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# **HOW TO TURN TOWARDS SOVIET TEMPORALITY? SETTING THE ANALYTICAL OPTICS**

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## **HOW TO TURN TOWARDS SOVIET TEMPORALITY? SETTING THE ANALYTICAL OPTICS<sup>8</sup>**

Responding to the reproaches addressed by Michel de Certeau a quarter of a century ago to historians, who use time as a taxonomic tool without reflecting on its social structure, we seek to make time visible through the analytical tools developed currently by sociologists and anthropologists of time. Setting the analytical optics, we are turning in a performative way towards temporality in the history of the Soviet 20th century, transferring the *temporal turn* from the declaration into presence. Continuing to experiment with looking at the Soviet reality through a temporality lens, we are gathering the subjects of our two-year research in the text. The number of co-authors, unusual for the humanities; the composition of paper; and the wide range of topics express and embody the letter and spirit of our project, where the Soviet social time is jointly studied from different perspectives. Compositionally, the article consists of six analytical short stories. In each of them, the results of one of our research cases, united under the umbrella of the Soviet temporality project, are interpreted with one of the core concepts or approaches introduced by the temporal turn.

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## Theoretical introduction

At the end of the 1980s, Michel de Certeau pointed out the temporal blindness of historians who use time as a taxonomic tool without reflection on its social structure [Certeau, 1987: 89]. The diagnosis was made after Fernand Braudel's and Reinhart Koselleck's conceptions of a multiscale and heterogeneous historical time were published [Braudel, 1958, Koselleck, 2003]. The fact is that the masters focused on supra-individual modes of existence in the big history, the heterogeneity of the historical experience of modernity, and the work of a historian. The temporal routines of human life in their historical, political, technological, cultural locality remained behind the analytical framework. François Hartog returned to de Certeau's verdict, intending to "do for time what Foucault once did for language", i.e., to describe the order and regularity of regimes of historicity by analogy with discursive formations [Hartog, 2003]. Hartog described the crisis of the regime of modernity, manifested in the extension of the present and the loss of connection with the future through nostalgia, memory, trauma, and heritage, i.e., the phenomena, which are interrelated with time, but irreducible to temporality. This work was continued by Aleida Assman [Assman, 2020]. It is curious that the epistemological challenge of de Certeau was answered, relying on the tools, the scale and inhumanity of which the author of *L'invention du quotidien* rejected categorically. The experimental one-year-historiography produced by Hans Uilrich Gumbrecht had a different scale and was invented to provide access to someone else's historical present [Gumbrecht, 1997]. Sketches on the elevators, on the cult of aviators, and on swims across the Channel shown the materializations and cultural codes of 1926, but its temporality is still invisible. The insensitivity to temporality increased in the absence of a workable vocabulary of the time-forms.

Sixty years ago, Susan Sontag called to create descriptive dictionaries of forms to see more, feel more, and "find as much content as possible" to concentrate on the object itself without neutralized interpretation [Sontag, 2001: 12]. It was about the analytical invisibility of art. Researchers encounter another invisibility, i.e., everyday life, body, space, vision, which opening complicated by the obviousness, the weakness of reflection, and the lack of the conceptual apparatus.

Currently, sociologists and anthropologists are working on the analytical and empirical opening of temporality. They started with the statement of social production of time and mapping social multiplicity of chronotypes, heterochrony, and timescapes without reduction to the past-present-future triad [Ssorin-Chaikov, 2017; Adam, 2004; Bender & Wellbery, 1991]. As the vocabulary expanded, the issue evolved into chronopolitics and temporal behavior, articulations of time or temporalizations, temporal imagination and patterns, frames, and scales [Fabian, 2014; Klinke 2013; Lemke, 2000; Bluedorn, 2004; Zerubavel, 2003, 1985; Gell, 2001;

Adam, 1998; Munn, 1992; etc.]. Social anthropologists Oksana Morsanu and Felix Ringel did for time what de Certeau once did for everyday life – describing the time-tricks, which are the temporal weapon of the weak, allowing them to act when confronted with the orders and regimes of temporality, bypassing and absorbing them [Morsanu & Ringel, 2016]. A qualitative reinterpretation of social phenomena and processes today is increasingly carried out based on the refiguration of temporality and requires the researcher to be temporally sensitive: for instance, migrants placed in refugee camps are defined as “subjects put on pause” [Everaert, 2020]; planning as a governmental technology, the quintessence and chronotope of modernity [Couperus, Grift & Langendijk, 2015]; and revolution as a chronocide [Epstein & Skidelsky, 2003]. In 1971, Koselleck called on historians to develop a theory of historical time so that the professional guild would have something to oppose other disciplines [Koselleck, 2010: 48]. Today, working with the diversity of temporality requires something that is exactly the opposite, which is overcoming the tunnel vision of historians and the limitations of discourse about historical time.

The epistemic shift to time and its contextualizing are coming to the fore and, turning into a lens for analyzing the practices of governing, management, interaction, and living are increasingly recognized as a temporal turn [Bear, 2016].<sup>9</sup> True, Laura Bear and her colleagues are focused on describing the timescapes of late capitalism and neoliberal economics. Last year, the organizers of the conference “Time, Objectified: Soviet Temporalities and Material Culture”, held at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, began their CfP with the statement addressed to researchers of the worlds of socialism who still “remained strangers on the terra of temporality”.<sup>10</sup> The Soviet experience, with its claims to the novelty of the history, the utopian horizon, the extension of the socialist present, the five-day working week and five-year plans, the era of Stagnation, and the acceleration of Perestroika, certainly requires the researcher to take time seriously and develop a temporal view [Adam, 2000].

It would be inaccurate to say that no one had previously studied time in the USSR and the features of its (discursive) production. Scholars wrote about communist utopia [Paperny, 2002, Genis 1994] and the *etatization* of time [Verdery, 1996], Soviet holidays [Dobrenko, 2002, Rolf, 2013] and time budgets in the late USSR [Patrushev, 2001], the retrospectivity of Stagnation [Yurchak, 2020], and the theme of time in Filonov’s painting [Cloutier, 2009]. However, with rare exceptions, time was not the main or special subject of research. Soviet life was not described through the time relations, and the temporal behavior and experience of communist temporality were not studied.

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<sup>9</sup> Doris Bachmann-Medick considers the transformation of the object of study into its analytical lens as one of the key features of the epistemological turn [Bachmann-Medick, 2016].

<sup>10</sup> <https://sites.utexas.edu/creees/2022/01/05/cfa-time-objectified-soviet-temporalities-and-material-culture/>

Anthropologists have begun work in this direction only in the past five years. Nikolay Ssorin-Chaikov traced the slowdown and delay of administrative time on the national outskirts of the empire [Ssorin-Chaikov, 2017]. Maria Yushmanova showed how in 1929, the transition to a five-day week broke the routines of work and everyday life [Yushmanova, 2019]. Elena Malaya described techniques for managing the desired future through its materialization in time capsules [Malaya, 2020]. The intermediate results of a heuristic project on the (in)efficient temporality of planning in the USSR and France were presented by sociologist Alexander Bikbov [Bikbov, 2021]. Finally, our contribution to studies of Soviet temporality resulted in the paper on the archeology of the socialist present in the 1930s [Orlova, Balakhonskaya, Berlov, Zaripova & Lukin, 2022].

