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SOCIALIST INTERNATIONALISM IN THE COLD WAR - EXPLORING THE SECOND WORLD

EDITED BY PATRYK BABIRACKI AND AUSTIN JERSILD

Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War

Patryk Babiracki • Austin Jersild
Editors

Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War

Exploring the Second World

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To Alfred Rieber

PREFACE

This volume originated as a 3-day workshop organized by Patryk Babiracki and Jan Behrends in June 2014 at the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung (ZZF) in Potsdam. The venue could not have been more symbolic. After all, the 1945 Potsdam conference had sealed the postwar order in Europe and helped create the socialist "Second World." The close proximity to the famous Glienicker Brücke—"The Bridge of Spies"—added some gravitas and some humor to our discussions of border crossings in the Cold War.

The event was generously sponsored by the Volkswagenstiftung, and it materialized thanks to the enormous amount of administrative and logistical help from Stephanie Karmann and Roxanna Noll as well as colleagues and administrators at the ZZF. Jens Gieseke supported the workshop as head of ZZF's Section I. The editors wish to thank all abovementioned people and institutions for laying the groundwork for this volume. We would like to express our special gratitude to the Volkswagenstiftung, which continued to support our Second-Worldly efforts by providing additional funds for the production of this book. We wish to extend our thanks to Whitney Landis, who assisted with the editing of this book. Patryk Babiracki wishes to personally thank Jan Behrends—for the early stage of collaboration—and Austin Jersild, who had graciously agreed to be part of this project well before the dust of our internationalist conversations in Potsdam had time to settle.

Alfred Rieber delivered the conference keynote lecture and kindly agreed to write the afterword; by way of thanking him and expressing our appreciation to Al as an exemplary scholar and a wonderful human being, we dedicate this modest book to him.

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Patryk Babiracki is an Associate Professor in Russian and East European history at the University of Texas-Arlington. His first monograph, titled *Soviet Soft Power in Poland: Culture and the Making of Stalin's New Empire, 1943–1957*, was published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2015. He co-edited a collection of essays entitled *Cold War Crossings: Travel and Exchange Across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s–1960s* (Texas A&M UP, 2014) and wrote several articles on transnational dimensions of Soviet and East European communisms during the Cold War.

David Crowley runs the Critical Writing in Art and Design MA at the Royal College of Art, London. He has a specialist interest in modernism in art and design, often with a focus on the histories of Eastern Europe under communist rule. His books include *Warsaw* (2003) and three edited volumes: *Socialism and Style. Material Culture in Post-war Eastern Europe* (2000); *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (2003);

and *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (2010). He writes regularly for *Eye* magazine, *Creative Review*, *Frieze*, and other art and design press titles. Crowley also curates exhibitions (including 'Cold War Modern' at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2008–9; 'The Power of Fantasy. Modern and Contemporary Art from Poland' at BOZAR, Brussels, 2011; and Sounding the Body Electric. Experiments in Art and Music in Eastern Europe at Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, 2012 and Calvert 22, London, 2013).

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Diplomacy and the Third World, 1948–1968," explores Indo-Soviet cultural exchange and how the unintended consequences of Soviet "soft power" in the subcontinent had implications on cultural change in the USSR.

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CHAPTER 1

Editors' Introduction

Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild

There was "no single practice of communism," emphasizes Maria Todorova in a discussion of memory and the socialist world, but there were "similar trajectories" and similar blueprints, institutions, and experiences that made what we are calling in this volume the "Second World," something distinctly different from either the "First" or "Third."[1] The growth in the study of memory, "socialist consumerism," and difficult post-socialist "transitions," as well as the more popular forms of *Ostalgie* in film, exhibits, and literature, all attest to the existence of the distinct and shared experience of socialism.[2] Even Berlin, famously remaking itself today as the new capital of the new Germany, routinely offers glimpses of historical and social experience more familiar to residents of Warsaw, Budapest, and Moscow than to its many tourists and recently arrived former West Germans. "From here [Berlin] to Vladivostok," recounted journalist and writer Anna Funder, more than a decade ago, there was "linoleum and grey cement, asbestos and prefabricated concrete," in her disillusioned view, all part of "Communism's gift to the built environment."[3]

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The "Second World" had distinctive characteristics, evolved over time, featured transnational exchange and was itself a product of transnational exchange, was highly significant to the evolution of the Cold War, and continues to shape this vast "Eurasian" space today.[4] Topics of study are routinely difficult to confine within the boundaries of a particular nation-state.[5] We refer to this world as "the Second World," both in order to convey its distinctness and interconnectedness and to mark the historiographic shift of which this volume is part. Multiple forms of exchange, shared experiences, perceptions, and dilemmas that crossed boundaries and borders, both transnational or within the socialist world and transsystemic or across the "Iron Curtain," shaped the history and evolution of the Second World.[6] Travel and exchange and its significance repeatedly emerge as topics for exploration in this volume, including attention to important foreign visitors and foreign influences, and the circulation within the Second World of ideas, practices, and norms. As Wendy Bracewell pointed out, "travels within the fraternal countries of the Socialist bloc were simultaneously travels abroad (new sights and sounds, different ways of doing things, perhaps even a different range of goods on sale) and travels at home (a shared socialist and internationalist ideology)."[7] Travel and transnational influences both affirmed the shared identity of the Second World and led to its fragmentation.

Few observers referred to the Second World during the Cold War; when they did, it was to use it as shorthand for the Soviet-type planned economies.[8] Early works tended to focus on those transnational institutions and practices that were central to policing, stability, and order.[9] The policies of the Soviet Union, at least initially, seemed designed to curtail rather than facilitate exchange and communication, as mystified East Europeans sometimes complained.[10] The primary Soviet interest was initially focused on the creation of a secure buffer zone against a future attack from the West. Over time, however, the Soviet and East European communists also thoroughly transformed their countries' landscapes, languages, fashions, rhythms of industrial production, identities, and values. By the 1970s, the inhabitants of the Second World came to share a distinct culture, which eventually outlived socialist political systems; it is also a culture that has been rarely acknowledged, much less "theorized."[11] These social and cultural aspects of the Second World lie at the center of our volume.

The Second World was both a promise and a problem to Moscow, especially in the era of reform and "peaceful coexistence" that emerged after the death of Stalin in 1953. "Let us verify in practice whose system is better," Nikita Khrushchev proclaimed in India. "We say to the leaders of the capitalist states: 'Let us compete without war.'"[12] The improved functioning and health of the Bloc was a crucial part of the official Soviet effort to "catch up with and surpass" the United States. Khrushchev and numerous reformers highly valued the skills and experiences of especially countries such as East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, and many East Europeans were pleased that their advanced standing within the Second World was finally recognized.[13] Polish sociologists, for example, were proud that they were in a position to offer their Soviet counterparts exposure to the "sociologists of the West."[14] The virtues of Eastern Europe were on display at the Czechoslovak pavilion at the World's Fair in Brussels in 1958.[15] The presentation of consumer culture (restaurants, tourist trips, fashion, hot springs in Karlový Vary, restored churches in Prague), industrial productivity (Kaplan turbines), and high culture (the Czech Philharmonic) displayed by the Czechoslovaks was much approved by the Soviets.[16] When Czechoslovak Party First Secretary, Antonín Novotný, was in Moscow July 2–4, 1958, he listened to Khrushchev praise the "contribution of Czechoslovakia to the development of commerce between the east and the West." Soviet Minister of Defense, Kliment Voroshilov, visited the Czechoslovak pavilion, and pronounced it "splendid, superb, simply magnificent."[17]

The problem was that the region was also now a source of instability for the Soviet Union itself.[18] Czechoslovakia was quiet in 1956, but the "events" in Poland and Hungary that summer and fall alarmed communist party leaders and many others throughout the Bloc. In internal but frank debate, the distant Chinese, high officials, diplomats, advisers, and others worried about the weaknesses of the Soviet model, the advising program, Socialist Bloc exchange, the planning process, and even posed questions about the role of historic Russian imperialism (although now generally formulated as "great power chauvinism"). Khrushchev's optimism about the superiority of Soviet socialism seemed especially unconvincing in countries long exposed to alternatives. Exchange and travel also ironically meant greater East European exposure to the Soviet Union, confirming the assumptions of many in the region about traditional Russian backwardness in comparison to lands further West.

These developments even form the background to the Sino-Soviet split, so dramatically expressed in the sudden withdrawal of numerous Soviet advisers, teachers, and industrial specialists from China in the summer of 1960. "Socialist consumerism" and dissent were not what the Chinese

Communist Party had in mind when Chairman Mao opted to "lean to one side" and "learn from the Soviet Union."[19] From the perspective of the evolution of the Bloc, the frustration was mutual: the Chinese were frustrated by forms of economic, industrial, and cultural development that they felt did not address the needs of China's special "experience," and Soviet officials were concluding that the future of the Bloc belonged in further engagement with the more industrial and consumer societies of the West rather than the agrarian and undeveloped East.[20] Reform, peaceful coexistence, and further engagement with the West appeared to have dangerous consequences. The Chinese watched these matters closely throughout the 1950s, and along with the Albanians and North Koreans, eventually denounced both the Soviets and their fraternal allies for their "revisionist" betrayal of the October Revolution.[21] The Second World found itself in competition with both the West and the Chinese in the developing conflicts of the Third World, an important new arena of Cold War competition.[22]

In part, the Second World was held together by common claims about the virtues and special characteristics of "internationalism." As is well known, nineteenth century socialist theorists used the term as a call to arms; they wanted to mobilize the working classes across the world for cooperation in the struggle against capitalist exploitation. Ostensibly with the same intention, the twentieth century communist regimes intermittently deployed internationalist rhetoric in order to undermine the capitalist West, to consolidate the Second World, or to reach out to the Third.[23] From the beginning, however, the term "internationalism" was unstable and therefore amenable to transformations within the increasingly complex international workers' movement.[24] Publicly, Soviet officials, journalists, and authorities at first meant by "proletarian internationalism" egalitarian cooperation between working classes of various nations, but under Stalin, the term "internationalism" (increasingly qualified as "socialist" after World War II) came to connote Soviet dominance.[25] The Soviet relationship with foreign countries was fraught with contradictions. Peaceful outreach to governments abroad in the 1920s went hand-in-hand with the subversive activities of the Comintern, while the official anti-Westernism and isolation that characterized the 1930s was accompanied by both widespread industrial exchange and targeted cultural outreach meant to generate hard currency (used, in turn, to finance Soviet industrialization.)[26] Perhaps the greatest irony was that despite all their lip service to internationalism, the communist regimes became notorious for their relentless attempts to control movements across borders.[27] Communist authorities from East Germany to China and Cuba worked hard to obstruct any cross-border traffic that they deemed either unrelated or threatening to their own projects; it is perhaps another distinct feature of the Second World that the line between the two was often unclear.[28]

The relatively wide scale and scope of international interactions within the Second World is therefore striking. This was particularly true during and after the rule of Nikita Khrushchev, who opened up the USSR to the world between 1955 and 1957.[29] But even the Stalinists before him had struggled to reconcile those effects of international outreach that strengthened their power with those unintended consequences of transnational exchange that undermined it.[30] As a result, the international structures that the communists created in order to build up the Soviet empire or their own individual power bases sometimes served to undermine the imperial goals. As the rulers of the Second World inherited these Stalinist institutions and developed new organizations for international cooperation and exchange, opportunities to engage in what could be termed "informal internationalism" also grew. "At the beginning, there were three Europes," wrote Polish poet Agnieszka Osiecka on the eve of socialism's collapse. She described "the prescribed Europe," for instance "a Sport Tournament in one of the brotherly countries"; the "permitted Europe," which included Picasso; and "the forbidden Europe" of Franz Kafka. Osiecka admitted that in 1955 "Kafka was still far away"; however, "the permitted Europe was flooding in through a variety of gaps and holes."[31] By the time the Second World came into being, "internationalism" evolved from a revolutionary program into something of a condition, a state, and a situation, which included diverse forms of international entanglements. As a starting point for making sense of them, we take Akira Iriye's definition of internationalism as "an idea, a movement, or an institution that seeks to reformulate the nature of relations among nations through cross-national cooperation and interchange."[32] How did such various types of contacts shape or reveal the unique contours of Eurasian space in the second half of the twentieth century? Should we speak about the Second World in territorial or relational terms, or both? What do cross-border interactions reveal about the functioning of communist institutions, cultures, and societies together? What do they say about the persistent tension between homogeneity and diversity, which characterizes imperial systems and which the communists also tried to resolve? Do these interactions tell us something about the distinctness of the Second World with regards to the First and the Third? These questions are central to this volume.

