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I. V. STUPNIKOV

THE WORLD OF CINEMA

ENGLISH READING BOOK

Textbook

Second edition, revised

ПЛАНЕТА МУЗЫКИ
ЛАНЬ
MUSIC PLANET
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И. В. СТУПНИКОВ

В МИРЕ КИНО

КНИГА ДЛЯ ЧТЕНИЯ ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

Учебное пособие

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The book includes texts on history and problems of cinema in Great Britain and the United States. The material has been selected and arranged so as to give the history of development of cinema in these countries. Some texts are dedicated to the most prominent figures in filmmaking.

The vocabulary and grammar comments facilitate the understanding of texts. At the end of the textbook, an index is given, as well as a list of the titles of the films mentioned in the book, with their data.

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Книга включает тексты по истории и проблемам кино Великобритании и США. Материал подобран и расположен так, чтобы дать последовательную картину развития кинематографа этих стран. Отдельные тексты посвящены наиболее выдающимся деятелям кино.

Лексико-грамматический комментарий облегчает понимание текстов. В конце пособия дан именной указатель, а также список названий фильмов, упомянутых в пособии, с их выходными данными.

ББК 81.2Англ

Обложка
А. Ю. ЛАПШИН

ОТ СОСТАВИТЕЛЯ

Данная книга для чтения включает материалы по истории, теории и практике искусства кино. В ней содержатся отрывки из книг различного характера (биографического, исторического, мемуарного), посвященных кино Великобритании и США[1].

За каждым текстом следует комментарий, цель которого — облегчить понимание текстов. В комментарии объясняются сложные грамматические явления и историко-литературные реалии.

В книге есть список фильмов, ставших значительным явлением в истории кинематографии, а также список имен деятелей кино (актеров, режиссеров, продюсеров, сценаристов), сыгравших видную роль в становлении и развитии этого вида искусства.

Данная книга может использоваться в качестве материала для дополнительного чтения студентами вузов искусств, обладающими необходимым лексическим минимумом и предусмотренными программой знаниями по грамматике для данной группы вузов. Тексты пособия различны по объему, что позволит преподавателю легко варьировать работу в аудитории и домашние задания по внеклассному чтению.

[1] Книга печатается по изданию: В мире кино: Книга для чтения на английском языке: Учеб. пособие / Сост. И. В. Ступников. М.: Высш. шк., 1988. — *Прим. издательства.*

ON THE ENGLISH CINEMA

THE INVENTION OF THE CINEMA

by Roy Armes

In order to appreciate the functioning of any national film industry and the particular achievements of its directors, writers and craftsmen, we need to look back at the origins of the cinema itself. Rachael Low-despite the immense thoroughness with which she surveys the history of British cinema from 1896 onwards[1] — is happy to follow the terms of reference of the B.F.I.'s[2] History Research Committee and ignore all questions of origin. The strengths and weaknesses of her survey stem largely from her acceptance of the cinema as a body of production, distribution and exhibition structures3 whose existence needs no explanation or justification. Thirty years later (Miss Low's first volume appeared in 1948) these questions can no longer be ignored. An historical survey needs to begin with the problem of how the cinema came into existence and to consider the reasons why certain potentials were realized and other ignored. Though the prehistory of the cinema is not of course an exclusively British domain, it is an area in which British-born scientists, inventors and craftsmen made a major contribution. It would be unjust to lay less emphasis on their achievements than on those of the many subsequent film makers who were to exploit the openings they created. If Francois Truffaut is correct and there is 'something about England that's anti-cinematic', this is certainly not apparent when we consider the contribution made to the invention of the cinema.

The basic principles underlying the cinema had been known for centuries before the moment of invention in the mid–1890s. The *camera obscura*[4], for example, was well known in Italy as early as the sixteenth century and the magic lantern[5] was described by the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher in 1646. Around 1680 Newton studied the phenomenon of persistence of vision and sixty years later methods of producing simple motion with lantern slides (by means of superimposition) had been devised. A fresh impetus came in the 1820s with two activities in which Englishmen were centrally involved: the invention of photography (to which Fox Talbot and Thomas Wedgewood contributed together with Niepce and Daguerre) and the scientific study of the imperfections of vision (in which P. M. Roget of the Royal Society played a major part). In a striking piece of analysis, Jean-Louis Comolli has stressed the intimate link between the two. The invention of photography was 'a development which backs up the eye by perpetuating its principles of representation of the world', while at the same time challenging its supremacy by 'substituting itself as a perfected version of the eye and its privileged representative'. The results of this mechanical duplication were startling. Not only did it make human vision the object of scientific study[6], it also changed the course of the visual arts. The photographic image confirmed the rules of perspective as they had been developed in painting over the centuries, but at the same time undermined their unexamined justification (that the single eye is the centre of the visible world). Instead photography stressed that images were neither static nor timeless, but relative to the position (in time and space) of the viewer. In John Berger's words, 'it was no longer possible to imagine everything converging on the human eye as on the vanishing point of infinity'. This new awareness of the problematic position of the human eye in relation to the world found its

