness.

As if the stretches from North to South and from West to East were not enough, an image of the meteorological station located on the highest Soviet mountain, Kazbek (no. 8), expands the country's reach upwards, towards the upper stratus of the atmosphere. It also glorifies Soviet science, and asserts the conquest of nature. Finally,

[412] A vacation in a *Dom otdykha* (Leisure/Rest Home) was one of the typical rewards given to *stakhanovits*. Gurzuf was made famous by the poet Aleksandr Pushkin, who visited the resort in 1821.

the image of the "gorgeous palm groves in the subtropical South" (no. 9) suggests that the country has a secure "supply [of] nutritious food." The subtropical South indirectly introduces the themes of ethnic diversity within the USSR, the Soviet republics, and the exotic.

Adopting the cinematic montage principles, that according to Eisenstein, "involved the creative process, the emotions and mind of the spectator,"[413] the spreads published in the printed media made the audience an active part of the viewing process. The assembly of seemingly unrelated images worked together to project the All-Union iconography achieving the effects of simultaneity and symbolic density comparable to cinema.

In the last years of the decade the periodical press continued to focus on proving the advantages of Socialism, and the photo-essays published in Soviet magazines continued to be designed to ensure "correct" interpretation of the images. This was achieved by carefully nudging the reader's/viewer's line of thought into the "right" direction with carefully constructed messages, clever juxtapositions of images, and calculated use of text. While the photo-essays design differed substantially between the high- and low-ends of the printed media, full-scale photo-essays' in *USSR in Construction* and short ones in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* employed similar visual language, and used various forms of photomontage as their main method of composition. They played on the interrelation of images as well as of images and text, carefully directing the reader's perception to ensure the unhampered operation of the Socialist Realist myth. Subsequently some images constructed specifically to play a part in the

[413] Sergey Eisenstein, "Word and Image" (originally entitled "Montage in 1938" and first published in *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 1 (1939): 37-49.) Cited in Michelson, "The Wings of Hypothesis," 63.

Socialist Realist narrative got disconnected from their original contexts, and “Socialist Realist fact” replaced the actual one, turning the ideologically constructed representation of history into history itself.

## Chapter V. Performing the New Soviet Holidays

Aiming to deliver a firsthand experience of the celebratory rituals, magazines embraced photomontage's capability to organize visual material and combine the immediacy and documentary power of photography with illusionism and the artistic freedom of painting and drawing. Photomontage proved to be the most useful in the discourse of "new world building" and in the representation of celebrations as it helped to deliver messages packed with visual codes and symbols in an effort to generate popular support for the Stalinist project.

While celebrations took place across the country they were all modeled on the typical Moscow demonstration or civilian parade in which rows of civilians streamed across Red Square from noon until dusk. People held posters and portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and the Politburo. In addition, representatives of each district carried portraits of shock-workers, posters noting production achievements, and caricatures of bureaucrats, idlers, and so-called malingerers. Moscow's festivities became legendary ideal celebrations, and images of the capital's parades against a backdrop of the Kremlin towers and Lenin's mausoleum were familiar to the whole country. In reality, attendance at the parade was limited to those who lived in the city and could reach Red Square by foot (transportation in the center was shut down during the celebrations), and select invitees from distant regions and national republics. Moreover, those who marched in the parade could not really see the whole picture since Red Square, the main stage of the majority of parades, provided a very limited view of the events. The complete spectacle was witnessed by a limited number of individuals who stood on the elevated platform of Lenin's mausoleum. Towards the end of the

decade the parade audience was very exclusive: admission was limited to the political elite.[414] Nevertheless, the majority of the population "witnessed" the parades that they had never attended personally thanks to the dutiful coverage of them provided by the printed media.[415] An analysis of the ways in which women's magazines visualized the celebrations, as offered in this chapter, helps to gain the perspective of the masses.

Cinema, potentially an ideal medium to spread the ideological and social message of the celebrations to the entire country, failed to serve this purpose due to the deficit of cinematic resources. In the end, the experience was delivered predominantly by way of audio (radio) and printed media (magazines and newspapers).[416] While radio broadcasted official slogans and programs on the importance, meaning, and history of the approaching date, as well as celebratory music and reportages from factories and collective farms, the periodical press presented equivalent information in print. Together with other printed media, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* played an important role in the process of ritualization and sacralization of the celebrations. To use the words of historian Malte Rolf, they helped "furnish the individual with visual and auditory cues to revisit their memories or

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[414] Michael John O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR: Physical Culture - Visual Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2006), 86. Also see Vladimir Paperny, *Kultura dva* [Culture two] (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2006), 93.

[415] Only during the second part of the 1930s were parades on the Red Square filmed, and those films were distributed to a wide audience. (O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR*, 86.) Yet even then, the printed press continued to play the central role in the visualization of celebrations.

[416] For more on conditions of the Soviet cinema see Jamie Miller, *Soviet Cinema, 1929-41: The Development of Industry and Infrastructure*, vol. 58, Europe-Asia Studies (London: Routledge, 2006). Miller provided details on the development of the Soviet film industry, and on distribution and demonstration systems for films in the 1920s and 1930s. His research showed that Soviet cinema as an industry was hampered by the absence of an infrastructure and an industry to produce technical equipment for film production and presentation, especially in the countryside. Only later in the decade, in 1938, was a special documentary of the 1938 *fizkultura* parade, entitled *The Song of Youth*, filmed. In Moscow it was shown daily in fifteen cinemas. (*Krasnyi Sport* [Red Sport], 19 August 1938, cited in O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR*, 89.) There is no data available about the film's distribution in the rest of the country.

construct new ones."[417] How such cues were transmitted by the magazines is the subject of this Chapter.

## The History of the May Day and October Anniversary Rituals

The celebration of May 1st (the May Day) as the International Workers Day begins with the Second International decision made in July 1889 to commemorate the Haymarket Affair, which occurred during a general strike in Chicago in 1886.[418] Beginning in 1890, it became an annually celebrated day in Russia. In Tsarist Russia, mass meetings and manifestations were illegal, and often involved strikes and clashes with police. As a result, pre-revolutionary May Day celebrations manifested the revolutionary strength of the proletariat. The first legal celebration of May Day in Russia took place in 1917 under the Provisional Government established after the February Revolution of the same year, and continued to be celebrated in Soviet times.[419] The October Anniversary, on the other hand, was essentially a new holiday directly associated with the victory of the Revolution, clear of any pre-existing history. Historian Frederick Corney demonstrated convincingly how the October Revolution entered the collective Soviet memory and the history books as a laboriously constructed narrative. The Bolsheviks Party slowly transformed the chaotic, polyphonic memory of October 1917 by turning contradictory descriptions of what happened into an orchestrated, alluring

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[417] Rolf, "Constructing a Soviet Time," 455-6.
[418] Chicago workers organized a strike and a demonstration to demand an eight-hour workday. The first May Day was celebrated as an international holiday in 1890 in both European countries and the United States. In England it was celebrated on May 4, 1890. See Rosa Luxemburg, "What Are the Origins of May Day," in *Selected Political Writings of Rosa Luxemburg* (Monthly Review Press, 1894).
[419] Sinitsina and Zaykin, *Nashi Prazdniki*, 22.

drama of the Revolution.[420] Clearly, the periodical press played an essential role in the process.

The first Bolshevik May Day, in 1918, established the order of the earliest manifestation of the new symbolic and ritual system.[421] Following the celebrations of the first years of the Revolution, Soviet celebratory rituals acquired their final shape with greater planning, control, and the standardization of symbols. Most importantly, Moscow and its Red Square were established as the "sacred center," while Lenin or government officials assumed their role as iconic symbols of Party leadership.[422] The Party characteristically did not provide any specific guidelines regarding the content and shape of the celebration, but various experts involved in the production of culturally related events and ideas had an influential voice in defining the acceptable "Soviet Style" of festivities.[423]

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[420] Corney, *Telling October*, 100. Corney quotes French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs to explain how a reconstruction of past events can induce the members of groups to harmonize their memory. (Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 43.) Christoph Neidhart pointed out that the Soviet stage director, Nikolai Evreinov, had already argued in 1923 that repeating an experience is impossible, and, if the event is replayed, our memories will end up accepting the more recent and more impressive staged version as the "real one." Nikolai Evreinov, "Voprosy o peredelakh teatral'noi illyuzii" [Questions of the transformation of theatrical illusions], in *Teatr' kak takovoi* [A theater as it is] (Berlin: Academia, 1923). Cited in Christoph Neidhart, "Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution (review)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 10, no. 3 (2008): 193.

