

history of the motion picture

Main

history of the medium from the 19th century to the present.

Early years, 1830–1910 » Origins

The illusion of motion pictures is based on the optical phenomena known as **persistence of vision** and the **phi phenomenon**. The first of these causes the brain to retain images cast upon the retina of the eye for a fraction of a second beyond their disappearance from the field of sight, while the latter creates apparent movement between images when they succeed one another rapidly. Together these phenomena permit the succession of still frames on a motion-picture film strip to represent continuous movement when projected at the proper speed (traditionally 16 frames per second for **silent films** and 24 frames per second for **sound films**). Before the invention of photography, a variety of optical toys exploited this effect by mounting successive phase drawings of things in motion on the face of a twirling disk (the **phenakistoscope**, c. 1832) or inside a rotating drum (the **zoetrope**, c. 1834). Then, in 1839, **Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre**, a French painter, perfected the positive photographic process known as **daguerreotypy**, and that same year the English scientist **William Henry Fox Talbot** successfully demonstrated a negative photographic process that theoretically allowed unlimited positive prints to be produced from each negative. As photography was innovated and refined over the next few decades, it became possible to replace the phase drawings in the early optical toys and devices with individually posed phase photographs, a practice that was widely and popularly carried out.

There would be no true motion pictures, however, until live action could be photographed spontaneously and simultaneously. This required a reduction in exposure time from the hour or so necessary for the pioneer photographic processes to the one-hundredth (and, ultimately, one-thousandth) of a second achieved in 1870. It also required the development of the technology of series photography by the British **American** photographer **Eadweard Muybridge** between 1872 and 1877. During that time, Muybridge was employed by Governor **Leland Stanford** of California, a zealous racehorse breeder, to prove that at some point in its gallop a running horse lifts all four hooves off the ground at once. Conventions of 19th-century illustration suggested otherwise, and the movement itself occurred too rapidly for perception by the naked eye; so Muybridge experimented with multiple cameras to take successive photographs of horses in motion. Finally, in 1877, he set up a battery of 12 cameras along a Sacramento racecourse with wires stretched across the track to operate their shutters. As a horse strode down the track, its hooves tripped each shutter individually to expose a successive photograph of the gallop, confirming Stanford's belief. When Muybridge later mounted these images on a **rotating disk** and projected them on a screen through a magic lantern, they produced a "moving picture" of the horse at full gallop as it had actually occurred in life.

The French physiologist **Étienne-Jules Marey** took the first series photographs with a single instrument in 1882; once again the impetus was the analysis of motion too rapid for perception by the human eye. Marey invented the **chronophotographic gun**, a **camera** shaped like a rifle that recorded 12 successive photographs per second, in order to study the movement of birds in flight. These images were imprinted on a rotating glass plate (later, paper **roll film**), and Marey subsequently attempted to project them. Like Muybridge, however, Marey was interested in deconstructing movement rather than synthesizing it, and he did not carry his experiments much beyond the realm of high-speed, or instantaneous, series photography. Muybridge and Marey, in fact, conducted their work in the spirit of scientific inquiry; they both extended and elaborated existing technologies in order to probe and analyze events that occurred beyond the threshold of human perception. Those who came after would return their discoveries to the realm of normal human vision and exploit them for profit.

In 1887 in Newark, **New Jersey**, an Episcopalian minister named **Hannibal Goodwin** first used **celluloid roll film** as a base for photographic emulsions, and within the year his idea had been appropriated by the industrialist **George Eastman**, who in 1888 began to mass-produce celluloid roll film for still photography at his plant in Rochester, New York. This event was crucial to the development of **cinematography**: series photography such as Marey's chronophotography could employ glass plates or paper strip film because it recorded events of short duration in a relatively small number of images, but cinematography would inevitably find its subjects in longer, more complicated events, requiring thousands of images and therefore just the kind of flexible but durable recording medium represented by celluloid. It remained for someone to combine the principles embodied in the apparatuses of Muybridge and Marey with celluloid strip film to arrive at a viable motion-picture camera—an innovation achieved by **William Kennedy Laurie Dickson** in the West Orange, New Jersey, laboratories of the Edison Company in 1888.

Early years, 1830–1910 » Edison and the Lumière brothers

Thomas Alva Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, and it quickly became the most popular home entertainment device of the century. It was to provide a visual accompaniment to the phonograph that Edison commissioned Dickson, a young laboratory assistant, to invent a motion-picture camera in 1887. Dickson built upon the work of Muybridge and Marey, a fact that he readily acknowledged, but he was the first to combine the two final essentials of motion-picture camera and projection technology. These were a device, adapted from the escapement mechanism of a clock, to ensure the intermittent but regular motion of the film strip through the camera and a regularly perforated celluloid film strip to ensure precise synchronization between the film strip and the shutter. Dickson's camera, the **Kinetograph**, initially imprinted up to 50 feet (15 metres) of celluloid film at the rate of about 40 frames per second.

Dickson was not the only person who had been tackling the problem of recording and reproducing moving images. Inventors throughout the world had been trying for years to devise working motion-picture machines. In fact, several European inventors, including the French-born Louis Le Prince and the Englishman William Friese-Greene, applied for patents on various cameras, projectors, and camera-projector combinations contemporaneously or even before Edison and his associates did. These machines were unsuccessful for a number of reasons, however, and little evidence survives of their actual practicality or workability.

Because Edison had originally conceived of motion pictures as an adjunct to his phonograph, he did not commission the invention of a projector to accompany the Kinetograph. Rather, he had Dickson design a type of peep-show viewing device called the **Kinetoscope**, in which a continuous 47-foot (14-metre) film loop ran on spools between an **incandescent lamp** and

a shutter for individual viewing. Starting in 1894, Kinetoscopes were marketed commercially through the firm of Raff and Gammon for \$250 to \$300 apiece. The Edison Company established its own Kinetograph studio (a single-room building called the “Black Maria” that rotated on tracks to follow the sun) in **West Orange**, New Jersey, to supply films for the Kinetoscopes that Raff and Gammon were installing in penny arcades, hotel lobbies, **amusement parks**, and other such semipublic places. In April of that year the first Kinetoscope parlour was opened in a converted storefront in **New York City**. The parlour charged 25 cents for admission to a bank of five machines.

The syndicate of Maguire and Baucus acquired the foreign rights to the Kinetoscope in 1894 and began to market the machines. Edison opted not to file for international patents on either his camera or his viewing device, and as a result the machines were widely and legally copied throughout Europe, where they were modified and improved far beyond the American originals. In fact, it was a Kinetoscope exhibition in Paris that inspired the **Lumière brothers, Auguste and Louis**, to invent the first commercially viable **projector**. Their **cinématographe**, which functioned as a camera and printer as well as a projector, ran at the economical speed of 16 frames per second. It was given its first commercial demonstration on December 28, 1895.

Unlike the Kinetograph, which was battery-driven and weighed more than 1,000 pounds (453 kg), the *cinématographe* was hand-cranked, lightweight (less than 20 pounds [9 kg]), and relatively portable. This naturally affected the kinds of films that were made with each machine: Edison films initially featured material such as circus or vaudeville acts that could be brought into a small studio to perform before an inert camera, while early Lumière films were mainly **documentary** views, or “actualities,” shot outdoors on location. In both cases, however, the films themselves were composed of a single, unedited shot emphasizing lifelike movement; they contained little or no narrative content. (After a few years design changes in the machines made it possible for Edison and the Lumières to shoot the same kinds of subjects.) In general, Lumière technology became the European standard during the early primitive era, and, because the Lumières sent their cameramen all over the world in search of exotic subjects, the *cinématographe* became the founding instrument of distant cinemas in Russia, Australia, and Japan.

In the **United States** the Kinetoscope installation business had reached the saturation point by the summer of 1895, although it was still quite profitable for Edison as a supplier of films. Raff and Gammon persuaded Edison to buy the rights to a state-of-the-art projector, developed by **Thomas Armat** of Washington, D.C., which incorporated a superior **intermittent** movement mechanism and a loop-forming device (known as the **Latham loop**, after its earliest promoters, Grey and Otway Latham) to reduce film breakage, and in early 1896 Edison began to manufacture and market this machine as his own invention. Given its first public demonstration on April 23, 1896, at Koster and Bial’s Music Hall in New York City, the Edison **Vitascope** brought projection to the United States and established the format for American film exhibition for the next several years. It also encouraged the activities of such successful Edison rivals as the **American Mutoscope and Biograph Company**, which was formed in 1896 to exploit the Mutoscope peep-show device and the American Biograph camera and projector patented by W.K.L. Dickson in 1896. During this time, which has been characterized as the “novelty period,” emphasis fell on the projection device itself, and films achieved their main popularity as self-contained vaudeville attractions. Vaudeville houses, locked in intense competition at the turn of the century, headlined the name of the machines rather than the films (“The Vitascope—Edison’s Latest Marvel,” “The Amazing Cinématographe”). The producer, or manufacturer, supplied projectors along with an operator and a program of shorts. These films, whether they were Edison-style theatrical variety shorts or Lumière-style actualities, were perceived by their original audiences not as motion pictures in the modern sense of the term but as “animated photographs” or “living pictures,” emphasizing their continuity with more familiar media of the time.

During the novelty period, the film industry was autonomous and unitary, with production companies leasing a complete film service of projector, operator, and shorts to the vaudeville market as a single, self-contained act. Starting about 1897, however, manufacturers began to sell both projectors and films to itinerant exhibitors who traveled with their programs from one temporary location (vaudeville theatres, fairgrounds, circus tents, lyceums) to another as the novelty of their films wore off at a given site. This new mode of screening by circuit marked the first separation of exhibition from production and gave the exhibitors a large measure of control over early film form, since they were responsible for arranging the one-shot films purchased from the producers into audience-pleasing programs. The putting together of these programs—which often involved narration, **sound effects**, and music—was in effect a primitive form of editing, so that it is possible to regard the itinerant projectionists working between 1896 and 1904 as the earliest directors of motion pictures. Several of them, notably Edwin S. Porter, were, in fact, hired as directors by production companies after the industry had stabilized in the first decade of the 20th century.

By encouraging the practice of peripatetic exhibition, the American producers’ policy of outright sales inhibited the development of permanent film theatres in the United States until nearly a decade after their appearance in Europe, where **England** and France had taken an early lead in both production and exhibition. Britain’s first projector, the teatrograph (later the animatograph), had been demonstrated in 1896 by the scientific instrument maker Robert W. Paul. In 1899 Paul formed his own production company for the manufacture of actualities and trick films, and until 1905 Paul’s Animatograph Works, Ltd., was England’s largest producer, turning out an average of 50 films per year. Between 1896 and 1898, two Brighton photographers, George Albert Smith and James Williamson, constructed their own motion-picture cameras and began producing trick films featuring superimpositions (*The Corsican Brothers*, 1897) and interpolated close-ups (*Grandma’s Reading Glass*, 1900; *The Big Swallow*, 1901). Smith subsequently developed the first commercially successful photographic colour process (**Kinemacolor**, c. 1906–08, with Charles Urban), while Williamson experimented with parallel editing as early as 1900 (*Attack on a Chinese Mission Station*) and became a pioneer of the chase film (*Stop Thief!*, 1901; *Fire!*, 1901). Both Smith and Williamson had built studios at Brighton by 1902 and, with their associates, came to be known as members of the “Brighton school,” although they did not represent a coherent movement. Another important early British filmmaker was Cecil Hepworth, whose *Rescued by Rover* (1905) is regarded by many historians as the most skillfully edited narrative produced before the Biograph shorts of D.W. Griffith.

Early years, 1830–1910 » Méliès and Porter

The shift in consciousness away from films as animated photographs to films as stories, or narratives, began to take place about the turn of the century and is most evident in the work of the French filmmaker **Georges Méliès**. Méliès was a professional magician who had become interested in the illusionist possibilities of the *cinématographe*; when the Lumières refused to sell him one, he bought an animatograph projector from Paul in 1896 and reversed its mechanical principles to design his own camera. The following year he organized the Star Film company and constructed a small glass-enclosed studio on the grounds of his house at Montreuil, where he produced, directed, photographed, and acted in more than 500 films between 1896 and 1913.

Initially Méliès used stop-motion photography (the camera and action are stopped while something is added to or removed from

the scene, then filming and action are continued) to make one-shot “trick” films in which objects disappeared and reappeared or transformed themselves into other objects entirely. These films were widely imitated by producers in England and the United States. Soon, however, Méliès began to experiment with brief multiscene films, such as *L’Affaire Dreyfus* (*The Dreyfus Affair*; his first, 1899), which followed the logic of linear temporality to establish causal sequences and tell simple stories. By 1902 he had produced the influential 30-scene narrative *Le Voyage dans la lune* (*A Trip to the Moon*). Adapted from a novel by **Jules Verne**, it was nearly one reel in length (about 825 feet [251 metres], or 14 minutes).

The first film to achieve international distribution (mainly through piracy), *Le Voyage dans la lune* was an enormous popular success. It helped to make Star Film one of the world’s largest producers (an American branch was opened in 1903) and to establish the fiction film as the cinema’s mainstream product. In both respects Méliès dethroned the Lumières’ cinema of actuality. Despite his innovations, Méliès’s productions remained essentially filmed stage plays. He conceived them quite literally as successions of living pictures or, as he termed them, “artificially arranged scenes.” From his earliest trick films through his last successful fantasy, *La Conquête du pôle* (“The Conquest of the Pole,” 1912), Méliès treated the frame of the film as the proscenium arch of a theatre stage, never once moving his camera or changing its position within a scene. He ultimately lost his audience in the late 1910s to filmmakers with more sophisticated narrative techniques.

The origination of many such techniques is closely associated with the work of **Edwin S. Porter**, a freelance projectionist and engineer who joined the Edison Company in 1900 as production head of its new skylight studio on East 21st Street in New York City. For the next few years, he served as director-cameraman for much of Edison’s output, starting with simple one-shot films (*Kansas Saloon Smashers*, 1901) but progressing rapidly to trick films (*The Finish of Bridget McKean*, 1901) and short multiscene narratives based on **political cartoons** and contemporary events (*Sampson-Schley Controversy*, 1901; *Execution of Czolgosz, with Panorama of Auburn Prison*, 1901). Porter also filmed the extraordinary *Pan-American Exposition by Night* (1901), which used time-lapse photography to produce a circular panorama of the exposition’s electrical illumination, and the 10-scene *Jack and the Beanstalk* (1902), a narrative that simulates the sequencing of lantern slides to achieve a logical, if elliptical, spatial continuity.

It was probably Porter’s experience as a projectionist at the Eden Musee theatre in 1898 that ultimately led him in the early 1900s to the practice of continuity editing. The process of selecting one-shot films and arranging them into a 15-minute program for screen presentation was very much like that of constructing a single film out of a series of separate shots. Porter, by his own admission, was also influenced by other filmmakers—especially Méliès, whose *Le Voyage dans la lune* he came to know well in the process of duplicating it for illegal distribution by Edison in October 1902. Years later Porter claimed that the Méliès film had given him the notion of “telling a story in continuity form,” which resulted in *The Life of an American Fireman* (about 400 feet [122 metres], or six minutes, produced in late 1902 and released in January 1903). This film, which was also influenced by James Williamson’s *Fire!*, combined archival footage with staged scenes to create a nine-shot narrative of a dramatic rescue from a burning building. It was for years the subject of controversy because in a later version the last two scenes were intercut, or crosscut, into a 14-shot parallel sequence. It is now generally believed that in the earliest version of the film these scenes, which repeat the same rescue operation from an interior and exterior point of view, were shown in their entirety, one after the other. This repetition, or overlapping continuity, which owes much to magic lantern shows, clearly defines the spatial relationships between scenes but leaves temporal relationships underdeveloped and, to modern sensibilities, confused. Contemporary audiences, however, were conditioned by lantern slide projections and even comic strips; they understood a sequence of motion-picture shots to be a series of individual moving photographs, each of which was self-contained within its frame. Spatial relationships were clear in such earlier narrative forms because their only medium was space.

Motion pictures, however, exist in time as well as space, and the major problem for early filmmakers was the establishment of temporal continuity from one shot to the next. Porter’s *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) is widely acknowledged to be the first narrative film to achieve such continuity of action. Comprised of 14 separate shots of noncontinuous, nonoverlapping action, the film contains an early example of parallel editing, two credible **back**, or rear, projections (the projection from the rear of previously filmed action or scenery onto a translucent screen to provide the background for new action filmed in front of the screen), two camera pans, and several shots composed diagonally and staged in depth—a major departure from the frontally composed, theatrical staging of Méliès.

The industry’s first spectacular box-office success, *The Great Train Robbery* is credited with establishing the realistic narrative, as opposed to Méliès-style fantasy, as the commercial cinema’s dominant form. The film’s popularity encouraged investors and led to the establishment of the first permanent film theatres, or nickelodeons, across the country. Running about 12 minutes, it also helped to boost standard film length toward one reel, or 1,000 feet (305 metres [about 16 minutes at the average silent speed]). Despite the film’s success, Porter continued to practice overlapping action in such conventional narratives as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1903) and the **social justice** dramas *The Ex-Convict* (1904) and *The Kleptomaniac* (1905). He experimented with model animation in *The Dream of a Rarebit Fiend* (1906) and *The Teddy Bears* (1907) but lost interest in the creative aspects of filmmaking as the process became increasingly industrialized. He left Edison in 1909 to pursue a career as a producer and equipment manufacturer. Porter, like Méliès, could not adapt to the linear narrative modes and assembly-line **production systems** that were developing.

Early years, 1830–1910 » Early growth of the film industry

Méliès’s decline was assisted by the industrialization of the French and, for a time, the entire European cinema by the **Pathé Frères company**, founded in 1896 by the former phonograph importer **Charles Pathé**. Financed by some of France’s largest corporations, Pathé acquired the Lumière patents in 1902 and commissioned the design of an improved studio camera that soon dominated the market on both sides of the Atlantic (it has been estimated that, before 1918, 60 percent of all films were shot with a Pathé camera). Pathé also manufactured his own film stock and in 1902 established a vast production facility at Vincennes where films were turned out on an assembly-line basis under the managing direction of Ferdinand Zecca. The following year, Pathé began to open foreign sales agencies, which would soon become full-blown production companies—Hispano Film (1906), Pathé-Rouss, Moscow (1907), Film d’Arte Italiano (1909), Pathé-Britannia, London (1909), and Pathé-America (1910). He acquired permanent exhibition sites, building the world’s first luxury cinema (the Omnia-Pathé) in Paris in 1906. In 1911 Pathé became Méliès’s distributor and helped to drive Star Film out of business.

Pathé’s only serious rival on the Continent at this time was **Gaumont Pictures**, founded by the engineer-inventor Léon Gaumont in 1895. Though never more than one-fourth the size of Pathé, Gaumont followed the same pattern of expansion, manufacturing its own equipment and mass-producing films under a supervising director (through 1906, **Alice Guy**, the cinema’s first woman director; afterward, **Louis Feuillade**). Like Pathé, Gaumont opened foreign offices and acquired theatre

chains. From 1905 to 1914 its studios at La Villette, France, were the largest in the world. Pathé and Gaumont dominated pre-World War I motion-picture production, exhibition, and sales in Europe, and they effectively brought to an end the artisanal mode of filmmaking practiced by Méliès and his British contemporaries.

In the United States a similar pattern was emerging through the formation of film exchanges and the consolidation of an industry-wide monopoly based on the pooling of patent rights. About 1897 producers had adopted the practice of selling prints outright, which had the effect of promoting itinerant exhibition and discriminating against the owners of permanent sites. In 1903, in response to the needs of theatre owners, Harry J. and Herbert Miles opened a film exchange in San Francisco. The exchange functioned as a broker between producers and exhibitors, buying prints from the former and leasing them to the latter for 25 percent of the purchase price (in subsequent practice, rental fees were calculated on individual production costs and box-office receipts). The exchange system of distribution quickly caught on because it profited nearly everyone: the new middlemen made fortunes by collecting multiple revenues on the same prints; exhibitors were able to reduce their overheads and vary their programs without financial risk; and, ultimately, producers experienced a tremendous surge in demand for their product as exhibition and distribution boomed nationwide. (Between November 1906 and March 1907, for example, producers increased their weekly output from 10,000 to 28,000 feet [3,000 to 8,500 metres] and still could not meet demand.)

The most immediate effect of the rapid rise of the distribution sector was the nickelodeon boom, the exponential growth of permanent film theatres in the United States from a mere handful in 1904 to between 8,000 and 10,000 by 1908. Named for the Nickelodeon (ersatz Greek for “nickel theatre”), which opened in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1905, these theatres were makeshift facilities lodged in converted storefronts. They showed approximately an hour’s worth of films for an admission price of 5 to 10 cents. Originally identified with working-class audiences, nickelodeons appealed increasingly to the **middle class** as the decade wore on, and they became associated with the rising popularity of the story film. Their spread also forced the standardization of film length at one reel, or 1,000 feet (305 metres), to facilitate high-efficiency production and the trading of products within the industry.

By 1908 there were about 20 motion-picture production companies operating in the United States. They were constantly at war with one another over business practices and patent rights, and they had begun to fear that their fragmentation would cause them to lose control of the industry to the two new sectors of distribution and exhibition. The most powerful among them—Edison, Biograph, Vitagraph, Essanay, Kalem, Selig Polyscope, Lubin, the American branches of the French Star Film and Pathé Frères, and Kleine Optical, the largest domestic distributor of foreign films—therefore entered into a collusive **trade agreement** to ensure their continued dominance. On September 9, 1908, these companies formed the **Motion Picture Patents Company** (MPPC), pooling the 16 most significant U.S. patents for motion-picture technology and entering into an exclusive contract with the **Eastman Kodak Company** for the supply of raw film stock.

The MPPC, also known as the “Trust,” sought to control every segment of the industry and therefore set up a licensing system for assessing royalties. The use of its patents was granted only to licensed equipment manufacturers; film stock could be sold only to licensed producers; licensed producers and importers were required to fix rental prices at a minimum level and to set quotas for foreign footage to reduce competition; Patents Company films could be sold only to licensed distributors, who could lease them only to licensed exhibitors; and only licensed exhibitors had the right to use Patents Company projectors and rent company films. To solidify its control, in 1910—the same year in which motion-picture attendance in the United States rose to 26 million persons a week—the MPPC formed the General Film Company, which integrated the licensed distributors into a single corporate entity. Although it was clearly monopolistic in practice and intent, the MPPC helped to stabilize the American film industry during a period of unprecedented growth and change by standardizing exhibition practice, increasing the efficiency of distribution, and regularizing pricing in all three sectors. Its collusive nature, however, provoked a reaction that ultimately destroyed it.

In a sense, the MPPC’s ironclad efforts to eliminate competition merely fostered it. Almost from the outset there was widespread resistance to the Patents Company on the part of independent distributors (numbering 10 or more in early 1909) and exhibitors (estimated at 2,000 to 2,500); and in January 1909 they formed their own **trade association**, the Independent Film Protective Association—reorganized that fall as the National Independent Moving Picture Alliance—to provide financial and legal support against the Trust. A more effective and powerful anti-Trust organization was the Motion Picture Distributing and Sales Company, which began operation in May 1910 (three weeks after the inception of General Film) and which eventually came to serve 47 exchanges in 27 cities. For nearly two years, independents were able to present a united front through the Sales Company, which finally split into two rival camps in the spring of 1912 (the Mutual Film Corporation and the **Universal Film Manufacturing Company**).

By imitating Patents Company practices of joining forces and licensing, the early independents were able to compete effectively against the Trust in its first three years of operation, netting about 40 percent of all American film business. In fact, their product, the one-reel short, and their mode of operation were initially fundamentally the same as the MPPC’s. The independents later revolutionized the industry, however, by adopting the multiple-reel film as their basic product, a move that caused the MPPC to embrace the one-reeler with a vengeance, hastening its own demise.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Pre-World War I American cinema

Multiple-reel films had appeared in the **United States** as early as 1907, when **Adolph Zukor** distributed Pathé’s three-reel *Passion Play*; but when Vitagraph produced the five-reel *The Life of Moses* in 1909, the Patents Company forced it to be released in serial fashion at the rate of one reel a week. The multiple-reel film—which came to be called a “feature,” in the vaudevillian sense of a headline attraction—achieved general acceptance with the smashing success of Louis Mercanton’s three-and-one-half-reel *La Reine Elisabeth* (*Queen Elizabeth*, 1912), which starred **Sarah Bernhardt** and was imported by Zukor (who founded the independent Famous Players production company with its profits). In 1912 Enrico Guazzoni’s nine-reel Italian superspectacle *Quo Vadis?* (“Whither Are You Going?”) was road-shown in legitimate theatres across the country at a top admission price of one dollar, and the feature craze was on.

At first there were difficulties in distributing features, because the exchanges associated with both the Patents Company and the independents were geared toward cheaply made one-reel shorts. Because of their more elaborate production values, features had relatively higher negative costs. This was a disadvantage to distributors, who charged a uniform price per foot. By 1914, however, several national feature-distribution alliances that correlated pricing with a film’s negative cost and box-office receipts were organized. These new exchanges demonstrated the economic advantage of multiple-reel films over shorts. Exhibitors quickly learned that features could command higher admission prices and longer runs; single-title packages were also cheaper and easier to advertise than programs of multiple titles. As for manufacturing, producers found that the higher

expenditure for features was readily amortized by high volume sales to distributors, who in turn were eager to share in the higher admission returns from the theatres. The whole industry soon reorganized itself around the economics of the multiple-reel film, and the effects of this restructuring did much to give motion pictures their characteristic modern form.

Feature films made motion pictures respectable for the **middle class** by providing a format that was analogous to that of the legitimate theatre and was suitable for the adaptation of middle-class novels and plays. This new audience had more demanding standards than the older working-class one, and producers readily increased their budgets to provide high technical quality and elaborate productions. The new viewers also had a more refined sense of comfort, which exhibitors quickly accommodated by replacing their storefronts with large, elegantly appointed new theatres in the major urban centres (one of the first was Mitchell L. Marks's 3,300-seat Strand, which opened in the Broadway district of Manhattan in 1914). Known as "dream palaces" because of the fantastic luxuriance of their interiors, these houses had to show features rather than a program of shorts to attract large audiences at premium prices. By 1916 there were more than 21,000 movie palaces in the United States. Their advent marked the end of the nickelodeon era and foretold the rise of the Hollywood studio system, which dominated urban exhibition from the 1920s to the '50s. Before the new studio-based monopoly could be established, however, the patents-based monopoly of the MPPC had to expire, and this it did about 1914 as a result of its own basic assumptions.