Continuing to experiment with considering the Soviet reality through a temporality lens, we are gathering the subjects of our two-years research in this text. The number of co-authors, unusual for the humanities, the composition of paper, and the wide range of topics can be seen as the expression and embodiment of our project, where the Soviet social time is jointly studied from different perspectives. Compositionally, the article consists of seven analytical short stories. In each of them, the results of one of the research cases, united under the umbrella of the Soviet temporality project, are interpreted with one of the core concepts or approaches introduced within the framework of the temporal turn. Thus, setting the analytical optics, we are turning in a performative way towards temporality in the history of the Soviet 20th century, and transferring the *temporal turn* from the declaration into presence.

## **Screening-day of Socialism: A timeframe**

On 12 April 1926, the Soviet director Dziga Vertov recorded in his diary: "Whatever box office revenues follow, we already have thirteen matured screening-days (*ékranoden*'). Against the background of multiple recent 'feature' films failures, this sounds proud." [Vertov, 1966: 166]. Evaluating the successful launch of his film *A Sixth Part of the World*, Vertov, a staunch proponent of the non-fiction cinema, made an appeal to temporality and placed the duration of the movie's exposure on the screens above the box office.

As is commonly known, time is the tool and environment for generating profits under capitalism [Bear, 2016]. In this section, we consider political-economic corrections of this formula made by socialism based on the case study of screening-day, or the day "accounted for by a projection unit if it projected at least one screening per day" [Kalistratov, 1948: 87].

Initially, the screening-day was a derivative of converting time into money. The history of the concept is rooted in practices when film exhibitors rented a film from the distributors for a certain chronological period. In Italy or the USSR, exhibitors rented a film from distributors on a

one-day basis.<sup>11</sup> A form of capitalistic contracting developed along with the technological renewal of the industry [Hanssen, 2002]. In the Soviet Union, the contracting concept radically changed after the October revolution, which brought institutional changes in the film industry and a new look at the mission of cinema.

In the first post-revolutionary years, it was the market that regulated the cost of daily film renting by inertia. In 1924, since the establishment of Sovkino, a state organization with a monopoly on the distribution of films on the territory of the RSFSR, the cost of a screening-day was administratively reduced from 94-128 rubles per day to 49.90 rubles for city cinema venues. At the same time, Sovkino provided special preferential conditions for workers' clubs (12-17 rubles) and film projection located in rural areas (5.83 rubles) [Lemberg, 1931: 93]. The basis of the state pricing mechanism was not economic benefit, but the expansion of the cinema networks. Thus, the reduction in the cost of a screening-day made the film program more accessible to different actors of film exhibiting and increased the intensity of the film stock use. As a result, screening-day commenced to indicate the degree of daily time used by the projector unit and the film stock depreciation.

Here, we consider screening-day as a basic timeframe of Soviet film distribution. The concept, introduced by Barbara Adam, signifies a time with clearly defined boundaries within which activity is structured, organized, or planned [Adam, 2008; Adam, 1998]. As Barbara Adam suggests, "first, that temporal frames are not given but chosen and, secondly, that the temporal frameworks we impose determines what we can and do see" [Adam, 2008: 2]. It should be noted that cultural technologies of time segmentation, which allow the processing of natural time into the temporality of culture, are of exceptional importance for social life and are one of the main subjects of interest in the anthropology of time [Munn, 1992]. Timeframes significantly expand the repertoire of formats and scales of time set by the calendar, supporting numerous hybrids of temporality and sociality, from the five-year Soviet planned economy and the five-day week introduced with the beginning of industrialization to the screening-days of socialism, where the technological, political-economic, and cultural are fused together. In the Soviet Union, the screening-day allowed the authorities to quantify, and hence control and keep a record of the popularity of the film, the lifespan of film reels, and the economic performance of film projection units.

The dialectic of the timeframe is that its temporal characteristics are dictated by social practices, which, in turn, acquire form within the given temporal boundaries. Here, tempo plays a crucial role, that is the speed, pace, and intensity of activity to be packed into the same unit of

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<sup>11</sup> This practice was widely known in the world industry. For instance, there was a weekly change in film programs in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands [van Oort et al., 2020].

time. In the case of screening-day, when its cost was reduced by regulation, the pace and intensity within its framework increased significantly. The observation of its dynamic enables us to catch the rapid acceleration of time brought about by the October Revolution. This speeding of time became visible in referring to the standards of film stock use adopted in the USSR. If inside the USSR an average life cycle of a film copy amounted to 125 screening-days, once exported abroad, due to the limited ability of Soviet exhibitors to distribute a film copy widely, its life cycle increased to 300 screening-days [Boltianskiĭ, 1929: 33]. The difference in life cycles signified that the time of a film stock inside the Soviet Union was denser, more saturated, and as a result, it passed rapidly. In the spirit of socialist materialism, the means of production dictated here the format of temporality.

Finally, the timeframe of film distribution dealt with the social-economic formations of the Soviet Union. The large-scale 'cinefication' (*kinofikatsiia*) that took place in the USSR in the 1920s implied the consistent saturation of the Soviet territory by film projectors and cinema venues so that every resident of the Soviet Union, from the capital's inhabitant to a reindeer herder from Siberia, had an opportunity to visit a cinema. Under these conditions, screening-day turned from a capitalistic unit of the market film economy into a socialistic unit of struggle against inequality. For instance, it was exactly the number of screening-days that were counted to determine the success of the cinefication policy in 1925 [Boltianskiĭ, 1929: 266].

By the end of the 1920s, Sovkino changed the terms of contracting for city cinemas, or a commercial cinema network, from flat daily fees to revenue sharing (25 %). However, other cinema networks (trade union networks and ministries networks) designed to serve the worker-peasant audience, still rented movies at reduced daily flat fees. These different conditions for different cinema networks resulted in the coexistence of two different temporalities: (1) time as a technology for the accumulation and production of capital and (2) time as a tool for overcoming spatio-temporal inequality.

In this section, we traced the timeframe of socialistic film distribution. Paying close attention to political-economic plasticity of screening-day, we made the hybrid temporality and sociality of socialism visible.

### **The discursive debut of the socialist present. Temporalization**

In the poem "1933-1934", which began the first issue of the newspaper *Vechernyaya Moskva* in 1934, Mikhail Svetlov discarded old-fashioned generational metaphors for the passage of time and articulated the Soviet temporality through the continuity of presence:

He didn't leave like before,  
In the form of an old grandfather,  
Not a baby replaces him,

Like in an old magazine, -  
Komsomolets replaced Komsomolets  
On the front of victory –  
Two casters side by side  
Stand by the molten steel.  
We are not our youth  
At twelve o'clock we see off,  
We will not find old age  
On the threshold of a new year –  
We, like last year,  
From under the snow, we rustle with the harvest [Svetlov, 1934].

Contrary to popular beliefs about the fundamental orientation of the USSR towards the utopian horizon of a bright communist future, in the second year of the second five-year plan, not the future, but the present became the priority temporal modality. Describing the onset of 1934 through the metaphor of a working watch – a change of the same for the same – the Soviet poet participates in discursive production, development, and appropriation of the present, interpreted as a serious political resource, a stage for demonstrating the achievements of socialist construction, and a priority area for updating Soviet experience and identity.