[421] It included a meeting, a military parade and a parade of athletes, and a demonstration by procession of workers. Repeating the May Day formula, the first October celebration in 1918 started with a meeting during which Lenin delivered a speech. This event was followed by the dedication of the monument to Marx and Engels, commemorating the October Revolution fighters, and again, a Red Army parade and demonstration by procession of civilians Sinitsina and Zaykin, *Nashi Prazdniki*, 24. The same information is provided in Rudnev, *Sovetskie prazdniki*, 11. For a recent discussion of the October Anniversary ritual formation see Corney, *Telling October*.

[422] For an in-depth discussion of the Soviet symbolic order, and a re-evaluation of the history of Soviet political symbolism see N. A. Soboleva, "From the History of Soviet Political Symbolism," *Russian Studies in History* 47, no. 2 (2008). The subject is also discussed in Stites, "The Origins of Soviet Ritual Style."

[423] Rolf pointed out that the appearance of festivals and the position they held in the Soviet cultural canon were shaped by various competing cultural agents, such as the provincial party elite in regional centers, self-declared "masters of ceremony," and by the specialist discourse of cultural practitioners. Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors," 615-26. Also see Lane, *The Rites of the Rulers*, 5. In the 1920s and 1930s the literature dealing with the theory and practice of mass festivals was extensive. See bibliography list in Rolf, *Sovetskii massovyi prazdnik*, 376-82.

After the Civil War, the holiday rituals, consisting of demonstration, parade, and meeting, became manifestations of strength as well as protest against inside and outside threats. In subsequent years, most holidays were celebrated under the rhetoric of the mobilization of workers for Socialist construction, and the strengthening of solidarity with workers of the world. Until 1939 May Day was also the day of the "military oath."[424] In the early years, the holiday was permeated with a rejoicing, carnivalesque atmosphere.[425] In the 1930s, theatricality and careful orchestration started to dominate, eliminating any notion of spontaneity. Historian Mike O'Mahony suggests that the State attempted to neutralize any potential for transgression that was promoted in pre-revolutionary festivals, yet sought to retain the celebratory functions of the carnivalesque.[426] In essence, it aimed to replace the danger inherent within spontaneous celebration with a carefully orchestrated theatricality.[427]

Eventually, through a complex process of ritualization and the forging of the new narrative, the May and October days evolved into the sacralized days of the Soviet mythology and maintained their reverential position even after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. The processions, mass meetings, and singing of the "Internationale"

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[424] In pre-revolutionary Russia, the military oath was taken at different times of the year. On April 27, 1918, the new Red Oath was established. From 1922 on, all new recruits started to take their oath together on a specific day--May First. In their recitation of the text of the oath, soldiers promised to fight for the liberation of workers and for world revolution. (Zhanna Kormina, "Voinskaia prisiaga: k istorii odnogo performativa" [Military oath: On the history of one performance], *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* [Emergency ration] 1, no. 33 (2004).) In 1939 the day of the oath was moved to February 23. Sinitsina and Zaykin, *Nashi Prazdniki*, 24; Rudnev, *Sovetskie prazdniki*, 14. The initial merging of the international working day and the day of the military oath had powerful symbolic meaning. The uniform ritual of taking the oath constituted a great performance act. Magazines did not fail to emphasize the connection, though designers preferred the dynamic images of marching units over those more static oath-taking photographs.

[425] For details on the 1918 May Day celebration in Petrograd see Stites, "The Origins of Soviet Ritual Style," 31. Also see Mazaev, *Prazdnik*, 243-53.

[426] O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR*, 60. For additional discussion of the carnival aspect of the celebrations see Sartori, "Stalinism and Carnival."

[427] O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR*, 81. Karen Petrone saw the celebration as a potential space for transgression and dissent. Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*.

(which was the anthem of international socialism and unofficial anthem of the Soviet Union until 1944) and other revolutionary songs shaped the individual experience of the celebration as part of the collective one. As often noted, the celebrations were "performed" as statewide rituals that were shared by all. Moscow was the central stage, the place where allegedly the ideal celebration took place. Moscow's festivities held especially high importance as they contributed to the image of unity and efficiency that the Soviet regime wanted to present.[428] The official myth, however, did not correspond with the reality in which mass participation — the main attraction of the celebrations — was not as massive as Soviet ideology intended it to be. It was an essentially urban phenomenon, with quite scarce involvement of the rural population.[429] Local festivities, especially in the rural areas of the Soviet Union, often suffered from chaotic and inefficient execution, and, compared to Moscow's, were significantly less impressive in quality.[430] As I hope to show, the Soviet illustrated magazines played a central role in

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[428] Such visualization of the celebratory discourse assumed the qualities of other works of art, which function as a small part of reality, enabling one to imagine the desirable whole. Historically pictures in Russian art have never been mere representations without essence. An icon, for example, was never worshipped as such but was revered because it allowed people to share the mystery of ideas beyond the icon itself. Blomqvist and Arvidsson, *Symbols of Power*, 7-8. Also see Abel, "Symbols of Power."; Lars Erik Blomqvist, "Some Utopian Elements in Stalinist Art," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 11 no. 2-3 (1984).

[429] Stites noted that, following the October Revolution, there was no alternative to the Bolshevik all-city festival, and no continuation of the nineteenth-century celebration of saints' days, which had been major rituals in provincial capitals and pilgrimage shrines. Stites, "Festivals of Collusion," 476. Special care was taken to ensure the massiveness of the celebrations. A guide written in 1935 developed an intricate plan to gather together participants from several collective farms for a mass celebration in the district's center (in this case, Harvest Day). The author of the guide dedicated significant attention to the organization of the timely arrival of all parties for the main program of the celebration (the meeting). He discussed not only the proper scheduling of the events during the day, but also ways in which to occupy those who had arrived earlier than others had. The events of the celebration were centered on the arrival by train of the important guests and artists from Moscow, and the flight performance of the nearby school of pilots. B. Iudin, ed., *Massovye prazdnetsva* [Mass Celebrations] (Moscow: Krestyanskaia Gazeta, 1935), 7-8. Obviously such an up-scale entertainment event would be deemed close to impossible to stage in areas distantly removed from the central cities and without an adequate mass transportation network.

[430] Petrone revealed the complexities existing in the relationships between central institutions and lower-level local officials. She argued that the quality of Soviet cadres profoundly affected the State's ability to convey its ideology, and that the Soviet people were able to exploit the celebrations as sites for

shaping the celebratory discourse, and in compensating any local deficiencies by visualizing parades and demonstrations in an idealized or, should we say, Socialist Realist way, rendering them "real" for the population.

Visualizing the Celebration: Developing Celebratory Iconography and Design Methods

The "workers' day" nature of May Day (defined as the International Workers Day) explains the more elaborate treatment it received in *Rabotnitsa,* yet during the first decade of the Revolution the representation of the celebrations in the magazine was rather sporadic and inconsistent. From 1928, the issue appearing in the last week of April prepared readers for the holiday with a special cover design (usually based on the previous year's demonstration or representing general symbols of the occasion) and articles on the subject (history, production reports and achievements dedicated to the holiday, letters from workers, etc.). Then, two to three weeks later, the magazine reported on the May Day celebration of the current year. The universal formula of the coverage included a featured detail of the parade on the cover and/or a photographic spread representing the May Day civic demonstration and military parade.

Reflecting the complexities in the establishment of the new traditions among peasantry, *Krestianka's* treatment of the new State celebrations was by far less consistent compared to *Rabotnitsa*. The magazine published informatory articles explaining the meaning of the May Day, yet, even after 1927, when the celebratory rituals took their

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undermining the government's ideology. In the 1930s the party's presence in the countryside was weak, while its presence in the cities did not guarantee effective control of specific developments. Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*, 4. Rolf provided evidence that local party officials fostered regionalization of the local traditions, yet never detached regional developments from the all-Union process. Moscow's celebrations were the role model for all kinds of celebrations, including specifically local ones. The standardization was a self-regulatory process, and did not require central commission any longer. Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors," 616.

final shape, it rarely included any elaborate visualization of the celebrations. Only after 1936 did the magazine add post-holiday coverage of the parades and demonstrations in the form of photographic spreads.[431]

From 1928, the October Anniversary was treated with more or less equal attention by both periodicals. Similar to the May Day formula, the celebratory mood was enhanced well before the actual date by the publication of the results of Socialist competitions and various success stories. An issue dedicated to the Anniversary day came out with a special cover design, and featured complex double- or single-page photomontages (often highly artistic) and was filled with graphic details decorating the celebratory articles, reproductions of artworks, and portraits of the leaders and Soviet heroes. All types of design solutions and illustrations were employed in order to generate the flamboyant mood of the occasion, turning the celebratory issue into an event in its own right. The magazines visualized the celebrations, setting an example, instructing, providing points of comparison, and ensuring that every Soviet individual would be in awe of the sheer scale and spirit of the All-Union experience, while, at the same time, be able to relate to that experience.