The chapters in this volume are organized into five sections. The sections and the contributions follow a chronological-geographic order. Such organization, we thought, would both highlight the multiplying forms as well as shifting patterns of internationalism and put into relief the evolving, increasingly contested nature of the "Second World." Thus, Part I zooms in on the time of gestation of the Second World between the last months of World War II and the end of the Stalin era. The division of Europe that was a central feature of the Cold War was of course unimaginable without the catastrophic war. Coping with the consequences and aftermath of German expansion to the East and the Soviet-German struggle is at the center of the article by Lars Peder Haga, who reminds us of the importance of this issue for Soviet writer Konstantin Simonov and Czechoslovak writer Oles' Honchar. Central issues important to the early formation of the Second World, such as the anxiety surrounding *kul'turnost'*, ideas about backwardness in relation to "Europe," the depth of humanity supposedly found in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the leading role of the Soviet Union, and what Haga refers to as the "hierarchy of suffering" experienced in the war, endured throughout its entire history. In the next chapter, Balázs Apor describes the making and function of the Stalin cult in Hungary, a key part of the "system of myths and rituals that was deployed with the aim of constructing the Second World." As is clear in Balázs Apor's contribution, the Stalinists embarked on the creation of a socialist world; but, in reproducing models and copying ideas, they initially rarely relied on direct international human contacts. This section shows that the Second World under Stalin was, in a sense, a virtual world—a world of symbols and references that connected people who had otherwise little experience of one another.

Part II illustrates how the freedoms that so famously changed the lives of millions of people in Eastern Europe complicated the earlier forms of cohesion in the Second World. Rethinking the statues of Stalin was of course just one example of the remaking of public space in the socialist world. Patryk Babiracki's exploration of the reports of Soviet Komsomol delegates who travelled to Poland illustrates the markedly different concerns of Soviets and Poles as they related to the changes and new possibilities of Khrushchev-era reform, and to a potential Polish "path" to socialism. The Soviet heritage itself was diverse and potentially provocative, David Crowley reminds us in his article, which explores the surprising endurance of early Soviet architectural experimentation in Eastern Europe. The "afterimages" of the Soviet avant-garde "haunted" the Second World, sometimes posing uncomfortable questions about revolution and culture during the familiar moments of political crisis, such as 1956, 1968, and 1989. Both youth activism and artistic cross-pollination had begun as official initiatives of the party-states. Both gave rise to lasting contacts beyond the sanctioned institutions, and often, directly or obliquely challenged the status quo. Attention to these forms of contact reminds us that internationalism had many faces; the disruptive dimension of internationalism helps to explain why, after a decade of coerced expansion, the Second World slowly began to implode.[33]

Part III examines the communist efforts to create a distinct international socialist culture. Kyrill Kunakhovich examines the twists and turns of Polish-East German cultural exchanges, where cultural experimentation from places like Poland was perceived as profoundly threatening for a communist elite anxious about its claims to represent German high culture and tradition. Marsha Siefert traces the little-known Soviet international outreach initiatives in the realm of cinema. Both authors raise important questions about the mixed effects of international socialist exchanges. They demonstrate that for all their ambiguous results, the idea that something akin to the crystallization of a Second World culture, with its internationalist institutions, canons, and elites, is difficult to dismiss.

Parts IV and V venture further afield and examine the Second World's linkages with the First and Third worlds. Despite the internal turmoil, the essays suggest that, within the Bloc in the wake of Stalin's death, the socialist world remained a distinct sphere circumscribed by its institutions, practices, and norms. The global context to these essays puts the Second World's relative cohesion into relief. Pia Koivunen shows that Westerners had to earn (and could easily lose) the label of a "friend," depending on their performance during the 1957 festival; a handful of Poles, on the other hand, much as they sowed foment during the event, could do so only thanks to the new policies and even distraction of the party-states. In Mark Keck-Szajbel's contribution, the cosmopolitan encounters during Czechoslovak motorcross competitions were accompanied by the intense Second-World culture of secrecy and surveillance.

The Third World was suspicious of the First World but also learning about the Second, whose outreach abroad was shaped by not just the momentous Sino-Soviet split but also by rivalry among the different alliance partners. Jeremiah Wishon returns to the World Youth Festivals introduced by Pia Koivunen to explore Soviet efforts to foster connections between the socialist world and Indian public opinion. Nonaligned states and "potential friends" such as India became increasingly important to the makers of Khrushchev-era foreign policy in an increasingly complicated Cold War. China figures prominently in the contributions from both David Tompkins and Austin Jersild. China's supposed discipline, effort, and communal labor could easily be romanticized in places like Poland and East Germany, as Tompkins describes, reminding us of the complexities the split posed for public culture and debate within the Bloc and also of the potential use to be made of the Chinese example by critics of Khrushchev's reformist agenda. Even in the 1950s, China claimed for itself a special connection to the developing societies of the Third World, yet another dilemma for the socialist world after 1960. Jersild describes the shared concerns of Guinea-Conakry and China about the limitations and weaknesses of the socialist world in the early 1960s. In the business of the promotion of internationalism, by the 1960s, the Second World had not only its own domestic skeptics but critics in China, Asia, and the very Third World it claimed to represent.

Notes

1. Todorova, "Introduction," 1–25.
2. Lindenberger, "Experts with a Cause," 29–42; Todorova and Gille, eds., *Post-Communist Nostalgia*; Hodgin and Pearce, eds., *The GDR Remembered*; Giustino, Plum, and Vari, eds., *Socialist Escapes*; Bren and Neuberger, eds., *Communism Unwrapped*; Siegelbaum, ed., *The Socialist Car*; Crowley and Reid, eds., *Pleasures in Socialism*; Ghodsee, *The Red Riviera*.
3. Funder, *Stasiland*, 124. Or in the words of Ivan Volgyes: "The legacy of the system is visible and recognizable from Moscow to Prague, and from Warsaw to Sofia." Volgyes, "The Legacies of Communism," 2.
4. Some thinkers and politicians, especially in Russia, have used the term "Eurasia" since the nineteenth century to give meaning to the Russian-dominated parts of Europe and Asia. In Stephen Kotkin's terms, such Eurasia was "autarkic, messianic, apologetic (for empire) and demotic (illiberally "democratic")." See Kotkin, "Mongol Commonwealth?" 495. In contrast, we mean by "Eurasia" the territories that largely (though not completely) overlapped with the socialist "Second World" in order to emphasize the international dimensions of socialist exchange.

5. For just a few examples, see Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?*; Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation*; Meng, *Shattered Spaces*; Brenner and Heumos, *Sozialgeschichtliche Kommunismusforschung*; Gatejel, "The Common Heritage of the Socialist Car Culture," 143–56.
6. See Kotkin, "Mongol Commonwealth?"; David-Fox, "The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane," 14–39; David-Fox, "The Implications of Transnationalism," 885–904; Mëhilli, "The Socialist Design," 635–65; Mëhilli, "Socialist Encounters," 107–133; Gorsuch and Koenker, eds., *Turizm*; Gorsuch and Koenker, *The Socialist Sixties*; Siegelbaum, ed., *The Socialist Car;* Borodziej, ed., *Schleichwege*; Logemann, *Das polnische Fenster*; Mikkonen and Koivunen, eds., *Beyond the Divide*.
7. Bracewell, ed., *East Looks West*, 299.
8. Giddens, *Sociology*. The reluctance to refer to the Second World may have had something to do with fear of offending; however, as Odd Arne Westad reminds us, the term "Third World," which also implied the "First" and "Second" Worlds, originally carried emancipatory connotations—see *Global Cold War*, 2.
9. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc*; Hacker, *Der Ostblock*. More recently, see Kramer, "Stalin, Soviet Policy, and the Establishment of a Communist Bloc in Eastern Europe, 1941–1949," in Kramer and Smetana, eds., *Imposing, Maintaining, and Tearing Open the Iron Curtain*, 3–37; Kemp-Welch, "Eastern Europe," in Leffler and Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 219–37; Applebaum, *Iron Curtain*; Volokitina, Murashko, Noskova, and Pokivailova, *Moskva i vostochnaia evropa*; Volokitina, Islamov, Murashko, Noskova, and Pogovaia, eds., *Vostochnaia evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov*; Vykoukal, Litera, and Tejchman, *Východ*.
10. 14 June 1945, "Uvolnenie spisového materiálu, 382/45, MZV TO—O 1945-59, SSSR, krabice 30, obal 26; Babiracki, *Soviet Soft Power in Poland*, 88.
11. Waldstein, "Theorizing the Second World," 98–117; Babiracki, "Interfacing the Soviet Bloc," 376–407.
12. Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 57.
13. On matters ranging from consumer marketing to culture, foreign policy, and technical expertise, see Bren and Neuberger, eds.,

Communism Unwrapped; Pernes, *Krize komunistického režimu v Československu*, 36–44; Békés, "Cold War, Détente, and the Soviet Bloc," in Kramer and Smetana, eds., *Imposing, Maintaining, and Tearing Open the Iron Curtain*, 247–276; Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front*; Gilburd, "Picasso in Thaw Culture," 65–108; Jersild, "The Soviet State as Imperial Scavenger," 109–132. For an early work on the influence of Eastern Europe on the USSR, see Szporluk, ed., *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR*.