As conceived by Edison, the basic operating principle of the Trust was to control the industry through patents pooling and licensing, an idea logical enough in theory but difficult to practice in the context of a dynamically changing marketplace. Specifically, the Trust's failure to anticipate the independents' widespread and aggressive resistance to its policies cost it a fortune in patent-infringement litigation. Furthermore, the Trust badly underestimated the importance of the feature film, permitting the independents to claim this popular new product as entirely their own. Another issue that the MPPC misjudged was the power of the marketing strategy known as the "**star system**." Borrowed from the theatre industry, this system involves the creation and management of publicity about key performers, or stars, to stimulate demand for their films. Trust company producers used this kind of publicity after 1910, when Carl Laemmle of Independent Motion Pictures (IMP) promoted Florence Lawrence into national stardom through a series of media stunts in St. Louis, Missouri, but they never exploited the technique as forcefully or as imaginatively as the independents did. Finally, and most decisively, in August 1912 the U.S. Justice Department brought suit against the MPPC for "restraint of trade" in violation of the **Sherman Antitrust Act**. Delayed by countersuits and by **World War I**, the government's case was eventually won and the MPPC formally dissolved in 1918, although it had been functionally inoperative since 1914.

The rise and fall of the Patents Company was concurrent with the industry's move to southern California. As a result of the nickelodeon boom, exhibitors had begun to require as many as 20 to 30 new films per week, and it became necessary to put production on a systematic year-round schedule. Because most films were still shot outdoors in available light, such schedules could not be maintained in the vicinity of **New York City** or Chicago, where the industry had originally located itself in order to take advantage of trained theatrical labour pools. As early as 1907, production companies, such as Selig Polyscope, began to dispatch production units to warmer climates during winter. It was soon clear that what producers required was a new industrial centre—one with warm weather, a **temperate climate**, a variety of scenery, and other qualities (such as access to acting talent) essential to their highly unconventional form of manufacturing.

Various companies experimented with location shooting in Jacksonville, Florida, in **San Antonio**, Texas, in Santa Fe, **New Mexico**, and even in Cuba, but the ultimate site of the American film industry was a Los Angeles suburb (originally a small industrial town) called **Hollywood**. It is generally thought that Hollywood's distance from the MPPC's headquarters in New York City made it attractive to the independents, but Patents Company members such as Selig, Kalem, Biograph, and Essanay had also established facilities there by 1911 in response to a number of the region's attractions. These included the temperate climate required for year-round production (the U.S. Weather Bureau estimated that an average of 320 days per year were sunny or clear); a wide range of topography within a 50-mile (80-km) radius of Hollywood, including mountains, valleys, forests, lakes, islands, seacoast, and desert; the status of Los Angeles as a professional theatrical centre; the existence of a low tax base; and the presence of cheap and plentiful labour and land. This latter factor enabled the newly arrived production companies to buy up tens of thousands of acres of prime **real estate** on which to locate their studios, standing sets, and backlots.

By 1915 approximately 15,000 workers were employed by the motion-picture industry in Hollywood, and more than 60 percent of American production was centred there. In that same year the **trade journal** *Variety* reported that capital investment in American motion pictures—the business of artisanal craftsmen and fairground operators only a decade before—had exceeded \$500 million. The most powerful companies in the new film capital were the independents, who were flush with cash from their conversion to feature production. These included the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation (later **Paramount Pictures**, c. 1927), which was formed by a merger of Zukor's Famous Players Company, Jesse L. Lasky's Feature Play Company, and the Paramount distribution exchange in 1916; **Universal Pictures**, founded by **Carl Laemmle** in 1912 by merging IMP with Powers, Rex, Nestor, Champion, and Bison; **Goldwyn Picture Corporation**, founded in 1916 by **Samuel Goldfish** (later Goldwyn) and Edgar Selwyn; Metro Picture Corporation and Louis B. Mayer Pictures, founded by **Louis B. Mayer** in 1915 and 1917, respectively; and the **Fox Film Corporation** (later **Twentieth Century-Fox**, 1935), founded by William Fox in 1915. After World War I these companies were joined by Loew's, Inc. (**parent corporation** of **MGM**, created by the merger of Metro, Goldwyn, and Mayer companies cited above, 1924), a national exhibition chain organized by **Marcus Loew** and Nicholas Schenck in 1919; **First National Pictures, Inc.**, a circuit of independent exhibitors who established their own production facilities in Burbank, California, in 1922; **Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc.**, founded by Harry, Albert, Samuel, and **Jack Warner** in 1923; and **Columbia Pictures, Inc.**, incorporated in 1924 by Harry and Jack Cohn.

These organizations became the backbone of the Hollywood studio system, and the men who controlled them shared several important traits. They were all independent exhibitors and distributors who had outwitted the Trust and earned their success by manipulating finances in the postnickelodeon feature boom, merging production companies, organizing national distribution networks, and ultimately acquiring vast theatre chains. They saw their business as basically a retailing operation modeled on the practice of chain stores such as Woolworth's and Sears. Not incidentally, these men were all first- or second-generation Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe, most of them with little formal education, while the audience they served was 90 percent Protestant and Catholic. This circumstance would become an issue during the 1920s, when the movies became a mass medium that was part of the life of every U.S. citizen and when Hollywood became the chief purveyor of American culture to the world.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Pre-World War I European cinema

Before World War I European cinema was dominated by France and Italy. At **Pathé Frères**, director-general Ferdinand Zecca

perfected the *course comique*, a uniquely Gallic version of the chase film, which inspired Mack Sennett's **Keystone Kops**, while the immensely popular Max Linder created a comic persona that would deeply influence the work of Charlie Chaplin. The episodic crime film was pioneered by Victorin Jasset in the "Nick Carter" series, produced for the small Éclair Company, but it remained for Gaumont's **Louis Feuillade** to bring the genre to aesthetic perfection in the extremely successful serials *Fantômas* (1913–14), *Les Vampires* (1915–16), and *Judex* (1916).

Another influential phenomenon initiated in prewar France was the *film d'art* movement. It began with *L'Assassinat du duc de Guise* ("The Assassination of the Duke of Guise," 1908), directed by Charles Le Bargy and André Calmettes of the Comédie Française for the Société Film d'Art, which was formed for the express purpose of transferring prestigious stage plays starring famous performers to the screen. *L'Assassinat*'s success inspired other companies to make similar films, which came to be known as *films d'art*. These films were long on intellectual pedigree and short on narrative sophistication. The directors simply filmed **theatrical productions** in toto, without adaptation. Their brief popularity nevertheless created a context for the lengthy treatment of serious material in motion pictures and was directly instrumental in the rise of the feature.

No country, however, was more responsible for the popularity of the feature than **Italy**. The Italian cinema's lavishly produced costume spectacles brought it international prominence in the years before the war. The prototypes of the genre, by virtue of their epic material and length, were the Cines company's six-reel *Gli ultimi giorni di Pompei* (*The Last Days of Pompei*), directed by Luigi Maggi in 1908, and its 10-reel remake, directed by Ernesto Pasquali in 1913; but it was Cines's nine-reel **Quo Vadis?** ("Whither Are You Going?" 1912), with its huge three-dimensional sets recreating **ancient Rome** and 5,000 extras, that established the standard for the superspectacle and briefly conquered the world market for Italian motion pictures. Its successor, the Italia company's 12-reel **Cabiria** (1914), was even more extravagant in its historical reconstruction of the **Second Punic War**, from the burning of the Roman fleet at Syracuse to Hannibal crossing the Alps and the sack of Carthage. The Italian superspectacle stimulated public demand for features and influenced such important directors as Cecil B. DeMille, Ernst Lubitsch, and especially D.W. Griffith.

The silent years, 1910–27 » D.W. Griffith

There has been a tendency in modern film scholarship to view the narrative form of motion pictures as a development of an overall **production system**. Although narrative film was and continues to be strongly influenced by a combination of economic, technological, and social factors, it also owes a great deal to the individual artists who viewed film as a medium of personal expression. Chief among these innovators was D.W. Griffith. It is true that Griffith's self-cultivated reputation as a Romantic artist—"the father of film technique," "the man who invented Hollywood," "the Shakespeare of the screen," and the like—is somewhat overblown. It is also true that by 1908 film narrative had already been systematically organized to accommodate the material conditions of production. Griffith's work nevertheless transformed that system from its primitive to its classical mode. He was the first filmmaker to realize that the motion-picture medium, properly vested with technical vitality and seriousness of theme, could exercise enormous persuasive power over an audience, or even a nation, without recourse to print or human speech.

Griffith began his film career in late 1907 as an actor. He was cast as the lead in the Edison Company's *Rescued from an Eagle's Nest* (1907) and also appeared in many Biograph films. He had already attempted to make a living as a stage actor and a playwright without much success, and his real goal in approaching the film companies seems to have been to sell them scripts. In June 1908 **Biograph** gave him an opportunity to replace its ailing director, George ("Old Man") McCutcheon, on the chase film *The Adventures of Dollie*. With the advice of the company's two cameramen, G.W. ("Billy") Bitzer (who would become Griffith's personal cinematographer for much of his career) and Arthur Marvin (who actually shot the film), Griffith turned in a fresh and exciting film. His work earned him a full-time director's contract with Biograph, for whom he directed more than 450 one- and two-reel films over the next five years.

In the Biograph films, Griffith experimented with all the narrative techniques he would later use in the epics *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916)—techniques that helped to formulate and stabilize Hollywood's classical narrative style. A few of these techniques were already in use when Griffith started; he simply refined them. Others were innovations Griffith devised to solve practical problems in the course of production. Still others resulted from his conscious analogy between film and literary narrative, chiefly Victorian novels and plays. In all cases, however, Griffith brought to the practice of filmmaking a seriousness of purpose and an intensity of vision, which, combined with his intuitive mastery of film technique, made him the first great artist of the cinema.

Griffith's first experiments were in the field of editing and involved varying the standard distance between the audience and the screen. In *Greaser's Gauntlet*, made one month after *Dollie*, he first used a cut-in from a long shot to a full shot to heighten the emotional intensity of a scene. In an elaboration of this practice, he was soon taking shots from multiple camera setups—long shots, full shots, medium shots, close shots, and, ultimately, close-ups—and combining their separate perspectives into single dramatic scenes. By October 1908 Griffith was practicing parallel editing between the dual narratives of *After Many Years*, and the following year he extended the technique to the representation of three simultaneous actions in *Lonely Villa*, cutting rapidly back and forth from a band of robbers breaking into a suburban villa, to a woman and her children barricaded within, to the husband rushing from town to the rescue. This type of crosscutting, or intercutting, came to be known as the "Griffith last-minute rescue" and was employed as a basic structural principle in both *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*. It not only employed the rapid alternation of shots but also called for the shots themselves to be held for shorter and shorter durations as the **parallel lines** of action converged; in its ability to create the illusion of simultaneous actions, the intercut chase sequence prefigured Soviet theories of montage by at least a decade, and it remains a basic component of narrative film form to this day.

Another area of experiment for Griffith involved **camera movement** and placement, most of which had been purely functional before him. When Biograph started sending his production unit to southern California in 1910, Griffith began to practice panoramic **panning shots** not only to provide visual information but also to engage his audience in the total environment of his films. Later he would prominently employ the **tracking**, or traveling, shot, in which the camera—and therefore the audience—participates in the dramatic action by moving with it. In California, Griffith discovered that **camera angle** could be used to comment upon the content of a shot or to heighten its dramatic emphasis in a way that the conventionally mandated head-on medium shot could not; and, at a time when convention dictated the flat and uniform illumination of every element in a scene, he pioneered the use of expressive lighting to create mood and atmosphere. Like so many of the other devices he brought into general use, these had all been employed by earlier directors, but Griffith was the first to practice them with the care of an artist and to rationalize them within the overall structure of his films.

Griffith's one-reelers grew increasingly complex between 1911 and 1912, and he began to realize that only a longer and more

expansive format could contain his vision. At first he made such two-reel films as *Enoch Arden* (1911), *Mán's Génesis* (1912), *The Massacre* (1912), and *The Mothering Heart* (1913), but these went virtually unnoticed by a public enthralled with such recent features from Europe as *Queen Elizabeth* and *Quo Vadis?* Finally Griffith determined to make an epic himself, based on the story of Judith and Holofernes from the Apocrypha. The result was the four-reel *Judith of Bethulia* (1913), filmed secretly on a 12-square-mile (31-square-km) set in Chatsworth Park, California. In addition to its structurally complicated narrative, *Judith* contained massive sets and battle scenes unlike anything yet attempted in American film. It cost twice the amount Biograph had allocated for its budget. Company officials, stunned at Griffith's audacity and extravagance, tried to relieve the director of his creative responsibilities by promoting him to studio production chief. Griffith quit instead, publishing a full-page advertisement in *The New York Dramatic Mirror* (December 3, 1913), in which he took credit for all the Biograph films he had made from *The Adventures of Dollie* through *Judith*, as well as for the narrative innovations they contained. He then accepted an offer from Harry E. Aitken, the president of the recently formed Mutual Film Corporation, to head the feature production company Reliance-Majestic; he took Bitzer and most of his Biograph **stock company** with him.

As part of his new contract, Griffith was allowed to make two independent features per year, and for his first project he chose to adapt *The Clansman*, a novel about the **American Civil War** and **Reconstruction** by the Southern clergyman **Thomas Dixon**, Jr. (As a Kentuckian whose father had served as a Confederate officer, Griffith was deeply sympathetic to the material, which was highly sensational in its depiction of Reconstruction as a period in which mulatto carpetbaggers and their black henchmen had destroyed the social fabric of the South and given birth to a heroic **Ku Klux Klan**.) Shooting on the film began in secrecy in late 1914. Although a script existed, Griffith kept most of the continuity in his head—a remarkable feat considering that the completed film contained 1,544 separate shots at a time when the most elaborate of foreign spectacles boasted fewer than 100. When the film opened in March 1915, retitled *The Birth of a Nation*, it was immediately pronounced “epoch-making” and recognized as a remarkable artistic achievement. The complexity of its narrative and the epic sweep of its subject were unprecedented, but so, too, were its controversial manipulations of audience response, especially its blatant appeals to racism. Despite its brilliantly conceived battle sequences, its tender domestic scenes, and its dignified historical reconstructions, the film provoked fear and disgust with its shocking images of miscegenation and racial violence. As the film's popularity swept the nation, denunciations followed, and many who had originally praised it, such as President **Woodrow Wilson**, were forced to recant. Ultimately, after screenings of *The Birth of a Nation* had caused riots in several cities, it was banned in eight Northern and Midwestern states. (First Amendment protection was not extended to motion pictures in the United States until the late 1950s.) Such measures, however, did not prevent *The Birth of a Nation* from becoming the single most popular film in history to date; it achieved national distribution in the year of its release and was seen by nearly three million people.

Although it is difficult to believe that the film's racism was unconscious, as some have claimed, it is easy to imagine that Griffith had not anticipated the power of his own images. He seems to have been genuinely stunned by the hostile public reaction to his masterpiece, and he fought back by publishing a pamphlet entitled *The Rise and Fall of Free Speech in America* (1915), which vilified the practice of censorship and especially intolerance. At the height of his notoriety and fame, Griffith decided to produce a spectacular cinematic polemic against what he saw as a flaw in human character that had endangered civilization throughout history. The result was the massive epic *Intolerance* (1916), which interweaves stories of martyrdom from four separate historical periods. The film was conceived on a scale so monumental that it dwarfed all its predecessors. Crosscutting freely between a contemporary tale of courtroom injustice, the fall of ancient Babylon to **Cyrus the Great** in 539 bc, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in 16th-century France, and the Crucifixion of Christ, Griffith created an editing structure so abstract that contemporary audiences could not understand it. Even the extravagant sets and exciting battle sequences could not save *Intolerance* at the box office. To reduce his losses, Griffith withdrew the film from distribution after 22 weeks; he subsequently cut into the negative and released the modern and the Babylonian stories as two separate features, *The Mother and the Law* and *The Fall of Babylon*, in 1919. (Although ignored by Americans, *Intolerance* was both popular and vastly influential in the Soviet Union, where filmmakers minutely analyzed Griffith's editing style and techniques.)

It would be fair to say that Griffith's career as an innovator of film form ended with *Intolerance*, but his career as a film artist certainly did not. He went on to direct another 26 features between 1916 and 1931, chief among them the World War I anti-German propaganda epic (financed, in part, by the British government) *Hearts of the World* (1918), the subtle and lyrical *Broken Blossoms* (1919), and the rousing melodrama *Way Down East* (1920). The financial success of the latter made it possible for Griffith to establish his own studio at Mamaroneck, New York, where he produced the epics *Orphans of the Storm* (1921) and *America* (1924), which focused on the French and American revolutions, respectively; both lost money. Griffith's next feature was the independent semidocumentary *Isn't Life Wonderful?* (1925), which was shot on location in Germany and is thought to have influenced both the “**street**” films of the German director G.W. Pabst and the post-World War II Italian Neorealist movement.

Griffith's last films, with the exception of *The Struggle* (1931), were all made for other producers. Not one could be called a success, although his first sound film, *Abraham Lincoln* (1930), was recognized as an effective essay in the new medium. The critical and financial failure of *The Struggle*, however, a version of Emile Zola's *L'Assommoir* (*The Drunkard*), forced Griffith to retire.

It might be said of Griffith that, like Georges Méliès and Edwin S. Porter, he outlived his genius, but that is not true. Griffith was fundamentally a 19th-century man who became one of the 20th-century's greatest artists. Transcending personal defects of vision, judgment, and taste, he developed the narrative language of film. He lost touch with his contemporaries because his subjects came to seem old-fashioned, but he remains peculiarly, uniquely in touch with the present because the techniques and structure he contributed to the motion-picture medium are still in use.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Post-World War I European cinema

Prior to World War I, the American cinema had lagged behind the film industries of Europe, particularly those of France and Italy, in such matters as feature production and the establishment of permanent theatres. During the war, however, European film production virtually ceased, in part because the same chemicals used in the production of celluloid were necessary for the manufacture of gunpowder. The American cinema, meanwhile, experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity and growth. By the end of the war, it exercised nearly total control of the international market: when the Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919, 90 percent of all films screened in Europe, Africa, and Asia were American, and the figure for **South America** was (and remained through the 1950s) close to 100 percent. The main exception was Germany, which had been cut off from American films from 1914 until the end of the war.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Post-World War I European cinema » Germany

Before World War I, the German motion-picture audience was largely uneducated and unemployed or from the **working class**. Most of the films exhibited were imported from other countries, particularly Denmark. The few German films produced were usually cheaply and crudely made. This impoverished state of the domestic industry became a matter of concern among military leaders during the war, when a flood of effective anti-German propaganda films began to pour into Germany from the Allied countries. Therefore, on December 18, 1917, the German general **Erich Ludendorff** ordered the merger of the main German production, distribution, and exhibition companies into the government-subsidized conglomerate Universum Film Aktiengesellschaft (**UFA**). UFA's mission was to upgrade the quality of German films. The organization proved to be highly effective, and, when the war ended in Germany's defeat in November 1918, the German film industry was prepared for the first time to compete in the international marketplace. Transferred to private control, UFA became the single largest studio in Europe and produced most of the films associated with the "golden age" of German cinema during the **Weimar Republic** (1919–33).

UFA's first peacetime productions were elaborate costume dramas (*Kostümfilme*) in the vein of the prewar Italian superspectacles, and the master of this form was **Ernst Lubitsch**, who directed such lavish and successful historical pageants as *Madame Du Barry* (released in the United States as *Passion*, 1919), *Anna Boleyn* (*Deception*, 1920), and *Das Weib des Pharaos* (*The Loves of Pharaoh*, 1921) before emigrating to the United States in 1922. These films earned the German cinema a foothold in the world market, but it was an Expressionist work, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1919), that brought the industry its first great artistic acclaim. Based on a scenario by the Czech poet Hans Janowitz and the Austrian writer Carl Mayer, the film recounts a series of brutal murders that are committed in the north German town of Holstenwall by a somnambulist at the bidding of a demented mountebank, who believes himself to be the incarnation of a homicidal 18th-century hypnotist named Dr. Caligari. Erich Pommer, *Caligari*'s producer at Decla-Bioskop (an independent production company that was to merge with UFA in 1921), added a scene to the original scenario so that the story appears to be narrated by a madman confined to an asylum of which the mountebank is director and head psychiatrist. To represent the narrator's tortured mental state, the director, **Robert Wiene**, hired three prominent Expressionist artists—Hermann Warm, Walter Röhrig, and Walter Reimann—to design sets that depicted exaggerated dimensions and deformed spatial relationships. To heighten this architectural stylization (and also to economize on **electric power**, which was rationed in postwar Germany), bizarre patterns of light and shadow were painted directly onto the scenery and even onto the characters' makeup.

In its effort to embody disturbed psychological states through decor, *Caligari* influenced enormously the UFA films that followed it and gave rise to the movement known as **German Expressionism**. The films of this movement were completely studio-made and often used distorted sets and lighting effects to create a highly subjective mood. They were primarily films of fantasy and terror that employed horrific plots to express the theme of the soul in search of itself. Most were photographed by one of the two great cinematographers of the Weimar period, Karl Freund and Fritz Arno Wagner. Representative works include F.W. Murnau's *Der Januskopf* (*Janus-Faced*, 1920), adapted from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; Paul Wegener and Carl Boese's *Der Golem* (*The Golem*, 1920), adapted from a Jewish legend in which a gigantic clay statue becomes a raging monster; Arthur Robison's *Schatten* (*Warning Shadows*, 1922); Wiene's *Raskolnikow* (1923), based on Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*; Paul Leni's *Das Wachsfigurenkabinett* (*Waxworks*, 1924); and Henrik Galeen's *Der Student von Prag* (*The Student of Prague*, 1926), which combines the Faust legend with a doppelgänger, or double, motif. In addition to winning international prestige for German films, Expressionism produced two directors who would become major figures in world cinema, **Fritz Lang** and **F.W. Murnau**.

Lang had already directed several successful serials, including *Die Spinnen* (*The Spiders*, 1919–20), when he collaborated with his future wife, the scriptwriter Thea von Harbou, to produce *Der müde Tod* ("The Weary Death"; English title: *Destiny*; 1921) for Decla-Bioskop. This episodic Romantic allegory of doomed lovers, set in several different historical periods, earned Lang acclaim for his dynamic compositions of architectural line and space. Lang's use of striking, stylized images is also demonstrated in the other films of his Expressionist period, notably the crime melodrama *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* (*Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, 1922), the Wagnerian diptych *Siegfried* (1922–24) and *Kriemhild's Rache* (*Kriemhild's Revenge*, 1922–23), and the stunningly futuristic *Metropolis* (1926), perhaps the greatest science-fiction film ever made. After directing the early sound masterpiece *M* (1931), based on child murders in Düsseldorf, Lang became increasingly estranged from German political life. He emigrated in 1933 to escape the Nazis and began a second career in the Hollywood studios the following year.

F.W. Murnau made several minor Expressionist films before directing one of the movement's classics, an (unauthorized) adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* entitled *Nosferatu—eine Symphonie des Grauens* ("Nosferatu, a Symphony of Horror," 1922), but it was *Der letzte Mann* ("The Last Man"; English title: *The Last Laugh*; 1924), a film in the genre of *Kammerspiel* ("intimate theatre"), that made him world-famous. Scripted by Carl Mayer and produced by Erich Pommer for UFA, *Der letzte Mann* told the story of a hotel doorman who is humiliated by the loss of his job and—more important, apparently, in postwar German society—of his splendid paramilitary uniform. Murnau and **Karl Freund**, his cameraman, gave this simple tale a complex narrative structure through their innovative use of camera movement and subjective point-of-view shots. In one famous example, Freund strapped a lightweight camera to his chest and stumbled drunkenly around the set of a bedroom to record the inebriated porter's point of view. In the absence of modern cranes and dollies, at various points in the filming Murnau and Freund placed the camera on moving bicycles, **fire engine** ladders, and overhead cables in order to achieve smooth, sustained movement. The total effect was a tapestry of subjectively involving movement and intense identification with the narrative.

Der letzte Mann was universally hailed as a masterpiece and probably had more influence on Hollywood style than any other single foreign film in history. Its "unchained camera" technique (Mayer's phrase) spawned many imitations in Germany and elsewhere, the most significant being E.A. Dupont's circus-tent melodrama *Variété* (1925). The film also brought Murnau a long-term Hollywood contract, which he began to fulfill in 1927 after completing two last "super-productions," *Tartuff* (*Tartuffe*, 1925) and *Faust* (1926), for UFA.

In 1924 the German mark was stabilized by the so-called **Dawes Plan**, which financed the long-term payment of Germany's **war reparations** debt and curtailed all exports. This created an artificial prosperity in the economy at large, which lasted only until the **stock market crash of 1929**, but it was devastating to the film industry, the bulk of whose revenues came from foreign markets. Hollywood then seized the opportunity to cripple its only serious European rival, saturating Germany with American films and buying its independent theatre chains. As a result of these forays and its own internal mismanagement, UFA stood on the brink of bankruptcy by the end of 1925. It was saved by a \$4 million loan offered by two major American studios, Famous Players–Lasky (later Paramount) and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, in exchange for collaborative rights to UFA studios, theatres, and creative personnel. This arrangement resulted in the founding of the Parufamet (Paramount-UFA-Metro) Distribution Company in early 1926 and the almost immediate emigration of UFA film artists and technicians to Hollywood, where they worked for a variety of studios. This first Germanic migration was temporary. Many of the filmmakers returned to UFA disgusted at the assembly-line character of the American studio system, but many—such as Ernst Lubitsch, Freund, Murnau, and Hungarian-born Mihály Kertész (**Michael Curtiz**)—stayed on to launch full-fledged Hollywood careers, and many more would come back

during the 1930s to escape the Nazi regime.