In this section,<sup>12</sup> based on the electronic archive of the central Soviet press,<sup>13</sup> we describe the complex practice of encoding time, which the anthropologist Johannes Fabian calls temporalization [Fabian, 2014: 74]. Unlike Koselleck, who described temporalization in relation to the modernist shift in the understanding of historicity and the awareness of the need for its political use [Escudier, 2011], Fabian interpreted temporalization more broadly. He revealed it in the variety of discursive productions of time, considered from the perspective of linguistics, semantics, and ideology [Fabian, 2014: 74]. Fabian focuses on temporalization in anthropology, where time is systematically used to produce a civilizational distance between the anthropologist and the object of his observation. Socialist temporalization, which this section is devoted to, unlike anthropological one, is built on the reduction of temporal distance.

The distance to the communist future is reduced due to the actualization of socialist successes and identifications in the present. The pre-war peak of socialist temporalization was 1934, the year of respite or the so-called “Stalinist thaw” [Gefter, 2015]. Its uniqueness lay in the double horizon of events: the first economic successes of industrialization had already been outlined and hunger had receded (food cards were canceled), and the great terror had not yet begun. Based on the archive of national newspapers and magazines, we have identified three

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<sup>12</sup> See more details [Orlova et al. 2022].

<sup>13</sup> We have used the possibilities to search in the archive of the newspapers (*Pravda*, *Ivestiya*, *Gudok*, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*) and magazines (*Krokodil*, *Ogonek*) aggregated on the platform *East View*.



patterns for the invention of the socialist present in 1934. They are *extension*, *discursive opening*, and *historicization*.

***An extension of the current moment.*** On the cover of *Krokodil* magazine for January 1934, two men in malitsas and torbasas (deerskin coats and boots) are talking under a loudspeaker mounted on a radio mast, against the backdrop of northern lights, deer, yarangas and other attributes of the Far North: “What is the program now?” - “Governmental! Now they will hand over how much our region has been allocated for construction in the 2nd five-year plan” [Krokodil, 1934, 3: 12]. The homage to the 17th CPSU Congress, which was opening in Moscow, is objectified in a language game with the *program*: the program for the 2nd five-year plan is adopted during the Congress, and the creation of a all-union radio network which allows the receiving of radio programs from the center even in Chukotka, becomes one of the tasks of the year. It is noteworthy that the scene unfolds around the radio station. In the 1930s, radio was the only media that provided real-time community access to events [Lovell, 2015: 63] and thus participated in the technological empowerment of the present. The short dialog uses the *current moment indicator* twice. *Now* in the question indicates the real time of communication, while *now* in the answer supports temporality scaling. The time of the *government program* can be interpreted broadly – as the hour and day of discussion, the two weeks of the Congress, or as the five-year period. The indicator of the current moment – *now* – pushes the boundaries of the present into the near future, where the event is about to happen. The guarantee of the event’s conditions of happiness was a plan or program.

After the decline of 1928, the use in the Soviet press of indicators of the current moment was restored by 1934, reached a new maximum and plateaued: *now* (*seichas*) in 1927 – 4281 occurrences, in 1928 – 3302, in 1929 – 2986, in 1934 – 4742; currently (*teper’*) – in 1927 – 4863, in 1929 – 3217, in 1931 – 1950, and in 1934 – 4065; *today* – 3392 in 1927, 2701 – in 1928, 3530 – in 1934). Different ways of using (critical and solemn, everyday, and symbolic, point and extended) provide a performative production of the present, literally expanding in 1934 as the mass of words increases.

***The invention of the socialist present*** and its extended production in 1934 are inextricably linked with *our time*. Between 1927 and 1938 the Soviet press most often uses this temporal figure precisely in 1934: in comparison with 1933, its use triples (from 47 to 139), and in 1935 it decreases by a third (from 139 to 82 uses). *Our time* and the Soviet present had in common the pronoun, the situational rules, and the discursive networks in which they were embedded. Unlike earlier uses, in 1934 our time was no longer filled with the features of the moment (“encircled by enemies on all sides”, “NEP” or “breaking life”), but generalized to “the Soviet conditions” [Pravda, 1934, 127], “when our country becomes socialist” [LG, 1934, 34].

This year newspapers wrote on the Soviet people more often than in all the time since 1917, often using the first-person form. *Our time* is involved in the development and maintenance of the identification standard, dictating demands "to every communist" [Pravda, 1934, 157] or putting forward a "new type of real hero" [Gudok, 1934, 189].

In the year of the 1st Congress of Soviet Writers, almost half of the uses of *our time* fell on *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. The bookmen responsible for the socialist realist representation, shaped the moment. Unlike the reporter's *today*, in *our time* there was an uncertainty that prompted the work of imagination and the ideological generalization necessary to create a typical image. The typifications full of pathos and dreams, were localized in the extended present, where the gap between routines and the project was shrinking. Sholokhov's friend and writer Vasily Kudashov wrote about an experience of expanding and socialist-romantic saturation of the present after meeting with the magician-breeder Michurin:

It was somehow more spacious around, it was easy to breathe, and there was also such a cheerful feeling that almost everything is now available for the penetration of the human mind, that in our time the distance from great and crazy fantasies to real and everyday life almost completely disappears. At that hour, I somehow felt harder than before under my feet a simple unpaved road, and the Earth seemed to be easily visible to the naked eye, as if I was looking at it from the side, and for some reason strangely small, like a globe [LG, 1934, 126].

Through spatial metaphors, the author of the essay revealed the homeopathic modality of *our time*: to experience the present an inoculation of the future was needed, to contact with reality – a planetary view, to produce the presence – a fantasy.

**Historization.** The socialist present is not only growing, changing scale, and merging with the Soviet identity, but also fitting into history. In 1934, the Soviet press was searching for suitable names and discursive formats for its historicization.

In another time and place, looking for words to describe unadulterated time, anthropologist Roy Wagner chose an epoch to capture the stop in the present, its eternal "nowness" [Wagner, 1986: 84–86]. The ideological opening of *our era* in the mid-1930s was a stop of the noon of socialism. Unlike the Wagner's era, which was inseparable from life, the Soviet monumental present was alienated in ideological way from life. Contemporaries saw in the socialist present an ideal form that has yet to be found: "We have two times before us – our topical *today* and the long-lasting *era of socialism*. It is necessary to find an image of an entire era in a topical fragment <...> First of all, we must delve into the essence of our era and our reality" [LG, 1934, 116]. The archaeologist of *our time* was to be a Soviet writer.

In 1934, Soviet writers invented the key formulas for the historicization of the present. They were *socialist reality* and *the era of socialism*. *Socialist reality* acted as "an effervescent

source of material" [LG, 1934, 169] and a measure of the political quality of literary creativity. *Our time* and *our era* were defined through involvement into socialism [LG, 1934, 128]. Two years later, the *era of socialism* had spread far beyond the field of literature. Literature of a different kind – the Constitution – was called "the greatest document of the era of socialism" [Pravda, 1936, 334], and the metro – one of its "wonderful structures" [Gudok, 1936, 110]. *Gudok* responded to the publication of the draft Constitution with an editorial where the *happy era of socialism* was separated from industrialization and collectivization, connecting as the apotheosis of Soviet temporality with the leader. Temporality became the tool for the personality cult a year and a half later, when the temporal figure of *the Stalin era* came into active use. However, the political valve of *the era* was opened in 1934.