A typical way of delivering the spectacle and a lifelike sensation of the celebration was to combine visual details on spreads in which individual photographs were kept intact with minimal cropping. Each spread was montaged with attention to the compositional arrangements and interconnection of images. Photography's documentary quality was exploited to provoke readers to identify physically with the representation, and, as a result, to become a part of the unified Soviet body sharing the celebration.

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[431] It should be noted that, in the first decade of the Revolution, the press was criticized as falling short in its attempts to convey the spectacle of the early celebrations. See Corney, *Telling October*, 91.

Sound effects were generated by association with local ceremonies, and, even more so, by radio broadcasts of Moscow's parades and celebrations. In the end, photomontage proved to be an indispensable design solution as it served to transgress the limitations of time and space, and create narratives suggesting the temporal development of events. This helped to overcome the otherwise fixed character of photographic representation, and to establish the illusion of simultaneity of experience across the country, merging visual- and sound-scapes of the celebrations. These features ultimately ensured photomontage's survival as an important graphic design method, especially at a time marked by restricted formal experimentation and the increasing prevalence of handmade graphic imagery.

Photo- and Graphic- Media on the Covers of the Celebration Issues

The primary subject associated with the celebratory iconography was the theme of industrialization. The May Day and October celebrations of the First and Second Five-Year Plans were the major spectacles demonstrating the results and expressing the support of Socialist projects.[432] From the beginning of the Soviet period, the vision of the Socialist future was symbolized by the sun/light and industrialization. One of the early posters dedicated to the first anniversary of October depicted an industrial landscape with smoke filling the sky in a curvilinear fashion characteristic of Art Nouveau (Apsit, Moscow, 1918). The motif of a factory smokestack became a typical iconographic element used to symbolize the fulfillment of the industrialization program that would lead to the promised future. The density of the smoke was in a way

[432] Petrone provided evidence that production achievements determined the order of the marchers. Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*, 29.

proportionate to the connection between the future and the process of industrialization.[433] This motif is especially prominent in *Rabotnitsa's* cover for the twelfth October Anniversary (1929) in which a slogan, "Long live the twelfth anniversary of October," is stretched diagonally over the photograph of factory smokestacks (Figure 107). Visualizing the First Five-Year Plan course to industrialization, the smokestacks here take on an independent, almost abstract appearance, personifying industrialization as evidence of the Revolution's success. Similar references translate into imagery relevant to the rural population in the October 1929 issue of *Krestianka* (Figure 108). The cover features a watercolor depicting a young woman hanging a banner bearing a partially visible slogan, "Long Live the 25th of October."[434] In the background, a group of people of different ages and genders is gathered next to a log house identified by a sign above the door as the "Collective Farm Club." This detail helps to place the scene on a modern Soviet collective farm.[435] Closer inspection reveals that the woman stands on a tractor, cropped by the picture frame. Another tractor is visible in the background. Overall, the cover composition visualizes the main attributes of Soviet-life advantages that are available to peasants as a result of the Revolution: industrialization and technological advancement delivered in the form of tractors and agricultural machinery; culture and education suggested by the club building; and the emancipation of women embodied by the active woman in the foreground. Throughout the decade these references consistently appear in various combinations.

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[433] The industrial landscape with working smokestacks often appeared in the period's posters. For a discussion of this motif in posters see Waschik and Baburina, *Iskusstvo russkogo plakata XX veka*, 104.
[434] "*Dazdrav* (part of the word *dazdravstvuet* (long life to …)" and "5 *oktiabria* (the digit "2" is missing) refers to 25 October)."
[435] For a discussion of the representation of the collective farm in painting see Rusnock, *Socialist Realist Painting*.

Addressed to a female audience, *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* were naturally inundated with images representing women. The magazines' covers regularly featured portraits of individual women or groups of women celebrating their achievements or illuminating scenes from their lives and work. The women represented on the covers are predominantly young and in good physical shape. The appearance of such types in *Krestianka* is especially significant since it stands in contrast to the traditional representation of the female Russian peasant as a so-called *baba,* conveyed as a robust, full-figured, large-bosomed woman. In the 1920s, representation of the *baba* often had a satirical flavor as the term has strong pejorative connotations of a simple, uncultured woman.[436] In her study of the iconography of Bolshevik posters, sociologist Victoria Bonnel suggests that images of modern, smiling young women that populate the visual landscape of the time projected a rural world in which traditional retrograde peasants no longer had a place. Such images depicted not an accomplished fact but an incentive to make it happen.[437] Bonnel asserts that posters of the early 1930s dealing with the theme of peasantry were primarily targeting the urban population since the iconography of the images accentuated characteristics that were appealing to that sector of society (slim female figures, modern clothes, references to technology and science).[438] The aim of these depictions was to generate popular support of collectivization outside rural areas where State policies were violently imposed.[439] While analysis of the magazines confirms Bonnel's conclusion in general, the covers of *Krestianka* indicate that, in the

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[436] Female resistance to collectivization was called "*bab'i bunty*" in official terminology. *Bunt* is an elemental chaotic rebellion or riot. The term implied that these irrational protests were staged by ignorant, naïve, and oppressed women. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power,* 110.
[437] Ibid.
[438] Ibid., 113.
[439] Ibid., 112. *Rabotnitsa* dedicated more attention to the promotion of collectivization than did *Krestianka*.

late 1920s, the image of an active modern Soviet woman was also promoted for the rural population. The women referred to on the earlier May Day cover, and in the center of the October cover of the same year (1929) (Figure 109) were both rendered as typical Russian peasants, judging by the white kerchiefs covering their heads and tied around their necks in the peasant manner (women workers usually tied kerchiefs behind their necks). At the same time, the women are enthusiastic, young collective-farm workers actively participating in the building of Socialism, and constituting the antithesis to the traditional and retrograde *baba.* Other women on the October 1929 cover wear an assortment of ethnic costumes. The inclusion of various ethnicities is significant not only as a reflection of the international character of May Day, but also as evidence of the growing attention to the subject of national identity within the Soviet Union. Images of ethnic minorities aimed to show their distinct cultural identity, and, at the same time, their participation in Soviet nation building, confirming the official message that the Soviet Union was a multicultural nation that provided equal rights to all national groups.[440] The visual media exploited traditional costumes to show the diversity and exoticism of the non-Russian cultures, yet reserved mostly subordinate roles for representatives of the ethnic groups.[441]

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[440] In his analysis of the *USSR in Construction* representation of ethnicity, Margolin noted that nations were depicted in a state of "seamless coalescence" into one entity with the unifying common goal of agricultural and industrial development. Victor Margolin, "Representations of Ethnicity in 'USSR in Construction', 1930-1941," *Iconics* 9 (2008): 7. According to Stalin's national policy, the national republics were expected to cooperate with the central State without requiring a specific degree of autonomy. For an account of the Soviet National policy see Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001). Also see Gerhard Simon, *Nationalism and Policy toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union: from Totalitarian Dictatorship to Post-Stalinist Society*, trans. Karen Forster and Oswald Forster (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).

[441] This was also observed by Margolin in his study of *USSR in Construction.* Margolin, "Representations of Ethnicity," 13. For a discussion of the controversies involved in the participation of the national republics in the parades see Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*, 35-38.

In the previously discussed examples, cover designs employed both photography and hand-drawn images. By 1931, however, photomontage triumphed over handmade imagery in both publications. Reflecting the period's special esteem for photography's capacity to document visual reality, the 1931 October issue of *Krestianka* suggests the industrialization theme with a photomontage that combines a photograph of a woman's head superimposed over a photographic image of an industrial plant (Figure 110). Wearing a kerchief tied in the peasant manner, the woman holds a red flag that expands upwards and merges into the background of the magazine's title, "*Krestianka.*" As a result, the design establishes a symbolic link between the triumph of the Revolution, industrialization, and peasantry, connecting these both visually and linguistically.

In 1932, the fifteenth year of the Revolution and the beginning of the Second Five-Year Plan, *Rabotnitsa* featured especially elaborate and complex montages on its May Day and October Anniversary covers (Figure 111). The May Day cover montage of that year prompted the reader to open the cover spread, turning it into a potential mini-poster.[442] The artistic nature of the montage is proclaimed by the credit line, "*fotomontazh khudozhnika Bonza*" (Photomontage by the artist Bonz) located at the upper part of the cover. The large photograph of a female worker, striding towards the viewer, and the smaller image of a woman on a tractor in a circular frame, at the upper left, suggest a symbolic connection between the countryside and industry. Other images included in the montage were placed slightly on a diagonal in narrow, horizontally arranged strips, suggesting a film sequence, a mini-documentary "across the country."

[442] *Rabotnitsa's* May Day issue of 1932 also uses continuous photomontage on both covers. The design turns the cover spread into a possible poster that, together with the inner double-page spreads, could be, and probably were, used to decorate clubs or individual houses. Areas removed from Moscow and major cities often had to deal with the lack of resources. Such use expands the role of the magazines from information agents into active visual components of the cultural environment.