14. 31 October 1961, "Zapis' besedy," F. I. Konstantinov and Adam Schaff, GARF f. 9518, op. 1, d. 133, l. 195–96.
15. Giustino, "Industrial Design and the Czechoslovak Pavilion at EXPO '58," 185–212.
16. *Expo '58: Československá restaurace*; May 3, 1958, "Cestovní zpráva," Jiří Cafourek, NA ČSOK, krabice 28, folder C; Official Programme 58 (May 15, 1958), 11, and Programme Officiel 58 (July 18, 1958), 5, NA ČSOK, krabice 15, folder Propagace 'Official Programme.'
17. *La Tchécoslovaquie a Bruxelles 58*, no. 5, NA ČSOK, folder La Tchécoslovaquie, 9, cover.
18. Weiner, "The Empires Pay a Visit," 333–76; Wojnowski, "De-Stalinization and Soviet Patriotism," 799–829.
19. Bernstein and Li, eds., *China Learns from the Soviet Union*.
20. Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance*.
21. 15 March 1958, "Zapis' besedy," P. Iudin and Mao Zedong, AVPRF f. 0100, op. 51, p. 432, d. 6, l. 93; 7 December 1956, "Li He tongzhi gei Deng Tuo tongzhi de dianbao," WJBDAG 109-01617-08, 51; Mëhilli, "Defying De-Stalinization," 4–56.
22. Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*.
23. Engerman, "The Second World's Third World," 183-211; Hilger, ed., *Die Sowjetunion und die Dritte Welt*; Katsakioris, "L'Union soviétique et les intellectuels africains," 15–32; idem., "The Soviet-South Encounter," 134-165; Möller, *DDR und Dritte Welt*; Mark, Apor, Vučetić, and Osęka, "'We Are with You, Vietnam,'" 439–464.
24. See "Internationalismus" in Labice and Bensussan, eds., *Kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus*; also "Internationalismus" in Stéphane Courtois, ed., *Das Handbuch des Kommunismus*.

25. Albert, "From 'World Soviet' to 'Fatherland of All Proletarians,'" 85–119, esp. 105; David-Fox, *Showcasing*, e.g. 28; Ouimet, *The Rise and Fall of the Brezhnev Doctrine in Soviet Foreign Policy*.
26. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence*; David-Fox, *Showcasing*, 175; Cohen, "Circulatory Localities," 11–45; on official anti-Western rhetoric, see Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*; Brooks, *Thank You Comrade Stalin!*.
27. Chandler, *Institutions of Isolation*; Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia?*.
28. Alfred Rieber's term "blocking" playfully captured this double tendency of engaging in socialist integration while simultaneously obstructing movement across borders. "Blocking: Opportunities and Obstacles to Exchanges among Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe," unpublished keynote address for the workshop "Exploring the Second World: Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War," Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam, June 19, 2014.
29. Gould-Davies, "The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy," 193–214; Gilburd, "The Revival of Soviet Internationalism in the Mid to Late 1950s," 362–401.
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31. Agnieszka Osiecka, *Szpetni czterdziestoletni* (1985), quoted in Murawska-Muthesius, "The Cold-War Traveller's Gaze," 325.
32. Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, 3; for recent studies that use the term broadly with regards to socialism, see Kirschenbaum, *International Communism*, 2; Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism*, 1–10; and even Pons, *The Global Revolution*, xii; see also Eichenberg and Newman, eds., *The Great War and Veterans' Internationalism*; and Werner and Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison," 30–50.
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PART I

The Second World Under Stalin

CHAPTER 2

Coming to Terms with Europe: Konstantin Simonov and Oles' Honchar's Literary Conquest of East Central Europe at the End of World War II

Lars Peder Haga

When Soviet soldiers crossed the border into East Central Europe in 1944–1945, it was a unique case of mass exposure to the world outside for ordinary Soviet citizens from all walks of life. This presented the Soviet Union with unprecedented challenges, as the soldiers' experience of Europe was out of tune with the image presented in Soviet propaganda in the interwar years. Seeing a materially superior Europe created confusion and resentment, even leading Soviet authorities to fear that war veterans might stage a neo-decembrist military coup.[1]

At the same time, victory over Axis Germany, and liberation of the countries of East Central Europe, presented an opportunity to further

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What were the worst things to come out of the victory over Germany?
(1) The Red Army saw Europe (2) Europe saw the Red Army (von Geldern and Stites, *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia*, 407.) (Soviet joke)

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develop the particular Soviet identity that had been under construction since the revolution. Finally, the Soviet Union had acquired an arena where they could play out their assumed role as leaders and teachers of the progressive and revolutionary forces of Europe.[2] On this arena, the perennial duality of Russia's relationship with Europe, the simultaneous ambition of being a leading European power, and the fear of being perceived as backward, came into play.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the literary strategies applied in an attempt to reconcile these conflicting ambitions, images, and experiences in the immediate postwar works of two prominent and loyal Soviet soldier-writers, Konstantin Simonov (1915–1979) and Oleksandr (Oles') Honchar (1919–1995).[3] As they wrote to make sense of these new "others," the peoples, things, and culture of Soviet-dominated Europe, they also added to the ongoing construction of the image of a superior Soviet man. Thus they contributed to the intellectual justification of Soviet cultural and political dominance within the expanding "Second World" that was about to include East Central Europe. At the same time, their texts reveal Soviet insecurities vis-à-vis her newly acquired European sphere of influence.

It is important to keep in mind that at the time, the notion of a "Second World" did not exist. Various ideas of a special relationship between the countries of East Central Europe and the Soviet Union, to an extent based on cultural affinities, mostly with the Slavic-speaking parts, but mostly on the Soviet role as liberator from Nazi oppression were expressed already during the war. But in the first postwar years, the future political trajectory of these countries was far from clear. As Charles Gati, among others, has pointed out, from 1945 to 1947, local communists were instructed to move gradually, and told that the installation of socialist regimes might take 15 to 20 years.[4] Both the labeling and the content of the regimes about to be established were contested within Soviet scholarly circles in the first years after the war, and neither a consistent vocabulary to describe nor a habit to think of these countries as a unitary region was firmly established until the term "Peoples' Democracies" became mandatory during 1947–1948.[5] This consolidation of the terminology was certainly not coincidentally concurrent with the hardening of Soviet policy and the establishment of professed Stalinist regimes throughout Soviet-dominated East Central Europe.

Simonov's and Gonchar's works can therefore be considered pioneering, in the sense that they had to make sense of and invent ways to come to terms with the countries their protagonists visit, without having a prescribed readymade mold or frame of understanding. They provide the reader with a glimpse into the very beginnings of the expansion of the "Second World" beyond the borders of the Soviet Union.

Writing the Victory: Soviet Experience and Mythologization of Europe

Just like Soviet writers and journalists had been assigned the responsibility to mobilize the population for the war effort, they also took upon themselves to mitigate the possibly subversive consequences of the exposure to Europe. At the same time, they started constructing a hierarchical relationship between the Soviet Union and the parts of Europe that had been liberated by the Red Army. In this, Simonov and Honchar were not alone, and their works are part of a broader Soviet discourse on East Central Europe.

Jan C. Behrends has argued that Europe outside the former Russian Empire was a "terra incognita" to Stalin and his camarilla in the thirties—it served as a negative contrast to the Soviet Union and was a source of danger, of spies and saboteurs.[6] In addition, the easily observable higher standard of living, industrialization, infrastructure, and more intangibly—"European culture," made the idea of self-evident Soviet dominance in Europe difficult. However, Ilya Erenburg, perhaps the most prominent Soviet writer and propagandist, who had also spent decades in Europe since before World War I, went to work constructing an appropriate Stalinist order among the East Central European countries, and between them and the Soviet Union. He chose the Soviet Union's role as military liberator of Europe from Nazi occupation as the foundation. He privileged the Slavic countries,[7] drawing upon the pan-Slav rhetoric that emerged from 1943, when it became obvious that the Red Army would eventually move into East Central Europe.[8] Political and ideological motivations were secondary, quite in line with the gradualist policies of the first postwar years, when Stalin still hoped to preserve the relatively benign climate of cooperation with the other victors of the war, and also realized that anti-Soviet and anti-Russian emotions in many of the territories under Soviet control had to be addressed.[9] Erenburg's writings were widely translated and published in the languages of East Central Europe, and served as a common baseline in the construction of the particular relationship between the Soviet Union and the socialist countries that constituted the European part of the "Second World."

Simonov and Honchar were performing the same work as Erenburg—creating an image for Soviet readers that could alleviate the negatives and enhance the positives of the Soviet encounter with Europe. Like Erenburg, Simonov was established as a prominent Soviet writer. The two of them knew each other well from working together at the Red Army newspaper "*Krasnaia Zvezda*," and they toured the United States together in 1946.[10] Simonov's proven loyalty to the Stalinist regime makes him an interesting case of a Soviet intellectual honestly intent on making sense of the contradictions of the Soviet experience of Europe.

When Konstantin Simonov published his play *Under the Chestnut-trees of Prague* in 1946, he was as safely perched at the top of the Soviet cultural hierarchy as anyone could be during late Stalinism. He had overcome his aristocratic background, survived the purges, and remade himself into a loyal Soviet writer, enjoying success with his wartime reporting in *Krasnaya Zvezda* as well as with his poems, plays, and novels.[11] Simonov was in Potsdam, observing Germany's formal surrender at the time of Prague's liberation, but soon traveled on to the Czechoslovak capital. The city made a sufficiently deep impression on him that he returned several times later, and also decided to make Prague the venue of his first postwar play. *Under the Chestnut-trees of Prague* follows the extended household of Czech medical doctor Frantishek Prokhazka[12] during and immediately after the Prague uprising and the arrival of Soviet troops in May 1945. The plot is centered on how a Soviet Colonel, Ivan Petrov, likely the author's alter ego, who is billeted in the Prokhazka house, assists in unmasking Prokhazka's old friend, Jan Grubek, as an ethnic German war criminal, by the real name of Hoffmann.

Oles' Honchar, on the other hand, entered East Central Europe as an enlisted soldier and later a non-commissioned officer (NCO) in a mortar company, rather than as an established writer.[13] Even though he had worked as a journalist and dabbled in writing before the war, it was his trilogy *The Standard-Bearers* that brought him to the top of the Soviet Ukrainian literary world.[14]

The Standard-Bearers, consisting of three books, *The Alps*,[15] *The Blue Danube*, and *Golden Prague*, is an epic account of a large gallery of characters in a regiment of the Second Ukrainian Front, most of them serving in a mortar company. The plot begins when the regiment crosses the Soviet-Romanian border and ends when it enters Prague as liberators. Along the way, the author changes his focus between characters, but the young officer Chernysh is the main protagonist of the trilogy. He follows a path through crisis on to personal improvement described by Katerina Clark as typical for the protagonist of the Soviet novel.[16]

Honchar's trilogy was awarded the Stalin Prize in 1947 and 1948, and served to boost the author's career, indicating that he had succeeded in creating a politically desirable account of the Soviet encounter with Europe.[17] Simonov's play was not a success of the same order. The contemporary Soviet press received it rather coldly, criticizing the play's incoherent mix of political propaganda and lyrical drama.[18] In retrospect, Simonov himself seemed to regard the play as less important.[19]

Both Simonov and Honchar belonged to the first (and only) fully Soviet generation, being born at the time of the revolution and living into the seventies and nineties, respectively. Both were visibly subjected to the Soviet system of censorship and control—Simonov later allowed Stalin to personally "ghost-write" a new ending to another one of his plays.[20] However, in the case of these works it seems that most of the controls were applied by the authors themselves. In their wartime contexts they both appear as sincere Soviet patriots. They both remained within the demands of Soviet Socialist realism, and their works are obviously not attempts to write the story of the Soviet liberation of East Central Europe as it was, but as it ought to be in a late Stalinist perspective.[21] These texts should be read as attempts at creating a foundation myth of the particular Soviet relationship with East Central Europe after the war, binding together and defining the hierarchical relationship of these two constituent parts of the "Second World."