Describing the discursive work on the time encoding in connection with the achievements of the socialist industry, which was carried out in 1934 in the national Soviet press, we fixed the core time-patterns and mapped the diversity of the temporalization landscape. In other spaces (f.e., in diaries) and in other years, the relationships between *our time*, indicators of the current moment and socialism established differently. However, the discursive frame of socialism as the territory of the present was formed in 1934.

### **Time of the Papanin's ice floe. Heterochrony**

As the *North Pole-1* station radioman Ernst Krenkel wrote in his diary on September 5, 1937, "we are always happy with calm weather: the drift is slowing down, scientific, and domestic work is going on calmly. But when there is no wind, there is a windmill, you cannot charge the batteries. Correspondence must be curtailed, and correspondent appetites moderated; only the *meteo* are sent to the mainland" [Krenkel, 1940:108]. For 274 days, which was the existence spell of the Soviet drifting research ice station, weather conditions literally changed not only the course of the ice floe, but also the temporal modes of living by its dwellers, including the tempo of their work, the affective background, the quality of their connectivity with the mainland, the saving resources, and intensity of equipment operation. In this section, we consider the concept of multi-temporality in a stratigraphic perspective through the Papanin's ice floe case [Iordheim, 2012, 2021].

Reinhart Kozelleck, Krzystov Pomyan, and Helge Jordheim, each in their own way, took the geological model of the layered occurrence of the earth's crust, introduced by the Dane Niels Stensen [Iordheim, 2021], as the basis for fixing the temporal multiplicity: "Like this geological model, the "layers of time" refer to a plurality of temporal planes, each with different durations and diverging origins, that are nonetheless simultaneously present and effective" [Koselleck, 2003: 9]. The metaphor of the *layering of time* encourages historians to focus on "the central idea

of simultaneously coexisting times, while also leaving open the nature of temporal processes occurring within each particular layer” [Hellerma, 2020: 195]. It was about a multitude of historical times, giving space and wide historiographical possibilities to a historiographer. We turn to the compact and extremely vivid Papanin’s case to reveal the multi-layers in the processes, time gaps, starting points, temporal experiences, events, and practices within the same ice floe. What is important, in the history of the Papaninites, the denaturalization of time, which Koselleck put to the bottom of modernity, “doesn’t work anymore” [Iordheim, 2021: 101]: the time of the ice floe is inextricably intertwined with the time of the polar station.

A cursory description of Papanin's expedition reveals its saturation with temporality and heterochrony. The drifting polar station was inscribed in the Stalinist history of the conquest of the Arctic as one of the main propaganda projects of the People's Commissariat of Ice—the Main Directorate of the Northern Sea Route [McCannon, 1998]. The expedition, which lasted about nine months, took more than a year of preparation, and was timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution. Four polar explorers – Ivan Papanin (station director), Ernest Krenkel (radioman), Evgeny Fedorov (meteorologist, geophysicist) and Peter Shirshov (hydrobiologist, glaciologist) – were landed on ice 8 km from the Pole and removed from a critically reduced ice floe 2500 km from the point, on February 19, 1938. The beginning of the expedition, which has been defined in different ways, was officially counted from June 6, 1937. In the history of the Papaninites, where everything breathes temporality, even capacities for food turned into preserves of the future: during preparation the expedition daily ration for the ice-team was packed into separate containers for ten days. Upon their return, the polar explorers, who every day measured temperature, humidity, ice thickness, currents, magnetic field, etc., not only received the degrees of Doctors of Geography, but also entered Soviet eternity with the titles of Heroes of the Soviet Union.

For Koselleck, the layers of time are made up of meanings, models, actions, and experiences ensembled through patterns – the repetitive structures – that have different origins, durations, and rhythms [Koselleck, 2003:109]. The peculiarity of our case is that all the layers and patterns of temporality were sedimented in the diaries that the Papaninites kept during their polar drift.<sup>14</sup>

The most voluminous, saturated, and detailed layer was the time of scientific and domestic work. It was framed and ordered through labor rhythms and schedules. From June 25, when the camp was equipped and the life of the ice station started work, round-the-clock duty began. Polar explorers were on duty for six hours on a fixed watch [Krenkel, 1940: 56]. Despite

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<sup>14</sup> Diaries of Papanin and Krenkel were published at the end of the expedition, Fedorov – in 1979, shortly before his death. Shirshov's diary, seemingly lost, was published in 2005 by his youngest daughter.

the schedules, the work was often irregular. Today it is difficult to understand why Shirshov, fulfilling the plan for processing seawater samples, somehow worked without sleep for more than a day [Papanin, 1972: 61]. The schedule for getting in touch with the mainland left its mark on the life of the station: news summaries were usually received at night or in the morning [Papanin, 1972: 46]. The explorers resorted to self-mobilization, maintaining a working rhythm even in illness. The heroic impulse was strengthened by the reluctance to stay in the tent where the temperature rarely rose above zero. The indignation of Shirshov, who served as the expedition doctor, reveals controversies and heterogeneities in the continuity of selfless labor: refusing bed rest for the sake of work, Krenkel did not leave space (and time) for the work of a doctor who was specially trained [Shirshov, 2005].

The time allotted for sleep, meals and personal activities is indicated by a dotted line in the diaries. Its border was drawn in different ways. For example, for Krenkel, night shifts were a time of rest, reflection, and keeping a diary, which became a private space in the cramped ice life [Krenkel, 1940: 57]. In their personal time, the polar explorers read, dozed, listened to music together, thought about their relatives, and went walks. Rare hunting trips were a special joy for Papanin [Papanin, 1972: 91].

The connection with the *big – Soviet – land* shaped the symbolic form of life on the ice. Extraterritorially, it was carried out through a walkie-talkie and a radio network, which by 1937 covered the territory of the USSR, and temporally, through synchronization with Moscow in a rapid polar drift between time zones: “1 am Moscow time. 9 p.m. GMT. But the latter exists only on Zhenya's chronometers. We live in the same time zone as distant Moscow” [Shirshov, 2005: 173]. The polar explorers did not just keep in touch and transmitted weather reports twice a day, but participated in the life of the country, feeling themselves as citizens – they celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution and voted in the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

In addition to the red days of the calendar, on the 6th and 21st of each month, local memorable dates were marked on the ice floe – the double start of the expedition. On May 21, the first plane with polar explorers landed on the ice near the Pole. On June 6, when everyone (including the dog Vesely) was assembled, the last plane left the ice camp. These days at the drifting station they washed, shaved, listened to messages on the radio, received telegrams, and drank on occasion. The unusual rhythm of the holidays accelerated and concentrated the social time of the station. Breaking the ice routine, these days brought meaning and rational regularity to the switch between the temporalities of work and leisure. Under the conditions of Arctic deprivation, a properly selected rhythm of diversity supported the ability to live and work.