The individual frames are left intact, and combined in a smooth, yet visible manner. They contain images of women operating machinery as well as views of industrial plants and construction sites (one of them, at the center, is the Dneprostroi — the main project of the First Five-Year Plan). A vertical strip, on the right, counters the direction of other strips; here, the reader encountered images of women in an airplane, at the lathe, and at training (two women with hammers in hands probably teaching two others). The lowest image in this group features women and children in Asian national dress. Wearing no veils, the women apparently learn to read, which signifies the emancipation and education bequeathed by the Revolution. While the coherency of each image is preserved, changes in the direction of the placement of the strips, the interchange of close-up and general views, modifications in scale and perspective, and the inclusion of abstract geometric shapes at the lower left and lower center, reveal a Constructivist, or rather "modern" sensibility on the part of the artists as well the as influence of the cinema. The result is a complex composition aiming to generate overall enthusiasm for the occasion of the celebration.

The 1932 October Anniversary cover of *Rabotnitsa* featured a similar montage, probably produced by the same artist, judging by the characteristic diagonal strips and the appearance of distinctive geometric details such as a circle, at the lower right, partially hidden by a quote from Stalin (Figure 112).[443] Here, the diagonally placed images of industrial projects and construction sites are superimposed on a view of a vast mass gathering of people. At the bottom of the montage the artist placed images of tractors and other agricultural machinery. At the lower part of the composition, a large-scale portrait of Stalin is seamlessly "squeezed" in between two images of some construction

[443] Rodchenko used similar geometric elements in his design.

sites, while Lenin, the mastermind of the Revolution, appears on the banner above. Lenin, Stalin, construction sites, and demonstration crowds routinely appeared in the October Anniversary representations, yet the complex and detailed compositions of the First Five-Year Plan would eventually be replaced by a more simplified formula, as discussed below.

The demonstration procession featuring a shoulder-to-shoulder stride was a central aspect of celebration rituals, and was dutifully visualized, especially in images appearing on the May Day issues covers. For example, in *Rabotnitsa* of 1931 the viewer encountered ranks of women in military uniforms marching by the *Bolshoi* Theater (Figure 113). In 1934 the magazine showed a cropped procession stretching endlessly, all the way to the horizon (Figure 114). The procession participants carry banners with slogans, carefully retouched to insure readability, relating to May Day and the Second Five-Year Plan. In 1935 *Rabotnitsa* used photomontage to bring together ranks of female soldiers and a close-up shot of the leaders observing the parade (Figure 115). The caption on the cover states that the women are "female students of the Military Academy." However, the imagery is more complex than what is acknowledged by the caption. Behind the women the viewer can see ranks of men, followed by military trucks and tanks that together create an impression of large parade displaying the might and power of the Soviet State. In other words, while the text focuses readers' attention on the detail most relevant to them, the image is a seamless, montage packed with a range of visual signs associated with the victory of Socialism.

Another formula of the celebratory covers with the juxtaposition of a large-scale individual figure with the masses, which underlined the supernatural aspects of the

shock-workers' individual achievements, yet, at the same time, helped to represent an individual within the context of a wider collective activity, thus allowing his or her achievements to be seen as characteristic of all participants.[444] *Rabotnitsa*'s May Day issue of 1929 presents a larger-than-life *rabotnitsa* directing with her outstretched hand the readers' attention to people gathering behind her (Figure 116). Once again, the design incorporates the back cover, prompting the reader to open both covers as a full spread to reveal the industrial landscape and the slogan, "*Pervoe maia — prazdnik truda*" [The 1st of May is the celebration of Labor] behind the woman in the foreground. The slogan communicates the "worker's day" theme of the holiday, while the youthful, vigorous, and enthusiastic *rabotnitsa* on the cover highlights its relevance for women.

*Krestianka's* October issues of 1932 and 1933 also featured photomontages that emphasized the collective notion of the celebration as well as the role of the individual within the masses and that of the masses in history. On the cover of the 1932 issue, a woman strides in front of a crowd cross-hatched by red rectangular shapes suggesting banners (Figure 117). On the 1933 issue cover, a woman holds a flag over a bird's-eye view of a crowd (Figure 118). Consistent with the canonical Socialist Realism visual formula, the women appearing on the covers of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* are shown in motion while the compositional arrangement emphasizes their physical health and stature. These representations also reflected the fact that the majority of workers in the labor force were under thirty years of age.[445]

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[444] Some scholars regard such a combination of the giant figure with an assemblage of smaller figures as derived from compositional devices used in Russian icons and popular prints or *lubki.* O'Mahony, *Sport in the USSR*, 32; Abel, "Symbols of Power."

[445] Bonnel found a similar representation of workers as paradigmatic of posters produced after 1931. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power,* 43.

Overall, photomontage dominates the cover designs of both magazines until at least 1936. After that, the periodicals increased their reliance on handmade forms of illustration. The cover of *Krestianka* in 1935 abandons the direct depiction of a demonstration, and, instead greets the readers with a hand drawn personification of Spring striding across the land (Figure 119). A folk-art-stylized flower arrangement frames the central image. The red flags, curving and swelling, continue the traditional iconography of a demonstration procession yet in a much more decorative and abstracted form. The change in design might be associated with the socio-political reorientation of society that was initiated after 1935 Stalin's announcement that Socialism had been achieved. This stopped the legal prosecution of the former *kulak* (well-to-do peasants) since the class war was proclaimed as officially over, and the militaristic atmosphere that penetrated the years of the First Five-Year Plan was replaced by the propaganda of wealth and rejoicing. Reflecting this development, the overt decorativeness and the folkloristic motifs of the cover could be an attempt to pay homage to the peasant tradition and to downplay the political associations of May Day as a way of introducing a more "secularized" version of the festival.[446]

The magazines' covers continued to visualize the celebration as a shared experience though after 1935 they used significantly less narrative and figurative details. Overall the design became increasingly schematic, with a greater use of the abstract symbols of the Revolution and of the celebration, such as flags, flowers, Kremlin towers, and the iconic double portrait of Stalin and Lenin, which became a standard of October

[446] This could be linked to Stalin's announcement in 1935 that "Life has become happier." For a discussion of folk culture in the Soviet period see Andrew Jenks, "From Periphery to Center: Palekh and Indigenization in the Russian Heartland," *Kritika: Exploration in Russian and Eurasian History* 3, no. 3 (2002).

iconography. For example, artist Ginzburg used it on the *Krestianka* cover dedicated to the 17th anniversary of October (1934) (Figure 120). *Krestianka* reprinted a poster by Klutsis in the October 1935 issue (Figure 121a) with Lenin and Stalin portraits prominently printed at the top.[447] The earlier 1933 version of the same poster did not have this detail, as it did not have a female peasant on the left side of the composition (Figure 121b). In following years, the motif of Lenin and Stalin profiles appeared in graphic form on the *Rabotnitsa* cover of 1936, and, as a photomontage element, on the otherwise graphic May Day covers of *Krestianka* of 1938 and 1939, as well as on the cover of *Rabotnitsa* of 1939 (Figure 122 a, 122b, 122c, 122d)

Evidently, at the beginning of 1937, photomontage was replaced by hand-drawn covers, which only occasionally incorporated photographic elements as in the example of Lenin-Stalin portraits discussed above. In 1938, *Rabotnitsa* reduced the May Day cover design to a red-color field and text announcing the occasion (Figure 123). The totalitarian model relates such changes to the ultimate rejection of the photomontage due to the continuation of attacks on Formalism, since the practice of photomontage, so closely associated with formal experimentation, would be deemed dangerous and undesirable. Yet, throughout the thirties, photomontage continued to flourish in the interior part of periodicals, thus contesting this conclusion.

Photomontage in Interior Spreads: Heightening the Sense of Achievement

The design of *Krestianka* 1929 October issue is a good example of the co-existence of photomontage and graphic art. The issue's cover and its inner central spread

[447] The back cover of this issue also recycles a graphic poster, "Woman is a big power in *kolkhozes*," by AKhRR member artist Svarog.

exemplify handmade imagery. Yet, though produced graphically, the inner-spread is made with evident montage principles and exemplifies an unusually elaborate example of montage-drawing. In *Krestianka*'s October anniversary issue of 1929 an artist named [?] Przheslavskii took over the whole spread and called it "From 1917 to 1929" (Figure 124).[448] In the upper center of the page the artist placed a slogan, "*Da zdravstvuet mirovoi Oktiabr'*" [Long live the World's October] that stretches above a globe superimposed with hammer and sickle. On the left, the radiant sun rises from the horizon with the date 1917 seen within its rays. As a reminder of the past struggle and sacrifice, a group of soldiers (with a sailor among them) and a nurse are visible on the left side of the montage while another nurse in the background attends to the wounded.