Strategies of Denial and Denigration: Silence, Selective Memory, and the Sinister Implications of European Luxury and Style

The simplest solution to the problem of representing a Europe that did not meet Soviet expectations would be to crudely deny its existence—a strategy of denial. To a certain extent, strategies of denial are present with both writers. It is most obvious not in the representation of Europe itself, but rather in the representation of Soviet behavior in East Central Europe.

Oles' Honchar's first impression of Europe outside the Soviet Union was not that of a superior standard of living. In his diary, he expressed disappointment in, rather than admiration for, Europe when he crossed the border for the first time: "Romania. A poor, uncultured (*nekul'turnaia*) country. The fields are bad, barbarically cultivated. There are no machines or cars (*tekhnika*), no roads, no clothes (sic!)."[22]

This laconic observation is expanded upon across the first few pages of *The Standard-Bearers*, where the action begins when Chernysh crosses the border into Romania in the company of the reconnaissance NCO Kazakov. As soon as they had passed the borderline, they noticed that the cultivated land was divided into long, narrow strips, a fact Chernysh immediately interpreted as a sign of poverty. Northern Romania was obviously far from the richest part of Europe, quite on the contrary. With living feudal structures and a destitute, illiterate peasant population, it was fertile grounds for a writer who wanted to engage in polemics against expectations of a prosperous Europe.[23]

The first human beings Chernysh and Kazakov met in Europe were a band of Gypsies who played a sad rendition of the popular Soviet song "Katiusha" to them. Chernysh was disgusted, while Kazakov made a sarcastic comment, with reference to European culture, now of the immaterial kind: "This may be the start of Western European culture—let's have a look!"[24] When Chernysh woke up from being bitten by fleas during their first night in Romania, Kazakov continued in the same sarcastic streak: "Europe—he muttered, rolled over on the other side and fell asleep."[25] At the very opening of the novel, Honchar found it necessary to repeal any illusions of a materially and culturally superior Europe with his audience.

The strongest taboo in the Soviet war literature was against any mention of the widespread Soviet abuse of the civilian population in the liberated territories. That Red Army soldiers with the tacit or even overt approval of the chain of command, extending all the way up to Stalin, engaged in looting, killing, and not least rape on a massive scale is well documented and undisputed today. These crimes were of course well known by contemporaries, especially those at the front. Vasily Grossman and Lev Kopelev, two other journalist-writers, were angered by the widespread abuse. Both complained to their chain of command and got into trouble.[26] To Honchar, an enlisted soldier, raising a formal protest was probably out of the question. Simonov, with his immense popularity and prestige, may have had better hopes of being heard. However, the problem is completely absent from his descriptions of the Soviet campaign in East Central Europe.

Neither in Simonov's wartime diary, published in the 1970s, nor in his diary published first in 1988, is plunder and abuse mentioned. Given

Simonov's constant and far-ranging travels and many conversations, it is inconceivable that he did not see or at least hear about instances of rape and other crimes committed by Soviet servicemen. But narratives of such events were impossible to publish in the seventies, and hardly are in today's Russia. It is likely that he, like other cultured, idealistic Soviet intelligent officers, decided to forget the crimes and focus on the task at hand, heightening the prestige of the Red Army, despite shock and grief over the behavior of Soviet soldiers, and perhaps shame over his own indifference toward it.[27] After all, Simonov was deeply loyal to the Stalinist regime at the time. The whistle-blower Grossman called him a "coward."[28]

As to *Under the Chestnut-trees*, it may be added that the Soviet soldiers who arrived in Prague probably acted with somewhat greater discipline than those taking hostile cities like Budapest and Berlin. The question is under research in Czech historiography.[29] Like in the other East Central European states, the topic was taboo during the communist period, and reliable numbers will be hard to come by. In the Czech case, association with the trauma and taboo attached to the treatment of their own ethnic German population after the war may also play a part. According to Norman Naimark, Slavic-speaking women were less vulnerable (but not immune) to rape.[30] It is quite likely that in the prevailing rage against everything German, the Czechs may have been more than eager to point Soviet soldiers looking for prey in the direction of their ethnic German neighbors, soon rounded up and waiting defenseless for deportation: Sigrid-John Tumler, a German deportee, described how Soviet soldiers went to a cinema in Prague where Germans were kept, to pick and rape women on the spot.[31] In the Sudetenland and in transit camps for Germans awaiting expulsions, the Soviet military sometimes actually restrained Czech soldiers and guards from the worst excesses against ethnic Germans, with one notable exception: rape of German women, in which the Soviets enthusiastically participated.[32] Prague was liberated as a friendly, not a hostile city, and afterward, orders started to trickle down from Moscow to restrain the excesses of the Red Army. The inhabitants by all accounts gave the Soviet troops a genuine and open welcome. All this may have contributed to a lower incidence of rape and looting directed at the ethnically Czech population in Prague than, for example, in Germany proper and in Hungary. It is unrealistic that this means that it did not happen at all. Grigorii Pomerants noted that punishment was differentiated for rape of German and Czech women in his diary.[33] *Under the Chestnut-trees* is also clinically devoid of sex, and the violence happens offstage, or is quite moderate, in conformity with the general Puritan trend in late Stalinist literature.[34]

Looting is only indirectly denied to happen in *Under the Chestnut-trees*, when Petrov promises to *buy* a suitcase with clothes and accessories for Masha, a female Soviet Russian sergeant who arrives at the Prokhazka house with Bozhena, Prokhazka's daughter, after a successful escape from a German prison camp.[35] The only theft is committed by Stefan, Bozhena's twin brother, when he steals a chestnut-twig for Masha, a rather innocent prank that serves as a contrast to the stereotype of the Czechs as overly rigid and devoted to *order*. Stefan, having returned from fighting with the Soviet trained and equipped Czechoslovak Corps, under Colonel Petrov's tutelage, has picked up some acceptable Soviet-style mischievousness.

Honchar, in contrast to Simonov, does not leave the issue out of his diary. Both before and after his departure from the Soviet Union, he has several entries where he expresses his disgust over his compatriots' poor sexual morals.[36] Later, he expressed his contempt for the common practice among officers to take a "field wife"[37] or mistress from rank-and-file female soldiers, and for another officer who in a quiet moment said that "this is a great opportunity to go rape some Hungarian women."[38] Neither did Honchar leave out the problem completely in his award-winning books. However, as one might expect, his literary heroes fare better than his colleagues did in real life. In *The Blue Danube*, the political officer Vorontsov reprimanded a married sergeant who had boasted of his sexual escapades, and emphasized the family as the basic building block of Soviet society, fully in line with late Stalinist ideology.[39]

In the third book of the trilogy, where the mortar company is engaged in the siege and storming of Budapest, Honchar comes closest to the theme. During the battle for Budapest, the full repertoire of Soviet abuse and atrocities was at play: from the systematic looting of valuables, art, industrial machinery, and so on by specialized units, to robberies and theft perpetrated by individual soldiers. Random civilians were rounded up and sent away to do forced labor. Rapes were widespread, but like in the Czech case, numbers can only be estimated: Ungváry claims that about 10 percent of the entire population of Budapest was raped during and after the siege.[40] The random and unpredictable nature of Soviet looting and rape made some parts of the city suffer worse than others. Random violence, sexual and non-sexual, as well as theft and vandalism perpetrated by Soviet soldiers against Hungarian civilians was part and parcel of what passed for "daily life" during the siege of Budapest and its aftermath.

Honchar approaches the problem obliquely, first through denial. When some of the company's soldiers broke into an underground shelter, the occupants looked at them in confusion: "Here they saw Soviet soldiers for the first time, and they looked upon them as if they were visitors from another world. It was strange how they did not immediately slit their throats, did not rape, were well dressed and well-armed."[41] While Honchar displays the fear of Soviet atrocities, he at once rejects it as unfounded and derived from hostile propaganda. At the same time, he rejects the idea of Soviet soldiers' "low material culture"—they are both well dressed and well-armed. In another episode, the responsibility for abuse is transferred to the local population: Near a horse carcass in Budapest, two local girls approached Chernysh and offered to exchange sex for bread. To Chernysh, the ideal young hero, this was of course unthinkable, and at first he did not understand what exactly he was offered. When it finally dawned upon him, he blushed, swore, and turned away, reacting as a good young Soviet man should—with disbelief, anger, and embarrassment.[42]

The theme is touched upon, but the initiative is transferred to the locals and partially explained by their distress. At the same time, this is a scene that would be recognizable for a Soviet veteran—a Lieutenant Vladimir Gel'fand noted a strikingly similar event in his diary, and prostitution and semi-prostitution of this kind was rampant in all of defeated and desperately poor postwar Europe.[43] By his selective use of events, Honchar succeeds in remaining somewhat realistic, but still puts his Soviet protagonist in a morally superior position.

As Soviet occupation continued, semi-prostitution continued, but likely also some real love stories. At least, several of the educated soldiers studied by Budnitskii longed for real romance. Too close relations between soldiers and civilians—perhaps especially with women—were seen as subversive by the military authorities, and they attempted to curtail such liaisons.[44] Honchar deals with this risk in the first chapter of *Golden Prague*. The old soldier Roman Blazhenko reprimanded the youngster Makovei after he had told about his innocent encounter with a Hungarian village girl, and praised the charms of Hungarian and Slovakian girls in general. Roman asked Makovei to stop playing with fire, and explained that this was not a question of morals, but of security. Among the pretty village girls, spies and fugitive fascists might be hiding, ready to "… pour you a drink of methanol and stab a knife in your back … Listen kid, you are not at home here, you are on foreign soil."[45] In this passage, Honchar introduces another strategy in addition to that of denial, silence, and selective reference of events. The material superiority of Europe was down-valued, or denigrated, by being turned into signs of a sinister, dangerous Europe of spies and wreckers.

A constant hunt for hidden enemies was a prime feature of the Soviet political culture, with cyclical apogees like the great purges of the thirties and the postwar Zhdanovshchina. The Soviet gaze was already accustomed to look for hidden enemies within, implanted from abroad, and now it had a real abroad to be turned loose on as well. In *Under the Chestnut-trees*, the main plot is the unmasking of the hidden enemy Grubek/Hoffmann, an ethnic German who has masqueraded as a Czech. The specially trained Soviet gaze required to reveal him is displayed in the final act; Colonel Petrov and his folksy sidekick and driver Goncharenko had seen through his disguise and secretly disarmed him days ago. Grubek/Hoffmann also represents this strategy of denigration by danger—warning the Soviet reader that a seductively affluent exterior may be a disguise for hidden danger and enemies.