Extraordinary contacts with the mainland changed the boundaries and order of the ice time layers. Thus, the authorities from Rudolf Island could expand the boundaries of the polar explorers' personal time by sending them mail or organizing a radio-bridge with family members. The tasks received by radio required overtime work of the radio when Levanevsky's plane disappeared [Krenkel, 1940: 94], or the meteorologist, when the additional *meteo* were needed [Papanin, 1972: 196].

In the course of the drift, the time of the ice floe itself, dictated by the polar seasons and situational excesses, more and more persistently invaded the unstable multi-layered life of polar explorers. In the polar summer, the ice floe thawed, and the camp was moved. This is how the field kitchen made of snow blocks melted away [Papanin, 1972: 46]. The polar wintering changed the expedition's way of life. At first, it became more measured, and the diary entries became lengthy. Shirshov was only now able to take up a diary, and Fedorov created a new section in his entries. However, the polar night was fraught with danger. In November, Papanin and Krenkel, lost in the darkness, could not find the camp [Shirshov, 2005: 181]. At the beginning of 1938, the ice floe was rapidly drifting towards Greenland, which no one had expected [Fedorov, 1983: 279]. It fell into the area of warm currents, beginning to melt and crack. Rapid changes in the weather did not leave time for the drifting station, so, the work of the polar explorers ended three months ahead of schedule.

Synchronous and stereophonic recording of their polar experience by the Papaninites, as we have shown, produced visibility and meanings for multi-layered temporality, which is recognized retrospectively as the temporality of the total polar mobilization, turned by Soviet propaganda into *exempla*.<sup>15</sup>

## **Editorial portfolio of a Soviet publishing house. A timescape**

In 1964, Zinoviy Paperny was ironic in writing about the temporal uncertainty of the “gravity” in which Soviet writers await the birth of their books:

Fathers run around the square, wringing their hands. So much excitement!

- The first fights began – with a closed reviewer ...

- Oh, premature birth! Dangerous for parent and child.

- But I have the opposite problem. I've been going for four years. Nothing at all [Paperny, 1966: 13].

He compared the publishing house with a maternity hospital. Fixed the alienation of the manuscript from the author. Described the relationship of the writer with the institution of the

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<sup>15</sup> For more details about the total polar mobilization as *exempla* for the Soviet life during industrialization and the formation of Stalinism, see [Orlova et al. 2022].

press as the extension of the relations with time – an exciting (and helpless) expectation that replaces other interactions.

In the literary-centric USSR, the publishing house was the key machine of cultural production, and the editor, who ensured the coherence of the manuscript and the book, creativity and censorship, skill and fees, and literature and ideology, was its operator [Dobrenko, 1999]. By signing a contract and finding an editor, the Soviet writer entered the institutional order of socialist realism. We will describe<sup>16</sup> the temporal aspects of the editing and publishing cycle in the 1960s through the timescape of *Molodaya Gvardiya* publishing house.<sup>17</sup>

Timescape, introduced by the social anthropologist Barbara Adam, has become one of the most popular terms for describing the complex but relatively stable ensembles of temporalities and spatio-temporal relationships in their connections to society and context. Adam's definition of timescape through variable combinations of seven elements – time frame (objective frame of time), timing (social synchronisation and co-ordination), tempo (the speed and intensity at which activities are conducted), temporality (the unique historical imprint embedded with processes or objects in a particular place in time), duration (the extent, temporal distance, and horizon of time), sequence (the understanding of order, succession, and priority) and temporal modalities (the individual and collective past, present and future) [Adam, 2004] – has given rise to many interpretations. Curating this umbrella term, some researchers leave only the outline of it, filling the multi-level time-figure with new elements [Bear, 2016], others see it as temporal behavior in the environment, “the temporal features of living” [Bludorn, 2006], or focus on the materialization of temporal relations and their practical implementation [Liu, 2020]. When adapting the term to describe the temporality of an organization and management practices, researchers focused on temporal orders, disciplines of time, temporal horizons (budgets), time frames (contracts), the speed of decision-making, the temporal aspects of employee availability, and labor efficiency [Reeves-Elington, 2007; Whipp et al. 2002]. The timescapes of teaching in private and public schools [Coco et al. 2007], timescapes of medical practice [Manathunga, 2019], management timescapes [Howlett & Goetz, 2014], emotional timescapes of the service sector [Maguire & Geiger, 2015] have already become the subject of research. Editorial work, the publishing process, and Soviet organizational environments – have not.

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<sup>16</sup> Three groups of sources were used: (1) cases of a series of exemplary biographies "Life of Remarkable People" (ZhZL) from the *Molodaya Gvardiya* fund in RGASPI, (2) biographical and expert interviews with Semyon Reznik, in 1963 - 1973 editor of the series; and (3) a set of ego-documents of editors and writers.

<sup>17</sup> *Molodaya Gvardiya* was one of the largest publishing houses of the USSR, known for its periodicals (magazines *Technika - Molodezhi*, *Studencheskiy Meridian*, *Murzilka*, the newspaper *Pionerskaya Pravda*, etc.), book series (ZhZL, Library fiction), and literature for youth. It was founded in October 1922 as a cooperative enterprise of the Central Committee of the RKSM and reached its peak in the 1960s, embodying the atmosphere of the "thaw" and the will to explore the cultural horizons of the scientific and technological era. Direct subordination to the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League gave status and infrastructural advantages but turned into increased ideological pressure.

The unit of book publishing in *Molodaya Gvardiya* in the 1960s was the movement of a manuscript from its inclusion in the publishing house's plan for the next year to the release of the book from the printing house after a series of delays. The entry of the author into the temporal order of the publishing house was regulated by a standard contract, which was concluded after the plan was agreed on by the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League. The contract set key timeframes: they stipulated the deadlines for submission (usually up to a year), the payment procedure (25% on signing the contract, 35% on approval of the manuscript, 40% on completion of proofreading) and the terms for accepting the manuscript (on the same day, if the leading editor does not mind).<sup>18</sup> In fact, access to publication in the state publishing house was a serious filter, ideological as well. Some writers waited for publication for years, others were not printed at all. The pressure of the disciplines of time on the authors who passed the filter was gentle: there were no penalties for violating the deadlines, delays and postponements were the norm in practice. A junior editor reminded the popularizer of physics Daniil Dadin about the approach of the inventory and the need to “put the contract in order and attach to it a new statement on the postponement of the submission of the *Rutherford* manuscript.”<sup>19</sup> Yevgeny Brandis worked on the biography of the Ukrainian writer Marko Vovchok (M.A. Vilinskaya) for nine years, taking six delays in connection with his work in the House of Creativity, business trips, and sick leave. Upon completion of editing, the manuscript was sent to the proofreader. The second proof had to contain only minor corrections. Otherwise, “it was already going for a new circle of proofreading, and this was considered as some kind of minus, extra-planned expenses”<sup>20</sup> of time and money.