The right side of the spread visualizes the present, and employs montage's abrupt change of scale. A colossal worker stands with extended hands and spread feet in the manner of a construction crane or bridge. Both the bridge and crane are present in the composition, signifying industrialization. Between the worker's feet, in an impossible twist of space, a chain of railroad cars loaded with coal endlessly moves out of a tunnel only to disappear into another.

In the background, on the left side, visualizing pre-revolutionary years, the artist placed outlines of an old factory and a village house with an adjacent graveyard. The past is transformed as one's gaze moves to the right where better-looking, up-to-date houses are flanked by a huge electric pole. The graveyard is replaced by a tractor; the factory has grown in size, turning into a humongous complex with scaffolding referring to the continuation of the building process. The date "1929," at the center under the arm

[448] The information about the artist and the title in this case were found in the table of contents of the issue. In some cases, the credit information was placed next to the image.

of the giant worker, is printed darker, thus appears more prominent and visually closer than "1917" at the upper left of the spread, which fades away as if moving into the past. In addition, the worker's right hand index finger is pointing to the past while his opened left hand invites one to observe the present situation. Transformation from past to present is visibly rendered in this drawing by the means of montage composition.

The medium of montage reigns within the rest of the issue.[449] The analysis of these photomontages is mindful of the connections between the visual vocabulary employed by the designers of these montages and the ideological discourse of the period. One article, "*Chto daiot rabochii klass krestianstvu*" [What the working class gives to peasantry], is surrounded by photomontage entitled "*Gorod shliot mashiny v derevniu*" [City sends machines to village] (Figure 125). The composition combines various images of technology and industrial sites in an overturned arch, which develops downwards from the upper left and then up again to the right.[450] The artist considered the vertical and horizontal balance of the composition, adding hand-drawn elements where he considered it necessary. Both subject and form reinforce the symmetry. For example, a circular frame around the "harvesting combine" in image no. 9 is juxtaposed with a circle around the "lumber collection" in image no. 3. The montage starts from the "general view of Moscow from the river front" (no. 1), and culminates with the "general

[449] It should be noted that the use of the double-page drawing-montage is very unusual, and that photography was by far the more typical medium for such spreads.
[450] The captions list: 1. General view of Moscow from the riverfront; 2. Threshing machine "advance-rumeli"; 3. Tractor in lumber collection; 4. Threshing machine at work; 5. Assembly of locomobile; 6. Threshing; 7. Column of tractors; 8. Tractor drags a harrow; 9. Combine harvesting; 10. Plowing with tractor; 11. General view of collective farm "Magnitnyi" (most likely the one located in the Ural mountains, where the construction of Magnitogorsk, the main project of the first Five-Year Plan, took place).

view of the collective farm 'Magnetic'" (no. 11).[451] Both images refer to geographic locations: the city of Moscow — the capital of the state where working class rules— and Magnitosroi — the site where the transformation of a rural area into a progressive industrial center was supposed to take place. The images within the montage predominantly show machines and various industrial details in a catalogue-like manner that also characterized the design of the early issues of the *USSR in Construction*.

The dynamic engagement of the viewer is continued on the following pages of the same issue. Here, the photomontage arch changes direction, this time starting at the lower left (Figure 126). Entitled "*Zhizn' otstalylkh prevratim v zhizn' peredovykh ludei* [Life of the backward [people] we will turn into life of the advanced people], it arches around the text reiterating the progress of collectivization and its positive effects on the peasantry. The text names the major advantages of collective farming: mechanization, science, education, new houses, positive aspects of work discipline, etc. The images do not directly correspond to the text, yet they visualize the same ideas, and are clarified by captions that are placed at the bottom of each page of the spread.

For example, details no. 5 and 6, at the upper left of the montage, show a man standing in the cornfield. In no. 5, the corn is taller than the person, while in no. 6 the plants hardly reach his waistline. Without any indication of the time of year, location, or type of corn, it is impossible to say with any precision what such juxtaposition means. The caption, however, explains that the tall corn is "corn in the collective farm," while the shorter plants are those produced in the individual peasant's field. Obviously, for propaganda purposes, the artist has manipulated the scale in favor of collective farming

[451] Here, Moscow functions purely as a symbolic center, since the capital of the country was never a center for machine construction.

(and, by extension, of forced collectivization). In another comparison, “a log house [*izba*] abandoned by a peasant, who,” according to the caption, "joined the commune ‘Avant-garde,’" (no. 9) is juxtaposed with no. 10, representing the “dorms of the commune “Avant-garde” (upper right). The image of the old log house with a reed-roof, is intentionally reduced in its proportions to allow the modern communal living place to appear more commodious and attractive.[452]

Indeed, the photomontage method enabled the magazines to visualize the transformation from past to present, and to juxtapose Soviet and capitalist lifestyles in a condensed and dynamic way. The “us versus them” theme is subject to an elaborate treatment in *Krestianka’s* May Day issue of 1929, which presents the viewer with a full photomontage entitled “*V SSSR sotsialisticheskaia stroika, za granitsei —bor’ba truda s kapitalom”* [In the USSR — a socialist construction, abroad — a struggle of Labor against Capital] (Figure 127). Dedicated to the international workers day, the spread is typical in its combination of photographic images with hand-drawn elements and text explaining the images. A diagonal strip separates the images into two parts. The larger part, positioned on the left and across the bottom, represents life in the USSR. The considerably smaller part, at the upper right, visualizes life abroad. The photomontage is composed of more or less full-frame images, with only moderate cropping and overlapping, which suggests again that the Constructivist montage was not as dominant

[452] The fact that the magazines addressed the uneducated readership may explain such deliberate manipulations of perception. At the same time, images showing various locations suggest that their selection was all but random. For example, image no. 11 shows “A meeting of the council of the *kolkhoz* ‘Novyi Koshekhabl’ (New Koshekhabl).” Koshekhabl was one of the largest villages in the republic of Adygeia, and was the only one in the path of the North Caucasian Railroad. During the Civil War, the railroad was seriously damaged, and its reconstruction in late 1926 constituted one of the important projects of industrialization. (See http://www.adygheya.ru/ territory/cosh/ and http://poezd19.narod.ru/history/dorogisov.html). To what extent the readers were expected to know such information, and, even more importantly, to establish the connection, is hard to tell.

in 1920s graphic design as it often seems to be in the Western, Modernist scholarship. Each frame is numbered, except for the central image that constitutes a dividing diagonal emphasized by two border lines along its edges. This diagonal photographic image depicts a demonstrating crowd — the central symbol of the holiday ritual. Towards its center the photograph is interrupted by a drawing of a lampooned capitalist exploiter depicted as a stereotypical head in a top hat. The hammer and sickle positioned unequivocally at the capitalist's throat threaten him, while the number "1"towers over him, mirroring the shape of the hammer. This tall vertical number "1" and the diagonally placed letters spelling "МАЯ" or "May" are positioned as if to whack the capitalist's head.[453]

This photomontage is loaded with visual details, resulting in a somewhat hectic composition comprised of assorted photographs depicting different places and events. As usual, the captions are positioned at the bottom of the pages, requiring the reader to move back and forth between image and corresponding text. "Abroad" (equivalent to "they" in the dichotomy) illustrates the "ugly grimace of capitalism," here visualized as the inhuman treatment of Western workers and their struggle for liberation.[454]

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[453] In the 1920s and until at least 1932 such grotesque figures personifying Capitalism, Bureaucracy, and other evils of the non-communist world often appeared in the demonstrations as floats, and were installed in various locations within the city. Images of such floats appeared in the left hand detail of *Rabotnitsa's* 1930 May Day photomontage (Figure 83). Mary Leder, an American living in Russia in the 1930s, recalled seeing such displays. Mary M. Leder, *My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back*, ed. Laurie Bernstein (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 33. For more information about the decoration of the city during the May Day celebration see Nemiro, *V gorod prishel prazdnik*.

[454] This part includes: 10. Red front-line soldiers in the May Day demonstration in Berlin; 11. The bourgeoisie prepares its police for civil war (as the caption explains, "In the picture: the policeman demonstrates on a living example how to strangle a worker); 12. An attack of combatants of Polish false-socialists on the workers' demonstration on the 1st of May, 1928 in Warsaw; 13. Japanese female textile workers celebrate the 1st of May in Tokyo under police supervision; 14. Children on the 1st of May demonstration in London." (The caption translates the text that is included within the images emphasizing the documentary character of the photographs: "On the side of the cart, the sign [reads]:'United Workers'.")

Depiction of the advantages offered by the Soviets was also not an easy task, since the photographic database of the early years of the First Five-Year Plan provided a very limited selection of images registering the "glorious victories of Socialism." Recycling what was available in 1929, the "us" part in this spread presents various industrial buildings and machines with an emphasis on heavy industry, transportation, and oil production. The montage progresses into a display of farming machinery and a harvest scene. The final images in the sequence exhibit the celebration of May Day and culminate with "Scene in the streets of Moscow — May 1st, 1928" (no. 9), at the lower right. This image reminded the viewer of Moscow's centrality in cultural iconography and highlighted the mood of the celebration as the scene shows a group of dancing people accompanied by an accordion (*garmoshka*) player.

