

Title: Seeing Moscow: Lev Kuleshov's *Mister West* and Aleksandr Medvedkin's *New Moscow*  
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The development of cinematic language and potential from the 1920s to the 1930s created a shift in the role of the viewer and the act of engaging Moscow space on film. Moving from a more individually created and perceived urban Moscow in film to a collective and imagined one, films such as Kuleshov's *Mr West* and Medvedkin's *New Moscow* exemplify this radical shift in the imagination, production and consumption of cinematic Moscow space—images of contemporary Moscow in documentary footage document the city in transition. What remains the same in both films—and both eras—is not that the Socialist Realist model depicted Moscow as a static center, but rather that the intrinsic dynamism of the city calls for the methodology of cinema to apprehend and re-project the multiple temporal and spatial layers that coexist in Moscow, not only at the time of shooting or screening, but even now, for the viewer in our 21<sup>st</sup> century present. Any director's use of film language, including the ideology encoded within the film, vies to control how the viewer apprehends the city and views its 'message' or 'meaning', which, in the case of both films, can be read ambiguously. Such ambiguity throws into question the potential of any one narrative—either aesthetic or ideological—to create a dominating definition of Moscow. Thus both films participate in a cinematic investigation of Moscow as a space of dynamic temporal and spatial flux, Moscow as a city that, despite the collective appreciation of New Moscow in *New Moscow*, remains a city that resists any single way of being seen.