Konstantin Simonov, always very conscious about his own and others' clothing and style of dress, was careful to put a hat on Grubek/Hoffmann's head in the dramatic final act. The hat, like the kissing of hands and forms of address like "Mister" and "Miss," appears as an icon of the style and etiquette of "Old Europe." Goncharenko puts it this way to Liudvig, Prokhazka's youngest son: "Last year we started manoeuvring abroad, where everyone wears a hat. They ask me: 'Tell me, do you wear hats in Russia?' And I have spent so many years wearing uniform caps that I have forgotten what we wear back home, hats or no hats."[46]

Even though some members of the Soviet elites wore hats, the hat remained somewhat foreign and suspicious through the 1940s. In his description of Stalin's funeral, Simonov commented on how he found the top hats of foreign diplomats out of place.[47] Simonov also lets Petrov use the hat in conjunction with other bourgeois pieces of clothing, gloves and spectacles, as signs of something threatening under the surface. When Masha returns from a car ride around Prague with Stefan, Petrov schools her: "You were driving around and you saw: there are people walking the streets. More or less similar people, wearing more or less similar hats, spectacles and gloves. Now, behind which spectacles are the eyes of a fascist hidden? Under what hat is a head, thinking about how everything can be returned to how it used to be? In what gloves are there hands, which would be happy to strangle both you and me? You did not see that?"[48]

In *The Standard-Bearers*, the Soviet soldiers are confronted with a black marketer in Budapest. He is described as having the looks of a minister, with a thick tweed overcoat and a fat briefcase under his arm.[49] This character has a real-life model in Honchar's diary, where the speculator's dress is described in even more detail: In addition to the overcoat, he wore a hat and spectacles, Jan Grubek's mirror image![50] A certain kind of formal dress and grooming is considered suspicious, a sure sign of sinister capitalist dealings and anti-Soviet intent.

At the same time, Soviet soldiers in East Central Europe based on their dress, appearance, and conduct, were subject to being labeled as backwards themselves. Both Simonov and Honchar have episodes where their Soviet protagonists are forced to reach a new level of consciousness about their appearance and conduct as representatives of the Soviet Union abroad. The image presented by Simonov and Honchar both of the Red Army as well fed, well dressed, and well-armed was often not mirrored in reality. Soviet soldiers would, on the contrary, often provoke the bewilderment of even sympathetic observers with their dress and conduct: "We thought that the men who had defeated the gigantic National Socialist war machine were superior in military terms. But all the Soviets we met were just gifted black marketeers and passionate rag-and-bone men. They were wearing a colourful medley of clothes from the occupied territories. Some were pulling baby carriages filled with plunder from their looting campaigns."[51]

In *The Standard-Bearers*, Honchar delves into this problem—and in several episodes, he lets the mentor characters correct the dress and conduct of the more immature troops. Unsurprisingly, given the Soviet and international military obsession with it, two of the incidents are about headgear. In *The Alps*, the soldier Sagaida and others were involved in a dispute with the regimental commander over their use of a non-reglementary piece of headgear, the *kubanka*—the low Cossack fur hat with embroidered textile top. In another episode, the battalion commander rode up behind two soldiers, Roman Blazhenko and Shovkun, and ripped off a civilian fur hat Blazhenko had acquired. Blazhenko pulled his issued garrison cap, the iconic *pilotka*, up from a pocket and put it on. In the following exchange between the two soldiers, Honchar lets them point out that in the face of a Europe where there are certain expectations to the appearance of a proper soldier, headgear is more important than ever: "'No Roman, it is better for you to wear the pilotka. In the fur hat you look like a sheep herder. And it must be said, Europe is watching us now.' 'That is true. They look at us, they compare … Now, who are these Stalin's soldiers, what kind of people are they? On the other hand, it is cold …'"[52]

Moving across the border and being confronted by foreigners' prejudices about the Soviet Union forced the Soviet protagonists to rethink how they represented their motherland. This was not only a question of style and appearances, but also about how to present themselves to a curious audience. In *The Blue Danube*, the collective farmer turned soldier Khoma Khaetskii was forced to talk about the Soviet Union when the company was billeted at a Hungarian farm. He suddenly realized that he had to be a diplomat and a teacher, representing his homeland in the most favorable way. Here, it is exactly the contrast and the differences between home and abroad that make Khoma see the greatness of what was happening in the Soviet Union. And Honchar lets him make an interesting conclusion: "'Home on the collective farm, in front of a representative from the raion or the oblast'[53] Khoma would first of all have waved his arms and shouted about a series of shortcomings (*nedochetov*). Had the Hungarian heard him there, he might have believed that Khoma's life only consisted of these shortcomings, the problems, waiting in line for merchandise at the cooperative store, and the abuses of the brigadier[54] and the quartermaster."[55]

Khoma chose to talk about the big issues instead of the petty grievances: He told the Hungarian farmer about how a commoner could get a seat in Parliament, and how the children of a farmer could have studies paid for by the government. Again, Honchar uses the strategy of selective denial, now applied within the text. While Khaetskii's inner voice acknowledges the shortcomings of the collective farm, his outer voice does not mention them in order to uphold what he perceives to be a proper image of his motherland. In what functionally amounts to a meta-reflection, he performs the act of "heroicizing" and "romanticizing" Soviet reality that was expected from Soviet authors from the mid-thirties onwards.[56] At the same time, it is a strategy of relativization—in the face of the fundamental flaws of "Old Europe," Khoma perceives the greatness of his Soviet homeland.

STRATEGIES OF SUBSTITUTION: THE HIERARCHY OF SUFFERING AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The shock caused by the gap in living standards is the only aspect of *Under the Chestnut-trees of Prague* that Konstantin Simonov chose to discuss in his autobiography, where he described the experience as a "… moral (*nravstvennyi*) and psychological shock, …" and explained that he spent a lot of time and energy on coming to grips with precisely this problem.[57] The strategy he came up with in the end was to be honest about the differences, but at the same time cultivate pride in the sacrifices the Soviet population had suffered through in order to gain victory—thus substituting a hierarchy of suffering for the hierarchy of "exterior culture" or material prosperity. The point is made clear by the Soviet hero Petrov in a dialogue with Bozhena, also quoted in Simonov's autobiography: "Please understand, Miss[58] Bozhena, in Europe there is much talk about the deprivations of war. But still few here know what deprivation is. Real deprivation. We, who have saved Europe, do not need to be ashamed over the mended stockings of our women …"[59]

The argument that the enormous losses and suffering of the Soviet state and population entitled them to retain the 1941 borders—the fruits of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact—was employed in the negotiations with the Western Allies. Stalin and Molotov actually downplayed the real losses, either to hide how weakened the Soviet Union was by the strain of war, or perhaps out of shame and grief over the enormous losses, in particular during the first phase of the war.[60] The hierarchy of suffering was a central rhetorical resource in the justification of Soviet dominance in East Central Europe, and it was a recurrent theme with Simonov as well as Honchar.

In Simonov and Honchar's hierarchies of suffering, the Soviet characters are also ranked differently. Two of the Russian characters, Petrov and Masha, are connected to two geographic centers of suffering: Masha comes from Stalingrad, Petrov from Leningrad. Both have lost their whole families, but carry the loss with dignity and calm throughout; it is only in the final act that Bozhena gets to know that Petrov has lost his family in the siege of Leningrad. Honchar's mortar company in *The Standard-Bearers* had fought at Stalingrad, and could thus be connected to this center of combined heroism and suffering.

The lowest rung in Simonov's hierarchy is occupied by the Czechs. (The Germans, being enemies, are excluded from it.) The Czechs had lived through only short periods of actual combat, and had not suffered the same destruction and abuse as the Soviet people. When Dr Prokhazka's friend and neighbor, the poet Tikhii, finally breaks his self-imposed silence,[61] he makes an important observation in this regard, and that is that the Czechs have always made the wrong conclusions from their limited suffering: "We were always good at being martyrs. Facing death, we had sufficient courage to spit our killers in the face, but we…we did not kill our killers often enough."[62]

Tikhii points out a lack of the ability to take decisive and violent action as the most important national shortcoming of the Czechs. Masha made the same conclusion based on her experiences in the prison camp: "I was in three camps, and during these years there were eleven escapes. There were all kinds of people there, of all nations, but out of these eleven escapes, our people, Soviet people, organized ten."[63] In the final scene of the play, the Czech unwillingness to use decisive force and a misapplied sense of decency has fatal results. Unwilling to bring a patrol of National Guardsmen into his father's house, Liudvig insists on attempting to lure Grubek/Hoffmann out on the street on his own, allowing Grubek/Hoffmann to murder him.

In this way, Simonov communicates what he defined as the decisive difference between Soviet people and others: The ability and will for action, unhampered by obsolete conventions, also in face of adversity, suffering, and risk of death.

To help the self-development of the hero of the Soviet novel, the *mentor-character* played an important role. This character (or characters—there may be more than one) functions as a catalyst for the hero's movement from spontaneity to consciousness. The mentor is older and more politically conscious than the hero. He has frequently been tested under fire, in the postwar years or in the Great Patriotic War. While it was still chronologically credible, the mentor had frequently met Lenin, or at least been a revolutionary in Lenin's time. The mentor supports the hero with advice, mentoring, and practical examples in the resolution of the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic, and helps him or her to direct his or her energies toward a constructive, disciplined, and goal-oriented direction.[64]

In *The Standard-Bearers* there are several obvious mentor characters. Among the most clearly drawn are Brianskii, Chernysh's first Company Commander, and the political officer (*zampolit*)[65] Vorontsov. The relationship between them and Chernysh, and to an extent Brianskii's fiancée, Shura Iasnogorskaia, who joins the company as a medic, is conventional and predictable according to the pattern described by Clark. Neither is it surprising that in the cases where Soviet characters interact with the local inhabitants, they invariably assume a mentor role. As we have seen, Khoma Khaetskii, the collective farmer who was later appointed company *starshina* lectured eager and interested Hungarians and Slovaks about the Soviet Union.[66]

In *Under the Chestnut-trees of Prague*, the mentor-hero relationship is turned upside down in several cases. The only mentor relationship that is fully in line with the prescribed pattern is that between Petrov and Stefan. Petrov is older, more experienced, and is explicitly mentioned as Stefan's mentor, both as a soldier and a man. The relationship between Petrov and Stefan is mirrored by that between Masha and Bozhena. Masha's superior endurance of the suffering of war and the camps, and the fact that she organized their escape, positions her as a natural mentor for Bozhena. The age difference is however the opposite of that between Petrov and Stefan: Masha is five years younger than Bozhena. Nevertheless, she is Bozhena's superior in maturity and consciousness. Masha occupies a higher rung in the hierarchy of suffering, and she possesses the will and ability to act with faith in the Soviet system. Her dignified endurance of captivity is an explicit inspiration for Bozhena to break with her former, leisure-oriented life and her fiancé, the capitalist Iulii Machek.