Censorship (*litovanie* in the professional slang) – getting *Glavlit*<sup>21</sup> permission for the printing of the manuscript – followed the proof-reading.<sup>22</sup> Censorship was both a phase of the editorial and publishing process and a pause with uncertain duration. Working ahead of the curve and trying to minimize the censorship pause, the editors tried to take the position of an imaginary censor. Checking on the spot – in “a room on the fourth floor without a sign”, where “two *Glavlit*-female, such lovely women” were sitting – was considered faster: “they read the proofs, put a stamp on them.”<sup>23</sup> If the manuscript was sent to the “big” *Glavlit*, the conclusion “could be expected in a week, and a month, and six months. The book got stuck, the plan faltered, all

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<sup>18</sup> RGASPI. F. M-42. Op. 5, P. 13. D. 65. P. 6.

<sup>19</sup> RGASPI. F. M-42. Op. 2. D. 1573. P. 5.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Semeon Resnik, 01.02.2022. Taped and transcribed by Maxim Lukin. P.5.

<sup>21</sup> The Main Directorate for Literary and Publishing Affairs.

<sup>22</sup> According to a historical anecdote, the children's illustrated magazine *Veselye Kartinki*, which was part of the *Molodaya Gvardiya* family, was an exception to the censorship rules – it had no *litovanie* and, consequently, the censor pause [Nesterov, 2020].

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Semeon Resnik, 01.02.2022. Taped and transcribed by Maxim Lukin. P.6.



sorts of troubles began”.<sup>24</sup> Shklovsky's book about Tolstoy was a heterochronic materialization of one of them. Even though “1962” appeared on the cover, at the beginning of 1963 it had not yet gone to the printing house, since *Glavlit* demanded that a reference to Lenin be added. For a publishing house which was actively engaged in the popularization and printing of science fiction, it mattered that after 1962, after passing through the *Glavlit*, popular science and sci-fi works were sent to *Glavatom*. The Strugatsky brothers' sci-fi story *The Return* returned from there two months later with a resolution: "No secret information is contained, but it is written at a low level and is not recommended for publication" [Strugatsky, 2001].

After the censorship check, the proofs were transferred to the printing house. In accordance with the economic logic of socialist deficit, even the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Komsomol with its own printing house lacked paper and production capacity. Judging by the appeal of the director of the *Molodaya Gvardiya* to the Central Committee, in 1956 about 20% of the production requirements were not provided every month. This meant temporal (release delays) and aesthetic (deterioration in the quality of printed book covers) costs.<sup>25</sup>

The manuscripts were included in the publishing plan. In the 1960s, all Soviet organizations had thematic, annual, five-year, and long-term plans. The publishers and magazines only had (often unofficial) plan called *editorial portfolio*. According to the memoirs of the editor of the *Molodaya Gvardiya*, “in most cases, the author did not bring the manuscript [on time], but a statement of postponement. And this could be repeated for many years”.<sup>26</sup> How did the publishing house maintain its annual rhythm of publications, especially strict in the case of thematic series? Reducing risks and violating all "planning and economic standards", the editors kept "a contractual portfolio two and a half times larger than the standards allowed."<sup>27</sup> If there was no manuscript on time, "the book was removed from the plan, another was released in its stead."<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the *editorial portfolio* was a pantry, a materialization, and a guarantee of the future of the *Molodaya Gvardiya*. By absorbing the unreliability of authors and providing a rhythm to publishing, it allowed editors to balance on the verge between official and nonofficial planning, the norm and its violation. Fitting into the objective framework of calendar time (time-frame), synchronizing the actions of book publishing participants (timing), maintaining the annual rhythm of thematic series (tempo), embedding book publishing into the landscape of Soviet ethic of creativity and political economy of socialism (temporality), providing a surplus of

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<sup>24</sup> Interview with Semeon Resnik, 01.02.2022. Taped and transcribed by Maxim Lukin. P.6.

<sup>25</sup> RGASPI. F. M-1. Op. 32. D. 818. L. 11.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Semeon Resnik, 30.01.2021. Taped and transcribed by Maxim Lukin. P.6.

<sup>27</sup> RGASPI. F. M-42. Op. 5, Ch. 13. D. 65. L. 14.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Semeon Resnik, 30.01.2021. Taped and transcribed by Maxim Lukin. P.5.

manuscripts and, therefore, a safe temporal horizon (duration), and giving a sufficient degree of freedom due to the ability to change the order of publications (sequence), the *editorial portfolio* became the quintessence of the timescape of Soviet publishing houses of the late socialist era and its materialization.

## **"A Schedule for the children's mass". Laboratory of Soviet Temporality**

In 1923, the director of the Central Institute of Labor (TsIT) and a supporter of the complete rationalization of Soviet life, publishing the brochure *Time*, called on citizens to *chronize* – that is, to form a conscious time setting to reveal a value, resource and tool for transforming industry, society, and the individual. The first step towards the formation of a “subjective setting of time”, according to Aleksey Gastev, was to be the accounting of time-wastes. Recording time-wastes on the chrono-cards, known as the study of time budgets, became one of the icons of the post-revolutionary avant-garde projecting. The brochure included its manual, sample cards-tables and advertised a set of 15 chrono-cards, which were available for 15 kop. in the TsIT bookstore in Moscow.

Gastev never once used the term *time budget*, introduced shortly before by Pitirim Sorokin, to denote a method for obtaining information about everyday time spending; collections of activities measured by time, or forms of presentation of data about them [Sorokin, 1921]. He clearly preferred the more governmental *timekeeping* and *time-inspection* to the economic concept.<sup>29</sup> The main organizer of mass studies of time budgets of various social and professional groups was the economist and statistician Stanislav Strumilin [Strumilin, 1924]. But it was Gastev's technique that was widely introduced in the study of time budgets in the mid-1920s, and his employees were recognized experts in timekeeping techniques. However, there was another reason to start the section with Gastev.

Aleksey Kapitonovich, a revolutionary, poet and Soviet anti-crisis manager, had a talent for wording that released the spirit of the times. This bout, he linked the disparate elements – the record card, the daily plan, the planning system, and the work being recorded – into one multitude, proclaiming it as "the most valid, real and experimental laboratory" [Gastev, 1923]. Observing the potential of measurements, Gastev emphasized the universalism of the *time regime* of party workers, the automatism of executive employees, the “compressed psychological atmosphere” of a military group, and access to life reforms through the routines of housewives. Students, teachers, and schoolchildren stood apart in this list. Gastev believed that “they will

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<sup>29</sup> As this formula came into wide use in the second half of the 1920s, its interpretation was increasingly given by financial and economic frames: "budget savings", "marginal spending", "thousands of hours flying out of the time budget every day", "increase (or ) of the budget", etc.

create a laboratory of time, which can be a school subject with a registration cards, completely imperceptibly” [1923].

Taking the words of the director of the CIT seriously, we try to figure out how the schoolchildren's registration cards, one can "to organize laboratories" of Soviet temporality insensibly. To do this, we use the model of the laboratory as a space of double refiguration, developed by Karin Knorr Cetina in the framework of the lab studies (within realm STS). According to Cetina, laboratories not only "provide an "enhanced" environment that "improves upon" natural orders in relation to social orders", but also "upgrade social orders" by "installing reconfigured scientists who become workable (feasible) in relation to these objects" [Knorr Cetina, 2009: 10]. Comparing two surveys of the time budget for Soviet schoolchildren conducted between the mid-1920s and mid-1930s, we focus on three aspects of the *laboratory life*: (1) improving natural time through its measurement, codification, fixation, and visualization, (2) setting up children for participation in the survey, (3) connecting the double order of the temporal lab with the Soviet order.