The appearance of the dancing group is clear expression of the celebration. The social optimism associated with the beginning of the new period following the Revolution was often projected metaphoricaly through the representation of dancing people. In early celebration posters dancing helped to express the emotional connection of the Revolution with happiness, and the joining together of all workers and peasants throughout the world in one international union.[455] During the First Five-Year Plan, the main theme of the holiday shifted to display the achievements of Socialist construction and the strengthening of security and display of emotions rarely appeared in the magazines. The austerity of the period was relaxed in 1935, after Socialism was proclaimed as having been achieved. In 1935 an author of the guide for mass celebrations Iudin wrote that "it would be a mistake to turn mass festivals exclusively into methods of overt mass agitation, forgetting about the needs of the participant to rest

[455] Waschik and Baburina, *Iskusstvo russkogo plakata XX veka*, 103.

and to be entertained, on the other hand, it is a mistake to reduce festivity to bare entertainment."[456] At this point, the celebrations already functioned as sites of political indoctrination, and were increasingly orchestrated and controlled by the Stalinist regime. Yet, the celebratory and rejoicing atmosphere was subtly encouraged since it was well understood by officials that entertainment was a necessary aspect of the rituals.

Returning to the discussion of the representation of dichotomies, a remarkably elaborate treatment of the "us versus them" theme that appeared in the *Rabotnitsa* 1933 May Day issue cover deserves mention (Figure 128). The May Day theme is visualized as a contrast between Soviet happiness and capitalist sorrow. Soviet advantages were typically reiterated through images of factory smokestacks, sport parades, school classrooms, and healthy-looking children. To show the hungry and suffering children of the capitalist world, the photomontage artist employed two drawings by the German artist Käthe Kollwitz.[457] The use of the Kollwitz drawing in the otherwise photographic montage could, once again, be explained by the fact that the artist was sympathetic to the Soviet Union, and, thus, ideologically compatible. As a foreigner, she was perceived as a live witness of the situation abroad. This charged her drawings with reportage quality, and in some way approximated their impact with the power of photography. This consideration, however, was relevant only for the creator of the montage and for those responsible for its publication since the reader of that issue was not informed about the origin of the images. The meaning of the drawings was conditioned by their placement in

[456] Iudin, *Massovye prazdnetsva*.
[457] In 1927 Kollwitz visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR). In 1932 her works were shown in Leningrad and Moscow.

the "they" part of the cover. In 1935 and 1936 Kollwitz's works were also published in *Kresianka* with short explanation and credit.[458]

The juxtaposition of Western and Soviet workers' lives was not confined to the magazine intended for female workers, who constituted the major readership audience of *Rabotnitsa*. Peasant readers of *Krestianka* were exposed to a similar dichotomy, and thus shared a unified Soviet visual language. Hence, in *Krestianka's* 1932 October Anniversary inner spread, a miserable, unemployed worker (most likely German, since the sign on his chest reads "will take any job" in German) is juxtaposed with a content, proud member of the Soviet proletariat (Figure 129). The weary, slouched-shouldered laborer, on the left, is dwarfed by the crematorium-looking factory behind him. The contrast between the partially destroyed structure with a solitary smokeless chimney behind the unemployed man and the working-to-their-full-capacity smokestacks of a gigantic factory behind the Soviet worker speaks for itself. The worm's-eye angle renders the Soviet worker larger than life, and his stature is equal to the proportions of the smokestacks, leaving no doubt regarding the correctness of his path and greatness of the Soviet system of labor.

After encountering the aforementioned "us versus them" spread, *Krestianka's* 1932 October issue reader was reminded of the alleged changes that took place in the country since the Revolution. This was rendered in another dichotomy formula that contrasted "now and then." In the spread entitled "*To nevezhestva, griazi i beskulturia k novoi sotsialisticheskoi kulture i bytu"* [From negligence, filth, and lack of culture towards new socialist culture and everyday life], a woman is shown stepping out of the past (represented by a hand drawing), and into the future (shown with photographs),

[458] *Krestianka* 5 (1935) and *Krestianka* 9 (1936)

though her right-to-left movement contradicts time progression, which is usually shown advancing from left to right (Figure 130). The text describes the results of the fifteen-year Socialist construction project, yet, typically, it does not refer to specific images appearing on the spread. Compositionally, the woman steps into a different page, as if visualizing the expression "to turn a page" to start a new life. This montage is also of a hybrid nature. The past is represented by caricature silhouette hand drawings depicting a condensed version of women's life before the Revolution — difficult housework, childcare, spousal abuse, and church indoctrination. Here, as Orlova had pointed out in relation to photography in Soviet newspapers, photography stepped aside when the need was to depict a negative viewpoint.[459] In contrast, the future, into which she steps, is visualized by several photographs representing the new Soviet life (literacy acquisition, communal dining, daycare, modern technology, etc.). Such life was still a dream for majority of the readers, yet the photographs did not lie because they (supposedly) showed life as it was becoming.

The past and future in this montage are literally divided by a panoramic view of the "*Novyi sotsyalisticheskii gorod in Dneprostroi*" [New Socialist City at the Dneprostroi]. Soviet regime projected a city as the "symbolic heart" of the regime, and gave it a leading role in the Socialist construction. Stalin proclaimed the necessity of transforming the psychology of the peasant by directing his attention towards the urban town: "The old type of peasant, with his savage distrust of the town, which he regarded as a plunderer, is passing into the background. His place is being taken by the new peasant, by the collective-farm peasant, who looks to the town with the hope of receiving real

[459] Orlova, "'Voochiiu vidim'," 192.

assistance *in production*."[460] Dneprostroi was among the first major projects of the First Five-Year Plan initiating huge mobilization efforts where the majority of construction recruits were former peasants. The photomontage transcends Stalin's message, visualizing the passageway from the Old to the New via the industrial city.

Celebratory Parades: Representing the Unity of the Soviet Body

In the second part of the thirties, a significantly larger percentage of the illustrations in the holiday issues was based on individually reproduced paintings and drawings discussed in Chapter II of this dissertation. Yet, the combination of photographic and graphic media continued to characterize magazine design. Photographic images, were essential for the visualization of nation-wide celebrations, prompting physical identification with the represented ceremonies and leading to the experiencing of a unified Soviet body sharing the celebration. Photomontage was used as a method to propel such identification. Even when the designer avoided radical cutting and cropping techniques, the meaning and visual impact of the celebration spreads were created as a result of the interconnection of the images and of images and text. Periodicals created an image of the ideal festival/parade/demonstration shared by all as a way of compensating for the imperfections of the actual celebrations, which often lacked proper organization and were not as harmonious as desired by the regime.

The cinema was the model visual medium able to bring the Revolutionary agenda to the masses. As Corney has shown, the montage technique in the cinema approximated

[460] Joseph Stalin, "K voprosam agrarnoi politiki v SSSR: Rech' na konferencii agrarnikov-marksistov 27 dekabria 1929" [On issues of agrarian policy in the USSR. Speach [delivered] at the conference of agrarians-marxists, December 27, 1929], *Pravda*, December 29 1929. Translated in Stalin, "Concerning questions of agrarian policy," 465.

the act of remembering, presenting the sum of the events rather than a linear storytelling.[461] Photographic spreads in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka's* aimed to achieve a similar effect in printed form by synthesizing the events taking place simultaneously in different places to project the all-Union experience.

In the first half of the 1930s, *Krestianka* expressed no particular interest in Moscow parades, reflecting the irrelevancy of these events to the peasant population, which, at the time, was going through forced collectivization. The magazine for peasant women preferred to treat the celebrations in the form of elaborate photographic spreads, which delivered a broader propaganda message. *Rabotnitsa*, on the other hand, started to show Red Square parades very early on. A typical formula exemplified by the 1930 May Day montage included a general view of Red Square and the Kremlin towers (upper center); images of the leaders viewing the parade (also placed at the upper part of the composition); and various details focusing on the masses participating in the procession (Figure 131).[462] The text, describing the fast and dynamic march of the army and exciting details of the decorations, compensates for the static quality of the photographs illustrating various views of the demonstrating crowds and military units. These images catered to the myth of the unity of the leaders and workers, workers and peasants, as well as the union of all Soviet republics. (For example, a photograph of "peasants in different national costumes" appears on the left, second from the top, in the 1930 May Day montage). The spreads incorporated images capturing various "villain" characters types (the capitalist, the priest, the *kulak*), whose large-scale sculptural and/or painted representations were displayed in the cities and carried in parades. The inclusion of such

[461] Corney, *Telling October*, 183.
[462] For earlier examples see Figure 82b and Figure 132.

references exemplified the so-called "anthropomorphization of the evil" and the carnivalesque flavor of the early celebrations. The above-mentioned *Rabotnitsa* May Day 1930 issue, for example, showed "mobile figures of a bureaucrat, Trotsky, and a capitalist" (left, in the third row from above). The appearance of Leon Trotsky is a good example of how quickly Soviet ideology adjusted its symbolism. A main figure of the Revolution, Trotsky went into exile in 1929, following which he was proclaimed the enemy of the people, and, just one year later, his image was used to symbolize evil. [463] In later parades, portraits of the leaders and elaborate symbolic floats replaced such specific references.