In the meantime, the new sensibility that had entered German intellectual life turned away from the morbid psychological themes of Expressionism toward an acceptance of “life as it is lived.” Called *die neue Sachlichkeit* (“the new objectivity”), this spirit stemmed from the economic dislocations that beset German society in the wake of the war, particularly the impoverishment of the middle classes through raging inflation. In cinema, *die neue Sachlichkeit* translated into the grim social realism of the “street” films of the late 1920s, including G.W. Pabst’s *Die freudlose Gasse* (*The Joyless Street*, 1925), Bruno Rahn’s *Dirnentragödie* (*Tragedy of the Streets*, 1927), Joe May’s *Asphalt* (1929), and Piel Jutzi’s *Berlin-Alexanderplatz* (1931). Named for their prototype, Karl Grune’s *Die Strasse* (*The Street*, 1923), these films focused on the disillusionment, cynicism, and ultimate resignation of ordinary German people whose lives were crippled during the postwar inflation.

The master of the form was **G.W. Pabst**, whose work established conventions of continuity editing that would become essential to the **sound film**. In such important realist films as *Die freudlose Gasse*, *Die Liebe der Jeanne Ney* (*The Love of Jeanne Ney*, 1927), *Die Büchse der Pandora* (*Pandora’s Box*, 1929), and *Das Tagebuch einer Verlorenen* (*Diary of a Lost Girl*, 1929), Pabst created complex continuity sequences using techniques that became key features of Hollywood’s “invisible” editing style, such as cutting on action, cutting from a shot of a character’s glance to one of what the character sees (motivated point-of-view shots), and cutting to a reverse angle shot (one in which the camera angle has changed 180 degrees; e.g., in a scene in which a man and a woman face one another in conversation, the man is seen from the woman’s point of view, then the woman is shown from the man’s point of view). Pabst later became an important figure of the early sound period, contributing two significant works in his pacifist films *Westfront 1918* (1930) and *Kameradschaft* (“Comradeship,” 1931). A few years later, however, Pabst found himself making films for the Nazis, a condition that afflicted the entire German film industry after 1933.

By March 1927, UFA was once again facing financial collapse, and it turned this time to the Prussian financier **Alfred Hugenberg**, a director of the powerful Krupp industrial empire and a leader of the right-wing German National Party who was sympathetic to the **Nazis**. Hugenberg bought out the American interests in UFA, acquiring a majority of the company’s stock and directing the remainder into the hands of his political allies. As chairman of the UFA board, he quietly instituted a nationalistic production policy that gave increasing prominence to them and their cause and that enabled the Nazis to subvert the German film industry when **Adolf Hitler** came to power in 1933. German cinema then fell under the authority of **Joseph Goebbels** and his Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. For the next 12 years every film made in the Third Reich had to be personally approved for release by Goebbels. Jews were officially banned from the industry, causing a vast wave of German film artists to emigrate to Hollywood. Los Angeles became known as “the new Weimar,” and the German cinema was emptied of the talent and brilliance that had created its golden age.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Post-World War I European cinema » The Soviet Union

Before the **Bolshevik Revolution** of October 1917, Russia for all practical purposes had no native film industry. In the industrialized nations of the West, motion pictures had first been accepted as a form of cheap recreation and leisure for the working class. From that base, they had reached out successfully to the middle class and gained wide popularity among all classes by about 1914. In prerevolutionary Russia, however, the working class was composed largely of serfs too poor to support a native industry, and the small movie business that did develop was dominated by foreign interests and foreign films—mainly French, German, and Danish.

The first native Russian company was not founded until 1908, and by the time of the Revolution there were perhaps 20 more; but even these were small, importing all their technical equipment and film stock from Germany and France. When Russia entered World War I in August 1914, foreign films could no longer be imported, and the tsarist government established the Skobelev Committee to stimulate domestic production and produce propaganda in support of the regime. The committee had little immediate effect, but when the tsar fell in March 1917 the Provisional Government headed by Aleksandr F. Kerensky reorganized it to produce antitsarist propaganda. When the **Bolsheviks** inherited the committee eight months later, they transformed it into the Cinema Committee of the People’s Commissariat of Education.

A minority party with approximately 200,000 members, the Bolsheviks had assumed the leadership of 160 million people who were scattered across the largest continuous landmass in the world, spoke more than 100 separate languages, and were mostly illiterate. **Vladimir Ilich Lenin** and other Bolshevik leaders looked on the motion-picture medium as a means of unifying the huge, disparate nation. Lenin was the first political leader of the 20th century to recognize both the importance of film as propaganda and its power to communicate quickly and effectively. He understood that audiences did not require literacy to comprehend a film’s meaning and that more people could be reached through mass-distributed motion pictures than through any other medium of the time. Lenin declared: “The cinema is for us the most important of the arts,” and his government gave top priority to the rapid development of the Soviet film industry, which was nationalized in August 1919 and put under the direct authority of Lenin’s wife, **Nadezhda Krupskaya**.

There was, however, little to build upon. Most of the prerevolutionary producers had fled to Europe, taking their equipment and film stock with them, wrecking their studios as they left. A foreign blockade prevented the importation of new equipment or stock (there were no domestic facilities for manufacturing either), and massive power shortages restricted the use of what limited resources remained. The Cinema Committee was not deterred, however; its first act was to found a professional film school in Moscow to train directors, technicians, and actors for the cinema.

The **Vsesoyuznyi Gosudarstvennyi Institut Kinematografii** (VGIK; “All-Union State Institute of Cinematography”) was the first such school in the world and is still among the most respected. Initially it trained people in the production of *agitki*, existing newsreels reedited for the purpose of agitation and propaganda (agitprop). The *agitki* were transported on specially equipped agit-trains and agit-steamers to the provinces, where they were exhibited to generate support for the Revolution. (The state-controlled Cuban cinema used the same tactic after the revolution of 1959.) In fact, during the abysmal years of the **Russian Civil War** (1918–20), nearly all Soviet films were *agitki* of some sort. Most of the great directors of the Soviet silent cinema were trained in that form, although, having very little technical equipment and no negative film stock, they were often required to make “films without celluloid.”

Students at the VGIK were instructed to write, direct, and act out scenarios as if they were before cameras. Then—on paper—they assembled various “shots” into completed “films.” The great teacher **Lev Kuleshov** obtained a print of Griffith’s *Intolerance* and screened it for students in his “Kuleshov workshop” until they had memorized its shot structures and could rearrange its multilayered editing sequences on paper in hundreds of different combinations.

Kuleshov further experimented with editing by intercutting the same shot of a famous actor's expressionless face with several different shots of highly expressive content—a steaming bowl of soup, a dead woman in a coffin, and a little girl playing with a **teddy bear**. The invariable response of film school audiences when shown these sequences was that the actor's face assumed the emotion appropriate to the intercut object—hunger for the soup, sorrow for the dead woman, paternal affection for the little girl. Kuleshov reasoned from this phenomenon, known today as the "**Kuleshov effect**," that the shot in film always has two values: that which it carries in itself as a photographic image of reality, and that which it acquires when placed into juxtaposition with another shot. He reasoned further that the second value is more important to cinematic signification than the first and that, therefore, time and space in the cinema must be subordinate to the process of editing, or "**montage**" (coined by the Soviets from the French verb *monter*, "to assemble"). Kuleshov ultimately conceived of montage as an expressive process whereby dissimilar images could be linked together to create nonliteral or symbolic meaning.

Although Kuleshov made several important films, including *Po zakonu* (*By the Law*, 1926), it was as a teacher and theorist that he most deeply influenced an entire generation of Soviet directors. Two of his most brilliant students were **Sergey Eisenstein** and **Vsevolod Illarionovich Pudovkin**.

Eisenstein was, with Griffith, one of the great pioneering geniuses of the modern cinema, and like his predecessor he produced a handful of enduring masterworks. Griffith, however, had elaborated the structure of narrative editing intuitively, whereas Eisenstein was an intellectual who formulated a modernist theory of editing based on the psychology of perception and Marxist dialectic. Trained as a civil engineer, in 1920 he joined the Moscow Proletkult Theatre, where he fell under the influence of the stage director **Vsevolod Meyerhold** and directed a number of plays in the revolutionary style of Futurism. In the winter of 1922–23 Eisenstein studied under Kuleshov and was inspired to write his first theoretical manifesto, *The Montage of Attractions*. Published in the radical journal *Lef*, the article advocated assaulting an audience with calculated emotional shocks for the purpose of agitation.

Eisenstein was invited to direct the Proletkult-sponsored film *Stachka* (**Strike**) in 1924, but, like Griffith, he knew little of the practical aspects of production. He therefore enlisted the aid of Eduard Tisse, a brilliant cinematographer at the state-owned Goskino studios, beginning a lifelong artistic collaboration. *Strike* is a semidocumentary representation of the brutal suppression of a strike by tsarist factory owners and police. In addition to being Eisenstein's first film, it was also the first revolutionary mass-film of the new Soviet state. Conceived as an extended montage of shock stimuli, the film concludes with the now famous sequence in which the massacre of the strikers and their families is intercut with shots of cattle being slaughtered in an abattoir.

Strike was an immediate success, and Eisenstein was next commissioned to direct a film celebrating the 20th anniversary of the failed **1905 Revolution** against tsarism. Originally intended to provide a panorama of the entire event, the project eventually came to focus on a single representative episode—the mutiny of the battleship **Potemkin** and the massacre of the citizens of the port of **Odessa** by tsarist troops. *Bronenosets Potemkin* (*Battleship Potemkin*, 1925) emerged as one of the most important and influential films ever made, especially in Eisenstein's use of montage, which had improved far beyond the formulaic, if effective, juxtapositions of *Strike*.

Although agitational to the core, *Battleship Potemkin* is a work of extraordinary pictorial beauty and great elegance of form. It is symmetrically broken into five movements or acts, according to the structure of Greek tragedy. In the first of these, "Men and Maggots," the flagrant mistreatment of the sailors at the hands of their officers is demonstrated, while the second, "Drama on the Quarterdeck," presents the actual mutiny and the ship's arrival in Odessa. "Appeal from the Dead" establishes the solidarity of the citizens of Odessa with the mutineers, but it is the fourth sequence, "The Odessa Steps," which depicts the massacre of the citizens, that thrust Eisenstein and his film into the historical eminence that both occupy today. Its power is such that the film's conclusion, "Meeting the Squadron," in which the Battleship Potemkin in a show of brotherhood is allowed to pass through the squadron unharmed, is anticlimactic.

Unquestionably the most famous sequence of its kind in film history, "The Odessa Steps" incarnates the theory of dialectical montage that Eisenstein later expounded in his collected writings, *The Film Sense* (1942) and *Film Form* (1949). Eisenstein believed that meaning in motion pictures is generated by the collision of opposing shots. Building on Kuleshov's ideas, Eisenstein reasoned that montage operates according to the Marxist view of history as a perpetual conflict in which a force (thesis) and a counterforce (antithesis) collide to produce a totally new and greater phenomenon (synthesis). He compared this **dialectical** process in **film editing** to "the series of explosions of an **internal combustion engine**, driving forward its automobile or tractor." The force of "The Odessa Steps" arises when the viewer's mind combines individual, independent shots and forms a new, distinct conceptual impression that far outweighs the shots' narrative significance. Through Eisenstein's accelerated manipulations of filmic time and space, the slaughter on the stone steps—where hundreds of citizens find themselves trapped between descending tsarist militia above and Cossacks below—acquires a powerful symbolic meaning. With the addition of a stirring revolutionary score by the German Marxist composer Edmund Meisel, the agitational appeal of *Battleship Potemkin* became nearly irresistible, and, when exported in early 1926, it made Eisenstein world-famous.

Eisenstein's next project, *Oktyabr* (**October**, 1928), was commissioned by the **Central Committee** to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Accordingly, vast resources, including the Soviet army and navy, were placed at the director's disposal. Eisenstein based the **shooting script** on voluminous documentary material from the era and on John Reed's book *Ten Days That Shook the World*. When the film was completed in November 1927, it was just under four hours long. While Eisenstein was making *October*, however, **Joseph Stalin** had taken control of the Politburo from **Leon Trotsky**, and the director was forced to cut the print by one-third to eliminate references to the exiled Trotsky.

Eisenstein had consciously used *October* as a laboratory for experimenting with "intellectual" or "ideological" montage, an abstract type of editing in which the relationships established between shots are conceptual rather than visual or emotional. When the film was finally released, however, Stalinist critics attacked this alleged "formalist excess" (aestheticism or elitism). The same charge was leveled even more bitterly against Eisenstein's next film, *Staroe i novoe* (**Old and New**, 1929), which Stalinist bureaucrats completely disavowed. Stalin hated Eisenstein because he was an intellectual and a Jew, but the director's international stature was such that he could not be publicly purged. Instead, Stalin used the Soviet state-subsidy apparatus to foil Eisenstein's projects and attack his principles at every turn, a situation that resulted in the director's failure to complete another film until *Alexander Nevsky* was commissioned in 1938.

Eisenstein's nearest rival in the Soviet silent cinema was his fellow student **Vsevolod Illarionovich Pudovkin**. Like Eisenstein, Pudovkin developed a new theory of montage but one based on cognitive linkage rather than dialectical collision. He maintained that "the film is not shot, but built, built up from the separate strips of celluloid that are its raw material." Pudovkin, like Griffith, most often used montage for narrative rather than symbolic purpose. His films are more personal than Eisenstein's; the epic drama that is the focus of Eisenstein's films exists in Pudovkin's films merely to provide a backdrop for the interplay of

human emotions.

Pudovkin's major work is *Mat* (**Mother**, 1926), a tale of strikebreaking and terrorism in which a woman loses first her husband and then her son to the opposing sides of the 1905 Revolution. The film was internationally acclaimed for the innovative intensity of its montage, as well as for its emotion and lyricism. Pudovkin's later films include *Konets Sankt-Peterburga* (*The End of St. Petersburg*, 1927), which, like Eisenstein's *October*, was commissioned to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, and *Potomok Chingis-Khana* (*The Heir to Genghis Khan*, or *Storm over Asia*, 1928), which is set in **Central Asia** during the Russian Civil War. Both mingle human drama with the epic and the symbolic as they tell a story of a politically naive person who is galvanized into action by tsarist tyranny. Although Pudovkin was never persecuted as severely by the Stalinists as Eisenstein, he, too, was publicly charged with formalism for his experimental sound film *Prostoi sluchai* (*A Simple Case*, 1932), which he was forced to release without its sound track. Pudovkin made several more sound films but remains best known for his silent work.

Two other seminal figures of the Soviet silent era were **Aleksandr Dovzhenko** and Dziga Vertov (original name Denis Kaufman). Dovzhenko, the son of Ukrainian peasants, had been a political cartoonist and painter before becoming a director at the state-controlled Odessa studios in 1926. After several minor works, he made *Zvenigora* (1928), a collection of boldly stylized tales about a hunt for an ancient Scythian treasure set during four different stages of Ukrainian history; *Arsenal* (1929), an epic film poem about the effects of revolution and civil war upon the Ukraine; and *Zemlya* (*Earth*, 1930), which is considered to be his masterpiece. *Earth* tells the story of the conflict between a family of wealthy landowning peasants (kulaks) and the young peasants of a **collective farm** in a small Ukrainian village, but the film is less a narrative than a lyric hymn to the cyclic recurrence of birth, life, love, and death in nature and in humankind. Although the film is acclaimed today, when it was released, Stalinist critics denounced it as counterrevolutionary. Soon after, Dovzhenko entered a period of political eclipse, during which, however, he continued to make films.

Dziga Vertov (a pseudonym meaning "spinning top") was an artist of quite different talents. He began his career as an *agitki* photographer and newsreel editor and is now acknowledged as the father of **cinema vérité** (a self-consciously realistic documentary movement of the 1960s and '70s) for his development and practice of the theory of the *kino-glaz* ("cinema-eye"). Vertov articulated this doctrine in the early 1920s in a number of radical manifestos in which he denounced conventional narrative cinema as impotent and demanded that it be replaced with a cinema of actuality based on the "organization of camera-recorded documentary material." Between 1922 and 1925, he put his idea into practice in a series of 23 carefully crafted newsreel-documentaries entitled *Kino-pravda* ("film truth") and *Goskinokalender*. Vertov's most famous film is *Chelovek s kinoapparatom* (*Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929), a feature-length portrait of Moscow from dawn to dusk. The film plays upon the "city symphony" genre inaugurated by Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin, the Symphony of a Great City* (1927), but Vertov repeatedly draws attention to the filmmaking process to create an autocritique of cinema itself.

Unlike most of his contemporaries, Vertov welcomed the coming of sound, envisioning it as a "radio-ear" to accompany the "cinema-eye." His first sound film, *Entuziazm—simfoniya Donbassa* (*Symphony of the Donbas*, 1931), was an extraordinary contribution to the new medium, as was *Tri pesni o Lenine* (*Three Songs About Lenin*, 1934), yet Vertov could not escape the charge of formalist error any more than his peers. Although he did make the feature film *Kolybelnaya* (*Lullaby*) in 1937, for the most part the Stalinist establishment reduced him to the status of a newsreel photographer after 1934.

Many other Soviet filmmakers played important roles in the great decade of experiment that followed the Revolution, among them Grigory Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, Boris Barnet, Yakov Protazanov, Olga Preobrazhenskaya, Abram Room, and the documentarian Esther Shub. The period came to an abrupt end in 1929, when Stalin removed the state film trust (then called Sovkino) from the jurisdiction of the Commissariat of Education and placed it under the direct authority of the Supreme Council of the National Economy. Reorganized as Soyuzkino, the trust was turned over to the reactionary bureaucrat Boris Shumyatsky, a proponent of the narrowly ideological doctrine known as **Socialist Realism**. This policy, which came to dominate the Soviet arts, dictated that individual creativity be subordinated to the political aims of the party and the state. In practice, it militated against the symbolic, the experimental, and the avant-garde in favour of a literal-minded "people's art" that glorified representative Soviet heroes and idealized Soviet experience. The restraints imposed made it impossible for the great filmmakers of the postrevolutionary era to produce creative or innovative work, and the Soviet cinema went into decline.

The silent years, 1910–27 » Post-World War I American cinema

During the 1920s in the United States, motion-picture production, distribution, and exhibition became a major national industry and movies perhaps the major national obsession. The salaries of stars reached monumental proportions, filmmaking practices and narrative formulas were standardized to accommodate **mass production**, and **Wall Street** began to invest heavily in every branch of the business. The growing industry was organized according to the studio system that, in many respects, the producer **Thomas Harper Ince** had developed between 1914 and 1918 at Inceville, his studio in the Santa Ynez Canyon near Hollywood. Ince functioned as the central authority over multiple production units, each headed by a director who was required to shoot an assigned film according to a detailed continuity script. Every project was carefully budgeted and tightly scheduled, and Ince himself supervised the final cut. This central producer system was the prototype for the studio system of the 1920s, and, with some modification, it prevailed as the dominant mode of Hollywood production for the next 40 years.

Virtually all the major film genres evolved and were codified during the 1920s, but none was more characteristic of the period than the **slapstick** comedy. This form was originated by **Mack Sennett**, who, at his Keystone Studios, produced countless one- and two-reel shorts and features (*Tillie's Punctured Romance*, 1914; *The Surf Girl*, 1916; *Teddy at the Throttle*, 1917) whose narrative logic was subordinated to fantastic, purely visual humour. An anarchic mixture of circus, vaudeville, burlesque, pantomime, and the chase, Sennett's Keystone comedies created a world of inspired madness and mayhem, and they employed the talents of such future stars as **Charlie Chaplin**, Harry Langdon, **Roscoe ("Fatty") Arbuckle**, **Mabel Normand**, and **Harold Lloyd**. When these performers achieved fame, many of them left Keystone, often to form their own production companies, a practice still possible in the early 1920s.

Chaplin, for example, who had developed the persona of the "Little Tramp" at Keystone, went on to direct and star in a series of shorts produced by Essanay in 1915 (*The Tramp*, *A Night in the Show*) and Mutual between 1916 and 1917 (*One A.M.*, *The Rink*, *Easy Street*). In 1917 he was offered an eight-film contract with First National that enabled him to establish his own studio. He directed his first feature there, the semiautobiographical *The Kid* (1921), but most of his First National films were two-reelers. In 1919 Chaplin, D.W. Griffith, **Mary Pickford**, and **Douglas Fairbanks**, the four most popular and powerful film artists of the time, jointly formed the **United Artists Corporation** in order to produce and distribute—and thereby retain artistic and financial control over—their own films. Chaplin directed three silent features for United Artists: *A Woman of Paris* (1923),

his great comic epic *The Gold Rush* (1925), and *The Circus* (1928), which was released after the introduction of sound into motion pictures. He later made several sound films, but the two most successful—his first two, *City Lights* (1931) and *Modern Times* (1936)—were essentially **silent films** with musical scores.

Buster Keaton possessed a very different kind of comic talent than Chaplin; but both men were wonderfully subtle actors with a keen sense of the tragic often contained within the comic, and both were major directors of their period. Keaton, like Chaplin, was born into a theatrical family and began performing in vaudeville skits at a young age. Intrigued by the new film medium, he left the stage and worked for two years as a supporting comedian for Arbuckle's production company. In 1919 Keaton formed his own production company, where over the next four years he made 20 shorts (including *One Week*, 1920; *The Boat*, 1921; *Cops*, 1922; and *The Balloonatic*, 1923) that represent, with Chaplin's Mutual films, the acme of American slapstick comedy. A Keaton trademark was the "trajectory gag," in which perfect timing of acting, directing, and editing propels his film character through a geometric progression of complicated sight gags that seem impossibly dangerous but are still dramatically logical. Such routines inform all of Keaton's major features—*Our Hospitality* (1923), *Sherlock, Jr.* (1924), *The Navigator* (1924), *Seven Chances* (1925), and his masterpieces *The General* (1927) and *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* (1928). Keaton's greatest films, all made before his company was absorbed by MGM, have a reflexive quality that indicates his fascination with film as a medium. Although some of his MGM films were financially successful, the factory-like studio system stifled Keaton's creativity, and he was reduced to playing bit parts after the early 1930s.

Important but lesser silent comics were **Lloyd**, the team of **Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy**, Langdon, and Arbuckle. Working at the **Hal Roach Studios**, Lloyd cultivated the persona of an earnest, sweet-tempered boy-next-door. He specialized in a variant of Keystone mayhem known as the "comedy of thrills," in which—as in Lloyd's most famous features, *Safety Last* (1923) and *The Freshman* (1925)—an innocent protagonist finds himself placed in physical danger. **Laurel and Hardy** also worked for Roach. They made 27 silent two-reelers, including *Putting Pants on Philip* (1927) and *Liberty* (1929), and became even more popular in the 1930s in such sound films as *Another Fine Mess* (1930) and *Sons of the Desert* (1933). Their comic characters were basically grown-up children whose relationship was sometimes disturbingly sadomasochistic. **Langdon** also traded on a childlike, even babylike, image in such popular features as *The Strong Man* (1926) and *Long Pants* (1927), both directed by **Frank Capra**. **Arbuckle**, however, in his few years of stardom, created the character of a leering, sensual adult. Arbuckle's talent was limited, but his persona affected the course of American film history in a quite unexpected way.

By the early 1920s some 40 million Americans—half of them minors—were attending the movies each week. The rapid spread of the medium and its easy accessibility had already caused mild public concern, especially because films had begun to feature increasingly risqué plots and situations. Concern increased as Hollywood became identified in the popular mind with the materialism, cynicism, and sexual license of the Jazz Age. Then in September 1921 the popular Arbuckle was charged with the rape and manslaughter of a young starlet, and the concern turned into anger and rage. Arbuckle was eventually exonerated, but other Hollywood scandals surfaced—e.g., the murder of director William Desmond Taylor, the death from **drug addiction** of matinee idol Wallace Reid—and the tabloid press screamed for blood.

In an attempt to stave off probable mass boycotts and government **censorship**, in March 1922 the studio heads formed a self-regulatory **trade organization**, the **Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America** (MPPDA), and hired the U.S. postmaster general, **Will H. Hays**, to head it. In practice, the **Hays Office**, as the MPPDA was known, functioned as an advisory body and engaged in little actual censorship. It promulgated an unenforceable "Purity Code," which was facetiously called the "Don'ts and Be Carefuls," and it endorsed a policy of "compensating values," whereby all manner of screen vileness could be depicted so long as it was shown to be punished by the film's end. Throughout the 1920s the Hays Office primarily (and successfully) served to mollify **pressure groups** and to manage **public relations**.

The leading practitioner of the compensating values formula was the flamboyant director **Cecil B. DeMille**. He first became famous after World War I for a series of sophisticated comedies of manners that were aimed at Hollywood's new middle-class audience (*Old Wives for New*, 1918; *Forbidden Fruit*, 1921). When the Hays Office was established DeMille turned to the sex- and violence-drenched religious spectacles that made him an international figure, notably *The Ten Commandments* (1923; remade 1956). DeMille's chief rival in the production of stylish sex comedies was the German émigré **Ernst Lubitsch**. An early master of the UFA *Kostümfilm*, Lubitsch excelled at sexual innuendo and understatement in such urbane essays as *The Marriage Circle* (1924). Also popular during the 1920s were the swashbuckling exploits of **Douglas Fairbanks**, whose lavish adventure spectacles, including *Robin Hood* (1922) and *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), thrilled a generation, and the narrative documentaries of **Robert Flaherty**, whose *Nanook of the North* (1922) and *Moana* (1926) were unexpectedly successful with the public and with critics.

The most enigmatic and unconventional figure working in Hollywood at the time, however, was without a doubt the Viennese émigré **Erich von Stroheim**. Stroheim, who also acted, learned directing as an assistant to Griffith on *Intolerance* and *Hearts of the World*. His first three films—*Blind Husbands* (1918), *The Devil's Passkey* (1919), and *Foolish Wives* (1922)—constitute an obsessive trilogy of adultery; each features a sexual triangle in which an American wife is seduced by a Prussian army officer. Even though all three films were enormously popular, the great sums Stroheim was spending on the extravagant production design and costuming of his next project brought him into conflict with his Universal producers, and he was replaced.

Stroheim then signed a contract with Goldwyn Pictures and began work on a long-cherished project—an adaptation of **Frank Norris**'s grim, naturalistic novel *McTeague*. Shot entirely on location in the streets and rooming houses of San Francisco, in **Death Valley**, and in the California hills, the film was conceived as a sentence-by-sentence translation of its source. Stroheim's original version ran approximately 10 hours. Realizing that the film was too long to be exhibited, he cut almost half of the footage. The film was still deemed too long, so Stroheim, with the help of director Rex Ingram, edited it down into a four-hour version that could be shown in two parts. By that time, however, Goldwyn Pictures had merged with Metro Pictures and Louis B. Mayer Pictures to become MGM. MGM took the negative from Stroheim and cut another two hours, destroying the excised footage in the process. Released as **Greed** (1924), the film had enormous gaps in continuity, but it was still recognized as a work of genius in its rich psychological characterization and in its creation of a naturalistic analogue for the novel.