Systematic measurements of schoolchildren's time budgets in the USSR began with the organization of the Time Budget Commission under the Moscow Department of Public Education at the end of 1924 [Bernstein, 1927]. Taking the Gastev method as a basis, the participants modified it from time to time: they changed the number of cards, the list of events, the indifference interval (the minimum duration when an event isn't listed). It's said about 4,800 schoolchildren involved in the survey of time budgets in those years [Rozhkov, 2016: 169].

Survey's results 1925–1926 were represented by Mikhail Bernstein, a pedologist, Gastev's collaborator and head of a department at the Institute for School Work Methods. In the mid-1920s, he was the person who shaped a unified framework for mass measurements of schoolchildren's time budgets. His paper saturated with survey methodology was addressed to everyone who took the position of a researcher. During survey, time, decanted through the chrono-card, was recycled from an undivided flow into a series of events clearly demarcated, visible and localized on the temporal axis. For each day a single card was filled out. Hours were inscribed on the top line of the table. In the leftmost column, it was necessary to enter the events of the day in accordance with the nomenclature, adding your own explanations in brackets. The cell at the intersection of the event axis and the time axis had to be hatched completely for the event lasting an hour, half – for half an hour, a quarter – for 15 minutes. An event lasting less than 10 minutes was not recorded. Bernstein poetically called these tables with visualization as "almost a photograph of the day or a graphic visual projection of human behavior in a day" [1927: 14].

For time to matter and be considered within this framework, it had to be cut in intervals each associated with a codified event included in the codebook. Trying to find the optimal ratio of variety and convenience of the tool, Bernstein settled on 12 categories: sleep; personal care; food; school lessons; pioneer and Komsomol work; club work; educational work; collective self-service; work to help the family; free time or rest; time spent on the road; randomness [Bernstein, 1927: 15].

The attention of researchers was demanded not so much by the setting the inscription device for time, but by the preparation of schoolchildren for participation in the study. (1) Discussed the age limit (not younger than 12-13 years old), as the children had to complete the chrono-cards on their own during the day. (2) Recorded and eliminated "clock illiteracy" – the inability of many schoolchildren "to quickly and easily navigate in time" using a device with two hands to measure time intervals. In a manner characteristic of pedologists, Bernstein emphasized social differences in the level of development of "clock" skills in urban and peasant children. He saw his task not only in making schoolchildren workable for his research, but also in pedologically raising the level of development of children through the developing of their clock handling skills.<sup>30</sup> (3) A serious problem was the lack of clocks, which Bernstein proposed to solve by developing a "time setting" among schoolchildren. Gastev's term was used here in a narrow sense to characterize the practices of urban navigation, allowing the child to find a clock in one of the public spaces (in the square, in the dining room, at the post office, in the window of a watch shop) or to orient in time by the temporal landmarks of an industrial society - factory beeps or trains.

Bernstein selected for research children "capable of showing activity according to their level of development" [1927: 15], appreciating them as actors and his accomplices. He separated the child's ability for active orientation in time from Soviet agency, disagreeing that conscious activists and organized collectivists are most suitable for the work of keeping track of time. Arguing that "passive loners and individualists" showed no less satisfactory results [1927: 12], the researcher recognized the child's right to temporal subjectivity – independent learning via working with the budget of his time:

Whole days of the past life were clearly presented to their eyes, which, before being taken into account, were extremely chaotic in nature, representing segments of time heaped on top of each other and dumped into a common heap without any internal connection and organic integrity. By the 4-5th day the children themselves began to discover certain regularities and

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<sup>30</sup> Bernstein does not describe a method for learning to tell time using a clock. However, in the first year of publication, the Leningrad magazine CHIZH shared an effective technique with young readers: cut a watch out of cardboard, make and fasten two hands, and then train at will with handmade time-training apparatus [CHIZH, 1930, 2]. In this story, the materialization and dwelling of time through embodiment took on matter.

rhythms in their pastime and received new convincing stimuli for even greater ordering and leveling of their routine [Bernstein, 1927: 11].

In the laboratory of time, designed in the early 1930s by employees of the Scientific Research Institute of the Children's Communist Movement, which studied and promoted collectivism in all forms, a completely different work was carried out. On February 26, 1932, the People's Commissariats of Education and Health approved the "Typical timetable and uniform norms for the workload of schoolchildren." Responding to it, an employee of the institute, Abram Gelmont, acted as a normative controller of children's time, who addressed the results of his research to teachers. He hoped to reduce the overload of schoolchildren with educational and social work, putting all children's time under rational control. The nomenclature was based on a simple and rigid triad (sleep, work, leisure), each element of which was regulated, quantified and equalized. Gelmont avoided discussing the differences in the development of Soviet schoolchildren, focusing on a different kind of inequality - the detrimental situation of students on the "abnormal" second shift, who were forced to expend additional efforts on organizing their time [Gelmont, 1933: 21]. The results of the study were presented in two forms: (1) as a set of exemplary and ugly temporal portraits of Soviet schoolchildren, where the daily routine of Tanya, a pupil of an orphanage, turns out to be ideal; (2) as a set of typical daily routines for students of different ages and school shifts.

It would be too easy to reduce the differences between the two laboratory settings for Soviet schoolchildren time processing, constructed with an interval of 6-7 years, to the binary oppositions of development and norm, pedology and Soviet pedagogy, agency and objectification, participation and alienation, complicity and control, focus on the person and the form. And yet, in the ways of organizing time, in the concept of the budget, in the techniques of temporalization of a schoolchild, there is a noticeable gap between the avant-garde apocrypha of the 1920s and the Soviet canon of the 1930s, appeared through temporality. It is especially obvious in relation to the schoolchildren's free time. In the program of 1926, any "pastime of children that proceeds at the personal discretion and desire of the child himself without any task from anyone else" [Bernstein, 1927: 25] is considered free. It includes free entertainment, free reading, free games, fiddling with inventions, taking care of pets, and so on. In 1932, "free time from compulsory classes", which takes up to a quarter of a day, falls under suspicion. The researchers are convinced that "the guys do not know how to use this time themselves" or use it incorrectly - they choose the wrong films, go on solitary walks, read whatever they stumble upon, and describe the day monotonously (walking, playing, skating) [Gelmont, 1933: 38]. The alternative to the unorganized time of the individual was to be the organized time of the collective, full of directed joint activity.

To return the right to free (schoolchildren's) time, another laboratory of another time was needed – a space of mutual re-figurations of temporal and social orders of late socialism with a weakening of the political regime, strengthening of individuation, aestheticization and customization of everyday life, the expansion of leisure saturated by disputes, sociological surveys and documentaries of the Leningrad studio, where is the question *What do you do in the evening?*<sup>31</sup> addressed not only to young workers<sup>3</sup>, but also to the author of *Capital*.<sup>32</sup>

## **Time, forward! Temporal Imagination**

We began our application for the Soviet Temporality Project with *Time, Forward!* – the main figure of the Soviet temporal imagination. Interpreting temporal imagination following Mette Svendsen in the spirit of the sociology of expectations, sociology of future and sociology of time as a *temporal horizon*, which its contemporaries “step into and that become decisive for how personhood should be stimulated or eroded in the ambiguous zone between life and death” [Svendsen, 2018: 23], we conclude both the project and the paper with a commentary on the temporal figure, Soviet time machines, performative production, and the Soviet affect of temporality.