reflection in all subsequent developments in painting, from Impressionism[7] onwards.

Though a number of optical toys, deriving from the experiments of scientists like Faraday in England, Stampfer in Austria and Plateau in Belgium and exploiting the phenomenon of persistence of vision, were devised in the early part of the nineteenth century, a true synthesis of photography and motion took many years to evolve. An intermediate stage between the still photograph and the moving picture is furnished by the work of two important precursors active in the 1870s and 1880s, the photographer Eadweard Muybridge (who was born and died in Kingston-on-Thames[8] but did most of his work in the USA) and the French physiologist Etienne Marey. Both used cameras to analyse motion but neither was concerned to project the images he achieved in such a way as to recreate the illusion of real movement As Marey said, animated photographs were of little interest to the scientist, since 'they have added nothing to the power of our eyes and removed none of the illusions'. During this same period two other inventors struggled in vain to achieve the desired synthesis of photography and motion which they were convinced would make their fortunes. Both Georges Demeny, a former assistant of Marey, and William Friese Greene, a commercial photographer from Bristol [9], poured all their money and, energies into inventions which ultimately proved unworkable. Each later claimed to be the true inventor of the cinema and Friese Greene's tombstone in Highgate cemetery[10] proclaims that 'his genius bestowed upon humanity the boon of commercial cinematography of which he was the first inventor and patentee'. Recent research, however, has demonstrated that neither in fact made any real contribution to the line of development which led to the birth of the cinema in 1895.

By 1888, however, when the great American inventor Thomas Edison decided to involve himself with moving

pictures, the difficulties could be defined from the outset with a fair degree of accuracy. Practical answers to many of the problems had already been proposed, and there was a considerable amount of research-including that of Muy-bridge and Marey-on which he could draw. Though the project was given no particular priority, William K. Laurie Dickson, the young Scottish-bora engineer he entrusted with the task, had come up with a workable solution by 1891. Despite various delays, a working model of the kinetoscope[11] could be shown to the public within two years and the first kinetoscope parlour was opened on Broadway[12] in April 1894. What is interesting in retrospect is the model of exploitation which Edison chose for his moving pictures. At **the** time he began work, two early nineteenth-century bourgeois entertainment artefacts, the musical box[13] and the magic lantern, had already been supplemented by new commercial products. George Eastman had revolutionized photography by marketing his Kodak camera as a 'consumer durable' with the slogan 'You press the button, we do the rest'. Edison, on the other hand, had developed his own invention of the phonograph as a coin-in-the-slot machine for amusement arcades and fairgrounds. It was perhaps inevitable, therefore, that Edison should conceive of moving pictures as an entertainment to be exploited in the same way. As a result, the kinetoscope which Dickson perfected on Edison's orders was not a system using projection but a coin-in-the-slot peepshow. By a striking coincidence Emile Reynaud, who had also begun work in 1888, displayed bis form of moving pictures, the praxinoscope[14], to a paying public at the Musee Grevin in Paris at almost the same time (beginning in 1892). The two machines, the kinetoscope and the praxinoscope, both anticipate the cinema in every respect but one: Dickson's machine used photography but not projection, while Reynaud's

projected images were drawn by hand, not obtained by photographic means (Reynaud is thus the undisputed father of film animation, which antedates the cinema proper by three years).