The magazines dutifully included in their celebratory spreads images depicting electric illumination, which was an extremely important decorative aspect of the holidays.[464] Mary Leder, an American woman living in Moscow at the time, recalled in her memoir the colorful and festive mood of the parades. At night, she and her friends walked around the city to enjoy the spectacular illumination. On November 7, 1931, "the city was ablaze with lights: every building had, at the very least, portraits of Lenin and Stalin and five-point stars outlined in electric light. Entire scenes from the Russian revolution or the history of the Communist Party were displayed in electric light on the bridges and squares."[465] Electrification of the country was considered an essential element of the Socialist construction agenda as it was directly linked with Communism both pragmatically, as a condition for industrialization, and metaphysically, as an element

[463] However, in Yuon's 1929 painting discussed in Chapter II, Trotsky was still featured as the hero of the Revolution.
[464] For an account of the electric light displays and their significance see Iurii Gerchuk, "Festival Decoration of the City. The Materialization of the Communist Myth in the 1930s," *Design History* 13, no. 2 (2000): 125.
[465] Leder, *My Life*, 34.

of enlightenment and education. Therefore, illuminated displays in the celebrations visualized this central myth of Soviet ideology — the myth of electrification — and the State spared no expense in this matter.[466] In the 1930s electricity was still a novelty, and, indeed, was non-existent in some rural areas.[467] Therefore, for Soviet citizens of areas removed from industrial centers and where electricity was virtually non-existent, the electric-light displays carried truly miraculous connotations.

Media dutifully translated the marvel of electric lights. In spite of the rather poor results in their attempts to reproduce the effect of illumination photographically in black and white, the magazines nonetheless featured images of illuminated decorations throughout the decade. The 1930 *Rabotnitsa* included the illuminated Dom Soyuza [the House of the Union], at the upper left. Earlier in 1929 the *Rabotnitsa* May Day issue presented an image of the illuminated obelisk *Svoboda* [Freedom], which was placed in front of the building of Mossovet [the Moscow Soviet] (upper left in Figure 132) and the MOGAS building [Moscow Hydro-Electric Station] (upper right in Figure 132). In this montage the symmetrical placement of these structures had symbolic meaning as it underlined the link between the government institution as a metaphorical source of light and the electric plant as the producer of real electricity.[468]

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[466] In 1920 Lenin pronounced: "Communism equals *Soviet* power plus the *electrification* of the entire country." Vladimir Lenin, "Doklad na VIII Vserossiiskom S'ezde Sovetov. 23 Decembrya 1920," (1920). English translation Vladimir Lenin, "Report to the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets December 29, 1920," in *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965). For a discussion of the mythological aspects of electrification see Zheltova, "Elektifikatsiia v Rossii."

[467] Similar situation existed in the rural areas of Europe and the United States. In the USA, Rural Electrification Administration (REA) was created in 1935as one of the New Deal agencies. Its primary goal was to promote rural electrification. (See Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New Deal Years, 1933–1937*, Random House, 1986), 491–92). I am grateful to Dr. Rosemary Bletter for bringing it up to my attention.

[468] *Rabotnitsa's* spreads incorporated images of the illuminated Moscow-Kazan Train Station (in 1931), Sverdlov Square near The Bolshoi Theater (in 1932), the Memorial *Svoboda* (Liberty) on the Square of Soviets, and the Moscow River riverfront at night (in 1935).

The generational aspect was an important element of parade iconography. Children marching with adults, columns of young pioneers, and *Komsomol* (*Kommunisticheskii Soiuz Molodezhi* [Communist Union of Youth]) members embodied the young generation that personified a better future and the birth of the "new Soviet person." In the 1929 parade montage, for example, portraits of the Communist party leaders and *Komsomol* members were placed in similar oval frames next to each other, at the upper center. The identical format and symmetrical placement imply the symbolic connection between the two groups as *Komsomol* was carrying on the ideological agenda of the Party. The October parades often included images of old Revolutionary fighters establishing a link to the historical foundation and heritage of the Revolution. In *Rabotnitsa* of 1932, a photograph of a group of old partisans is placed below one of the Politburo members, at the center of the composition (Figure 133). In 1933 an old fighter with a characteristic grey beard was positioned across from the iconic monument to Lenin on the right side of the spread (Figure 134).

Arguably the most important symbolic connotation of the parade — the readiness to defend the conquests of the Revolution — was conveyed by numerous photographs of various military units, students of the military academy, and tanks, cavalries, and civilians marching in columns representing the OSOAVIACHIM Society [Soiuz obshchestv sodeistviia oborone i aviacionno-khimicheskomu stroitel'stvu SSSR — Union of Societies of Assistance to Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR].[469] Historian Karen Petrone had noted that the order of the marches on Red Square reflected the hierarchic order of society. Military units marched first, followed by

[469] OSOAVIAKHIM was created on January 27, 1927. The goal of the society was the preparation of reserves for the armed forces. Soon afterwards it had become a powerful militarized organization, with its own aerodromes, radio clubs, parachute towers, and firing ranges.

industrial workers, and, then, by collective farmers.[470] The photomontages aimed to achieve the All-Union scale of representation and also reflected the social order: the leaders are on the top, the army and "best of the best" in the middle, and the rest of society at the base.

The importance of the parade's military theme in the construction of the general message of the celebration was frequently projected through the interplay between aerial views of marching military units and close-up details of machinery and soldiers. In the May Day issue of 1936 *Rabotnitsa,* general views of military divisions marching in the May Day parade were juxtaposed with a circle closing up on a soldier (lower left) who, according to the caption, "repeated the words of the military oath" (Figure 135). The soldier's open mouth suggests the audible aspect, and allows the reader to imagine what exactly the soldier is saying, as most of the population at the time was familiar with the text. Across from the soldier, at the upper right, a group of sailors guard the flag – the sacred object that the soldier below promises to protect. At the lower right, the montage artist placed a close-up image of a mother and child, who, as the composition suggests, look at the soldier, across the pages, and up to the sailors. Their presence transcended the idea that mothers raise their children to become defenders of the Socialist State. Three circles together form a triangle connecting all three messages in a unified whole. As if that was not sufficient, mother and child, who, according to the caption, watch the flight of airplanes, add, yet, another important theme of Soviet mythology. Soviet leadership expressed a deep interest in technology and flight, while fascination with the airplane pervaded the whole society, gripping the popular imagination. Children and airplanes

[470] Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous,* 23.

symbolize the bright future, the passage through time and space, the new era.[471] In other words, the montage, while documenting the events of a specific parade, simultaneously transports the major ideas of the Socialist Realist myth.

The aforementioned *Rabotnitsa's* 1936 spread indicates an important shift towards a de-militarization of the parades already evident on *Krestianka's* covers of a year earlier. The title of the spread, *Festival vesny Sotsializma* [The festival of the spring of Socialism], introduces a more universal and secular approach to the celebration. At the lower part of the spread, the artist combined various fragments of Moscow's demonstrating crowds into a seamless montage that places a stronger emphasis on the masses, not on the military units. In the following year of 1937, *Rabotnitsa* championed a similarly universal title, *Prazdnik vesny chelovechestva* [The festival of the spring of humanity] (Figure 136)." The photograph of the Moscow-Volga Canal, at the upper center, celebrated the achievements of Socialist construction while the presence of delegates from Spain (slightly to the left of center) implied the continuation of the revolutionary struggle. This montage indicated a major iconographic change because the presentation of the demonstration incorporated images from other cities — major industrial centers located in different areas of the country. Images from Kiev, Kharkov, Gorky, and Minsk were placed one above the other, on the left side of the spread. The seamless integration of the images created an illusion of the physical space shared by all participants. At the same time, each component of the montage was numbered and provided with a caption at the bottom of the page. The captions explained the happening in detail, highlighted the documentary nature of the images, and exposed the constructed

[471] For a discussion of paintings representing aviation and subjects associated with flight see Chonghoon Lee, "Visual Stalinism from the Perspective of Heroisation: Posters, Paintings, and Illustrations in the 1930s," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 3/4 (2007): 515.

nature of the composition. Paradoxically, this did not destroy the seamlessness of the illusion that, hovering in the white space of the background, were mounted People's Commissar for Defense and a Marshal of the Soviet Union, Clement Voroshilov, and other leaders on the tribune behind him, receiving not just Moscow's parade but the All-Union parade as well. Altogether, viewers of the montage are prompted to experience the excitement of the celebration and the unity of the Soviet body.