In 1965, director Mikhail Schweitzer, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution, filmed the industrial drama *Time, Forward!* about the people of the first five-year plan, striving to get ahead of time and waking up before the alarms. The film includes newsreel footage from 1930 – the construction of Magnitka, one of the outposts of socialist industrialization, and Mayakovsky's funeral. The famous quote from *The March of Time* in the sixth act of *The Bath*, Mayakovsky's fantasy play about turning time into a technological weapon to separate the healthy core of socialism from the state bureaucracy, was used as an epigraph to rhyme with the film. The script was written by one of the brightest "writers-fellow travelers". Valentin Kataev reworked his experimental novel *Time, Forward!*, published in 1932 on the 15th anniversary of the October, as the basis for the film, about one day in the life of the builders of Magnitogorsk, bringing Mayakovsky's utopia into reality. Kataev introduced a historical chronicle of the present, calculated by the minute, as a machine for “mobilizing the readership” and a “panoramic report” on the formation of the socialist sublime, “extraordinary events of the Soviet industrial revolution” [Volovich, 2014]. “In order to enhance the lively cinematic effect,” the writer experimented with the structure and rhythm of the text, turning the novel into a discursive facility for the performative transformation of the reader's temporality:

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<sup>31</sup> Documentary by Nikolay Osipovich, 1974.

<sup>32</sup> We are talking about a bearded quote from Karl Marx, wandering through the late Soviet literature, dedicated to leisure: “Real wealth is such time that is not directly absorbed by productive labor, but remains free for pleasure, for leisure, because of which scope will be opened for free activity and development” [Marx, 1964: 265].

I wanted to create a thing that not only reflected one of the construction sites, but would, as it were, immerse readers headlong into its rhythm, into its hot air, into all its unique heroic details, permeated through and through with one idea of tempo, which decides everything [Literaturnaya gazeta, 1933 , 59].

If Kataev's avant-garde novel or Schweitzer's two-part film were not easy to comprehend for every member of the Soviet audience, the soundtrack reached everyone. The biography of its author, composer Georgy Sviridov, who received the Stalin Prize of the 1st degree in 1946, was subjected to devastating ideological criticism for formalism in 1948, was awarded the Lenin Prize in the thaw of 1960, was perceived at various times as the mouthpiece of Soviet modernism and the mainstay of Russian idea, embodies the political heterochrony of the Soviet XX century. The sixth part of Sviridov's suite *Time, Forward!*, which refers to Mayakovsky by its number and spirit, was written in the key of B-flat minor for piano and orchestra, established a link between the avant-garde and the techno-social impulse of the thaw, turned the tempo into an access code to the Soviet mode of existence.

Since the very beginning, *Time, forward!* was used as the musical theme for the information program *Vremya*, aired on the Soviet television since January 1968. It became the main timeframe of the USSR in the era of late socialism, ensuring the synchronization of the daily routines of TV-citizens with the ideological pulse of the country. Judging by the request that Sviridov received in 1971 from the Chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, political significance was attached to the affective potential of the melody. Comrade Lapin demanded that the composer made the music "quieter" and reduced its anxiety, which produced "the impression ... as if the war had begun" [Sviridov, 2002]. Engagement, affective mobilization, activity, and striving for the future, which set the temporal horizon of the "Thaw", did not coincide critically with the tempo-rhythm of stagnation and its temporal imagination. According to one version, the musical intro was removed from the news program after the Soviet troops were brought into Afghanistan as too depressing or aggressive. According to another, it was sent into retirement during Perestroika for its authoritarian spirit, and replaced by Glinka. Ideological manipulations with *Time, Forward!* in the last decade of the USSR, pointed to the crisis of the Soviet project and were aimed to de-montage it.

Ahead of events, the symptoms of the crisis of the Soviet temporal imagination and late socialism in general were revealed by another cultural project called *Time, Forward!*. On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution, at the *Soyuzmultfilm studio*, which in those years accumulated scripts about magic clocks and moral lessons of temporality, director Vladimir Tarasov and artist Nikolai Koshkin shot a transmedia cartoon-archive and a cartoon-collage. They acted as radical curators of the Soviet twentieth century, filtered through

the poetry of Mayakovsky. Images of Petrov-Vodkin and Deineka, industrialization, war, space, BAM and Atommash were assembled in an epic portfolio and rhythmically separated by a mass of faceless, insensitive and totally mobilized Mayakovsky clones. Meanwhile the poet of the revolution himself remained the only living and active participant in the great Soviet history, equal to it in scale. In the finale, the *Vladimir Mayakovsky* starship leaves the Earth, hopelessly afflicted by the virus of acquisitiveness and concern for personal gain. Behind the scenes, the *March of Time* from *The Bath* sounds, set to demobilizing music by Andei Turkov. However, it is not the music, but the voice of Mayakovsky-Kaidanovsky and the eyes, armed with the optical techniques of the avant-garde, that perform the main work of archiving, summarizing and merciless revising the Soviet era.

Observing how the *Time, Forward!* transforms from the utopian chronotope of the Soviet civilization into the crisis one, we want to draw not only political but also epistemic lessons from the Soviet temporal imagination. Access to Soviet temporality and reflection on its form each time required artists to develop an experimental optics and its technological multimedia arrangements. Constructing this text as a device for temporal analytics, which provides a different view of Soviet history, we continue the experiments in the area of research.

## **Concluding remarks**

The paper accumulates the results of our scientific and educational group in the study of Soviet temporality. It does not just make the Soviet era visible or allows us to view political, cultural, and administrative processes in a new way through the prism of temporality. It is conceived as a simulator for setting up temporal analytical optics. Using the example of screening-day in the USSR of the 1920s, we show how the core interval (timeframe) of film distribution acquires an additional – socialist – meaning and turns into a tool to level Soviet movie-goers' rights. Basing on the archives of the Soviet central press for 1934, we describe the process of encoding time – temporalization – as the affirmation of the socialist presence and identify three timeframes of socialist temporalization (expanded use of indicators of the *nowness*, discursive discovery of *our time*, and historicization of the present). Interpreting the diaries of the participants of the expedition "North Pole-1", we characterize the multi-layered time of a drifting ice floe and its common denominator – total temporal mobilization. Accumulating archival sources, memoirs, and expert interviews, we describe the temporal structure of the editorial and publishing cycle of the *Molodaya Gvardiya* publishing house in the 1960s through a timescape and its core materialization – the publishing portfolio. Based on the metaphor of Alexei Gastev, we describe the study of schoolchildren's time budgets as a political lab of Soviet temporality. Finally, turning to the main figure of the Soviet temporal imagination, we reveal its crisis nature and



point out the importance of experimental devices in working with Soviet temporality. To be continue.

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