While Reynaud's optical theatre was a totally personal means of entertainment which could be exploited commercially only by its designer, the kinetoscope was an immediate and enormous popular success in every major city where it was shown. Edison had demonstrated conclusively that moving pictures were both practical and profitable. Even he seems not to have realized quite how profitable, since he failed to take out patents to cover the kinetoscopes which he offered for sale in London at £70 each after the opening of the first English kinetoscope parlour in Oxford Street on 17th October 1894. Given[16] this lack of foreign protection and Edison's own dominant position in America, it was almost inevitable that the final breakthrough-the projection of moving photographic pictures-should be achieved in Europe. The man generally acknowledged to have staged the first projection for a paying audience-Louis Lumiere, at the Grand Cafe in the Boulevard des Capucines in Paris on 28th December 1895-was the one man concerned with the invention of the cinema to command resources comparable to those of Edison. With his brother Auguste, Louis Lumiere was the owner of the largest factory producing photographic materials in Europe, and this secure financial base was to be decisive when he came to exploit his invention, which he named the cinematograph. But if Lumiere had not contrived this public showing in December 1895, he would in all probability have been overtaken by one of his rivals. At that time there were a number of other inventors working quite independently in Europe-including Birt Acres and Robert William Paul in England-who were on the brink of offering their own solutions to the problem.

NOTES

[1] **the history of British cinema from 1896 onwards...** — Rachel Law's books on the history of British cinema are meant here.

[2] **B.F.I.** — British Film Institute, an association of those interested in the arts and sciences involved in film making. It organizes showings of famous pictures and seeks to preserve them.

[3] **distribution** — the process of renting films to exhibitors on the producing companies behalf; exhibitor — a member of the film industry in charge of arrangements for presenting public film shows. Originally major producers like MGM, Warner and Paramount distributed their own films exclusively, but with the rise of independent producers the situation has become much more fluid, with distributors bidding for the films they consider most likely to succeed at the box office and tying up successful producers to long-term contracts.

[4] **camera obscara** — a darkened box in which the real image of an object, received through a small aperture, is projected upon a plane surface, for viewing, tracing, or photographing.

[5] **magic lantern** — a device for throwing magnified picture upon a screen in **a** darkened room by means of a light placed behind a lens or lenses

[6] **Not only did it make human vision the object of scientific study...** — It not only made human vision the object of scientific study...

[7] **Impressionism** — in painting, a theory and school of art, developed in the third quarter of the 19th century, which attempted to produce, with the vividness and immediacy of nature and particularly of light itself, the impressions made by the subject on the artist.

[8] **Klngston-on-Thames** — a municipal borough in NE Surrey, England.

[9] **Bristol** — a county borough and port in SW Gloucestershire, England

[10] **Hlghgate cemetery** — a cemetery in north London where many famous people lie buried, including Karl Marx, Michael Faraday, Herbert Spencer

[11] **kinetoscope** — the invention of W. K. L. Dickson, Edison's assistant, a device for showing and viewing motion pictures which was exhibited in 1894. Gordon Hendricks in his book *The Kinetoscope* (1966) describes the kinetoscope as a 'peep-hole picture machine' which 'stood on the floor to a height of four feet. Through an eyepiece on the top the customer could, upon application of the coin of the realm, cause the machine to whirr briskly and show motion pictures of dancing girls, performing animals, etc."

[12] **Broadway** — a street running north and south through New York City, famous for its brightly lighted entertainment district

[13] **musical box** — a case containing a mechanism that reproduces melodies

[14] **praxinoscope** — a scientific toy in which the reflexions of a series of pictures produce the impression of an actually moving object

[15] **given** — assuming

THE GREAT WAR

by George Perry

By 1917 the war in Europe had reached such proportions that the Government was forced to conscript all able-bodied men for the fighting services. The draining of manpower from the studios had a devastating effect on the film industry, and production virtually ceased. But already the public had turned against the British cinema in general, as a result of the mass of inferior films being supplied by the producers. There was little respect for original work; films had mostly been based on well-known novels or popular stage successes which were usually filmed with no attempts to 'open up' the subjects for the screen. During the latter part of the war the amount of new British product was exceeded eighteen times by foreign footage[1] then available, most of it American. And America, where the star system had taken root with rewarding financial results, had an industry which was constantly adventurous and imaginative.