**Conclusion**

Taking into consideration the mass-oriented nature of Soviet art production, this study focuses on the printed media as an agent delivering imagery to the masses. As the only central press women's periodicals that were continually published during the 1930s, *Krestianka* and *Rabotnitsa* played an essential role in providing not only political but also social and cultural guidance, as well as establishing standards for emulation. Standard and cheap, they were the most popular and long-lived women magazines. These magazines featured a great diversity of visual information, and provided representative examples of the media and methods used to present and promote cultural norms throughout the Soviet Union. They regularly included cultural and educational information, visualized the new cultured village and collective farmers, printed works of art, and published articles about artists and exhibitions, introducing high culture to the working and peasant households. The study of the magazines' visual content contributes to a better understanding of the process of formation of the Soviet visual media-scape.

In many cases, the Soviet population had its first encounter with works of art through their reproduction in the periodical press, and the context and form of their appearance within the magazines' layout was essential to their impact. The consumption of images appearing in the illustrated magazines differed significantly from that of the originals. Held in hand, the magazine provided a more intimate experience, one that could be extended over time. It differed from the more immediate impact of a poster or a painting due to their larger size and placement on a wall in a public space. In addition, the reproduction of certain visual styles, as well as the very style of presentation

contributed to the ways in which the magazines disseminated specific ideology and interpreted reality for their readers.

To convey the ideological atmosphere of the Socialist building agenda, mass periodicals such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* used all possible means — photography, graphic arts, paintings, and images from other published sources, and were not limited only to the reproduction of works by established artist. As a magazine for urban, and, thus, more educated women, *Rabotnitsa* covered art and cultural history starting in the late 1920s. *Krestianka* assumed the responsibility of cultural enlightenment in the second half of the 1930s, and supplied its readers with reproductions of paintings in the form of free color supplements and a short explanatory text. Very simple in content, the essays in both magazines provided basic art historical information, contributing to the cultural foundation shared by the majority of the Soviet people.

An important aspect of the women's illustrated periodicals was their attention to the work of women artists that not only provided women artists with income but also helped to strengthen their professional status. The number of women artists featured in the magazines was very low, which corresponds to the general situation of women artists during the 1930s. Nevertheless, in some cases, these magazines were the only venue that reproduced works of lesser known women artists.

By the mid-1930s, the women's magazines actively promoted the myth of a unified "Socialist" culture developed by Stalin's regime in an attempt to collect and direct all cultural activities into one effectively controlled system. The regime regarded amateur artists as popularizers of the professional arts, and the art education system taught the rules of Socialist Realism to everyone who wished to express him- or herself

visually. Amateur arts production also fed the myth of the wealthy and cultured New Soviet person. By publishing images of happy Soviet life painted by the very people who supposedly lived that life, the magazines helped to confirm this myth.

The Soviet illustrated press developed in strong association to the early twentieth-century theoretical artistic discussions, and was affected by the changes in cultural politics. The illustrated periodicals served as a stage for the practical application of the views expressed in this discussion. The magazine *USSR in Construction* is especially illuminating in light of these debates, as it played a very important role in shaping graphic design trends of the period, and served as a role model for other illustrated periodicals in the Soviet Union and abroad. Nameless designers and highly established artists eagerly contributed to both ends of Soviet design: high — represented by *USSR in Construction*, and low — as it appeared in the women's magazines. An average Soviet read cheap mass periodicals, such as *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka*, which often recycled images from *USSR in Construction*, creating a juncture for the interaction between "high-" and "low-" ends of Soviet design.

Study of the professional and educational literature serving printed media practitioners indicates that, while cultural discourse was a defining force affecting the magazines' design and content, many practical issues relating to technology and printing supplies, availability of professionally-trained designers, photo reporters, and illustrators as well as many financial issues played equally important roles. Hence, photography was a preferred method of illustration not only because it was highly esteemed as a modern medium able to capture the events in the most "objective" ways, but also because it was cheaper and more efficient as a method of reproduction. While photographers and artists

contested the primacy of their media in Soviet art, the professional literature for printed press practitioners saw their work as complementary to each other due to the heavy involvement of the artist retoucher in the translation of photographs into magazine reproductions.

From the pragmatic angle of the illustrated press professionals, photomontage was mainly employed as a practical tool, one that allowed for the efficient and attractive organization of diverse visual material. In the midst of the rivalry between painting and photography, photomontage manifested the ultimate unity of photography and graphic arts, as it incorporated both the indexical power of photography and the synthesizing capacity of painting and drawing. In spite of its problematic associations with rejected formal experiments, photomontage's technical and visual flexibility ensured its longevity in graphic design. By the mid-1930s photomontage as a method of design had reached relatively high artistic status and in popular press it co-existed with painting and graphic illustration.

In the 1930s, the radical cut-and-paste photomontage techniques, which emphasized fragmentation and the constructed nature of the representation paradigmatic of the early 1920s, gave way to the seamless integration of individual fragments into a clear and unified composition, which was discussed in the literature of the 1930s as "organic" or "synthetic" photomontage. Such a format suited the objective of representing reality in a positive interpretation as required by the Socialist Realist doctrine, usefully defined by Margarita Tupitsyn as "mythography." Such montage was also considered to be of a higher artistic value. A study of the various montage-based illustrations appearing in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* suggests that, while the magazine

designers responded to the changes in the ideological climate, the quality and complexities of their montages also depended on the skills of the artists and on the specifics of the assignment. The examples appearing in the popular magazines indicate that the production of the organic/mythographic images often faced a serious obstacle due to the lack of skillful photomontage artists.

Responding to the media debates, illustrated press designers used photomontage as a way to compensate for photography's confinement to a singular moment and its incapacity to synthesize and analyze the information. In the women's magazines reviewed in this study, photomontage methods were not limited to the cut-and-paste combination of diverse fragments into one composition with various degrees of illusionism. Photographic spreads composed of individual frames were used to produce similar "synthesizing" effects based on the interrelation between strategically selected images arranged in a certain order.

Such photographic spreads became a typical way of presenting photo-essays, which, by the late 1920s, had developed as a dominant form of photojournalism used to compensate for the limitations of an individual photograph. The quality and complexity of photo-essay design differed substantially between the high- and low-ends of the printed media, yet the full-scale photo-essays in *USSR in Construction* and the short ones in *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* employed similar visual language and used various forms of photomontage as their main method of composition. Photo-essays presented as photographic spreads with various degrees of cropping and overlapping employed cinematic techniques in an attempt to deliver a life-like sensation to the reader. They approximated the effect of a mini-movie yet were cheaper to produce and more

instantaneous in their visual impact. They played on the interrelation of images as well as of images and text, carefully directing the reader's perception to ensure the unhampered operation of the Socialist Realist myth. The production of a cinematic sensation was central in the spreads dedicated to numerous Soviet celebrations, which were a major aspect of the Soviet ideology. The use of photography in the visualization of nationwide rituals prompted physical identification with the representation, and, thus, led to experiencing the unified Soviet body sharing the celebration.

Photography and photomontage dominated the graphic design programs of *Rabotnitsa* and *Krestianka* during the First Five-Year Plan. Hand-made imagery was also in use, yet it started to play a more important role in the second part of the 1930s, especially in the holiday issues. Improved technology and a better quality of printing supplies played their part in this change; however, the more important reason for the increased use of graphic illustration and the inclusion of quality color reproductions of paintings was the re-establishment of easel painting, and, specifically, the history genre as the dominant and most esteemed of art forms.

In the second part of the 1930s, when the magazines' designers had access to a sufficiently large database of painted and photographed images documenting past and present, the illustrated magazines for women continued to employ diverse visual media and to use photomontage as their preferred graphic design method. *Krestianka*'s photomontage spreads often incorporated history paintings with the photographs. The reliance on paintings in the depiction and interpretation of history reflected the rural readership of the magazine, which was in higher need of visual propaganda stimuli, especially in the representation of the celebrations. *Rabotnitsa* remained more faithful to

the photographic nature of montage in its holiday issues, relegating its inner pages to this controversial medium in the later 1930s.

By looking into design features and by placing the visual content of the magazines within larger political and economic forces, I hoped to redirect scholarly attention to the rich visual material found in the Soviet popular press and to present a comprehensive reading of the cultural role played by these magazines. I also strove to show that by mirroring the developments in the Soviet artistic discourse and responding to technological and economic changes, the cheap illustrated magazines for women and the exclusive *USSR in Construction* shared a role of introducing and promoting a unified visual language to all Soviet people.

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