Boguslav Tikhii, the poet, also moves toward a greater degree of consciousness in a way. But it would be more precise to say that he returns from passivity to activity. Completely in line with the stereotypical character descriptions of *Under the Chestnut-trees*, he is a very obvious metaphor for European radicalism in decay. In the list of characters, he is described as flabby and sloppily dressed. During the play, we learn that he has actually fought in the Spanish Civil War, of course on the republican side. For good measure, he was in the same unit as the Montenegrin Slavko Dzhokich, who joins the Prokhazka household upon returning from a German prison camp. Since, age-wise, Tikhii belongs to the same generation as Frantishek Prokhazka and Jan Grubek, he finds himself torn between the radicalized youths and the careful Frantishek and Jan. In the end, however, he chooses the right side. He submits poems for publication in the communist newspaper *Rudé Právo* and even physically intervenes in the confrontation between Petrov and Grubek/Hoffmann in the final act. The challenges of war have awoken the old radicalism—an awakening that begins in the first act, when Tikhii beats a Gestapo officer to death. Tikhii's chosen weapon—his inkhouse—is a pathetically crude metaphor for how being a writer also should mean to be a fighter.

The most drastic reversal of the mentor relationship happens with Frantishek Prokhazka, the stereotypical image of the well-meaning, but naive European intellectual. He remains blissfully ignorant of the hidden enemy in his own house until the final scene. Frantishek lacks both the clear-sightedness to unmask Grubek as well as the courage to confront him. In the end, it is quite unclear if he has even overcome his shortcomings. Frantishek's oldest son Stefan has, on the other hand, achieved a higher level of consciousness through his stay in the Soviet Union and not least due to Petrov's mentoring. Both Stefan and Bozhena attempt to change their father's congealed thought patterns and habits. Frantishek seems to have some perception of this reversed mentoring relationship when he, in a conversation with Grubek and Tikhii, describes the trio as “shards of old Europe.”[67] Grubek, probably ironically, comments in a conversation with Petrov that young people nowadays are supposed to educate their elders: “Because if we old men don’t understand something (nods to Stefan and Bozhena), our children will explain it to us. Is it not so, Miss Bozhena?”[68]

For sons to teach and even denounce their reactionary fathers was not unheard of in the Soviet mythology. Pavlik Morozov, the mythical pioneer who denounced his father for issuing forged documents to “kulaks,” and was later murdered together with his younger brother by his own grandfather and a cousin in 1932, was worshipped as a hero in the thirties.[69] From the mid-thirties, however, the family was supposed to have changed into a support for the regime, and the nuclear family was promoted as the basic building block of high Stalinist society. The Pavel Morozov myth soon became problematic—rebellious children were no longer ideals.[70] Stefan’s conflict with his father never culminates in an unmasking or a rejection—it is the father’s old friend, Grubek/Hoffmann, who is the masked enemy. Simonov has taken a theme from the Soviet Union of the thirties and adapted it to Czechoslovakia a decade later. In this way, he turned the systemic border between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union into a generational divide as well. Problems and conflicts belonging to the Soviet past replayed themselves in Czechoslovakia, even as Petrov and Masha are there to help. This temporal displacement between the Soviet Union and the emerging “People’s Democracies” would remain an integral part of the intellectual framework of the “Second World.” The People’s Democracies would be allowed to profit from the Soviet experience in building socialism, but could never be allowed to completely catch up with the Soviet Union, as that would challenge the latter’s natural leading role.[71]

In *Under the Chestnut-trees* there are two parallel love stories across the boundary between Soviet people and other people. Unlike Gonchar, who handled the danger of love across the systemic divide by a strategy of denigration—by making it dangerous—Simonov chose to use this kind of love to emphasize the inequality in the development of human beings between the Soviet Union and Europe. The first love story is between Masha and Stefan, the second is between Bozhena and Petrov. Masha and Stefan are mutually attracted to each other, and Stefan asks Masha to stay with him when she prepares to leave for the Soviet Union in the final act. Masha rejects the possibility—she must return to the Soviet Union, even though her whole family may be dead. Stefan accepts her decision, and promises to follow her to the Soviet Union as soon as possible, “… maybe to study."[72] Stefan then asks Masha to marry him upon his future arrival in the Soviet Union, and Masha accepts the proposal. It is proven impossible for Soviet people to be comfortable and settle abroad, while it is not impossible for a Czech to come to the Soviet Union. That Stefan suggests that he should go there to study clearly shows in what direction knowledge and influence is supposed to flow in the future. Stefan and Masha share an implicit understanding that the Soviet Union is the best place to live, and in this way, the hierarchical relationship between the homelands of the two young lovers is reinforced.

Their relationship as human beings cannot be said to be as unequivocally hierarchical. Masha does not assume a traditional mentoring role in relation to Stefan. However, it was Stefan's attraction to her that incited him to overcome the Czech inertia and exaggerated respect for rules and regulations when he climbed a fence to steal a Chestnut-twig with flowers to give her as a birthday present.

Bozhena's attraction to Petrov remains unanswered from his side. After much anguish and soul-searching, Bozhena also concludes that a relationship between them is impossible, and that she will be unable to live in the Soviet Union. She uses several metaphors to describe the insurmountable differences, first one she has borrowed from Grubek, that Petrov is from a different planet: "… I cannot even in my imagination put him [Petrov] at my side, because he is from a completely different planet. From a completely different one …"[73] It seems that Simonov cannot emphasize enough how impossible a relationship between a mature Soviet mentor-character and a European petty-bourgeois woman is.

Thus, a hierarchy of spiritual and human development, with the Soviet person in a naturally superior position, also substitutes for the hierarchies of material development. While Europe may have been richer in terms of material wealth, the Soviet Union had produced an improved human being, qualitatively superior to the European.

Redefining the Rules: *Kul'turnost'* versus *Meshchanstvo* and Systemic Relativism

Ilya Erenburg noted at the outbreak of the war that Soviet soldiers had an exaggerated respect for their German counterparts, partially because of what Erenburg termed their "exterior culture"—what in practice amounted to their material welfare. In his autobiography, Erenburg showed great insight when he pointed out how the Soviet Union had brought this dilemma upon itself by defining a set of measures of development, prosperity, and culture that it had no chance of attaining: "In the twenties and thirties any schoolboy could tell you the measures of a people's [level of] culture.—The density of the railroad network, the number of automobiles, the availability of education, social hygiene. In all these fields Germany occupied one of the leading places …"[74]

A strategy applied by Simonov, to handle the gap in standards of living in *Under the Chestnut-trees*, was to attempt to redefine the application of these measures, by applying another, problematic distinction in Soviet attitudes to material values: The distinction between being *cultured* and being *petty-bourgeois*, between *kul'turnost'* and *meshchanstvo*.

Vera Dunham has shown how a penchant for material values and a kind of consumerism became appreciated again during the thirties, forties, and fifties, and replaced the revolutionary asceticism of the twenties in the Soviet Union. With some contempt, she labels this appreciation as *Meshchanstvo* values, a derogatory term that is better translated as "petty-bourgeois" or "philistine" rather than "middleclass" as it is in the title of Dunham's book.[75] It appears that Dunham's agenda is to attack the Soviet regime for a double standard, by revealing its inconsequential attitude to material values. While the appreciation of fine furniture, nice tablecloths, luxurious clothing, and better food, if only in *ersatz* form on the pages of popular books and magazines, was considered cultured behavior for Soviet citizens, the same behavior in the West was condemned as a sign of moral decay and lacking human and spiritual qualities.

Catriona Kelly has criticized Dunham for an oversimplification of this turn toward material values. Kelly has, in her study of Russian and Soviet advice literature, *Refining Russia*, shown how finding the right *balance* between material and spiritual values, between deserved material welfare and contemptible greed, and between polite behavior and exaggerated, petty-bourgeois etiquette were recurring themes in this literature.[76] What at any time was considered the correct appreciation of material objects and norms for behavior and etiquette can be subsumed under the label of *kul'turnost.'* The term may be translated into "being cultured." It was primarily a term that denoted a person's attitudes, interests and social skills, from personal hygiene via etiquette to the ability to carry on an intelligent conversation about art or politics.[77] The line between "being cultured" (*kul'turnost'*) and "being petty-bourgeois" (*meshchanstvo*) could be thin. Both Honchar and Simonov are actively drawing the border between them, in particular the latter, as he made the gap in living standards a main problem in *Under the Chestnut-trees*.

In Simonov's play, small details concerning etiquette, clothing and style are used to emphasize the bourgeois and alien character of the Czech setting. In the stage directions for the first act, Simonov describes the Prokhazka home as neatly decorated and furnished. On the walls, there should be Czech and Slovak folk art as well as watercolor paintings of Prague. The interior was probably within the limits of a Soviet notion of taste, if beyond the economic means of ordinary citizens.

When Masha and Bozhena arrive at the Prokhazka house, Bozhena insists that her father shall kiss the hand of the Soviet guest. Kissing women's hands had been written off as old-fashioned, pre-revolutionary, and exaggerated etiquette in the Soviet Union at the time. The episode was likely included to show that Czechoslovakia still remained a part of "Old Europe," where bourgeois manners that were extinct in the Soviet Union still lived on. In *The Blue Danube*, the painter Ferenc attempted to kiss the hand of Chernysh when they met at the entrance to Parliament, and Ferenc wanted to solemnly congratulate Chernysh on the victory. Chernysh pulled his hand back and said: "What are you doing Ferenc? We don't do that with us!"[78] Crossing the systemic boundary between the Soviet Union and East Central Europe was also crossing a boundary in time, and traveling into a past where bourgeois and aristocratic etiquette were still alive.[79]

Consumption was accepted in the Soviet Union if it was considered to be deserved. Material incentives such as higher wages, bonuses, and gifts in the form of consumer products such as record players and furniture were used to reward *Stakhanov*-workers as well as excellent artists, scholars, and scientists. Frantishek Prokhazka's tastefully prosperous home was acceptable seen in light of this—he was a medical doctor and researcher, a usable hero in Soviet drama.[80] As a working *intelligent*, he differs from the capitalists Iulii Machek and Jan Grubek. The line between deserved and undeserved consumption is even more clearly drawn when Bozhena's flamboyant lifestyle before the war is compared to the suitcase with shoes and clothing Petrov promises to give Masha for her birthday. Petrov, always the omniscient commentator, sums up the moral judgment of deserved consumption, at the same time connecting it to the hierarchy of suffering: "I want my fellow countrywoman to dress pretty. She, and all of our girls. And she may just as well do it before anyone else—she has lived through more than many others, and has earned the right to enjoy this little piece of female happiness before all of them."[81]

This judgment of Masha's consumption as acceptable because it was deserved for a young Soviet woman, while Bozhena's was not, is an example of what György Péteri has called *systemic relativism*. That is the idea that fundamentally different economic laws were at play on the different sides of the systemic border between the capitalist and socialist world. Consequently, similar events and behavior were judged differently, depending on at what side of the divide they occurred.[82]

At the very beginning of *The Standard-Bearers*, there is an episode that clearly illustrates this point. The non-commissioned officer Kazakov and the officer Chernysh were billeted in a Romanian farmhouse during their first night spent in Romania. Their peasant landlady made up a proper bed for Chernysh, and prepared a place to sleep on the floor for Kazakov, assuming that the NCO had to be the young officer's batman (*denshchik*). By referring to the pre-revolutionary custom of assigning an enlisted man as an officer's servant, Honchar also illustrates the time-travel aspect of leaving the Soviet Union: The two military men have truly entered "Old Europe," where class differences and privileges are taken for granted. However, when they later joined the mortar company, it turned out that the company commander had an elderly soldier, less fit for combat, assigned to him as a "runner" (*ordinarets*). While he did indeed serve as the commander's runner in combat, he also performed the menial tasks of a batman: serving food, fetching the CO's binoculars, and cleaning his collar-linings.[83] With a simple change of name—from *denshchik* to *ordinarets*—the same function had been transformed from an iconic image of backwardness and feudal residues to a natural part of everyday Soviet military life.