As early as 1915 it had been suggested that imported films should be taxed. In 1917 Sidney Morgan, a producer, urged that British exhibitors be forced to show a minimum quota of British material, since the better-organized American publicity and star system were detrimental to the home industry. He proposed that the quota should stand at thirty-three per cent The exhibitors' response was to blame the producers for the sorry condition of the British cinema and to argue that the public

would not be able to stomach a heavy diet of home-produced films after sampling the delights of Hollywood. It was, the exhibitors felt, a denial of choice and, of course, a potential reduction of revenue for them. Block booking was an extension of the exclusive system, a logical consequence of the disappearance of the old open-market free-for-all. The next pernicious practice was blind booking, which meant that films were pencilled[3] in as much as a year in advance, long before they had been trade-shown, and in some cases before they had even been made. On the one hand it was argued that this approach saved the exhibitor's time, expense and work and that he knew best what his audiences wanted anyway; and, on the other, that stagnation and sterility were the inevitable results. But a good new film that suddenly appeared either threw the system out of gear[4], or failed to get the bookings it deserved. The renter was in many cases being superseded by direct hiring from the producer, and tough battles raged within the trade while the European armies were locked on the Western Front.

To add to its problems war conditions had imposed restrictions on the film industry. The 1915 budget levied an Import Tax on all imported goods, and in 1916 an Entertainments Tax[5] was introduced, which included the theatre and sporting events. On the very low prices of a penny and twopence the tax amounted to an extra halfpenny but on higher priced seats it meant an increase of only ten per cent. This was a situation of marked social unfairness since cinemas in poor areas were severely hit while West End[6] theatres scarcely felt it. Although the trade accepted that the tax was a necessary part of the war effort there were considerable protests, and minor although still unsatisfactory amendments to the tax were made in spite of the Bioscope's[7] claim that 700 cinemas had closed as a result of it. The trade gritted its teeth and

paid up, or passed the tax on in the form of higher-priced seats. This was done with as good a grace as possible because both the trade and public believed that it was all to help the war effort. Had they known that they would continue to pay the tax for many years after the Second World War the protests would have been more vociferous-governments have an unpleasant reluctance to give up a tax once[8] they have invented it.

The Import Tax in 1915 was extended later in the war to a prohibition of film exports, not on grounds of censorship but in order that no intentional or unintentional trading with the enemy should occur. These restrictions were removed at the cessation of hostilities. But by then Britain had lost its world trade markets.

The film scene during the war was not entirely without hope. In one area there was considerable innovation and excitement, that of newsreel and documentary. At first the military authorities had been suspicious of both still[9] and film cameramen and had offered few opportunities for them to shoot what was happening on the Western Front But as the war progressed it was apparent that the Germans had learned the propaganda value of the cinema. The War Office relented and began inviting film producers on to the War Office Topical Committee with the intention of getting official cameramen to the front By 1917 the Committee was producing its own newsreel, or Topical Budget, to use the contemporary title. One of the cameramen, Geoffrey Malins, later wrote a book, *How I Filmed the War*, describing his experience in France. For the first time the film men came under fire, sharing the dangers of the fighting men. In the cinema's infancy the Boer War[10] had only been observed at a distance, and there were many examples of deliberate faking, then accepted as a matter of course. The bulk of the 1914–18 war newsreels have been carefully preserved by the Imperial War Museum and form

a remarkable historical collection, conveying more vividly than the most precise literary description the horror of the conditions in which men fought. Malins was one of the cameramen who filmed *The Battle of the Somme*, released as a full-length feature within four weeks of the action. Shots of troops being mown down by enemy fire alarmed film-goers, but the tone of the film received official commendations, with even the King" declaring that 'the public should see these pictures'. There were marked propaganda overtones, particularly where sub-titles were concerned. It was an emotional time and no effort was spared to trade on the public propensity to regard the Germans as worse than animals. *The Somme* was followed by other battle films, *St Quentin, Ancre, Arras. The Battle of Ancre* featured the first tanks going into action in September 1916. It captured the public's imagination and aroused a mass of press comment, for once favourable to the cinema.

Ordinary commercial films with war themes continued to appear, even though the public, as in the Second World War, regarded the cinema as a means of escape from the rigours of shortages, rationing and bombing. The animated cartoon, which owed its origins to American comic strip[12] artists like Winsor McKay and Bud Fisher, who had begun experimenting on film in the years preceding the war, began to be seen in Britain. Usually the artist's hand was visible, drawing his subjects at lighting speed with the aid of an undercranked[13] camera. Elementary as the technique was[14], it provided the cinema with the work of such notable cartoonists as Harry Furniss, Lancelot Speed and Dudley Buxtoa Another animation technique in these early days employed cut-out figures which were moved and photographed by stop-motion[15] against appropriate backgrounds. These two techniques were considered fitting for war subjects, which were not otherwise regarded as suitable material