Stroheim made one more film for MGM, a darkly satiric adaptation of the Franz Lehár operetta *The Merry Widow* (1925). He then went to Celebrity Pictures, where he directed *The Wedding March* (1928), a two-part spectacle set in imperial Vienna, but his work was taken from him and recut into a single film when Celebrity was absorbed by Paramount. Stroheim's last directorial duties were on the botched *Queen Kelly* (1929) and *Walking Down Broadway* (1932), although he was removed from both films for various reasons. He made his living thereafter by writing screenplays and acting.

Although many of Stroheim's troubles with Hollywood were personal, he was also a casualty of the American film industry's

transformation during the 1920s from a speculative entrepreneurial enterprise into a vertically and horizontally integrated oligopoly that had no tolerance for creative difference. His situation was not unique; many singular artists, including Griffith, Sennett, Chaplin, and Keaton, found it difficult to survive as filmmakers under the rigidly standardized studio system that had been established by the end of the decade. The industry's conversion to sound at that time reinforced its big-business tendencies and further discouraged independent filmmakers. The studios, which had borrowed huge sums of money on the very brink of the Great Depression in order to finance the conversion, were determined to reduce production costs and increase efficiency. They therefore became less and less willing to tolerate artistic innovation or eccentricity.

The pre-World War II sound era » Introduction of sound

The idea of combining motion pictures and sound had been around since the invention of the cinema itself: Edison had commissioned the Kinetograph to provide visual images for his phonograph, and Dickson had actually synchronized the two machines in a device briefly marketed in the 1890s as the Kinetophone. Léon Gaumont's Chronophone in France and Cecil Hepworth's Vivaphone system in England employed a similar technology, and each was used to produce hundreds of synchronized shorts between 1902 and 1912. In Germany, producer-director Oskar Messter began to release all of his films with recorded musical scores as early as 1908. By the time the feature had become the dominant film form in the West, producers regularly commissioned orchestral scores to accompany prestigious productions, and virtually all films were accompanied by cue sheets suggesting appropriate musical selections for performance during exhibition.

Actual recorded sound required amplification for sustained periods of use, however, which became possible only after **Lee De Forest's** perfection in 1907 of the **Audion** tube, a three-element, or triode, **vacuum tube** that magnified sound and drove it through speakers so that it could be heard by a large audience. In 1919 De Forest developed an optical sound-on-film process patented as **Phonofilm**, and between 1923 and 1927 he made more than 1,000 synchronized sound shorts for release to specially wired theatres. The public was widely interested in these films, but the major Hollywood producers, to whom De Forest vainly tried to sell his system, were not: they viewed "talking pictures" as an expensive novelty with little potential return.

By that time, **Western Electric**, the manufacturing subsidiary of American Telephone & Telegraph Company, had perfected a sophisticated sound-on-disc system called **Vitaphone**, which their representatives attempted to market to Hollywood in 1925. Like De Forest, they were rebuffed by the major studios, but **Warner Brothers**, then a minor studio in the midst of aggressive expansion, bought both the system and the right to sublease it to other producers. Warner Brothers had no more faith in talking pictures than did the major studios but thought that the novelty could be exploited for short-term profits. The studio planned to use Vitaphone to provide synchronized orchestral accompaniment for all Warner Brothers films, thereby enhancing their marketability to second- and third-run exhibitors who could not afford to hire live orchestral accompaniment. After mounting a \$3 million promotion, Warner Brothers debuted the system on August 6, 1926, with *Don Juan*, a lavish costume drama starring John Barrymore, directed by Alan Crosland, and featuring a score performed by the **New York Philharmonic** Orchestra. The response was enthusiastic; Warner Brothers announced that all of its films for 1927 would be released with synchronized musical accompaniment and then turned immediately to the production of its second Vitaphone feature, *The Jazz Singer* (1927), also directed by Crosland, included popular songs and incidental dialogue in addition to the orchestral score; its phenomenal success virtually ensured the industry's conversion to sound.

Sensing that Warner Brothers' gamble on sound might pay off, MGM, First National, Paramount, and others had asked the MPPDA to investigate competing **sound systems** in early 1927. There were several sound-on-film systems that were technologically superior to Vitaphone, but the rights to most of them were owned by **William Fox**, president of **Fox Film Corporation**. Fox, like the Warners, had seen sound as a way of cornering the market among smaller exhibitors. Therefore, in the summer of 1926, he acquired the rights to the Case-Sponable sound-on-film system (whose similarity to De Forest's Phonofilm was the subject of subsequent patent litigation) and formed the Fox-Case Corporation to make shorts under the trade name Fox Movietone. Six months later he secretly bought the American rights to the German Tri-Ergon process, whose flywheel mechanism was essential to the continuous reproduction of optical sound. To cover himself completely Fox negotiated a reciprocal pact between Fox-Case and Vitaphone under which each licensed the other to use its sound systems, equipment, and personnel. The sound-on-film system eventually prevailed over sound-on-disc because it enabled image and sound to be recorded simultaneously in the same (photographic) medium, ensuring their precise and automatic synchronization.

Despite Warner Brothers' obvious success with **sound films**, film industry leaders were not eager to lease sound equipment from a direct competitor. They banded together, and Warner Brothers was forced to give up its rights to the Vitaphone system in exchange for a share in any new royalties earned. The major film companies then wasted no time. By May 1928 virtually every studio in Hollywood, major and minor, was licensed by Western Electric's newly created marketing subsidiary, Electrical Research Products, Incorporated (ERPI), to use Western Electric equipment with the Movietone sound-on-film recording system. ERPI's monopoly did not please the **Radio Corporation of America (RCA)**, which had tried to market a sound-on-film system that had been developed in the laboratories of its **parent company**, General Electric, and had been patented in 1925 as RCA Photophone. In October 1928, RCA therefore acquired the Keith-Albee-Orpheum vaudeville circuit and merged it with Joseph P. Kennedy's Film Booking Offices of America (FBO) to form **RKO Radio Pictures** for the express purpose of producing sound films using the Photophone system (which ultimately became the industry standard).

The pre-World War II sound era » Introduction of sound » Conversion to sound

The wholesale conversion to sound of all three sectors of the American film industry took place in less than 15 months between late 1927 and 1929, and the profits of the major companies increased during that period by as much as 600 percent. Although the transition was fast, orderly, and profitable, it was also enormously expensive. The industrial system as it had evolved for the previous three decades needed to be completely overhauled; studios and theatres had to be totally reequipped and creative personnel retrained or fired. In order to fund the conversion, the film companies were forced to borrow in excess of \$350 million, which placed them under the indirect control of the two major New York-based financial groups, the Morgan group and the Rockefeller group.

Furthermore, although cooperation among the film companies through such agencies as the MPPDA, the **Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences**, and the Society of Motion Picture Engineers (SMPE) ensured a smooth transition in corporate terms, inside the newly wired theatres and studio soundstages there was confusion and disruption. The three competing systems—Vitaphone, Movietone, and Photophone—were all initially incompatible, and their technologies were under such constant modification that equipment was sometimes obsolete before it was uncrated. Whatever system producers chose, exhibitors during the early transitional period were forced to maintain both sound-on-disc and sound-on-film reproduction equipment. Even as late as 1931, studios were still releasing films in both formats to accommodate theatres owned by sound-

on-disc interests.

It was in the area of production, however, that the greatest problems arose. The statement that “the movies ceased to move when they began to talk” accurately described the films made during the earliest years of the transition, largely because of technical limitations. Early **microphones**, for example, had a very limited range. In addition, they were large, clumsy, and difficult to move, so that they were usually concealed in a single, stationary location on the set. The actors, who had to speak directly into the microphones to register on the sound track, were therefore forced to remain practically motionless while delivering dialogue. The microphones caused further problems because they were omnidirectional within their range and picked up every sound made near them on the set, especially the noisy whir of running cameras (which were motorized in 1929 to run at an even speed of 24 frames per second to ensure undistorted sound synchronization; silent cameras had been mainly hand-cranked at rates averaging 16 to 18 frames per second). To prevent the recording of camera noise, cameras and their operators were initially enclosed in soundproof glass-paneled booths that were only 6 feet (2 metres) long per side. The booths, which were facetiously called “iceboxes” because they were uncomfortably hot and stuffy, literally imprisoned the camera. The filmmakers’ inability to tilt or dolly the camera (although they could pan it by as much as 30 degrees on its tripod), combined with the actors’ immobility, helps to account for the static nature of so many early sound films.

The impact of sound recording on editing was even more regressive because sound and image had to be recorded simultaneously to be synchronous. In sound-on-disc films, scenes were initially made to play for 10 minutes at a time in order to record dialogue continuously on 16-inch (41-cm) discs; such scenes were impossible to edit until the technology of rerecording was perfected in the early 1930s. Sound-on-film systems also militated against editing at first because optical sound tracks run approximately 20 frames in advance of their corresponding image tracks, making it extremely difficult to cut a composite print without eliminating portions of the relevant sound. As a result, no matter which system of sound recording was used, most of the editing in early sound films was purely functional. In general, cuts could only be made—and the camera moved—when no sound was being recorded on the set.

Most of these technical problems were resolved by 1933, although equilibrium was not fully restored to the **production process** until after the mid-1930s. Sound-on-disc filming, for example, was abandoned in 1930, and by 1931 all the studios had removed their cameras from the iceboxes and converted to the use of lightweight, soundproof camera housings known as “blimps.” Within several years, smaller, quieter, self-insulating cameras were produced, eliminating the need for external soundproofing altogether. It even became possible to move the camera again by using a wide range of boom cranes, camera supports, and steerable dollies. Microphones, too, became increasingly mobile as a variety of booms were developed for them from 1930 onward. These long radial arms suspended the microphone above the set, allowing it to follow the movements of actors and rendering the stationary microphones of the early years obsolete. Microphones also became more directional throughout the decade, and track noise-suppression techniques came into use as early as 1931.

The pre-World War II sound era » Introduction of sound » Postsynchronization

The technological development that most liberated the sound film, however, was the practice known variously as postsynchronization, rerecording, or **dubbing**, in which image and sound are printed on separate pieces of film so that they can be manipulated independently. Postsynchronization enabled filmmakers to edit images freely again. Because the overwhelming emphasis of the period from 1928 to 1931 had been on obtaining high-quality sound in production, however, the idea that the **sound track** could be modified after it was recorded took a while to catch on. Many motion-picture artists and technicians felt that sound should be reproduced in films exactly as it had originally been produced on the set; they believed that anything less than an absolute pairing of sound and image would confuse audiences.

For several years, both practice and ideology dictated that sound and image be recorded simultaneously, so that everything heard on the sound track would be seen on the screen and vice versa. A vocal minority of film artists nevertheless viewed this practice of synchronous, “naturalistic” sound recording as a threat to the cinema. In their 1928 manifesto “Sound and Image,” the Soviet directors Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Grigory Aleksandrov denounced synchronous sound in favour of asynchronous, contrapuntal sound—sound that would counterpoint the images it accompanied to become another dynamic element in the montage process. Like the practical editing problem, the theoretical debate over the appropriate use of sound was eventually resolved by the practice of postsynchronization.

Postsynchronization seems to have first been used by the American director **King Vidor** in the all-black musical *Hallelujah* (1929) for a sequence in which the hero is chased through Arkansas swamplands. Vidor shot the action on location without sound, using a freely moving camera. Later, in the studio, he added to the film a separately recorded sound track containing both naturalistic and impressionistic effects. In the following year Lewis Milestone’s *All Quiet on the Western Front* and G.W. Pabst’s *Westfront 1918* both used postsynchronization for their battle scenes. **Ernst Lubitsch** used dubbing in his first American sound films, the dynamic musicals *The Love Parade* (1929) and *Monte Carlo* (1930), as did the French director **René Clair** in *Sous les toits de Paris* (*Under the Roofs of Paris*, 1930). In all these early instances, sound was recorded and rerecorded on a single track, although some American directors, including Milestone and the Russian-born Armenian **Rouben Mamoulian** (*Applause*, 1929; *City Streets*, 1931), had experimented with multiple microphone setups and overlapping dialogue as early as 1929. Generally, through 1932, either dialogue or music dominated the sound track unless they had been simultaneously recorded on the set. In 1933, however, technology was introduced that allowed filmmakers to mix separately recorded tracks for background music, **sound effects**, and synchronized dialogue at the dubbing stage. By the late 1930s, postsynchronization and multiple-channel mixing had become standard industry procedure.

The pre-World War II sound era » Introduction of sound » Nontechnical effects of sound

Other changes wrought by sound were more purely human. Directors, for example, could no longer literally direct their performers while the cameras were rolling and sound was being recorded. Actors and actresses were suddenly required to have pleasant voices and to act without the assistance of mood music or the director’s shouted instructions through long dialogue takes. Many found that they could not learn lines; others tried and were defeated by heavy foreign accents (e.g., **Emil Jannings**, Pola Negri, Vilma Banky, and Lya de Putti) or voices that did not match their screen image (e.g., **Colleen Moore**, Corinne Griffith, Norma Talmadge, and **John Gilbert**). Numerous silent stars were supplanted during the transitional period by stage actors or film actors with stage experience. “Canned theatre,” or literal transcriptions of stage hits, became a dominant Hollywood form between 1929 and 1931, which brought many Broadway players and directors into the film industry on a more or less permanent basis. In addition, to fulfill the unprecedented need for dialogue scripts, the studios imported hundreds of editors, critics, playwrights, and novelists, many of whom would make lasting contributions to the verbal sophistication of the American sound film.

As sound demanded new filmmaking techniques and talents, it also created new genres and renovated old ones. The realism it permitted inspired the emergence of tough, socially pertinent films with urban settings. **Crime epics**, or **gangster films**, such as **Mervyn LeRoy's** *Little Caesar* (1930), **William Wellman's** *Public Enemy* (1931), and **Howard Hawks's** *Scarface* (1932) used sound to exploit urban slang and the audible pyrotechnics of the recently invented **Thompson submachine gun**. Subgenres of the gangster film appeared in the prison film (*The Big House*, 1930; Hawks's *The Criminal Code*, 1931; LeRoy's *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, 1932) and the newspaper picture (Milestone's *The Front Page*, 1931; LeRoy's *Five Star Final*, 1931; John Cromwell's *Scandal Sheet*, 1931; **Frank Capra's** *Platinum Blonde*, 1931), both of which relied on authentic-sounding vernacular speech.

The public's fascination with speech also accounted for the new popularity of historical biographies, or "biopics." These films were modeled on the UFA's silent *Kostümfilm*, but dialogue enhanced their verisimilitude. Several actors with impressive speaking voices were often associated with the genre, notably **George Arliss** (*Disraeli*, 1929; *The House of Rothschild*, 1934) and **Paul Muni** (*The Life of Emile Zola*, 1937; *Juarez*, 1939) in the **United States** and **Charles Laughton** (**Alexander Korda's** *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, 1933, and *Rembrandt*, 1936) in England.

In the realm of comedy, pure slapstick could not and did not survive, predicated as it was on purely visual humour. It was replaced by equally vital—but ultimately less surreal and abstract—sound comedies: the anarchic dialogue comedies of the **Marx Brothers** (*The Cocoanuts*, 1929; *Animal Crackers*, 1930; *Monkey Business*, 1931; *Horse Feathers*, 1932; *Duck Soup*, 1933) and **W.C. Fields** (*The Golf Specialist*, 1930; *The Dentist*, 1932; *Million Dollar Legs*, 1932) and the fast-paced wisecracking "screwball" comedies of directors such as **Frank Capra** (*Lady for a Day*, 1933; *It Happened One Night*, 1934; *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, 1936), **Howard Hawks** (*Twentieth Century*, 1934; *Bringing Up Baby*, 1938), Gregory La Cava (*My Man Godfrey*, 1936), Mitchell Leisen (*Easy Living*, 1937), and **Leo McCarey** (*The Awful Truth*, 1937).

The **horror-fantasy** genre, traditionally rooted in **German Expressionism**, was greatly enhanced by sound, which not only permitted the addition of eerie sound effects but also restored the dimension of literary dialogue present in so many of the original sources. Appropriately, Universal Pictures' three great horror classics—**Tod Browning's** *Dracula* (1931), James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931), and Karl Freund's *The Mummy* (1932)—were all early sound films.

One significant genre whose emergence was obviously contingent upon sound was the **musical**. Versions of Broadway musicals were among the first sound films made (including, of course, the catalyst for the conversion, Warner Brothers' *The Jazz Singer*), and by the early 1930s the movie musical had developed in formal sophistication to become perhaps the major American genre of the decade. Among the formidable artists who helped to achieve this sophistication were Ernst Lubitsch at Paramount (*The Love Parade*, 1929; *Monte Carlo*, 1930; *The Smiling Lieutenant*, 1931), dance director **Busby Berkeley** at Warner Brothers (*42nd Street*, 1933; *Gold Diggers of 1933*, 1933; *Footlight Parade*, 1933; *Dames*, 1934), and dancer-star **Fred Astaire**, who choreographed and directed his own integrated dance sequences at RKO (*The Gay Divorcee*, 1934; *Roberta*, 1935; *Top Hat*, 1935; *Swing Time*, 1936).

Walt Disney pioneered a genre that might be called the **animated musical** with *The Skeleton Dance* (1929), the first entry in his "Silly Symphony" series. Unburdened by the awkward logistics of live-action shooting, Disney was free to combine sound and image asynchronously or with perfect frame-by-frame synchronization in such classic **cartoons** as *Steamboat Willie* (1928—Mickey Mouse's debut) and *The Three Little Pigs* (1933). To enhance their fantasy-like appeal, both the musical and the **animated film** made early use of the photographic colour systems introduced by the Technicolor Corporation during the conversion to sound (two-colour imbibition, 1928; three-colour, three-strip imbibition, 1932), and the two genres quickly became associated with colour in the public mind.

The pre-World War II sound era » Introduction of colour

Photographic colour entered the cinema at approximately the same time as sound, although, as with sound, various colour effects had been used in films since the invention of the medium. **Georges Méliès**, for example, employed 21 women at his Montreuil studio to hand-colour his films frame by frame, but hand-colouring was not cost-effective unless films were very short. In the mid-1900s, as films began to approach one reel in length and more prints of each film were sold, mechanized **stenciling** processes were introduced. In Pathé's Pathécolor system, for example, a stencil was cut for each colour desired (up to six) and aligned with the print; colour was then applied through the stencil frame by frame at high speeds. With the advent of the feature and the conversion of the industry to **mass production** during the 1910s, frame-by-frame stenciling was replaced by mechanized tinting and toning. Tinting coloured all the light areas of a picture and was achieved by immersing a black-and-white print in dye or by using coloured film base for printing. The toning process involved chemically treating film emulsion to colour the dark areas of the print. Each process produced monochrome images, the colour of which was usually chosen to correspond to the mood or setting of the scene. Occasionally, the two processes were combined to produce elaborate two-colour effects. By the early 1920s, nearly all American features included at least one coloured sequence; but after 1927, when it was discovered that tinting or toning film stock interfered with the transmission of optical sound, both practices were temporarily abandoned, leaving the market open to new systems of **colour photography**.

Photographic colour can be produced in motion pictures using either an additive process or a subtractive one. The first systems to be developed and used were all additive ones, such as Charles Urban's Kinemacolor (c. 1906) and Gaumont's Chronochrome (c. 1912). They achieved varying degrees of popularity, but none was entirely successful, largely because all additive systems involve the use of both special cameras and projectors, which ultimately makes them too complicated and costly for widespread industrial use.

One of the first successful subtractive processes was a two-colour one introduced by Herbert Kalmus's **Technicolor** Corporation in 1922. It used a special camera and a complex procedure to produce two separate positive prints that were then cemented together into a single print. The final print needed careful handling but could be projected using ordinary equipment. This "cemented positive" process was used successfully in such features as *Toll of the Sea* (1922) and Fairbanks's *The Black Pirate* (1926). In 1928 Technicolor introduced an improved process in which two gelatin positives were used as relief matrices to "print" colour onto a single strip of film. This printing process, known as imbibition, or **dye-transfer**, made it possible to mass-produce sturdy, high-quality prints. Its introduction resulted in a significant rise in Technicolor production between 1929 and 1932. Colour reproduction in the two-colour Technicolor process was good, but, because only two of the three **primary colours** were used, it was still not completely lifelike. Its popularity began to decline sharply in 1932, and Technicolor replaced it with a three-colour system that employed the same basic principles but included all three primary colours.

For the next 25 years almost every colour film made was produced using Technicolor's three-colour system. Although the

quality of the system was excellent, there were drawbacks. The bulk of the camera made location shooting difficult. Furthermore, Technicolor's virtual monopoly gave it indirect control of the production companies, which were required to rent—at high rates—equipment, crew, consultants, and laboratory services from Technicolor every time they used the system. In the midst of the Depression, therefore, conversion to colour was slow and never really complete. After three-colour Technicolor was used successfully in Disney's cartoon short *The Three Little Pigs* (1933), the live-action short *La Cucaracha* (1934), and Rouben Mamoulian's live-action feature *Becky Sharp* (1935), it gradually worked its way into mainstream feature production (*The Garden of Allah*, 1936; *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 1937; *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, 1938; *The Wizard of Oz*, 1939; *Gone with the Wind*, 1939), although it remained strongly associated with fantasy and spectacle.

The pre-World War II sound era » The Hollywood studio system

If the coming of sound changed the aesthetic dynamics of the filmmaking process, it altered the economic structure of the industry even more, precipitating some of the largest mergers in motion-picture history. Throughout the 1920s, **Paramount**, **MGM**, **First National**, and other studios had conducted ambitious campaigns of vertical integration by ruthlessly acquiring first-run theatre chains. It was primarily in response to these aggressive maneuvers that **Warner Brothers** and **Fox** sought to dominate smaller exhibitors by providing prerecorded musical accompaniment to their films. The unexpected success of their strategy forced the industry-wide conversion to sound and transformed Warner Brothers and Fox into major corporations. By 1929, Warner Brothers had acquired the Stanley theatre circuit, which controlled nearly all the first-run houses in the mid-Atlantic states, and the production and distribution facilities of its former rival First National to become one of the largest studios in Hollywood. Fox went even further, building the multimillion-dollar Movietone City in Westwood, California, in 1928 and acquiring controlling shares of both Loew's, Inc., the parent corporation of MGM, and Gaumont British, England's largest producer-distributor-exhibitor. Its holdings were surpassed only by those of Paramount, which controlled an international distribution network and the vast Publix theatre chain. In an effort to become even more powerful, Paramount in 1929 acquired one-half of the newly formed **Columbia Broadcasting System** and proposed a merger with Warner Brothers. It was then that the U.S. Department of Justice intervened, forbidding Paramount's merger with Warner Brothers and divorcing Fox from Loew's.

Without government interference, "Paramount-Vitaphone" and "Fox-Loew's" might have divided the entertainment industries of the entire English-speaking world between them. As it was, by 1930, 95 percent of all American production was concentrated in the hands of only eight studios—five vertically integrated major companies, which controlled production, distribution, and exhibition, and three horizontally integrated minor ones that controlled production and distribution. Distribution was conducted at both a national and an international level: since about 1925, foreign rentals had accounted for half of all American feature revenues, and they would continue to do so for the next two decades. Exhibition was controlled through the major studios' ownership of 2,600 first-run theatres, which represented 16 percent of the national total but generated three-fourths of the revenue. Film production throughout the 1930s and '40s consumed only 5 percent of total corporate assets, while distribution accounted for another 1 percent. The remaining 94 percent of the studios' investment went to the exhibition sector. In short, as film historian Douglas Gomery pointed out, the five major studios of the time can best be characterized as "diversified theater chains, producing features, shorts, cartoons, and newsreels to fill their houses."

Each studio produced a distinctive style of entertainment, depending on its corporate economy and the personnel it had under contract. **MGM**, the largest and most powerful of the major studios, was also the most "American" and was given to the celebration of middle-class values in a visual style characterized by bright, even, high-key lighting and opulent production design. Paramount, with its legions of UFA-trained directors, art directors, and cameramen, was thought to be the most "European" of the studios. It produced the most sophisticated and visually baroque films of the era. Conditioned by its recent experience as a struggling minor studio, Warner Brothers was the most cost-conscious of the major companies. Its directors worked on a quota system, and a flat, low-key lighting style was decreed by the studio to conceal the cheapness of its sets. Warner Brothers' films were often targeted for working-class audiences. **Twentieth Century-Fox** was formed in 1935 by the merger of Fox Film Corporation and Joseph M. Schenck's Twentieth Century Pictures after **William Fox** was bankrupted through his financial manipulations. The studio acquired a reputation for its tight budget and production control, but its films were noted for their glossy attractiveness and state-of-the-art **special effects**. **RKO Radio** was the smallest of the major companies and never achieved complete financial stability during the studio era; it became prominent, however, as the producer of *King Kong* (1933), the Astaire-Rogers dance cycle, and **Orson Welles's** *Citizen Kane* (1941) and also as the distributor of Disney's features.

The minor studios were Carl Laemmle's **Universal Pictures**, which became justly famous for its horror films; **Harry Cohn's** **Columbia Pictures**, whose main assets were director Frank Capra and screenwriter Robert Riskin; and **United Artists**, which functioned as a distributor for independent American features and for Alexander Korda's London Film Productions. In terms of total assets, the five major studios were about four times as big as the three minor ones, with MGM, Paramount, Warner Brothers, and Twentieth Century-Fox all about the same size and RKO approximately 25 percent smaller than its peers. At the very bottom of the film industry hierarchy were a score of poorly capitalized studios, such as Republic, Monogram, and Grand National, that produced cheap, formulaic, hour-long "**B movies**" for the second half of double bills. The double feature, an attraction introduced in the early 1930s to counter the Depression-era box-office slump, was the standard form of exhibition for about 15 years. The larger studios were, for the most part, not interested in producing B movies for double bills, because, unlike the main feature, whose earnings were based on box-office receipts, the second feature rented at a flat rate, which meant that the profit it returned, though guaranteed, was fixed at a small amount. At their peak, the B-film studios produced 40–50 movies per year and provided a training ground for such stars as **John Wayne**. The films were made as quickly as possible, and directors functioned as their own producers, with complete authority over their projects' minuscule budgets.