CONCLUSIONS

As I have shown, Simonov and Honchar applied three main groups of strategies to handle the experience of East Central Europe: strategies of denial and denigration, strategies of substitution, and strategies of (re) defining the rules.

The most obvious strategies are those of denial, by silence and selective focus and memory. Honchar, by focusing on the poor, rural districts of Romania, can deny the visions of Europe as more affluent and more "cultured" than the Soviet Union. At the same time, the fear of not being taken seriously, to be the object of contempt as poor and backwards, shines through. The protagonists, even the formidable Petrov, need time to consider how to choreograph their performance on the European stage.[84] The knowledge of Europe's gaze upon them made Honchar's soldiers sharpen up their appearance, in order to avoid looking like sheepherders. Thus, both authors end up spending just as much time denying the perceived backwardness of the Soviet Union, and denying or even shifting the responsibility for Soviet abuses onto the local population. Both authors, in a related strategy of turning material welfare into something suspicious, warned the Soviet reader against the danger of seduction by tempting material benefits. They systematically unmasked enemies hiding behind luxurious outer facades: Grubek in *Under the Chestnut-trees*, the black marketeer in Budapest, and the Hungarian village girl in *The Standard-Bearers*. In this way, the "superior exterior culture" was transformed from a sign of superiority into a symptom of hidden danger.

Simonov and Honchar's shared strategy of substitution is to claim that the Soviet Union, by the end of the Second World War, was populated by humans who actually differed qualitatively from those in the rest of Europe and the world. In Honchar's *The Standard-Bearers*, attention is always focused on these new Soviet humans, and the locals serve mainly as a contrast, against whom the noble traits of the Soviet characters are put into relief. The local population usually appears passive, and when they act, they turn to the Soviet protagonists for advice. When non-Soviet characters appear as independently active, it is usually with malicious intent: Romanian and German soldiers, the prostitute, and the black marketeer in Budapest.

The same distinction between active Soviet characters and passive locals is seen in Simonov's *Under the Chestnut-trees* where it is precisely the passivity and naïveté of Frantishek Prokhazka and Liudvig's reluctance to apply force inside his father's house that lead to the tragic end. While Boguslav Tikhii breaks out of his own passivity, in the end he turns to Petrov for advice on how to handle Grubek/Hoffman—the active villain of the play. Bozhena has to let Petrov go, reconciling herself with the fact that she never can reach him.

The distinctions are of a hierarchical nature, founded on suffering, combat experience, and revolutionary experience, where the Soviet protagonists are clearly superior to the Czech, Romanian, Hungarian, and Slovak protagonists and supporting characters. Young Masha appears as more mature than 26-year-old Bozhena. On the other hand, both Bozhena and Stefan are the superiors of their father in judgment. In this way, the systemic boundary between the Soviet Union and East Central

Europe is equaled with a generational divide, where the Soviet Union leads with a generation. The friendly inclined characters may at best be seen as what Maria Todorova has termed "incomplete selfs," different, but with prospects of improvement, and potentially reaching the same level of consciousness as the Soviet protagonists in an undetermined future.[85] In addition, Simonov's Prague and Honchar's East Central Europe are peopled by even more absolute others—enemies beyond any hope of improvement, like Grubek/Hoffman. The overall differences between the Soviet Union and East Central Europe far outweigh the similarities in both works.

This hierarchical divide in terms of human qualities can be termed as a *strategy of substitution* to handle the living standards gap. While the Soviet Union may have been outdone in "exterior culture," it was certainly superior in human culture.

This strict delineation of a qualitative boundary between the Soviet Union and East Central Europe opened up the writers' strategies of changing or rejecting the rules. In particular Simonov distinguished between deserved and moderate consumption on the one hand, and undeserved and exaggerated consumption on the other—between *kul'turnost'* and *meshchanstvo*. Thus, material superiority may mean something else—and be deserved by the Soviet characters, while it is a sign of moral inferiority in the East Central European characters. This is an example of *systemic relativism*—by applying different measures of development for the Soviet Union and for the rest of the world, Honchar and Simonov attempted to solve the self-imposed problem diagnosed by Erenburg: "Any schoolboy could tell you the measures of a people's [level of] culture."[86]

This imagined, unbridgeable divide between the Soviet Union and East Central Europe corresponds to the division between two orders of reality that Katerina Clark has identified in Soviet literature from the thirties onwards: There were two orders of people, as well as of space and time—depending on their closeness to true, future, socialist forms. Within the Soviet Union, the communist leaders (in particular Stalin), the mentor-characters of the Soviet novel (who had achieved true insight), Moscow, and the Kremlin were described as belonging to this higher order of reality.[87] In the *Standard-Bearers* and *Under the Chestnut-trees*, this pattern is transposed onto the relationship between the Soviet Union and East Central Europe, with the latter stuck in a lower order of reality, spatially, temporally, and in terms of human development.

In the end, both writers had a *defensive* approach to the problem at hand. The main intention of their works is to persuade a Soviet reader of the superiority of the Soviet Union and Soviet man over Europe and Europeans, despite everything a Soviet reader would interpret as evidence of the opposite. As a result, they indeed started building a very clear distinction between the Soviet Union and Soviet-dominated East Central Europe, a distinction that remained crucial in the justification of Soviet leadership of the "Second World" right up to the end of its existence.

NOTES

1. See e.g. Zubkova, *Russia after the War,* 25; and Budnitskii and Rupp, "The Intelligentsia Meets the Enemy," 680.
2. The experience of occupation and "Sovietization" of the lands acquired in the aftermath of the Molotov-Ribbentrop-pact in 1939–1941 may be seen as a precursor. However, the lands then included were overwhelmingly lost parts of the Russian empire, and the experience was cut short by the German attack in 1941. See e.g. Jan Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*.
3. I have chosen to transcribe *Гончар* as *Honchar*, as opposed to *Gonchar*. His name has been transcribed in both ways, but *Honchar* is more in line with Ukrainian pronunciation. All other transcriptions in this paper follow the Library of Congress system, except when other established transcriptions are presumed to be better known.
4. Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc,* 35–37.
5. Skilling, "'People's Democracy' in Soviet Theory;" and Haga, "Imaginer la démocratie populaire."
6. Behrends, "Völkerfreundschaft und Amerikafeindschaft," 129.
7. Ibid., 130–132.
8. Brooks, *Thank you Comrade Stalin!,* 184–188.
9. On the gradualist policies towards East Central Europe, see e.g. Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc,* 35–37; and Loth, *Stalins ungeliebtes Kind*.
10. *Red Star* attracted the absolute elite of Soviet war correspondents, not only Simonov, but also Vasily Grossman, Ilya Erenburg, and others.
11. Simonov, "Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia." Simonov wrote "Glazami…" just before his death in 1979, but it remained unpublished until 1988. Simonov, *Raznye dni vojny: Dnevnik pisatelia;* the biographical sketch here is based on these texts and Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers*. Figes' book is to the author's knowledge the

best source of information about Simonov's life in English, even though the reader should exercise some caution in light of the controversy surrounding Figes' use of sources. This author has found no major discrepancies between Figes' account and Simonov's.

12. All Czech names, except for known historical persons, are transcribed directly from Simonov's Cyrillic.
13. Very little is written about Oles' Honchar outside his native Ukraine. A notable exception is Dzjadevyč, "Der ukrainische sozialistische Realismus und der Europa-Diskurs," 145–163. The biographical sketch here owes a lot to Dzjadevyč.
14. After the war, Oles' Honchar, like Konstantin Simonov, had a remarkable career as a writer: he was president of the Ukrainian Writers' Union from 1959 to 1971 (and by default also a secretary in the Soviet Writers' Union), from 1962 he was a member of the Supreme Soviet, and from 1970 a candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. In the 1960s he appeared more and more as a patriotic Ukrainian almost-dissident, and this is how he is mostly remembered in post-soviet Ukraine. See e.g. the article in *Welcome to Ukraine Magazine*, an English-language publication intended for travelers and business-people visiting the Ukraine: http://www.wumag.kiev.ua/index2.php?param=pgs20071/104 downloaded 11.27.14. Here the Stalin prizes awarded to Honchar are euphemistically called "State Awards."
15. *Alpy*, "The Alps" in this context refers to the Carpathian Mountains.
16. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 46–48.
17. The Stalin Prize, later renamed the Lenin Prize, was the Soviet Union's highest award for literature, art, music, and film. The prizes were formally awarded by a committee appointed by the Soviet government (The Council of People's Commissars, later The Council of Ministers). According to Konstantin Simonov, who was present at some of the award meetings after 1948, all awards for literature were in reality decided by Stalin himself. Simonov, "Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia," 416–417.
18. V. Ermilov in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, December 15, 1946, quoted in Lazar Il'ich Lazarev, *Konstantin Simonov*, 180–181. Lazarev agreed with Ermilov's assessment, like Simonov's other late 1980s biographer, Aleksandr Karaganov, in *Konstantin Simonov*, 101.

19. Simonov, "Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia," 341.
20. The play in question was "*Chuzhaia ten.*" "A Stranger's shadow," loosely based on the Kliueva-Roskin affair, intended to stoke xenophobia and the witch-hunt for traitors during the Zhdanovshchina. Simonov, "Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia," 376–397; and Figes, *The Whisperers,* 505–506.
21. For a thorough discussion of this dichotomy, see Clark, *The Soviet Novel,* 36–41.
22. Diary entry for April 25 1944, Honchar, *Schodenniki,* 47.
23. Despite this, the Soviet military leadership was worried by the reported confusion and anger of Soviet soldiers who observed the relatively higher living standards of Romanian peasants. Merridale, *Ivan's War,* 247–48.
24. Honchar, *Znamenostsy*, 11.
25. Ibid., 14.
26. Kopelev, *No Jail for Thought*; and Grossman, *A Writer at War.*
27. Budnitskij and Rupp, "The Intelligentsia Meets the Enemy," 629–682.
28. Grossman's daughter, quoted in the postscript by the editors Anthony Beevor and Luba Vinogradova, Grossman, *A Writer at War,* 349.
29. See Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation,* 111, and note 31.
30. Naimark, "About 'the Russians,"" 59–60.
31. Demetz, *Prague in Danger,* 237.
32. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred,* 116, 118–119.
33. Quoted in Budnitskii and Rupp, "The Intelligentsia Meets the Enemy," 667.
34. Ermolaev, *Censorship in Soviet Literature,* 132–134.
35. Simonov, "Pod kashtanami," 311.
36. Honchar, *Schodenniki,* 28, 32, 101.
37. Ibid., 51. "Field wife" was often abbreviated *PPZh, pokhodno-polevaia zhena,* a pun on the common Soviet submachinegun, the PPSh. Reese, *Why Stalin's Soldiers Fought,* 299.
38. Honchar, *Schodenniki*, 68.
39. Honchar, *Znamenostsy,* 166.
40. Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest,* 348–354.
41. Honchar, *Znamenostsy,* 241.
42. Ibid., 255.

