



# **In Excess: Sergei Eisenstein's Mexico (Cinema and Modernity)**

*Masha Salazkina*

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During the 1920s and '30s, Mexico attracted an international roster of artists and intellectuals—including Orson Welles, Katherine Anne Porter, and Leon Trotsky—who were drawn to the heady tumult engendered by battling cultural ideologies in an emerging center for the avant-garde. Against the backdrop of this cosmopolitan milieu, *In Excess* reconstructs the years that the renowned Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein spent in the country to work on his controversial film *¡Que Viva Mexico!*

Illuminating the inextricability of Eisenstein's oeuvre from the global cultures of modernity and film, Masha Salazkina situates this unfinished project within the twin contexts of postrevolutionary Mexico and the ideas of such contemporaneous thinkers as Walter Benjamin. In doing so, Salazkina explains how Eisenstein's engagement with Mexican mythology, politics, and art deeply influenced his ideas, particularly about sexuality. She also uncovers the role Eisenstein's bisexuality played in his creative thinking and identifies his use of the baroque as an important turn toward excess and hybrid forms. Beautifully illustrated with rare photographs, *In Excess* provides the most complete genealogy available of major shifts in this modern master's theories and aesthetics.

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