An important aspect of the studio system was the **Production Code**, which was implemented in 1934 in response to pressure from the Legion of Decency and public protest against the graphic violence and sexual suggestiveness of some sound films (the urban gangster films, for example, and the films of **Mae West**). The Legion had been established in 1933 by the American bishops of the **Roman Catholic church** (armed with a mandate from the Vatican) to fight for better and more "moral" motion pictures. In April 1934, with the support of both Protestant and Jewish organizations, the Legion called for a nationwide boycott of movies it considered indecent. The studios, having lost millions of dollars in 1933 as the delayed effects of the Depression caught up with the box office, rushed to appease the protesters by authorizing the MPPDA to create the Production Code Administration. A prominent Catholic layman, Joseph I. Breen, was appointed to head the administration, and under Breen's auspices Father Daniel A. Lord, a Jesuit priest, and Martin Quigley, a Catholic publisher, coauthored the code whose provisions would dictate the content of American motion pictures, without exception, for the next 20 years.

In a swing away from the excesses of the "new morality" of the Jazz Age, the Production Code was monumentally repressive.

forbidding the depiction on screen of almost everything germane to the experience of normal human adults. It prohibited showing “scenes of passion,” and adultery, illicit **sex**, seduction, and rape could not even be alluded to unless they were absolutely essential to the plot and severely punished by the film’s end. The code demanded that the sanctity of marriage be upheld at all times, although sexual relations were not to be suggested between spouses. It forbade the use of profanity, vulgarity, and racial epithets; prostitution, miscegenation, sexual deviance, or drug addiction; nudity, sexually suggestive dancing or costumes, and “lustful kissing”; and excessive drinking, **cruelty to animals** or children, and the representation of surgical operations, especially childbirth, “in fact or silhouette.” In the realm of **violence**, it was forbidden to display or to discuss contemporary weapons, to show the details of a **crime**, to show **law enforcement** officers dying at the hands of criminals, to suggest excessive brutality or slaughter, or to use murder or suicide except when crucial to the plot. Finally, the code required that all criminal activity be shown to be punished; under no circumstances could any crime be represented as justified. Studios were required to submit their scripts to Breen’s office for approval before beginning filming, and completed films had to be screened for the office, and altered if necessary, in order to receive a Production Code Seal, without which no film could be distributed in the United States. Noncompliance with the code’s restrictions brought a fine of \$25,000, but the studios were so anxious to please that the fine was never levied in the 22-year lifetime of the code.

The studio heads were willing not merely to accept but also to institutionalize this system of de facto censorship and **prior restraint** because they believed it was necessary for the continued success of their business. The economic threat of a national boycott during the worst years of the **Depression** was real, and the film industry, which depends on pleasing a mass audience, could not afford to ignore **public opinion**. Producers found, moreover, that they could use the code to increase the efficiency of production. By rigidly prescribing and proscribing the kinds of behaviour that could be shown or described on the screen, the code could be used as a **scriptwriter’s** blueprint. A love story, for example, could only move in one direction (toward marriage), adultery and crime could have only one conclusion (disease or horrible death), dialogue in all situations had well-defined parameters, and so forth. The code, in other words, provided a framework for the construction of screenplays and enabled studios to streamline what had always been (and still is) one of the most difficult and yet most essential tasks in the production process—the creation of filmable continuity scripts. Furthermore, the Depression was a time of open political anti-Semitism in the United States, and the men who controlled the American motion-picture industry were all Jewish; it was a propitious moment for them to antagonize their predominantly non-Jewish audience.

Between 1930 and 1945, the studio system produced more than 7,500 features, every stage of which, from conception through exhibition, was carefully controlled. Among these assembly-line productions are some of the most important American films ever made, the work of gifted directors who managed to transcend the mechanistic nature of the system to produce work of unique personal vision. These directors include **Josef von Sternberg**, whose exotically stylized films starring **Marlene Dietrich** (*Shanghai Express*, 1932; *The Scarlet Empress*, 1934) constitute a kind of painting with light; **John Ford**, whose vision of history as moral truth produced such mythic works as *Stagecoach* (1939), *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), *My Darling Clementine* (1946), and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949); **Howard Hawks**, a master of genres and the architect of a tough, functional “American” style of narrative exemplified in his films *Scarface* (1932), *Twentieth Century* (1934), *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939), and *The Big Sleep* (1946); British émigré **Alfred Hitchcock**, whose films appealed to the popular audience as suspense melodramas but were in fact abstract visual psychodramas of guilt and spiritual terror (*Rebecca*, 1940; *Suspicion*, 1941; *Shadow of a Doubt*, 1943; *Notorious*, 1946); and **Frank Capra**, whose cheerful screwball comedies (*It Happened One Night*) and populist fantasies of good will (*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, 1939) sometimes gave way to darker warnings against losing faith and integrity (*It’s a Wonderful Life*, 1946). Other significant directors with less consistent thematic or visual styles were **William Wyler** (*Wuthering Heights*, 1939; *The Little Foxes*, 1941), **George Cukor** (*Camille*, 1936; *The Philadelphia Story*, 1940), **Leo McCarey** (*The Awful Truth*, 1937; *Going My Way*, 1944), **Preston Sturges** (*Sullivan’s Travels*, 1941; *The Miracle of Morgan’s Creek*, 1944), and **George Stevens** (*Gunga Din*, 1939; *Woman of the Year*, 1942).

The most extraordinary film to emerge from the studio system, however, was **Orson Welles’s** *Citizen Kane* (1941), whose controversial theme and experimental technique combined to make it a classic. The first of six films Welles had contracted to produce for RKO with his **Mercury** Theater radio ensemble company, *Citizen Kane* made radically innovative use of sound and deep-focus photography as it examined the life of Charles Foster Kane, a character based on the press baron **William Randolph Hearst**. The film employs a complicated flashback structure in which Kane’s friends and associates give their accounts of the man after his death, paradoxically revealing not greatness or might but pathetic insecurity and emptiness. In creating this portrait of a powerful American who could bend international politics to his will but never fathom human love, Welles stretched the technology of image and sound recording beyond its contemporary limits. Using a newly available Eastman film stock with increased sensitivity to light, plastic-coated wide-angle lenses opened to smaller than normal apertures, and high-intensity **arc lamps**, cinematographer **Gregg Toland** achieved a photographic **depth of field** that approximated the perceptual range of the human eye and enabled Welles to place the film’s characters in several different planes of depth within a single scene. These deep-focus sequence shots are complemented throughout the film by the techniques of ambient and directional sound that Welles had learned from radio. Most important of all, the resonance of the film’s narrative matches the technical brilliance of its presentation, functioning on several levels at once, the historical, the psychological, and the mythic. Although recognized by many critics as a work of genius, *Citizen Kane* was a financial failure on its release, and Welles directed only three other films under his RKO contract. *Citizen Kane* remains, nevertheless, one of the most influential films ever made and is widely considered to be one of the greatest.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema

Having created large new markets for their sound recording technologies in the United States, Western Electric and RCA were anxious to do the same abroad. Their objective coincided with the desire of the major American film studios to extend their control of the international motion-picture industry. Accordingly, the studios began to export sound films in late 1928, and ERPI and RCA began installing their equipment in European theatres at the same time. Exhibitors in the **United Kingdom** converted the most rapidly, with 22 percent wired for sound in 1929 and 63 percent by the end of 1932. Continental exhibitors converted more slowly, largely because of a bitter patents war between the German cartel Tobis-Klangfilm, which controlled the European rights to sound-on-film technology, and Western Electric. The dispute was finally resolved at the 1930 German-American Film Conference in Paris, where Tobis, ERPI, and RCA agreed to pool their patents and divide the world market among themselves. The language problem also delayed the conversion to sound on the Continent. Because dubbing was all but impossible in the earliest years of the transition, films had to be shot in several different languages (sometimes featuring a different cast for each version) at the time of production in order to receive wide international distribution. Paramount therefore built a huge studio in the Paris suburb of Joinville in 1930 to mass-produce multilingual films. The other major American studios quickly followed suit, making the region a factory for the round-the-clock production of movies in as many as 15 separate languages. By the end of 1931, however, the technique of dubbing had been sufficiently perfected to replace multilingual production, and Joinville was converted into a dubbing centre for all of Europe.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » Great Britain

Because of the lack of a language barrier, the United Kingdom became Hollywood's first major foreign market for sound films. The British motion-picture industry was protected from complete American domination, however, by the Cinematograph Films Act passed by Parliament in 1927. The act required that a certain minimum proportion of the films exhibited in British theatres be of domestic origin. Although most of the films made to fulfill this condition were low-budget, low-standard productions known as "quota quickies," the British cinema produced many important film artists (most of whom were soon lured to Hollywood). One of the first major British talents to emerge after the introduction of sound was Alfred Hitchcock, who directed a series of stylish thrillers for British International Pictures and Gaumont British, before he moved to Hollywood in 1939. His first sound film, *Blackmail* (1929), marked the effective beginning of **sound production** in England. The film was already in production as a silent when the director was ordered to make it as a "part-talkie." It was especially noted for the expressive use of both naturalistic and nonnaturalistic sound, which became a distinguishing feature of Hitchcock's later British triumphs (*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 1934; *The Thirty-nine Steps*, 1935; *Sabotage*, 1936), as well as of the films of his American career. Among the significant British filmmakers who remained based in London were the Hungarian-born brothers Alexander, Zoltán, and Vincent Korda, who founded London Films in 1932 and collaborated on some of England's most spectacular pre-World War II productions (e.g., *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, 1933; *Rembrandt*, 1936; *Elephant Boy*, 1937; *The Four Feathers*, 1939), and **John Grierson**, who produced such outstanding documentaries as Robert Flaherty's *Industrial Britain* (1933) and Basil Wright's *Song of Ceylon* (1935) for the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit and its successor, the General Post Office (GPO) Film Unit.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » France

In France during the 1920s, as a result of the post-World War I decline of the Pathé and Gaumont film companies, a large number of small studios had leased their facilities to independent companies, which were often formed to produce a single film. This method of film production had lent itself readily to experimentation, encouraging the development of the **avant-garde** film movement known as **Impressionism** (led by Germaine Dulac, Jean Epstein, Marcel L'Herbier, and Fernand Léger) and the innovative films of **Abel Gance** (*La Roue*, 1923; *Napoléon vu par Abel Gance*, 1927) and Dmitri Kirsanoff (*Ménilmontant*, 1926). Because the French film industry had evolved no marketable technology for sound recording, however, the coming of sound left producers and exhibitors alike vulnerable to the American production companies at Joinville and to the German Tobis-Klangfilm, which had been purchasing large studios in the Paris suburb of Epinay since 1929. In the face of this threat, the French industry attempted to regroup itself around what was left of the Pathé and Gaumont empires, forming two consortia—Pathé-Natan and Gaumont-Franco-Film-Aubert—for the production and distribution of sound films. Although neither group was financially successful, they seem to have created an unprecedented demand for French-language films about French subjects, reinvigorating the country's cinema. Between 1928 and 1938, French film production doubled from 66 to 122 features, and, in terms of box-office receipts, the French audience was considered to be second only to the American one. By 1937–38 French cinema had become the most critically acclaimed in the world, leading export markets in every **industrial country** in the West.

Many filmmakers contributed to the prominence of French cinema during the 1930s, but the three most important were **René Clair**, Jean Vigo, and **Jean Renoir**. Clair was a former avant-gardist whose contributions to the aesthetics of sound, although not so crucial as Hitchcock's, were nevertheless significant. His *Sous les toits de Paris* (*Under the Roofs of Paris*, 1930), frequently hailed as the first artistic triumph of the sound film, was a lively **musical comedy** that mixed asynchronous sound with a bare minimum of dialogue. Clair used the same technique in *Le Million* (1931), which employed a wide range of dynamic contrapuntal effects. *À nous la liberté* (*Freedom for Us*, 1931) was loosely based on the life of Charles Pathé and dealt with more serious themes of industrial alienation, although it still used the musical-comedy form. The film's intelligence, visual stylization, and brilliant use of asynchronous sound made it a classic of the transitional period.

Jean Vigo completed only two features before his early death: *Zéro de conduite* (*Zero for Conduct*, 1933) and *L'Atalante* (1934). Both are lyrical films about individuals in revolt against social reality. Their intensely personal nature is thought to have influenced the style of poetic realism that characterized French cinema from 1934 to 1940 and that is exemplified by Jacques Feyder's *Pension mimosas* (1935), Julien Duvivier's *Pépé le Moko* (1937), and Marcel Carné's *Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938) and *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939). Darkly poetic, these films were characterized by a brooding pessimism that reflected the French public's despair over the failure of the Popular Front movement of 1935–37 and the seeming inevitability of war.

Jean Renoir, the son of the Impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir, made nine films before he directed the grimly realistic *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*, 1931) and *La Nuit du carrefour* (*Night at the Crossroads*, 1932), his first important essays in sound. Renoir subsequently demonstrated a spirit of increasing social concern in such films as *Boudu sauvé des eaux* (*Boudu Saved from Drowning*, 1932), a comic assault on bourgeois values; *Toni* (1934), a realistic story of Italian immigrant workers; *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (*The Crime of Monsieur Lange*, 1935), a political parable about the need for collective action against capitalist corruption; and *La Vie est à nous* ("Life Is Ours"; English title: *The People of France*; 1936), a propaganda film for the **French Communist Party** that contains both fictional and documentary footage. The strength of his commitment is most clearly expressed, however, by the eloquent appeal he makes for human understanding in his two pre-World War II masterworks. *La Grande Illusion* (*Grand Illusion*, 1937), set in a **World War I** prison camp, portrays a civilization on the brink of collapse due to national and class antagonisms; in its assertion of the primacy of human relationships and the utter futility of war (the "grand illusion"), the film stands as one of the greatest antiwar statements ever made. In *La Règle du jeu* (*The Rules of the Game*, 1939), set in contemporary France, the breakdown of civilization has already occurred. European society is shown to be an elegant but brittle fabrication in which feeling and substance have been replaced by "manners," a world in which "the terrible thing," to quote the protagonist Octave (played by Renoir), "is that everyone has his reasons." In both films Renoir continued his earlier experiments with directional sound and deep-focus composition. His technical mastery came to influence the American cinema when he emigrated to the United States to escape the Nazis in 1940.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » Germany

Because of its ownership of the Tobis-Klangfilm patents, the German film industry found itself in a position of relative strength in the early years of sound, and it produced several important films during that period, including Josef von Sternberg's *Der blaue Engel* (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), G.W. Pabst's two antiwar films, *Westfront 1918* (1930) and *Kameradschaft* (1931), and his adaptation of Bertolt Brecht's *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*, 1931). The most influential of the early German sound films, however, was Fritz Lang's *M* (1931), which utilized a dimension of aural imagery to counterpoint its visuals in the manner of Alfred Hitchcock's *Blackmail*. *M* has no musical score but makes expressive use of nonnaturalistic sound, as when

the child murderer (played by **Peter Lorre**) is heard to whistle a recurring theme from Grieg's *Peer Gynt* before committing his crimes offscreen.

German cinema became moribund after **Adolf Hitler** took power in 1933, primarily because **Joseph Goebbels** encouraged filmmakers to produce trivial and escapist entertainment rather than more meaningful or thought-provoking fare. One director who did create films of undeniable artistic quality under Goebbels's regime was **Leni Riefenstahl**. She made striking use of asynchronous sound and montage in two propaganda epics commissioned by Hitler, *Triumph des Willens* (*Triumph of the Will*, 1935) and *Olympische Spiele 1936* (1938). A similar situation existed in **Benito Mussolini's** Italy, where fascist censorship mandated the production of *telefono bianco*, or "white telephone," films (lightweight romantic comedies with glamorous studio sets) and occasional nationalist propaganda, although Mussolini did establish a national film school (the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, 1935) and a huge new studio complex (Cinecittà, 1937) in Rome.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » Soviet Union

Although the Soviet engineers P.G. Tager and A.F. Shorin had designed optical sound systems as early as 1927, neither was workable until 1929. Sound was slow in coming to the Soviet Union: most Soviet transitional films were technically inferior to those of the West, and Soviet filmmakers continued to make **silent films** until the mid-1930s. As in Germany and Italy, however, sound reemphasized film's propaganda value, and through the authoritarian government's policy of **Socialist Realism** the Soviet cinema became an instrument of mass indoctrination as never before. The filmmakers most affected by the new policy were the great montage artists of the 1920s. Each of them made admirable attempts to experiment with sound—Lev Kuleshov's *The Great Consoler* (1933), Dziga Vertov's *Symphony of the Donbas* (1931) and *Three Songs About Lenin* (1934), Sergey Eisenstein's *Bezhin Meadow* (1935; terminated by Boris Shumyatsky in midproduction), Vsevolod Illarionovich Pudovkin's *A Simple Case* (1932) and *Deserter* (1933), and Aleksandr Dovzhenko's *Ivan* (1932)—but their work was ultimately suppressed or defamed by the party bureaucracy. Only Eisenstein was powerful enough to reassert his genius: in the nationalistic epic *Alexander Nevsky* (1938), whose contrapuntal sound track is a classic of its kind, and in the operatically stylized *Ivan the Terrible, Parts I and II* (1944–46), a veiled critique of Stalin's autocracy. Most of the films produced at the time were propaganda glorifying national heroes.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » Japan

In Japan, as in the Soviet Union, the conversion to sound was a slow process: in 1932 only 45 of 400 features were made with sound, and silent films continued to be produced in large numbers until 1937. The main reason for the slow conversion was that Japanese motion pictures had "talked" since their inception through the mediation of a *benshi*, a commentator who stood to the side of the screen and narrated the action for the audience in the manner of **Kabuki** theatre. The arrival of recorded sound liberated the Japanese cinema from its dependence on live narrators and was resisted by the *benshi*, many of whom were stars in their own right and possessed considerable box-office appeal. In the end, however, Japan's conversion to sound was complete.

As in the United States, the introduction of sound enabled the major Japanese film companies (Nikkatsu, founded 1912; Shochiku, 1920; Toho, c. 1935) to acquire smaller companies and form vertical monopolies controlling production, distribution, and exhibition. Production procedures were standardized and structured for the mass production of motion pictures, and the studios increased their efficiency by specializing in either *jidai-geki*, period films set before 1868 (the year marking the beginning of the **Meiji Restoration**, 1868–1912, and the abolition of the feudal shogunate), or *gendai-geki*, films of contemporary life, set any time thereafter. Although, as a matter of geopolitical circumstance, there was hardly any export market for Japanese films prior to **World War II**, the domestic popularity of sound films enabled the Japanese motion-picture industry to become one of the most prolific in the world, releasing 400 films annually to the nation's 2,500 theatres. Most of these films had no purpose other than entertainment, but in the late 1930s, as the government became increasingly expansionist and militaristic, Japan's major directors turned to works of social criticism called "tendency" films, such as **Ozu Yasujiro's** *Hitori musuko* (*The Only Son*, 1936) and **Mizoguchi Kenji's** *Naniwa hika* (*Osaka Elegy*, 1936) and *Gion no shimai* (*Sisters of the Gion*, 1936). In response the government imposed a strict code of censorship that was retained throughout the war.

The pre-World War II sound era » International cinema » India

In India, sound created a major industrial boom by reviving a popular 19th-century theatrical form: the folk-music drama based on centuries-old religious myths. Despite the fact that films had to be produced in as many as 10 regional languages, the popularity of these "all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing" mythologicals or historicals played an enormous role in winning acceptance for sound throughout the subcontinent and in encouraging the growth of the Indian film industry. An average of 230 features were released per year throughout the 1930s, almost all for domestic consumption.

The war years and post-World War II trends » Decline of the Hollywood studios

During the **U.S.** involvement in World War II, the Hollywood film industry cooperated closely with the government to support its war-aims information campaign. Following the declaration of war on Japan, the government created a Bureau of Motion Picture Affairs to coordinate the production of entertainment features with patriotic, morale-boosting themes and messages about the "American way of life," the nature of the enemy and the allies, civilian responsibility on the home front, and the fighting forces themselves. Initially unsophisticated vehicles for xenophobia and jingoism with titles like *The Devil with Hitler* and *Blondie for Victory* (both 1942), Hollywood's wartime films became increasingly serious as the war dragged on (Fritz Lang's *Hangmen Also Die*, Jean Renoir's *This Land Is Mine*, Tay Garnett's *Bataan*, all 1943; Delmer Daves's *Destination Tokyo*, Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat*, Lewis Milestone's *The Purple Heart*, all 1944; and Milestone's *A Walk in the Sun*, 1946). In addition to commercial features, several Hollywood directors produced documentaries for government and military agencies. Among the best-known of these films, which were designed to explain the war to both servicemen and civilians, are Frank Capra's seven-part series *Why We Fight* (1942–44), John Ford's *The Battle of Midway* (1942), William Wyler's *The Memphis Belle* (1944), and **John Huston's** *The Battle of San Pietro* (1944). The last three were shot on location and were made especially effective by their immediacy.

When World War II ended, the American film industry seemed to be in an ideal position. Full-scale mobilization had ended the Depression domestically, and victory had opened vast, unchallenged markets in the war-torn economies of western Europe and Japan. Furthermore, from 1942 through 1945, Hollywood had experienced the most stable and lucrative three years in its history, and in 1946, when two-thirds of the American population went to the movies at least once a week, the studios earned

record-breaking profits. The euphoria ended quickly, however, as inflation and labour unrest boosted domestic production costs and as important foreign markets, including Britain and Italy, were temporarily lost to protectionist quotas. The industry was more severely weakened in 1948, when a federal antitrust suit against the five major and three minor studios ended in the "Paramount decrees," which forced the studios to divest themselves of their theatre chains and mandated competition in the exhibition sector for the first time in 30 years. Finally, the advent of network **television** broadcasting in the 1940s provided Hollywood with its first real competition for American leisure time by offering consumers "movies in the home."

The American film industry's various problems and the nation's general postwar disillusionment generated several new film types in the late 1940s. Although the studios continued to produce traditional genre films, such as westerns and musicals, their financial difficulties encouraged them to make realistic, small-scale dramas rather than fantastic, lavish epics. Instead of depending on spectacle and **special effects** to create excitement, the new lower-budget films tried to develop thought-provoking or perverse stories reflecting the psychological and social problems besetting returning war veterans and others adapting to postwar life. Some of the American cinema's grimmest and most naturalistic films were produced during this period, including those of the so-called social consciousness cycle, which attempted to deal realistically with such endemic problems as racism (**Elia Kazan's** *Gentleman's Agreement*, 1947; Alfred Werker's *Lost Boundaries*, 1949), alcoholism (Stuart Heisler's *Smash-Up*, 1947), and **mental illness** (Anatole Litvak's *The Snake Pit*, 1948); the semidocumentary melodrama, which reconstructed true criminal cases and were often shot on location (Kazan's *Boomerang*, 1947; Henry Hathaway's *Kiss of Death*, 1947); and the **film noir**, whose dark, fatalistic interpretations of contemporary American reality are unique in the industry's history (Tay Garnett's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, 1946; Orson Welles's *The Lady from Shanghai*, 1948; Jacques Tourneur's *Out of the Past*, 1947; Abraham Polonsky's *Force of Evil*, 1948).

Film content was next influenced strongly by the fear of **communism** that pervaded the United States during the late 1940s and early '50s. Anticommunist "witch-hunts" began in Hollywood in 1947 when the **House Un-American Activities Committee** (HUAC) decided to investigate communist influence in motion pictures. More than 100 witnesses, including many of Hollywood's most talented and popular artists, were called before the committee to answer questions about their own and their associates' alleged communist affiliations. On November 24, 1947, a group of eight screenwriters and two directors, later known as the **Hollywood Ten**, were sentenced to serve up to a year in prison for refusing to testify. That evening the members of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, which included the leading studio heads, published what became known as the Waldorf Declaration, in which they fired the members of the Hollywood Ten and expressed their support of HUAC. The studios, afraid to antagonize already shrinking audiences, then initiated an unofficial policy of **blacklisting**, refusing to employ any person even suspected of having communist associations. Hundreds of people were fired from the industry, and many creative artists were never able to work in Hollywood again. Throughout the blacklisting era, filmmakers refrained from making any but the most conservative motion pictures; controversial topics or new ideas were carefully avoided. The resulting creative stagnation, combined with financial difficulties, contributed significantly to the demise of the studio system, although, paradoxically, the actions that the studios took between 1952 and 1965, including the practice of blacklisting, can be viewed as an attempt to halt the industry's decline.

The film industry believed that the greatest threat to its continued success was posed by television, especially in light of the Paramount decrees. The studios seemed to be losing their control of the nation's theatres at the same time that exhibitors were losing their audiences to television. The studios therefore attempted to diminish television's appeal by exploiting the two obvious advantages that film enjoyed over the new medium—the size of its images and, at a time when all television broadcasting was in black and white, the ability to produce photographic **colour**. (In the 1952–53 season, the ability to produce multiple-track stereophonic sound joined this list.) In the late 1940s, less than 12 percent of Hollywood features were produced in colour, primarily because of the expense of three-strip **Technicolor** filming. In 1950, however, a federal consent decree dissolved the Technicolor Corporation's de facto monopoly on the process, and Kodak simultaneously introduced a new multilayered film stock in which emulsions sensitive to the red, green, and blue parts of the spectrum were bonded together on a single roll. Patented as **Eastmancolor**, this "integral tri-pack" process offered excellent colour resolution at a low cost because it could be used with conventional cameras. Its availability hastened the industry's conversion to full colour production. By 1954 more than 50 percent of American features were made in colour, and the figure reached 94 percent by 1970.

The **aspect ratio** (the ratio of width to height) of the projected motion-picture image had been standardized at 1.33 to 1 since 1932, but, as television eroded the film industry's domestic audience, the studios increased screen size as a way of attracting audiences back into theatres. For both optical and architectural reasons this change in size usually meant increased width, not increased height. Early experiments with multiple-camera wide-screen (Cinerama, 1952) and stereoscopic 3-D (**Natural Vision**, 1952) provoked audience interest, but it was an anamorphic process called **CinemaScope** that prompted the wide-screen revolution. Introduced by Twentieth Century-Fox in the biblical epic *The Robe* (1953), CinemaScope used an anamorphic lens to squeeze a wide-angle image onto conventional 35-mm film stock and a similar lens to restore the image's original width in projection. CinemaScope's aspect ratio was 2.55 to 1, and the system had the great advantage of requiring no special cameras, film stock, or projectors. By the end of 1954, every Hollywood studio but Paramount had leased a version of the process from Fox (Paramount adopted a nonanamorphic process called VistaVision that exposed double-frame images by running film through special cameras and projectors horizontally rather than vertically), and many studios were experimenting with wide-gauge film systems (e.g., Todd-AO, 1955; Panavision-70, 1960) that required special equipment but eliminated the distortion inherent in the anamorphic process.

Like the coming of sound, the conversion to wide-screen formats produced an initial regression as filmmakers learned how to compose and edit their images for the new elongated frame. Sound had promoted the rise of aurally intensive genres such as the musical and the **gangster film**, and the wide-screen format similarly created a bias in favour of visually spectacular subjects and epic scale. The emergence of the three- to four-hour wide-screen "blockbuster" in such films as *War and Peace*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, and *The Ten Commandments* in 1956 coincided with the era's affinity for safe and sanitized material. Given the political paranoia of the times, few subjects could be treated seriously, and the studios concentrated on presenting traditional genre fare—westerns, musicals, comedies, and blockbusters—suitable for wide-screen treatment. Only a director like **Hitchcock**, whose style was oblique and imagist, could prosper in such a climate. He produced his greatest work during the period, much of it in VistaVision (*Rear Window*, 1954; *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 1956; *Vertigo*, 1958; *North by Northwest*, 1959; *Psycho*, 1960; *The Birds*, 1963).

In spite of the major film companies' elaborate strategies of defense, they continued to decline throughout the 1950s and '60s. Because they could no longer dominate the exhibition sector, they faced serious competition for the first time from **independent** and foreign filmmakers. "Runaway" productions (films made away from the studios, frequently abroad, to take advantage of lower costs) became common, and the **Production Code** was dissolved as a series of federal court decisions between 1952 and 1958 extended First Amendment protection to motion pictures. As their incomes shrank, the major companies' vast studios and backlots became liabilities that ultimately crippled them. The minor companies, however, owned modest studio facilities

and had lost nothing by the Paramount decrees because they controlled no theatres. They were thus able to prosper during this era, eventually becoming major companies themselves in the 1970s.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Italy

World War II physically and economically devastated the film industries of the **Soviet Union**, Japan, and most of the European nations. Italy's early surrender, however, left its facilities relatively intact, enabling the Italian cinema to lead the post-World War II film renaissance with its development of the **Neorealist** movement. Although it had roots in both Soviet expressive realism and French poetic realism, **Neorealism** was decidedly national in focus, taking as its subject the day-to-day reality of a country traumatized by political upheaval and war.

Most of the major figures in the Neorealist movement had studied at Mussolini's Centro Sperimentale, but they vigorously rejected the stagy, artificial style associated with the *telefono bianco* films in favour of a Marxist aesthetic of everyday life. The first identifiable Neorealist film was **Luchino Visconti's** *Ossessione* (*Obsession*, 1942), a bleak contemporary melodrama shot on location in the countryside around Ferrara. It was suppressed by the fascist censors, however, so that international audiences were first introduced to the movement through **Roberto Rossellini's** *Roma, città aperta* (*Open City*, 1945), which was shot on location in the streets of Rome only two months after Italy's surrender. The film featured both professional and nonprofessional actors and focused on ordinary people caught up in contemporary events. Its documentary texture, postrecorded sound track, and improvisational quality became the hallmark of the Neorealist movement. Rossellini followed it with *Paisà* (*Paisan*, 1946) and *Germania, anno zero* (*Germany, Year Zero*, 1947) to complete his "war trilogy." Visconti's second contribution to Neorealism was *La terra trema* (*The Earth Trembles*, 1948), an epic of peasant life that was shot on location in a Sicilian fishing village. In many respects it is more exemplary of the movement than *Ossessione* and is widely regarded as a masterpiece. Neorealism's third major director was **Vittorio De Sica**, who worked in close collaboration with scriptwriter **Cesare Zavattini**, the movement's major theorist and spokesman. De Sica's films sometimes tend toward sentimentality but in *Sciuscià* (*Shoeshine*, 1946), *Ladri di biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thief*, 1948), and *Umberto D.* (1952), he produced works central to the movement.

Neorealism was the first postwar cinema to reject Hollywood's narrative conventions and studio production techniques, and, as such, it had enormous influence on future movements such as British **Social Realism**, Brazilian Cinema Novo, and French and Czech New Wave. It also heralded the practices of shooting on location using natural lighting and postsynchronizing sound that later became standard in the film industry. Despite its influence, in the 1950s Neorealism disappeared as a distinct national movement, together with the socioeconomic context that had produced it, as the **Marshall Plan** began to work its "economic miracle" in Europe. Italian cinema nevertheless remained prominent through the films of several gifted directors who began their careers as Neorealists and went on to produce their major work during the 1960s and '70s.

Federico Fellini had worked as a scriptwriter for Rossellini before directing in the 1950s an impressive series of films whose form was Neorealist but whose content was allegorical (*I vitelloni* [*The Loafers*], 1953; *La strada* [*The Road*], 1954; *Le notti di Cabiria* [*Nights of Cabiria*], 1956). During the 1960s Fellini's work became increasingly surrealistic (*La dolce vita* [*The Sweet Life*], 1960; *Otto e mezzo* [$8\frac{1}{2}$], 1963; *Giulietta degli spiriti* [*Juliet of the Spirits*], 1965; *Fellini Satyricon*, 1969), and by the 1970s he was perceived to be a flamboyant ironic fantasist—a reputation that sustained him through such serious and successful films as *Fellini Roma* (1972), *Amarcord* (1974), and *E la nave va* (*And the Ship Sails On*, 1983).

Michelangelo Antonioni had also collaborated with Rossellini. Accordingly, his first films were Neorealist documentary shorts (*Gente del Po* [*People of the Po*], 1947), but during the 1950s he turned increasingly to an examination of the Italian bourgeoisie in such films as *Cronaca di un amore* (*Story of a Love Affair*, 1950), *La signora senza camelie* (*Camille Without Camellias*, 1953), and *Le amiche* (*The Girlfriends*, 1955), and in the early 1960s Antonioni produced a trilogy on the malaise of the **middle class** that made him internationally famous. In *L'avventura* (*The Adventure*, 1959), *La notte* (*The Night*, 1960), and *L'eclisse* (*The Eclipse*, 1962), he used long-take sequence shots equating film time with real time to create a vision of the reverberating emptiness of modern urban life. Antonioni then began to use colour expressionistically in *Deserto rosso* (*Red Desert*, 1964) and *Blow-Up* (1966) to convey alienation and abstraction from human feeling, and all of his later works in some way concerned the breakdown of personal relationships (*Zabriskie Point*, 1970; *Identificazione di una donna* [*Identification of a Woman*], 1982) and of identity itself (*The Passenger*, 1975).

While Fellini and Antonioni were putting Italy in the vanguard of modernist cinema, the country's second post-World War II generation of directors emerged. **Ermanno Olmi** (*Il posto* [*The Job*], 1961; *Un certo giorno* [*One Fine Day*], 1968; *L'albero degli zoccoli* [*The Tree of Wooden Clogs*], 1979) continued the Neorealist tradition in his tales of ordinary people caught up in systems beyond their comprehension. **Pier Paolo Pasolini**, who had worked as a scriptwriter for Fellini, achieved international recognition for *Il vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, 1964), a brilliant semidocumentary reconstruction of the life of Christ with Marxist overtones. Pasolini went on to direct a series of astonishing, often outrageous films that set forth a Marxist interpretation of history and myth—*Edipo re* (*Oedipus Rex*, 1967), *Teorema* (*Theorem*, 1968), *Porcile* (*Pigsty*, 1969), *Medea* (1969), *Salò* (1975)—before his murder in 1975. Like Pasolini, **Bernardo Bertolucci** was a Marxist intellectual whose films attempt to correlate sexuality, ideology, and history; his most successful films were *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*, 1970), a striking dissection of the psychopathology of fascism, *Ultimo tango a Parigi* (*Last Tango in Paris*, 1972), a meditation on sex and death, and *Novecento* (1900, 1976), a six-hour epic covering 50 years of Italian **class conflict**. Other important **Italian** filmmakers have included Francesco Rosi (*Salvatore Giuliano*, 1962), Marco Bellocchio (*La Cina è vicina* [*China Is Near*], 1967), **Marco Ferreri** (*La Grande Bouffe* [*Blow-Out*], 1973), Ettore Scola (*Una giornata speciale* [*A Special Day*], 1977), **Paolo and Vittorio Taviani** (*Padre padrone* [*Father and Master*], 1977), Franco Brusati (*Dimenticare Venezia* [*To Forget Venice*], 1979), and **Lina Wertmüller** (*Pasqualino settebellezze* [*Seven Beauties*], 1976).

Beginning in the 1970s, the declining European economy compelled many Italian directors to make coproductions with American, French, German, and Swedish companies. In order to maximize profits, several such films featured international stars in leading roles. This dependence on world markets—as well as the increased popularity of television throughout Italy—often led to the loss of national identity in Italian films, although such filmmakers as **Roberto Benigni**, Carlo Verdone, and Maurizio Nichetti were able to use the new situation to good advantage. Perhaps the most individual voice in recent Italian cinema has been Nanni Moretti, whose humorous, satiric works, such as *Caro diario* (*Dear Diary*, 1994), critique the social values of the late 20th century. Moretti's family drama *La stanza del figlio* (*The Son's Room*) won the top award at the 2001 Cannes **film festival**.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » France

French cinema of the occupation and postwar era produced many fine films (**Marcel Carné's** *Les Enfants du paradis* [*The Children of Paradise*], 1945; Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la bête* [*Beauty and the Beast*], 1946; René Clément's *Jeux interdits* [*Forbidden Games*], 1952; Jacques Becker's *Casque d'or* [*Golden Helmet*], 1952; Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Le Salaire de la peur* [*The Wages of Fear*], 1953), but their mode of presentation relied heavily on script and was predominantly literary. There were exceptions in the austere classicism of **Robert Bresson** (*Le Journal d'un curé de campagne* [*The Diary of a Country Priest*], 1950, and *Un Condamné à mort s'est échappé* [*A Man Escaped*], 1956), the absurdist comedy of **Jacques Tati** (*Les Vacances de M. Hulot* [*Mr. Hulot's Holiday*], 1953; *Mon oncle* [*My Uncle*], 1958), and the lush, magnificently stylized masterworks of the German émigré **Max Ophüls**, whose *La Ronde* (1950), *Le Plaisir* (1952), *Madame de...* (1953), and *Lola Montès* (1955) represent significant contributions to world cinema. An independent documentary movement, which produced such landmark nonfiction films as Georges Rouquier's *Farrebique* (1948), **Georges Franju's** *Le Sang des bêtes* (*The Blood of the Beasts*, 1949), and **Alain Resnais's** *Nuit et brouillard* (*Night and Fog*, 1956), also emerged at this time. It provided a training ground for young directors outside the traditional industry system and influenced the independent production style of the movement that culminated the French postwar period of renewal—the **Nouvelle Vague**, or **New Wave**.

The most important source of the New Wave lay in the theoretical writings of **Alexandre Astruc** and, more prominently, of **André Bazin**, whose thought molded an entire generation of filmmakers, critics, and scholars. In 1948 Astruc formulated the concept of the **caméra-stylo** ("camera-pen"), in which film was regarded as a form of audiovisual language and the filmmaker, therefore, as a kind of writer in light. Bazin's influential journal **Cahiers du cinéma**, founded in 1951, elaborated this notion and became the headquarters of a group of young *cinéphiles* ("film-lovers")—the critics **François Truffaut**, **Jean-Luc Godard**, **Claude Chabrol**, Jacques Rivette, and **Eric Rohmer**—who were to become the major directors of the New Wave. Bazin's basic principle was a rejection of montage aesthetics—both radical Eisensteinian cutting and Hollywood-style continuity, or invisible, editing—in favour of the long take and composition in depth, or what he called *mise-en-scène*. Borrowed from the theatre, this term literally means "the placing in the scene," but Bazin used it to designate such elements of filmic structure as camera placement and movement, the lighting of shots, and blocking of action—that is, everything that precedes the editing process.

The *Cahiers* critics embraced *mise-en-scène* aesthetics and borrowed the idea of authorship from Astruc. In proposing *la politique des auteurs* ("the policy of authors"), christened the **auteur theory** by the American critic Andrew Sarris, they maintained that film should be a medium of personal artistic expression and that the best films are those imprinted with their makers' individual signature. As a logical consequence of this premise, the *Cahiers* critics rejected mainstream French cinema and its "tradition of quality" in favour of the classic *mise-en-scène* tradition (exemplified in the films of **Louis Feuillade**, F.W. Murnau, **Erich von Stroheim**, Renoir, Welles, Ophüls), Hollywood studio directors who had transcended the constraints of the system to make personal films (**Howard Hawks**, **Josef von Sternberg**, Hitchcock, Ford), and the low-budget American **B movie** in which the director usually had total control over production.

The first films of the New Wave were independently produced dramatic shorts shot in 16-mm by the *Cahiers* critics in 1956–57, but 1959 was the year that brought the movement to international prominence, when each of its three major figures made their first features. Truffaut's *Les quatre cents coups* (*The 400 Blows*), Resnais's *Hiroshima, mon amour*, and Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*) were all in their different ways paradigms of a fresh new style based on elliptical editing and location shooting with handheld cameras. This style was both radically destructive of classic Hollywood continuity and pragmatically suited to the New Wave's need to make its films quickly and cheaply. Its ultimate effect was to deconstruct the narrative language that had evolved over the previous 60 years and to create a reflexive cinema, or meta-cinema, whose techniques provided a continuous comment on its own making.

The critical and commercial success of the first New Wave features produced an unprecedented creative explosion within the French industry. Between 1960 and 1964, literally hundreds of low-budget, stylistically experimental films were made by *cinéphiles* with little or no experience. Many of these ended in failure, and the New Wave as a collective phenomenon was over by 1965. But the three figures who had initiated the movement, and a small group of sophisticated and talented filmmakers—Chabrol, Rivette, Rohmer, **Louis Malle**, **Agnès Varda**, and **Jacques Demy**—dominated French cinema until well into the 1970s, and several continued to make significant contributions into the next century.

François Truffaut was the most commercially successful of the original New Wave group, and, through such films as *Jules et Jim* (1961) and the autobiographical "Antoine Doinel" series, which began with *Les quatre cents coups* (*The 400 Blows*, 1959), he acquired a reputation as a romantic ironist. Truffaut's range also extended to parodies of Hollywood genres (*Tirez sur le pianiste* [*Shoot the Piano Player*], 1960), homages to Hitchcock (*La mariée était en noir* [*The Bride Wore Black*], 1967), historical reconstructions (*L'enfant sauvage* [*The Wild Child*], 1970), reflexive narratives (*La nuit américaine* [*Day for Night*], 1973), and literary adaptations (*L'Histoire d'Adèle H.* [*The Story of Adele H.*], 1975; *Le dernier métro* [*The Last Metro*], 1980).

Jean-Luc Godard was the most stylistically and politically radical of the early New Wave directors. Some of his early films were parodies of Hollywood genres (*Une femme est une femme* [*A Woman Is a Woman*], 1961; *Alphaville*, 1965; *Pierrot le fou*, 1965), but the majority of them treated political and social themes from a Marxist, and finally Maoist, perspective (*Le petit soldat* [*The Little Soldier*], 1960; *Vivre sa vie* [*My Life to Live*], 1962; *Les carabiniers* [*The Riflemen*], 1963; *Bande à part* [*Band of Outsiders*], 1964; *Une femme mariée* [*A Married Woman*], 1964). With *Masculin-féminin* (1966), Godard turned from narrative to cinema *verité*-style essay, and his later films became increasingly ideological and structurally random (*Made in U.S.A.*, 1966; *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* [*Two or Three Things I Know About Her*], 1967; *La chinoise*, 1967; *Week-end*, 1967; *One Plus One*, 1968). During the 1970s, Godard made films for the radical **Dziga Vertov** production collective (*Pravda*, 1969; *Le vent d'est* [*Wind from the East*], 1969; *Letter to Jane*, 1972) and experimented with combinations of film and videotape (*Numero deux* [*Number Two*], 1975; *La communication*, 1976). In the 1980s Godard returned to theatrical filmmaking, purified of ideology but no less controversial for it, with such provocative features as *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (*Every Man for Himself*, 1980), *Passion* (1982), *Je vous salue, Marie* (*Hail Mary*, 1986), and *Éloge de l'amour* (*In Praise of Love*, 2001).

Alain Resnais was slightly older than the *Cahiers* group, but he identified with the New Wave through style and theme. His most famous film is the postmodern mystery *L'année dernière à Marienbad* (*Last Year at Marienbad*, 1961), which questions the processes of thought and memory—central concerns in Resnais's work. *Muriel* (1963), *La guerre est finie* (*The War Is Over*, 1966), *Stavisky* (1974), *Providence* (1977), and *Mon oncle d'Amérique* (*My Uncle in America*, 1978) are all in various ways concerned with the effects of time on human memory from both a historical and a personal perspective.

Other important New Wave figures who remain influential are **Claude Chabrol**, whose entire career can be seen as an extended homage to Hitchcock; **Louis Malle**, a master of film types who relocated to the United States; **Eric Rohmer**, whose "moral tales," including *Ma nuit chez Maud* (*My Night at Maud's*, 1968) and *Le genou de Claire* (*Claire's Knee*, 1970),

established the ironic perspective on human passion that he maintained in later films; **Agnès Varda**, famed for her improvisational style; **Jacques Demy**, whose best films are homages to the Hollywood musical; and Jacques Rivette, the most austere abstract and experimental of the *Cahiers* group.

Few national movements have influenced international cinema as strongly as the French New Wave. By promoting the concept of personal authorship, its directors demonstrated that film is an audiovisual language that can be crafted into “novels” and “essays”; and, by deconstructing classic Hollywood conventions, they added dimensions to this language that made it capable of expressing a new range of internal and external states. In the process, the New Wave helped to reinvigorate the stylistically moribund cinemas then found in Britain, **West Germany**, and the United States; it created a current of “second waves” and “third waves” in the already flourishing Italian, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, and Japanese cinemas.

The New Wave made France the leading centre of Modernist and postmodern film and film theory, a position it continued to hold for many years. By the 1990s France followed the lead of other European countries in assimilating into the world market. The influence of the New Wave was still evident, but increased demands for commercial fare resulted in several crime thrillers and period costume dramas, genres that were often specialties of young directors.

Unique among European filmmakers, however, many French directors remain unfettered by commercial demands. At the turn of the 21st century, Chabrol was still a dominant force, with such films as *La Cérémonie* (*Judgment in Stone*, 1995) demonstrating his continued mastery of the psychological thriller. Prominent young directors included Manuel Poirier, who specialized in affectionate, offbeat romances and “buddy pictures,” such as *Western* (1997); Claire Simon, who, after several years of directing documentaries, adapted her characteristic ironic humour to such fiction films as *Sinon, oui* (*A Foreign Body*, 1997) and *Ça c'est vraiment toi* (*That's Just Like You*, 2000); and Robert Guédiguian, a writer-producer-director known for works such as *Marius et Jeannette* (1997) and *À la place du cœur* (1998), which effectively blend affectionate character studies with biting social satire.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Great Britain

In Great Britain the post-World War II cinema was even more literary than in France, relying heavily on the adaptation of classics in the work of such directors as **Laurence Olivier** (*Henry V*, 1944; *Hamlet*, 1948; *Richard III*, 1955), **David Lean** (*Great Expectations*, 1946; *Oliver Twist*, 1948), and Anthony Asquith (*The Importance of Being Earnest*, 1952). Even less-conventional films had literary sources (**Carol Reed**'s *Outcast of the Islands*, 1951; **Michael Powell**'s and **Emeric Pressberger**'s *The Red Shoes*, 1948, and *The Tales of Hoffman*, 1951). There were exceptions to this trend in a series of witty, irreverent comedies made for **Michael Balcon**'s **Ealing Studios** (*Kind Hearts and Coronets*, 1949; *The Lavender Hill Mob*, 1951; *The Man in the White Suit*, 1951), most of them starring **Alec Guinness**, but, on the whole, British postwar cinema was elitist and culturally conservative.

In reaction, a younger generation of filmmakers led by **Lindsay Anderson**, Czechoslovak-born **Karel Reisz**, and **Tony Richardson** organized the **Free Cinema** movement in the mid-1950s. Its purpose was to produce short, low-budget documentaries illuminating problems of contemporary life (**Anderson**'s *O Dreamland*, 1953; **Richardson**'s *Momma Don't Allow*, 1955). Grounded in the ideology and practice of Neorealism, Free Cinema emerged simultaneously with a larger **social movement** assailing the British class structure and calling for the replacement of bourgeois elitism with liberal working-class values. In the cinema this antiestablishment agitation resulted in the New Cinema, or Social Realist, movement signaled by Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), the first British postwar feature with a working-class protagonist and proletarian themes. Stylistically influenced by the New Wave, with which it was concurrent, the Social Realist film was generally shot in black and white on location in the industrial Midlands and cast with unknown young actors and actresses. Like the New Wave films, Social Realist films were independently produced on low budgets (many of them for Woodfall Film Productions, the company founded in 1958 by Richardson and playwright **John Osborne**, one of the principal **Angry Young Men**, to adapt the latter's *Look Back in Anger*), but their freshness of both content and form attracted an international audience. Some of the most famous were Richardson's *A Taste of Honey* (1961) and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1962), **John Schlesinger**'s *A Kind of Loving* (1962) and *Billy Liar* (1963), Anderson's *This Sporting Life* (1963), and Reisz's *Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment* (1966).

These films and others like them brought such prestige to the British film industry that London briefly became the production capital of the Western world, delivering such homegrown international hits as Richardson's *Tom Jones* (1963), Schlesinger's *Darling* (1965), **Richard Lester**'s two Beatles films, *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) and *Help!* (1965), Schlesinger's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967), and Anderson's *If...* (1968), as well as such foreign importations as **Roman Polanski**'s *Repulsion* (1965) and *Cul-de-sac* (1966), Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966), and American **Stanley Kubrick**'s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971). This activity inspired a new, more visually oriented generation of British filmmakers—Peter Yates, **John Boorman**, **Ken Russell**, Nicolas Roeg, and **Ridley Scott**—who would make their mark in the 1970s; but, as England's economy began its precipitous decline during that decade, so, too, did its film industry. Many British directors and performers defected to Hollywood, while the English-language film market simultaneously experienced a vigorous and unprecedented challenge from Australia. In the 1980s, amid widespread speculation about the collapse of the film industry, British annual production reached an all-time low.

Great Britain's film industry, however, has a long history of rebounding from periods of crisis. A major factor in the revival of British cinema during the late 20th century was the founding in 1982 of Channel 4, a television network devoted to commissioning—rather than merely producing—original films. Their success led to the establishment of a subsidiary, FilmFour Ltd., in 1998. Internationally acclaimed films produced or coproduced under either the Channel 4 or FilmFour banner include *A Room with a View* (1986), *The Crying Game* (1992), *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994), *Trainspotting* (1996), *Secrets and Lies* (1996), *The Full Monty* (1997), and *Welcome to Sarajevo* (1997). Also contributing to the resurgence of British film was the National Lottery (established in 1994), which has annually contributed millions of pounds to the film industry.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Germany

Germany's catastrophic defeat in World War II and the subsequent partitioning of the country virtually destroyed its film industry, which had already been corrupted by the Nazis. Rebuilt during the 1950s, the West German industry became the fifth largest producer in the world, but the majority of its output consisted of low-quality *Heimatfilme* (“homeland films”) for the domestic market. When this market collapsed in the 1960s because of changing demographic patterns and the diffusion of television, the industry was forced to turn to the federal government for subsidies. In recognition of the crisis, 26 writers and filmmakers at the Oberhausen film festival in 1962 drafted a manifesto proclaiming the death of German cinema and demanding the

establishment of a *junger deutscher Film*, a “young German cinema.” The members of this Oberhausen group became the founders of Das Neue Kino, or the **New German Cinema**, which was brought into being over the next decade through the establishment of the Kuratorium Junger Deutscher Film (1965; Young German Film Board, a grant agency drawing on the cultural budgets of the federal states), the Filmförderungsanstalt, or FFA (Film Subsidies Board, which makes production funds available by levying a federal tax on theatre tickets), and the independent distributing company Filmverlag der Autoren (1971; Authors’ Film-Publishing Group), with additional funding from the two West German television networks.

These institutions made it possible for a new generation of German filmmakers to produce their first features and established a vital new cinema for West Germany that attempted to examine the nation’s *unbewältigte Vergangenheit*, or “unassimilated past.” The first such films, which were deeply influenced by the New Wave, especially by the work of Godard, included **Volker Schlöndorff’s** *Der junge Törless* (*Young Torless*, 1966) and Alexander Kluge’s *Die Artisten in der Zirkuskuppel: ratlos* (*The Artists Under the Big Top: Disoriented*, 1968). In the 1970s, however, three major figures emerged as leaders of the movement—**Rainer Werner Fassbinder**, **Werner Herzog**, and **Wim Wenders**.

Fassbinder was the most prolific, having made more than 40 features before he died in 1982. His films are also the most flamboyant. Nearly all of them take the form of extreme melodrama, ending in murder or suicide—*Warum läuft Herr R. amok?* (*Why Does Herr R. Run Amok?*, 1969), *Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant* (*The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, 1972), *Angst essen Seele auf* (*Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, 1973)—and several are consciously focused on German wartime and postwar society (*Die Ehe der Maria Braun* [*The Marriage of Maria Braun*], 1979; *Lola*, 1981; *Veronika Voss*, 1982).

Herzog’s films have tended more toward the mystical and the spiritual than the social, although there is nearly always some contemporary referent in his work—the image of idealism turned to barbarism in *Aguirre, der Zorn Gottes* (*Aguirre, the Wrath of God*, 1972); the hopeless inability of science to address the human condition in *Jeder für sich und Gott gegen alle* (*Every Man for Himself and God Against All*, or *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser*, 1974); the inherently destructive nature of technology in *Herz aus Glas* (*Heart of Glass*, 1977); the incomprehensible nature of pestilence in his remake of Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1979).

Wenders, on the other hand, is profoundly postmodern in his contemplation of alienation through spatial metaphor. In such works of existential questing as *Die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter* (*The Goalie’s Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, 1971) and *Im Lauf der Zeit* (“In the Course of Time”; English title: *Kings of the Road*; 1976), he addressed the universal phenomena of dislocation and rootlessness that afflict modern society.

The state subsidy system enabled hundreds of filmmakers, including many women (e.g., Margarethe von Trotta) and minorities, to participate in the New German Cinema. With the exception of the work of Fassbinder, Herzog, and Wenders, however, the New German Cinema did not find a large audience outside West Germany. Yet in terms of exploring and extending the audio-language system of film, it was to the 1970s and ’80s very much what the New Wave was to the ’60s, and its influence was widely felt.

After the reunification of Germany in 1990, a national identity had still not been forged in any of the various arts. Several outstanding German directors and production artists did emerge, but most of them achieved their greatest success in Hollywood. Roland Emmerich (*Independence Day*, 1996; *The Patriot*, 2000) proved to be a skillful practitioner of the action-adventure genre, and Wolfgang Petersen, who received international acclaim for *Das Boot* (1982), earned a reputation for tense thrillers (*In the Line of Fire*, 1993) and unrelenting visual spectacles (*The Perfect Storm*, 2000). German cinematographers (Michael Ballhaus, Karl Walter Lindenlaub) and composers (Hans Zimmer, Christopher Franke) were also among the more notable artisans working in Hollywood films at the turn of the 21st century.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Africa

The development of an indigenous film culture in Africa occurred at different moments in the history of the continent. The various time lines are related to the political, social, and economic situations in each country and to the varying effects of colonialism on the continent. Only Egypt had a truly active film industry for the first half of the 20th century; the development of cinema elsewhere on the continent was largely the result of individual efforts. One such example is Paul Soumanou Vieyra, the first African graduate of the French film school Institut des Hautes Études Ciné, who joined with friends to produce the short film *Afrique sur Seine* (1955), considered the first fiction film by black Africans.

Some countries, such as Morocco, have never developed a strong national cinema; others, such as Algeria and Tunisia, have nationalized all or parts of their film industries. Several African nations are members of the Fédération Pan-Africaine des Cinéastes (FEPACI; “Federation of Pan-African Filmmakers”), formed in 1969 to oversee the political and financial problems of the film industries throughout the continent.

At the end of the 20th century, many filmmakers and scholars began to examine the questions of, first, what constitutes an “African film” and, second, how film can best deal with the diaspora of the African people. On one hand, African filmmakers had to acknowledge and learn from the conventions of Western film. On the other, they wanted to highlight and preserve aspects of the African culture that had been threatened by Western colonialism. As part of this search to define the goals of African cinema, African filmmakers often use the medium to explore the social issues plaguing postcolonial Africa. Directors such as Adama Drabo (*Ta Dona* [*Fire*], 1991) and Moufida Tlatli (*Les Silences du palais* [*The Silences of the Palace*], 1994) explored such matters as education, the environment, and women’s rights and suggested that traditional approaches to such issues must be adapted to the realities of contemporary Africa. Aspects of these realities were examined by such directors as Tsitsi Dangarembga (*Everyone’s Child*, 1996) and Salem Mekuria (*Ye Wonz Maibel* [*Deluge*], 1995), who dealt with the AIDS crisis and political violence, respectively. Colonization itself was examined by such directors as Bassek ba Kobhio, whose satirical study of **Albert Schweitzer**, *Le Grand Blanc de Lambaréné* (*The Great White Man of Lambaréné*, 1995), shows how colonialism damaged both the colonizer and the colonized.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Japan

Although more than half of Japan’s theatres were destroyed by U.S. bombing during World War II, most of its studio facilities were left intact. Japan, therefore, continued to produce films in quantity during the Allied occupation (1945–52). Many traditional Japanese subjects were forbidden by the Allied Command as promoting feudalism, however, including all films classified as *jidai-geki* (period dramas). Nevertheless, the film that first brought Japanese cinema to international attention belonged to that category: **Kurosawa Akira’s** *Rashomon* (1950), which won the Golden Lion at the 1951 Venice film festival. The film, a meditation on the nature of truth set in the medieval past, marked the beginning of the Japanese cinema’s

unprecedented renaissance. During this period, new export markets opened in the West, and Japanese filmmakers produced some of their finest work, winning festival awards throughout the world. Kurosawa, who was already well known in his homeland for a number of wartime and postwar genre films, became the most famous Japanese director in the West on the strength of his masterful samurai epics—*Shichinin no samurai* (*Seven Samurai*, 1954), *Kumonosu-jo* (*Throne of Blood*, 1957), *Kakushi toride no san akunin* (*The Hidden Fortress*, 1958), *Yojimbo* (1961), and *Sanjuro* (1962)—which raised the *chambara*, or “sword-fight,” film to the status of art. He made films in other genres, including literary adaptations, *gendai-geki* (modern dramas), gangster films, and period films that cannot be categorized at all (*Akahige* [*Red Beard*], 1965; *Dersu Uzala*, 1975); but Kurosawa always returned to the samurai form for his most profound statements about life and art (*Kagemusha* [*The Shadow Warrior*], 1980; *Ran*, 1985).

Two other established directors who produced their greatest films in the postwar period were **Mizoguchi Kenji** and Ozu Yasujiro. Both had begun their careers in the silent era and were more traditionally Japanese in style and content than Kurosawa. Mizoguchi’s films, whether period (*Sansho dayu* [*Sansho the Bailiff*], 1954) or contemporary (*Yoru no onnatachi* [*Women of the Night*], 1948), were frequently critiques of feudalism that focused on the condition of women within the **social order**. His greatest postwar films were *Saikaku ichidai onna* (*The Life of Oharu*, 1952), the biography of a 17th-century courtesan, and *Ugetsu* (1953), the story of two men who abandon their wives for fame and glory during the 16th-century civil wars. Both were masterworks that clearly demonstrated Mizoguchi’s expressive use of luminous decor, extended long takes, and deep-focus composition. As one of the great *mise-en-scène* directors, Mizoguchi can be compared to Murnau, Ophüls, and Welles, but his transcendental visual style makes him unique in the history of cinema.

Ozu Yasujiro, too, was a stylist, but the majority of his 54 films were *shomin-geki*, a variety of *gendai* film dealing with the lives of lower-middle-class families (*Tokyo monogatari* [*Tokyo Story*], 1953; *Higanbana* [*Equinox Flower*], 1958; *Ukigusa* [*Floating Weeds*], 1959). They were all very much alike and, in a sense, were all part of a single large film whose subject was the ordinary lives of ordinary people and the sacred beauty therein. Ozu’s minimalist style—originating in both Zen Buddhist aesthetics and the fact that most of his films were shot within the confines of a typical Japanese house—was based on his use of low-angle long takes in which the **camera** is positioned about 3 feet (1 metre) off the floor at the eye level of a person seated on a tatami mat. This practice led Ozu to an especially imaginative use of offscreen space and “empty scenes.”

The second postwar generation of Japanese filmmakers was mainly composed of **Kobayashi Masaki**, **Ichikawa Kon**, and Shindo Kaneto. Kobayashi is best known for *Ningen no joken* (*The Human Condition*, 1959–61), his three-part antiwar epic set during Japan’s brutal occupation of Manchuria, and the beautiful ghost film *Kwaidan* (1964). Ichikawa’s major works were the pacifist films *Biruma no tategoto* (*The Burmese Harp*, 1956) and *Nobi* (*Fires on the Plain*, 1959). Shindo is best known for his poetic **semidocumentary** *Hadaka no shima* (*The Island*, 1960) and the bizarre, folkloristic *Onibaba* (1964).

The third generation of postwar directors was most active during the 1960s and ’70s. The group was deeply influenced by the French New Wave and included **Teshigahara Hiroshi** (*Suna no onna* [*Woman in the Dunes*], 1964), Masumura Yasuzo (*Akai Tenshi* [*The Red Angel*], 1965), **Imamura Shohei** (*Jinruigako nyumon* [*The Pornographers*], 1966), and Oshima Nagisa (*Ai no corrida* [*In the Realm of the Senses*], 1976). In the mid-1960s, however, competition from multiple-channel **colour television** and from American distributors forced the Japanese film industry into economic decline. A decade later, two major studios were bankrupt, and film production was increasingly dominated by two domestic exploitation genres, the *yakuza-eiga*, or contemporary urban gangster film, and the semipornographic *eroducti on* film, which mixed sex and sadism. During the 1980s and ’90s, Japan continued to produce the highest annual volume of films of any country in the world, but the studios remained in decline, and most serious productions, such as Kurosawa’s *Kagemusha*, were funded by foreign interests. At the turn of the 21st century, funding for films remained low, although the market for films was greater than ever. This situation led to the **mass production** of low-budget films, as well as to the increased popularity of amateur and experimental films.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » China, Taiwan, and Korea

Other Asian nations have had spotty cinematic histories, although most developed strong traditions during the late 20th century. The film industries of China, Taiwan, and Korea were marked by government restrictions for most of the 20th century, and the majority of their output consisted of propaganda films. The loosening of many restrictions in the 1980s and ’90s resulted in a new wave of Asian directors who have attained worldwide prominence. At the turn of the 21st century, China’s “Fifth Generation Cinema” was known for such outstanding young directors as **Zhang Yimou**, who specializes in tales of political oppression and sexual repression. Korea’s cinematic history is difficult to assess, because virtually no films made prior to World War II exist today, but works produced during the 1950s and ’60s—the “golden age” of Korean cinema—have gained a strong international reputation. The most successful Taiwanese directors of the late 20th century were **Ang Lee**, who has directed films ranging from American morality tales such as *The Ice Storm* (1997) to the lavish martial-arts fantasy *Wo hu zang long* (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, 2000), and Hou Hsiao-hsien, who is best known for his sensitive family dramas (*Hao nan hao nu* [*Good Men, Good Women*], 1995).

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » India

Serious postwar Indian cinema was for years associated with the work of **Satyajit Ray**, a director of singular talent who produced the great Apu trilogy (*Pather panchali* [*The Song of the Road*], 1955; *Aparajito* [*The Unvanquished*], 1956; *Apur sansar* [*The World of Apu*], 1959) under the influence of both **Jean Renoir** and Italian Neorealism. Ray continued to dominate the Indian cinema through the 1960s and ’70s with such artful Bengali films as *Devi* (*The Goddess*, 1960), *Charulata* (*The Lonely Wife*, 1964), *Aranyer din ratri* (*Days and Nights in the Forest*, 1970), and *Ashanti sanket* (*Distant Thunder*, 1973). The Marxist intellectual Ritwik Ghatak received much less critical attention than his contemporary Ray, but through such films as *Ajantrik* (*Pathetic Fallacy*, 1958), he created a body of alternative cinema that greatly influenced the rising generation.

In 1961 the Indian government established the Film Institute of India to train aspiring directors. It also formed the Film Finance Commission (FFC) to help fund independent production (and, later, experimental films). The National Film Archive was founded in 1964. These organizations encouraged the production of such important first features as Mrinal Sen’s *Bhuvan Shome* (*Mr. Shome*, 1969), Basu Chatterji’s *Sara akaash* (*The Whole Sky*, 1979), Mani Kaul’s *Uski roti* (*Daily Bread*, 1969), Kumar Shahani’s *Maya darpan* (*Mirror of Illusion*, 1972), Avtar Kaul’s *27 Down* (1973), and M.S. Sathyu’s *Garam hawa* (*Scorching Wind*, 1973) and promoted the development of a nonstar “parallel cinema” centred in Bombay. A more traditional path was followed by Shyam Benegal, whose films (*Ankur* [*The Seedling*], 1974; *Nishant* [*Night’s End*], 1975; *Manthan* [*The Churning*], 1976) are relatively realistic in form and deeply committed in sociopolitical terms. During the 1970s the regional industries of the southwestern states—especially those of Kerala and Karnataka—began to subsidize independent production, resulting in a “southern new wave” in the films of such diverse figures as G. Aravindan (*Kanchana sita* [*Golden Sita*], 1977), Adoor

Gopalakrishnan (*Elipathayam [Rat-Trap]*, 1981), and Girish Karnad (*Kaadu [The Forest]*, 1973). Despite the international recognition of these films, the Indian government's efforts to raise the artistic level of the nation's cinema were largely unsuccessful. India remains a land of more than one billion people, many of them illiterate and poor, whose exclusive access to audiovisual entertainment is film; television is the medium of the rich and powerful middle class. The Indian film industry therefore continues to be the world's largest producer of low-quality films for domestic consumption, releasing 700 features per year in 16 languages.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Australia

Australia was a country virtually without a film industry until the late 1960s and early '70s, when the federal government established the Australian Film Development Corporation (after 1975, the **Australian Film Commission**) to subsidize the growth of an authentic national cinema, founded a national film school (the Australian Film and Television School, or AFTS) to train directors and other creative personnel, and initiated a system of lucrative tax incentives to attract foreign investment capital to the new industry. The result was a creative explosion unprecedented in the English-language cinema. Australia produced nearly 400 films between 1970 and 1985—more than had been made in all of its prior history.

With financing from the Film Commission and such semi-official bodies as the **New South Wales** Film Corporation (by the end of the decade each of the federal states had its own funding agency), the first films began to appear in the early 1970s, and within the next few years several talented directors began to receive recognition, including **Peter Weir** (*Picnic at Hanging Rock*, 1975), **Bruce Beresford** (*The Getting of Wisdom*, 1977), Fred Schepisi (*The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith*, 1978), **George Miller** (*Mad Max*, 1979), and the first AFTS graduates, Phillip Noyce (*Newsfront*, 1978) and **Gillian Armstrong** (*My Brilliant Career*, 1979). Unlike the productions financed with foreign capital by the Canadian Film Development Corporation during the same period, these new Australian films had indigenous casts and crews and treated distinctly national themes. By the end of the 1970s, Australian motion pictures were being prominently featured at the Cannes international film festival and competing strongly at the box office in Europe. In 1981 Australia penetrated the American market with two critical hits, Beresford's *Breaker Morant* (1980) and Weir's *Gallipoli* (1981), and the following year achieved a smashing commercial success with Miller's *Mad Max II* (1981; retitled *The Road Warrior*, 1982). In the 1980s, many Australian directors came to work for the American film industry, with varying degrees of success (Schepisi—*Barbarossa*, 1982; Beresford—*Tender Mercies*, 1983; Armstrong—*Mrs. Soffel*, 1984; Weir—*Witness*, 1985; Miller—*The Witches of Eastwick*, 1987). Despite this temporary talent drain and a decline in government tax concessions, the Australian cinema remained one of the most influential and creatively vital in the world. Prominent younger directors helped to maintain Australia's world status, including Baz Luhrmann, noted for his flamboyant visual style in such films as *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and *Moulin Rouge* (2001), and P. J. Hogan, known for biting social comedies such as *Muriel's Wedding* (1994) and *My Best Friend's Wedding* (1997).

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Russia, eastern Europe, and the former Soviet-bloc countries

After World War II the Soviet Union's film industry experienced greater stagnation than that of any other nation except Germany. The Socialist Realism doctrine imposed during Stalin's dictatorship caused film production to fall from 19 features in 1945 to 5 in 1952. Although Stalin died the following year, the situation did not improve until the late 1950s, when such films as Mikhail Kalatozov's *Letyat zhuravli (The Cranes Are Flying)*, 1957) and Grigory Chukhrai's *Ballada o soldate (Ballad of a Soldier)*, 1959) emerged to take prizes at international film festivals. Some impressive literary adaptations were produced during the 1960s (Grigory Kozintsev's *Hamlet*, 1964; Sergey Bondarchuk's *Voyna i mir [War and Peace]*, 1965–67), but the most important phenomenon of the decade was the graduation of a whole new generation of Soviet directors from the Vsesoyuznyi Gosudarstvennyi Institut Kinematografii (VGIK; "All-Union State Institute of Cinematography"), many of them from the non-Russian republics—the Ukraine (Yury Ilyenko, Larissa Shepitko), Georgia (Tengiz Abuladze, Georgy Danelia, Georgy and Eldar Shengelaya, Otar Yoseliani), Moldavia (Emil Lotyanu), Armenia (Sergey Paradzhanov), Lithuania (Vitautas Zhalekevichius), Kirgiziya (Boltbek Shamshiev, Tolomush Okeyev), Uzbekistan (Elyor Ishmukhamedov, Ali Khamraev), Turkmenistan (Bulat Mansurov), and Kazakhstan (Abdulla Karsakbayev). By far the most brilliant of the new directors were **Sergey Paradzhanov** and **Andrey Tarkovsky**, who both were later persecuted for the unconventionality of their work. Paradzhanov's greatest film was *Tini zabutykh predkiv (Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors)*, 1964), a hallucinatory retelling of a Ukrainian folk legend of ravishing formal beauty. Tarkovsky created a body of work whose seriousness and symbolic resonance had a major impact on world cinema (*Andrey Rublev*, 1966; *Solaris*, 1971; *Zerkalo [Mirror]*, 1974; *Stalker*, 1979; *Nostalghia [Nostalghia]*, 1983), even though it was frequently tampered with by Soviet censors.

During the 1970s the policy of **Socialist Realism** (euphemized as "pedagogic realism") was again put into practice, so that only two types of films could safely be made—literary adaptations and *bytovye*, or films of everyday life, such as Vladimir Menshov's *Moskva slezam ne verit (Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears)*, 1980). The Soviet cinema then experienced a far-reaching liberalization under the regime of Party Secretary **Mikhail Gorbachev**, whose policy of *glasnost* ("openness") took control of the industry away from bureaucratic censors and placed it in the hands of the filmmakers themselves. The Soviet cinema began to be revitalized as formerly suppressed films, such as Elem Klimov's *Agoniya* (1975), were distributed for the first time, and films that dealt confrontationally with Stalinism, such as Abuladze's *Pokayaniye (Repentance)*, 1987), were made without government interference.

Of the eastern European nations that fell under Soviet control after World War II, all except **East Germany** and **Albania** produced distinguished cinemas. Following the pattern set by the Soviets, these countries nationalized their film industries and established state film schools. They experienced a similar period of repressive government-imposed restrictions between 1945 and 1953, with a "thaw" during the late 1950s under Soviet premier **Nikita Khrushchev**. In **Poland** the loosening of ideological criteria gave rise to the so-called Polish school led by Jerzy Kawalerowicz (*Matka Joanna od aniolow [Mother Joan of the Angels]*, 1961), Andrzej Munk (*Eroica*, 1957), and, preeminently, **Andrzej Wajda** (*Pokolenie [A Generation]*, 1954; *Kanal [Canal]*, 1956; *Popiol i diament [Ashes and Diamonds]*, 1958). Wajda's reputation grew throughout the 1960s and '70s, when he was joined by a second generation of Polish filmmakers that included Roman Polanski (*Noz w wodzie [Knife in the Water]*, 1962), Jerzy Skolimowski (*Bariera [Barrier]*, 1966), and Krzysztof Zanussi (*Iluminacja [Illumination]*, 1972). The Polish cinema expressed its support of the **Solidarity trade union** in the late 1970s through films by Wajda and such younger directors as **Krzysztof Kieslowski**, Agnieszka Holland, and Feliks Falk.

The example of the Polish school encouraged the development of the **Czech New Wave** (1962–68), which became similarly entangled in politics. The **Czechoslovak** films that reached international audiences during this period were widely acclaimed for their freshness and formal experimentation, but they faced official disapproval at home, and many were suppressed for being politically subversive. Among the directors who were most critical of President Antonin Novotny's hard-line regime were Vera Chytilová (*Sedmikrasky [Daisies]*, 1966), Jaromil Jireš (*Zert [The Joke]*, 1968), **Ján Kadár** (*Obchod na Korze [The Shop on*

Máin Street], 1965), **Milôš Formán** (*Hoří, má panenka* [The Firemen's Ball], 1967), Jirí Menzel (*Ostře sledované vlaky* [Closely Watched Trains], 1966), and Jan Němec (*O Slavnosti a hostech* [The Party and the Guests], 1966). When Alexander Dubček became president in January 1968, the Czechoslovak cinema eagerly participated in his brief attempt to give socialism "a human face." After the Soviet invasion of August 1968, many New Wave films were banned, the Czechoslovak film industry was reorganized, and several prominent figures, including Forman and Němec, were forced into exile.

In **Hungary** the abortive revolution of 1956 forestalled a postwar revival in film until the late 1960s, when the complex work of Miklós Jancsó (*Szegénylegények* [The Round-Up], 1965; *Csillagosok, katonák* [The Red and the White], 1967; *Még kér a nép* [Red Psalm], 1972) began to be internationally recognized. The rigorous training given students at the Budapest Film Academy ensured that the younger generation of Hungarian filmmakers would rise to prominence, as happened in the case of István Szabó (*Mephisto*, 1981), István Gaál (*Magasiskola* [Falcons], 1970), Márta Mészáros (*Örökbefogadás* [Adoption], 1975), and Pál Gábor (*Angi Vera*, 1978), many of whose films—as do Jancsó's—involve ideological interpretations of the national past.

Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria, unlike their more sophisticated **Warsaw Pact** allies, did not begin to develop film industries until after World War II. Yugoslavia was the most immediately successful and produced the countries' first internationally known director: the political avant-gardist Dušan Makavejev (*Ljubavni slučaj ili tragedija službenice P. T. T.* [The Tragedy of the Switchboard Operator], 1967). Makavejev belonged to the late-1960s movement known as Novi Film (New Film), which also included such directors as Puriša Djordjević, Aleksandar Petrović, and Živojin Pavlović, all of whom were temporarily purged from the film industry during a reactionary period in the early 1970s. This dark period came to an end in 1976 when the filmmakers of the **Prague school** made their debuts. Goran Marković, Rajko Grlić, Srdjan Karanović, Lordan Zafranović, and Emir Kusturica were all graduates of the FAMU film school in Prague who had begun their careers working for Yugoslav television. Their offbeat, visually flamboyant social comedies brought a new breath of life into Yugoslav cinema and won a number of international prizes. Like Czechoslovakia, whose Jiří Trnka perfected **puppet animation** in the 1950s, Yugoslavia also became world-famous for its animation, especially that of the "Zagreb school" founded by Vatroslav Mimica and Dušan Vukotić.

The **Romanian** and **Bulgarian** film industries did not begin to progress until the mid-1960s, but both countries now possess authentic national cinemas and boast a handful of directors well known on the festival circuit (e.g., the Romanians Dan Pița, Mircea Veroiu, and Mircea Daneliuc, and the Bulgarians Hristo Hristov, Eduard Zakhariiev, Georgi Dylgerov, and award-winning animator Todor Dinov).

For decades, state money was readily available for filmmaking throughout the Soviet bloc countries, provided that the films were ideologically acceptable. This of course changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union in January 1992, whereupon funding became the chief obstacle to filmmaking in the region. By the late 1990s, fewer than two dozen films per year were produced in Russia. Adding to the decline were such factors as theatres that were closed or converted into businesses such as car dealerships, a home-video industry that was barely in its inceptive stages, and the popularity of American and Asian films. Although such directors as Sergey Bodrov and Vladimir Khotinenko have received a degree of international acclaim, the financial situation of the film industries throughout Russia and eastern Europe suggests that it will be many years before these nations establish a degree of prominence in world cinema.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Spain and Mexico

Of the smaller film industries of the West, Spain's should be noted because it produced one of the world's greatest satirists in **Luis Buñuel**, and Mexico's should be commended because it allowed Buñuel to work after he was forced out of Spain by the fascists. (Buñuel also worked frequently in France.) In a career that spanned most of film history, Buñuel directed scores of brilliantly sardonic films that assaulted the institutions of bourgeois Christian culture and Western civilization. Among his most successful are *Los olvidados* (*The Forgotten Ones*, 1950), *Él* (*Torment*, 1952), *Nazarín* (1958), *Viridiana* (1961), *El ángel exterminador* (*The Exterminating Angel*, 1962), *Belle de jour* (1967), *Le Charme discret de la bourgeoisie* (*The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, 1973), and *Le Fantôme de la liberté* (*The Phantom of Liberty*, 1974). Buñuel deeply influenced **Carlos Saura**, another Spanish filmmaker whose work tended toward the grotesque and darkly comic (*La caza* [The Hunt], 1966; *La prima Angélica* [Cousin Angelica], 1974; *Bodas de sangre* [Blood Wedding], 1981), as well as an entire generation of younger directors who began to work after Spanish dictator Francisco Franco's death in 1975 (e.g., Victor Erice, Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón, Jaime Chavarrí, and Pilar Miró). **Pedro Almodóvar**, whose provocative, postmodernist works include *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios* (*Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, 1988) and *Todo sobre mi madre* (*All About My Mother*, 1999), has been hailed as Spain's most innovative director since Buñuel. Buñuel's presence in Mexico between 1946 and 1965 had little effect on the general mediocrity of that nation's film industry, however. The commercialism of the Mexican cinema was briefly mitigated by a group of idealistic young filmmakers in the late 1960s (Arturo Ripstein, Felipe Cazals, Jaime Humberto Hermosillo) but reappeared even more relentlessly in the following decade. The Mexican cinema enjoyed a resurgence at the turn of the 21st century, and directors such as Alfonso Cuarón (*Y tu mamá también*, 2001) and Alejandro González Iñárritu (*Amores perros*, 2000) gained international acclaim.

The war years and post-World War II trends » International cinema » Sweden

The Scandinavian film industries are small, state-subsidized, and (since the introduction of sound) oriented largely toward the domestic market; however, the post-World War II Swedish cinema, like the Spanish, is noted for producing a single exceptional talent: **Ingmar Bergman**. Bergman first won international acclaim in the 1950s for his masterworks *Det sjunde inseglet* (*The Seventh Seal*, 1956), *Smultronstället* (*Wild Strawberries*, 1957), and *Jungfrukällan* (*The Virgin Spring*, 1960). His trilogies of the 1960s—*Såsom i en spegel* (*Through a Glass Darkly*, 1961), *Nattvardsgästerna* (*Winter Light*, 1963), and *Tystnaden* (*The Silence*, 1963); *Persona* (1966), *Vargtimmen* (*Hour of the Wolf*, 1968), and *Skammen* (*Shame*, 1968)—were marked by a deep spiritual and intellectual probing, and later films, such as *Viskningar och rop* (*Cries and Whispers*, 1972) and *Fanny och Alexander* (*Fanny and Alexander*, 1984), confirmed that he is essentially a religious artist.

The war years and post-World War II trends » Recent trends in American cinema

In the **United States**, as elsewhere, the last half of the 1960s was a time of intense conflict between generations and of rapid **social change**. Deeply involved with its own financial crisis, Hollywood was slow to respond to this new environment, and the studios made increasingly desperate attempts to attract a demographically homogeneous audience that no longer existed. The stupendous failure of Twentieth Century-Fox's blockbuster *Cleopatra* (1963) was briefly offset by the unexpected success of its *The Sound of Music* (1965), but over the next few years one box-office disaster after another threatened the studios'

independence until most were absorbed by conglomerates. RKO had been sold to the General Tire and Rubber Corporation in 1955, and Universal had been acquired by MCA (the Music Corporation of America) in 1962. **Paramount** was then taken over by Gulf and Western Industries, Inc., in 1966, United Artists by **Transamerica Corporation** in 1967, **Warner Bros.** by Kinney National Services, Inc. (later renamed Warner Communications), in 1969, and MGM by the Las Vegas financier Kirk Kerkorian in 1970. Continuing this trend, in 1981 **Twentieth Century-Fox** was acquired by Denver oil tycoon Marvin Davis (who later shared ownership with publisher **Rupert Murdoch**), and Columbia was purchased by the Coca-Cola Company in 1982. United Artists merged with **MGM** in 1981 to form MGM/UA, which was subsequently acquired by Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., in 1986. The impact of such mergers was pronounced because they reduced filmmaking in the United States to a subordinate role; in the profit-making machinery of these **multinational corporations**, film production was often less important than the production of such items as refined sugar, **ball bearings**, field ammunition, rubber tires, and **soft drinks**.

Before conglomeration had completely restructured the industry, however, there was an exciting period of experiment as Hollywood made various attempts to attract a new audience among the nation's youth. In an effort to lure members of the first "television generation" into movie theatres, the studios even recruited directors from the rival medium, such as Irvin Kershner (*A Fine Madness*, 1966), **John Frankenheimer** (*Seconds*, 1966), **Sidney Lumet** (*The Pawnbroker*, 1965), **Robert Altman** (*Countdown*, 1968), **Arthur Penn** (*Mickey One*, 1965), and **Sam Peckinpah** (*Major Dundee*, 1965). These directors collaborated with film-school-trained cinematographers (including **Conrad Hall**, Haskell Wexler, and William Fraker), as well as with the Hungarian-born cinematographers **Laszlo Kovacs** and Vilmos Zsigmond, to bring the heightened cinematic consciousness of the French New Wave to the American screen. Their films frequently exhibited unprecedented political and social consciousness as well.

The years 1967–69 marked a turning point in American film history as Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969), Wexler's *Medium Cool* (1969), and Dennis Hopper's *Easy Rider* (1969) attracted the youth market to theatres in record numbers. (Altman's *M*A*S*H* [1970] provided a novel comedic coda to the quintet.) The films were unequal aesthetically (the first three being major revisions of their genres, the last two canny exploitations of the prevailing mood), but all shared a cynicism toward established values and a fascination with apocalyptic violence. There was a sense, however briefly, that such films might provide the catalyst for a cultural revolution. Artistically, the films domesticated New Wave camera and editing techniques, enabling once-radical practices to enter the mainstream narrative cinema. Financially, they were so successful (*Easy Rider*, for example, returned \$50,000,000 on a \$375,000 investment) that producers quickly saturated the market with low-budget youth-culture movies, only a few of which—Penn's *Alice's Restaurant* (1969), Michael Wadleigh's *Woodstock* (1970), and David and Albert Maysles' *Gimme Shelter* (1970)—achieved even limited distinction.

Concurrent with the youth-cult boom was the new permissiveness toward sex made possible by the institution of the **Motion Picture Association of America** (MPAA) ratings system in 1968. Unlike the Production Code, this system of self-regulation did not proscribe the content of films but merely categorized them according to their appropriateness for young viewers. (G designates general audiences; PG suggests parental guidance; PG-13 strongly cautions parents because the film contains material inappropriate for children under 13; R indicates that the film is restricted to adults and to persons under 17 accompanied by a parent or guardian; and X or NC-17 signifies that no one under 17 may be admitted to the film—NC meaning "no children.") In practice, the X rating has usually been given to unabashed pornography and the G rating to children's films, which has had the effect of concentrating sexually explicit but serious films in the R and NC-17 categories.) The introduction of the ratings system led immediately to the production of serious, nonexploitative adult films, such as John Schlesinger's *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) and **Mike Nichols**'s *Carnal Knowledge* (1971), in which sexuality was treated with a maturity and realism unprecedented on the American screen.

The revolution that some had predicted would overturn American cinema, as well as American society, during the late 1960s never took place. Conglomeration and inflation did occur, however, especially between 1972 and 1979, when the **average cost** per feature increased by more than 500 percent to reach \$11 million in 1980. Despite the increasing costs, the unprecedented popularity of a few films (**Francis Ford Coppola**'s *The Godfather*, 1972; **Steven Spielberg**'s *Jaws*, 1975; **George Lucas**'s *Star Wars*, 1977) produced enormous profits and stimulated a wildcat mentality within the industry. In this environment, it was not uncommon for the major companies to invest their **working capital** in the production of only five or six films a year, hoping that one or two would be extremely successful. At one point, **Columbia** reputedly had all of its assets invested in Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), a gamble that paid off handsomely; **United Artists**' similar investment in Michael Cimino's financially disastrous *Heaven's Gate* (1980), however, led to the sale of the company and its virtual destruction as a corporate entity.

The new generation of directors that came to prominence at this time included many who had been trained in university film schools—Francis Ford Coppola and Paul Schrader at the **University of California** at Los Angeles, George Lucas and John Milius at the **University of Southern California**, **Martin Scorsese** and **Brian De Palma** at **New York University**, Steven Spielberg at California State College—as well as others who had been documentarians and critics before making their first features (**Peter Bogdanovich**, William Friedkin). These filmmakers brought to their work a technical sophistication and a sense of film history eminently suited to the new Hollywood, whose quest for enormously profitable films demanded slick professionalism and a thorough understanding of popular genres. The directors achieved success as highly skilled technicians in the production of cinematic thrills, although many were serious artists as well.

The graphic representation of violence and sex, which had been pioneered with risk by *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Wild Bunch*, and *Midnight Cowboy* in the late 1960s, was exploited for its sensational effect during the '70s in such well-produced R-rated features as Coppola's *The Godfather*, Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973), Spielberg's *Jaws*, **Scorsese**'s *Taxi Driver* (1976), De Palma's *Carrie* (1976), and scores of lesser films. The newly popular science-fiction/adventure genre was similarly supercharged through computer-enhanced special effects and Dolby sound, as the brooding philosophical musings of Kubrick's *2001* gave way to the cartoon-strip violence of Lucas's *Star Wars*, Spielberg's *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), and their myriad sequels and copies. There was, however, originality in the continuing work of veterans **Altman** (*McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, 1971; *Nashville*, 1975; *Three Women*, 1977) and Kubrick (*A Clockwork Orange*, 1971; *The Shining*, 1980), American Film Institute graduate Terrence Malick (*Badlands*, 1973; *Days of Heaven*, 1978), and controversial newcomer **Cimino** (*The Deerhunter*, 1978; *Heaven's Gate*). In addition, **Coppola** (*The Godfather*; *The Godfather, Part II*, 1974; *Apocalypse Now*, 1979) and **Scorsese** (*Mean Streets*, 1973; *Raging Bull*, 1980) created films of unassailable importance. Some of the strongest films of the era came from émigré directors working within the American industry—John Boorman's *Deliverance* (1972), **Roman Polanski**'s *Chinatown* (1974), **Miloš Forman**'s *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975), and **Ridley Scott**'s *Alien* (1979). In general, however, Hollywood's new corporate managers lacked the judgment of industry veterans and tended to rely on the recently tried and true (producing an unprecedented number of high-budget sequels) and the viscerally sensational.

To this latter category belong the spate of “**psycho-slasher**” films that glutted the market in the wake of John Carpenter’s highly successful low-budget chiller, *Halloween* (1978). The formula for producing films of this type begins with the **serial murder** of teenagers by a ruthless psychotic and adds gratuitous sex and violence, with realistic gore provided by state-of-the-art makeup and special-effects artists. Its success was confirmed by the record-breaking receipts of the clumsily made *Friday the Thirteenth* (1980). There were precedents for psycho-killer violence in Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1960) and Tobe Hooper’s *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974), but for decades the exploitation of gore had existed only at the periphery of the industry (in the “splatter” movies of Herschell Gordon Lewis, for example). The slasher films took the gore and violence into the mainstream of Hollywood films.

During the 1980s the fortunes of the American film industry were increasingly shaped by new technologies of video delivery and imaging. Cable networks, direct-broadcast satellites, and half-inch videocassettes provided new means of motion-picture distribution, and **computer-generated** graphics provided new means of production, especially of special effects, forecasting the prospect of a fully automated “electronic cinema.” Many studios, including **Universal** and Columbia, devoted the majority of their schedules to the production of telefilms for the commercial television networks, and nearly all the studios presold their theatrical features for cable and videocassette distribution. In fact, **Tri-Star**, one of **Hollywood’s** major producer-distributors, was a joint venture of CBS Inc., Columbia Pictures, and Time-Life’s premium cable service **Home Box Office** (HBO). HBO and competitor Showtime both functioned as producer-distributors in their own right by directly financing films and entertainment specials for **cable television**. In 1985, for the first time since the 1910s, **independent film** producers released more motion pictures than the major studios, largely to satisfy the demands of the cable and home-video markets.

The strength of the cable and video industries led producers to seek properties with video or “televsual” features that would play well on the small television screen (*Flashdance*, 1983; *Footloose*, 1984) or to attempt to draw audiences into the theatres with the promise of spectacular 70-mm photography and multitrack Dolby sound (*Amadeus*, 1984; *Aliens*, 1986). Ironically, the long-standing 35-mm theatrical feature survived in the mid-1980s in such unexpected places as “kidpix” (a form originally created to exploit the PG-13 rating when it was instituted in 1984—*The Breakfast Club*, 1985; *Stand by Me*, 1986) and, more dramatically, the **Vietnam** combat film (Oliver Stone’s *Platoon*, 1986; Coppola’s *Gardens of Stone*, 1987; Kubrick’s *Full Metal Jacket*, 1987). Responding to the political climate, the studios produced some of their most jingoistic films since the **Korean War**, endorsing the notion of political betrayal in Vietnam (*Rambo: First Blood, Part II*, 1985), fear of a Soviet invasion (*Red Dawn*, 1985), and military vigilantism (*Top Gun*, 1986). Films with a “literary” quality, many of them British-made, were also popular in the American market during the 1980s (*A Passage to India*, 1984; *A Room with a View*, 1985; *Out of Africa*, 1985).

These trends were taken to greater extremes in the 1990s and early 21st century, to the extent that the style and content of a film determined its most popular venue. Major advances in computer-generated animation and special effects allowed for films of unprecedented visual sophistication (*Jurassic Park*, 1993; *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace*, 1999; *The Matrix*, 1999), and audiences preferred the experience of seeing such films on large theatre screens. Computer animation was also put to good use in films that play equally well on theatre or television screens, such as *Toy Story* (1995), *Antz* (1998), and *Chicken Run* (2000). Independent producers, especially those who specialized in low-budget films of intimate subject matter, regained strength under the new regime of home video and created some of the most unconventional and interesting work the American cinema had seen in some time; they included Joel and Ethan Coen (*Blood Simple*, 1984; *Fargo*, 1996; *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, 2000), Spike Jonze (*Being John Malkovich*, 1999), and Quentin Tarantino (*Pulp Fiction*, 1994; *Jackie Brown*, 1997). It was also an era in which low-cost marketing via the Internet could turn a \$50,000 independent film into a \$100,000,000 blockbuster (*The Blair Witch Project*, 1999). These “indie” films were too original to have been made in the studio era and too eccentric for the mass-market economies of the late 20th century. They hark back to the vitality and integrity of the pre-studio age—to the work of D.W. Griffith, **Buster Keaton**, Erich von Stroheim, and **Charlie Chaplin**—when anything was possible because everything was new.

David A. Cook

Additional Reading » General histories

The history of motion pictures is discussed generally in Arthur Knight, *The Liveliest Art: A Panoramic History of the Movies*, rev. ed. (1979), an influential history; Louis Giannetti and Scott Eyman, *Flashback: A Brief History of Film*, 4th ed. (2001), a concise overview with an emphasis on American film; Robert Sklar, *A World History of Film* (2002), a comprehensive survey that examines principal films, directors, and national cinemas; Paul Rotha, with Richard Griffith, *The Film till Now*, new ed. (1967), a substantial history, though now dimmed by age and a lack of critical perspective; Pierre Leprohon, *Histoire du cinéma*, 2 vol. (1961–63), a useful reference work of names, dates, titles, and events; Gerald Mast, *A Short History of the Movies*, 4th ed. (1986); David A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film* (1981), a wide-ranging historical survey of international film; Eric Rhode, *A History of the Cinema from Its Origins to 1970* (1976, reprinted 1985), an international critical history providing detailed though opinionated coverage; Kenneth Macgowan, *Behind the Screen: The History and Techniques of the Motion Picture* (1965), a dated but still valuable history by an industry insider; and Ephraim Katz, *The Film Encyclopedia*, 4th ed. (2001), an informative reference source. Perhaps the most exhaustive study of American film history is Charles Harpole (ed.), *History of the American Cinema* (1990–).

Additional Reading » Historical studies of specific periods

Early developments are studied in Terry Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights: A History of the Motion Picture*, 2 vol. (1926, reissued in 1 vol., 1986), a romantic account covering the period to 1925, with emphasis on American film between 1890 and 1915; Michael Chanan, *The Dream That Kicks: The Prehistory and Early Years of Cinema in Britain* (1980), an extraordinary

study of the cultural and ideological "site" of cinema at the moment of its birth; Kevin Brownlow, *Hollywood, the Pioneers* (1979), a systematic treatment of the subject through the 1920s, copiously illustrated by John Kobal; John Fell (ed.), *Film Before Griffith* (1983); and Lary May, *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry* (1980, reprinted 1983).

Further developments are presented in Georges Sadoul, *Histoire générale du cinéma*, 6 vol. in varied editions (1973–75), a detailed study of the epoch of silent film; Kevin Brownlow, *The Parade's Gone By* (1968), a well-illustrated study of American silent films and stars, based on interviews with survivors; John Kobal, *Hollywood: The Years of Innocence* (1985), a pictorial work on the period; William K. Everson, *American Silent Film* (1978, reissued 1998); Graham Petrie, *Hollywood Destinies: European Directors in America, 1922–1931* (1985); and Benjamin B. Hampton, *A History of the Movies* (1931, reissued as *History of the American Film Industry from Its Beginnings to 1931*, 1970). An excellent, well-researched account of the coming of sound is found in Alexander Walker, *The Shattered Silents: How the Talkies Came to Stay* (1978, reissued 1986). See also Evan William Cameron (ed.), *Sound and the Cinema: The Coming of Sound to American Film* (1980), an anthology of scholarly essays and reminiscences; Leonard Quart and Albert Auster, *American Films and Society Since 1945* (1984), a brief, penetrating study; and William Luhr (ed.), *World Cinema Since 1945* (1987).

Additional Reading » Historical and critical studies of national film movements

British filmmaking is the subject of Roy Armes, *A Critical History of the British Cinema* (1978); Rachael Low, *The History of the British Film*, 7 vol. (1948–79), a detailed study of the silent film; Ernest Betts, *The Film Business: A History of British Cinema, 1896–1972* (1973), a standard, compact history; Alexander Walker, *Hollywood UK: The British Film Industry in the Sixties* (1974; also published as *Hollywood, England*, 1974, reprinted 1986); George Perry, *The Great British Picture Show*, rev. ed. (1985), a popular concise history; and Sarah Street, *British National Cinema* (1997).

For France, see Richard Abel, *French Cinema: The First Wave, 1915–1929* (1984), a definitive scholarly study of avant-garde and commercial cinema of the era, superbly illustrated; James Monaco, *The New Wave: Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol, Rohmer, Rivette* (1976, reprinted 1980), an excellent critical study; Georges Sadoul, *French Film* (1953, reissued 1972); Roy Armes, *French Cinema* (1985); and Alan Williams, *Republic of Images: A History of French Filmmaking* (1992).

For Germany, see Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (1947, reissued with additions, 1974), a psychological, sociological, and political analysis; David Stewart Hull, *Film in the Third Reich: A Study of the German Cinema, 1933–1945* (1969, reissued 1973), an exploration of the cinema's role in Nazi propaganda; David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema, 1933–1945* (1983); Julian Petley, *Capital and Culture: German Cinema, 1933–45* (1979), a discussion of the economic and social structure of the Nazi film industry; Lotte H. Eisner, *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt* (1969, reissued 1973; originally published in French, 1965; new enlarged French ed., 1981), a study of the influence of the arts of painting, drama, and the novel on the cinema; and Eric Rentschler, *West German Film in the Course of Time: Reflections on the Twenty Years Since Oberhausen* (1984), a scholarly account of the New German Cinema and its historical-economic contexts.

Italian filmmaking is the subject of Pierre Leprohon, *The Italian Cinema* (1972; originally published in French, 1966); James Hay, *Popular Film Culture in Fascist Italy: The Passing of the Rex* (1987); Mira Liehm, *Passion and Defiance: Film in Italy from 1942 to the Present* (1984), an informative though sometimes eccentric critical study; Roy Armes, *Patterns of Realism* (1971, reprinted 1986), a standard study of the Neorealist cinema; and Peter Bondanella, *Italian Cinema: From Neorealism to the Present* (1983), a definitive scholarly analysis.

Films from the Soviet Union and eastern European countries are the subject of Jay Leyda, *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*, 3rd ed. (1983), a broad, authoritative study of developments beginning with tsarist times; Mira Liehm and Antonín J. Liehm, *The Most Important Art: Eastern European Film After 1945* (1977), a survey of Soviet, Polish, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Yugoslav, East German, Romanian, and Bulgarian cinema, illustrated with many rare stills; Ronald Holloway, *The Bulgarian Cinema* (1986), a well-illustrated study; Peter Hames, *The Czechoslovak New Wave* (1985); Graham Petrie, *History Must Answer to Man: The Contemporary Hungarian Cinema* (1978); and Daniel J. Goulding, *Liberated Cinema: The Yugoslav Experience* (1985), a critical history of the postwar period.

For other European countries, see Peter Cowie, *Swedish Cinema* (1966), and *Swedish Cinema from Ingeborg Holm to Fanny and Alexander* (1985); and Peter Besas, *Behind the Spanish Lens: Spanish Cinema Under Fascism and Democracy* (1985).

For a survey of Australian movies, see Graham Shirley and Brian Adams, *Australian Cinema, the First Eighty Years* (1983), a standard scholarly history covering developments to 1975; and Brian McFarlane, *Australian Cinema 1970–1985* (1987), a valuable account of Australia's unprecedented film explosion.

Filmmaking in Asian and African countries is discussed in Noël Burch, *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema*, rev. and ed. by Annette Michelson (1979), a classical study of the film form and its misinterpretations in the West; Tadao Sato, *Currents in Japanese Cinema*, trans. from Japanese (1982), original essays with a filmography to 1981; Audie Bock, *Japanese Film Directors* (1978, reprinted 1985), a scrupulously researched critical study of 10 directors spanning the history of the industry; Thomas Weisser and Yuko Mihara Weisser, *Japanese Cinema: The Essential Handbook*, 4th rev. ed. (1998); Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry*, expanded ed. (1982); Jay Leyda, *Dianying: An Account of Films and the Film Audience in China* (1972); Erik Barnouw and S. Krishnaswamy, *Indian Film*, 2nd ed. (1980), an authoritative study; T.M. Ramachandran (ed.), *70 Years of Indian Cinema, 1913–1983* (1985), a well-illustrated, extended history; Roy Armes, *Third World Film Making and the West* (1987), a historical overview that also includes discussions of Latin American cinema; and Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen, *Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema*, new rev. ed. (1999).

Book-length works on Latin America, Cuba, and Mexico include Jorge A. Schnitman, *Film Industries in Latin America: Dependency and Development* (1984), an economic analysis from the silent era through the 1980s; Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (eds.), *Brazilian Cinema* (1982), a definitive English-language history; Michael Chanan, *The Cuban Image: Cinema and Cultural Politics in Cuba* (1985); Carl J. Mora, *Mexican Cinema: Reflections of a Society, 1896–1980* (1982), a scholarly critical history; and Chon A. Noriega (ed.), *Visible Nations: Latin American Cinema and Video* (2000).

The cinema of the United States is the subject of Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Social History of American Movies* (1975); Lewis Jacobs, *The Rise of the American Film, a Critical History*, expanded ed. (1968, reissued 1974), a detailed study with emphasis on trends and audience preference; David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, and Janet Staiger, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960* (1985); Douglas Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System* (1985); Andrew Sarris, *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions, 1929–1968* (1968, reprinted 1985), a classic definition of the auteur theory and its critical application to American films and filmmakers; and Tino Balio (ed.), *The American Film Industry*, rev. ed. (1985), an anthology of historical scholarship and primary documents from the origins to the 1980s.

Additional Reading » Genre studies

Thomas Schatz, *Hollywood Genres: Formulas, Filmmaking, and the Studio System* (1981), examines prevalent styles and forms. Nonfiction films are discussed in Richard Meran Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History* (1973), which focuses on British and American documentaries; Richard Meran Barsam (ed.), *Nonfiction Film: Theory and Criticism* (1976); and Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film*, rev. ed. (1983). War themes are explored in Craig W. Campbell, *Reel America and World War I: A Comprehensive Filmography and History of Motion Pictures in the United States, 1914–1920* (1985); and Jeanine Basinger, *The World War II Combat Film: Anatomy of a Genre* (1986).

Studies of the western, crime movies, and film noir include William K. Everson, *The Hollywood Western: 90 Years of Cowboys and Indians, Train Robbers, Sheriffs and Gunslingers, and Assorted Heroes and Desperados* (1992, rev. ed. of *A Pictorial History of the Western Film*, 1969); Jim Kitses, *Horizons West: Anthony Mann, Budd Boetticher, Sam Peckinpah: Studies of Authorship Within the Western* (1969); Jon Tuska, *The Filming of the West* (1976); Lawrence Alloway, *Violent America: The Movies, 1946–1964* (1971); Carlos Clarens, *Crime Movies: From Griffith to The Godfather and Beyond* (1980), a historical cross-genre survey; Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward (eds.), *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style* (1979), a critical reference work; Foster Hirsch, *The Dark Side of the Screen: Film Noir* (1981, reprinted 1983), an in-depth study; and Jon Tuska, *Dark Cinema: American Film Noir in Cultural Perspective* (1984). Experimental cinema is the subject of Sheldon Renan, *An Introduction to the American Underground Film* (1967). The social-issue movie is explored in Peter Roffman and Jim Purdy, *The Hollywood Social Problem Film: Madness, Despair, and Politics from the Depression to the Fifties* (1981). For feminist studies of Hollywood films, see Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (1987); and E. Ann Kaplan, *Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera* (1983), which also covers independent films.

Two surveys of specific genres are Kalton C. Lahue, *Continued Next Week: A History of the Moving Picture Serial* (1964), and *World of Laughter: The Motion Picture Comedy Short, 1910–1930* (1966, reprinted 1972). Other works on comedy include Walter Kerr, *The Silent Clowns* (1975); Gerald Mast, *The Comic Mind: Comedy and the Movies*, 2nd ed. (1979), a thematic

study of silent and sound comedies and the relationship between intellectual content and comic form; and Andrew Horton (ed.), *Comedy/Cinema/Theory* (1991).

Musicals are discussed in John Kobal, *A History of Movie Musicals: Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance*, rev. ed. (1983), an extremely well-represented international survey; Ted Sennett, *Hollywood Musicals* (1981, reprinted 1985); Jane Feuer, *The Hollywood Musical* (1982); Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (1987, reissued 1989), a definitive study of the structure of the genre; and Colin Larkin, *The Virgin Encyclopedia of Stage and Film Musicals* (1999).

For an overview of animated films, see Leonard Maltin, *Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons* (1980); Donald Crafton, *Before Mickey: The Animated Film, 1898–1928* (1982), a scholarly discussion of pre-Disney works; and Christopher Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney: From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms* (1973, reprinted 1983), a richly illustrated study.

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Related Articles

Aspects of this topic are discussed in the following places at Britannica.

Assorted References

- **development of tap dance** (*in* **tap dance: Film**)

An entirely new arena for tap dancers opened up with the introduction of “talking” motion pictures. Although the technology for sound on film had been around for several years, it was not until *The Jazz Singer* (1927) that the public accepted this new medium. The advent of sound enabled entire acts of many popular vaudeville tap dancers to be captured on...

- **“Heaven’s Gate” fiasco** (*in* **Michael Cimino (American director)**)

...and story of *The Deer Hunter* with a clarity and straightforwardness that eluded him in subsequent films. He followed his *Deer Hunter* triumph with one of the most legendary disasters in Hollywood history, *Heaven’s Gate* (1980), a western that lost millions and crippled its studio, United Artists. Although the movie has its defenders, Cimino was widely criticized for being...

- **role of photography** (*in* **photography: Photography of movement**)

...To prove that his photographs were accurate, Muybridge projected them upon a screen one after the other with a lantern-slide projector he had built for the purpose; the result was the world’s first motion-picture presentation. This memorable event took place at the San Francisco Art Association in 1880.

- **use of cigarette smoking** (*in* **smoking (tobacco): Mass production and mass appeal** ;

...with societal attitudes by so-called new women. Most important, the cigarette habit was legitimated, celebrated, and glamourized on the Hollywood screen and transported to the rest of the world. Movie stars such as Edward G. Robinson, James Cagney, Spencer Tracy, ...

in **smoking (tobacco): The antismoking movement**)

...has come to feel marginalized and harassed, the very suppression of smoking only increases its power as a symbol of individualism and resistance. For instance, a survey of internationally successful Hollywood films found that motion pictures released in 1995 featured four times as much smoking as those released in 1990, with an increase in the number of positive verbal and visual references made...

External Web sites

This topic is discussed at the following external Web sites.

History.com - History of Motion Picture

Mark Freeman Films - History of Motion Pictures

Citations

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history of the motion picture. (2009). In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved May 11, 2009, from Encyclopædia Britannica Online: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/394161/history-of-the-motion-picture>