43. Quoted in Budnitskii and Rupp, “The Intelligentsia Meets the Enemy,” 667.
44. Ibid., 667–673.
45. Honchar, *Znamesnostsy,* 292.
46. Simonov, “Pod Kashtanami,” 306. Goncharenko’s line resonates in the report from the VOKS delegate Ivan Kairov, who visited Prague in February 1948: “*In Prague everyone wears a hat.*” Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), Fond 5283, Opis’ 22, Delo. 74, List. 14
47. Simonov, “Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia,” 489.
48. Simonov, “Pod kashtanami,” 320.
49. Honchar, *Znamenostsy,* 257–258.
50. Honchar, *Schodenniki*, 107.
51. Ferenc Kishont, later known as Ephraim Kishon, an Israeli humorist who lived in Budapest in 1944, quoted in Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest*, 349.
52. Honchar, *Znamenostsy*, 68–70.
53. Raion and oblast’ are Soviet and Russian regional administrative units.
54. Brigadier here means a mid-level supervisor at the collective farm.
55. Honchar, *Znamenostsy,* 207.
56. Clark, *The Soviet Novel,* 34. The passage might indeed have been seen as subversive if intended for a foreign audience—giving away Khoma’s propagandistic trick.
57. Simonov, “Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia,” 354–355.
58. Petrov uses the Czech (and common Western Slavic) polite form of address “*pani*”, that would give a Soviet audience associations to foreign and pre-revolutionary forms of address with strong class content. In the context it was obviously intended to be ironic.
59. Simonov, “Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia,” 355; and Simonov, “Pod kashtanami,” 311.
60. Brooks, *Thank You Comrade Stalin!*, 206
61. “Tikhii” means “silent” in both Czech and Russian.
62. Simonov, “Pod kashtanami,” 317.
63. Ibid., 296.
64. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 168–169.
65. The Soviet political officer, *Zamestitel’ komandira po politicheskoi chasti,* had as his primary mission the political education and morals of the troops as well as the officers.

66. The company first sergeant, *rotnyi Starshina*, was the most senior NCO in the company, responsible for discipline in the ranks, supplies, and administrative matters.
67. Simonov, "Pod kashtanami," 316.
68. Ibid., 312.
69. One of the many mythological representations of the case is Mikhail Doroshin, "Pavlik Morozov," in Geldern and Stites, 153–156. There has been considerable doubt cast on whether Morozov really was a pioneer, and also whether he actually denounced his father. The question of guilt, especially in the case of the grandfather, is today very unclear. See e.g. Jo Ann Conrad's review of *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia,* edited by Geldern & Stites, 100–103; and Catriona Kelly's thorough investigation of the Pavlik case, both as myth and crime, in *Comrade Pavlik*.
70. Clark, *The Soviet Novel,* 115–116; and Kelly, *Comrade Pavlik,* 147–196.
71. For the temporal divide between the Soviet Union and the "Peoples' Democracies," see e.g. Behrends, "Besuch aus der Zukunft," 195–204; and Haga, "*Imaginer la démocratie populaire*," 29–30.
72. Simonov, "Pod kashtanami," 339–40.
73. Ibid., 318.
74. Erenburg, *Liudi, gody, zhizn'*, 367.
75. Dunham, *In Stalin's Time*.
76. Kelly, *Refining Russia*, 312–316.
77. For a more thorough discussion of the term, see Kelly, *Refining Russia*; Volkov, "The Concept of 'Kul'turnost;'" 210–230; and Fitzpatrick, "Becoming Cultured," 216–237.
78. Honchar, *Znamenostsy,* 278.
79. Simonov himself adopted the habit of kissing women on the hand, when he after the war replaced his image as a warrior-writer with that of a bon-vivant and gentleman. Raised as the son of a princess, it is no surprise that he had some knowledge of the etiquette of "The Old World." Figes, *The Whisperers,* 483.
80. Telberg: "Heroes and Villains of Soviet Drama," 309.
81. Simonov, "Pod kashtanami," 310.
82. Péteri, "Nylon Curtain," 117.
83. Soviet and Russian uniforms had loosely sewn collar-linings, *vorotnichki,* which were supposed to be removed and cleaned with regular intervals.

84. Simonov, “Pod kashtanami,” 321.
85. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 17–18.
86. See note 75 above.
87. Clark, *The Soviet Novel,* 144–147.

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CHAPTER 3

The Stalin Cult and the Construction of the Second World in Hungary in the Early Cold War Years

Balázs Apor

József Révai, chief ideologue of Stalinist Hungary, on the occasion of the unveiling of the Stalin statue in Budapest in December 1951 described the sculpture as a "Hungarian sculpture" that "emerged from the nation's soul."[1] The pretense of Révai's now (in)famous claim is strikingly clear. The construction of the monument was certainly not prompted by popular demand, and the finished product had very little to do with Hungarian national traditions either. The proposal to erect a statue in honor of the Soviet dictator originated in the closed confines of the Hungarian Communist leadership (the Secretariat), while the inspiration to build it came from abroad. Once completed, the sculpture was perceived by many as the symbol of Hungary's subjugation to Soviet rule, and not as the culmination of national history as Communist propaganda had claimed. Although domestic factors played a role in the creation of Stalin's gigantic bronze likeness in Budapest, the history of the statue reveals more

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about the transnational aspects of the Soviet leader's cult than about the embedded nature of the phenomenon in Hungarian society. The sculpture, for one, was anything but unique: larger-than-life statues depicting the Generalissimus sprang up like mushrooms in the countries of the Soviet Bloc around the time of Stalin's 70th birthday (usually thereafter). The creation of such structures in Bucharest, Bratislava, Prague, Berlin, and so on was part of the symbolic competition among the members of the newly Sovietized periphery for the dictator's favor. The size, location, and the ritual function of the statues, therefore, were not irrelevant: they indicated the commitment of Eastern European Party elites to the Stalinist version of socialism. But Stalin sculptures did not merely suggest the international dynamics of the cult of the Soviet Party Secretary; they also highlight the extent to which ideas, material, style, and artistic know-how were circulated in the Soviet Bloc. Sculptors used images and designs produced in the Soviet Union as their models—only a select few had the privilege to actually travel there—while Soviet advisors and ambassadors on the ground made sure that the appropriate artwork was selected for public display. In exceptional cases, entire statues were transported from one country to another. The *Stalindenkmall* in Berlin, for example, was the work of a Soviet artist and was presented to East Germany as a "gift" from Moscow.[2] The monument in Budapest was also shaped by cultural transfers as well as direct Soviet guidance: the sculptor drew inspiration from his visit at the Stalin exhibition in the Tretiakov Gallery, and the Soviet ambassador to Hungary was consulted before the artist and his proposed plan was approved.[3] Révai's argument, therefore, was false, but not (only) because the Stalin statue was an abuse of national traditions, but because it was a product of transnational processes, and it performed a function that also transcended national boundaries. The sculpture, in fact, was a symbolic marker of Soviet imperial expansion delineating the boundaries of the emerging Second World.

The Leader Cult and the Construction of the Second World

If Stalin monuments of the early Cold War years designated the territories belonging to the Soviet sphere of influence, the cult of the leader bound those societies together through symbolic means. The cult, then, was a system of myths and rituals that was deployed with aim of constructing the Second World. Stalin was posited as the international symbol of peace by

Communist propaganda, while his worship fostered the forging of affective links between Moscow and the peripheries of the growing empire. The endeavor to internationalize the Soviet leader's imagery, however, preceded the Cold War. From the mid-1930s onwards, Stalin's official representations depicted him as the embodiment of the Soviet Union, and as the supranational symbol of the communist movement.[4] Although local adjustments were made in the peripheries to the set of images promoted from and by Moscow, depictions of Stalin as "the father of peoples" remained prevalent in the late 1930s. The post-war period witnessed the meteoric expansion of the cult beyond the boundaries of the Soviet state. The cult became a truly international matter: it was constructed simultaneously in multiple countries, and it functioned as the cornerstone of the legitimation campaigns of (almost) all Eastern European communist parties.[5] The cult, therefore, was the central component of the Sovietization process in Central and Eastern Europe. It furthered the integration of the new borderlands, and fostered the creation of emotional bonds—structured around the notions of love, loyalty, and gratitude—between the center and the enlarged periphery. The extravagant celebrations of Stalin's 70th birthday in 1949 in the countries of the Soviet Bloc marked the culmination of Sovietization, and could be interpreted as the concluding ritual act in the creation of the Stalinist Second World.

The swift expansion of the Stalin myth to the international scene was orchestrated from Moscow, but the cult was also built locally, by the communist parties of Central and Eastern Europe, within the parameters set by the Kremlin. At the same time, the Stalin myth functioned as a symbolic fertilizer that contributed to the emergence of a wide array of myths and ritual practices, centered around national party leaders including Bolesław Bierut, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Klement Gottwald, Georgi Dimitrov, Mátyás Rákosi, and so on, and their entourage. The cults of such politicians were mostly based on the mimetic adaptation of the Soviet model, but they also made an appeal to national traditions.[6] Despite Moscow's frequent–although at times irregular–monitoring of the cult's development in the Bloc, the promotion of Stalin's mythical image was not a uniform process. On the one hand, the implementation and adaption of the cult's rituals to national traditions inevitably led to modifications in the Soviet leader's image, and resulted in the emergence of local variations of his cult. On the other hand, the intensity of cult construction was largely influenced by the enthusiasm and commitment of national party elites, as well as the practical obstacles they had to overcome.[7]

While the development of the Stalinist version of leader adoration in the countries of the Soviet Bloc was somewhat erratic, and unsystematic, the cults of Communist Party secretaries assumed the features of an integrated system. This system was hierarchical, and it had international as well as domestic (national) dimensions. Initially, the Stalin cult rose to prominence as part of the twin cults of Lenin and Stalin. It gradually marginalized the veneration of Lenin, but at the same time, it also inspired the development of cultic practices among members of the top party leadership.[8] With the completion of Sovietization in Eastern Europe, this hierarchical symbolic system was transferred to the countries of the Bloc. Stalin's mythical image retained its position at the apex of the Communist pantheon, along with Marx, Engels, and Lenin. The lower rungs of the "ladder of cults" were occupied by the most prominent Soviet political figures, as well as the leaders of international Communist parties.[9] The relationship of the Stalin cult and the sub-cults in the peripheries was strictly hierarchical, but it was not always one-directional: the symbolic competition among the leaders of the Second World for Stalin's favor advanced the expansion, and re-vitalization of the worship of the Soviet dictator. The cohesion of the system of Communist leader cults in the peripheries of the Soviet Empire was further enhanced by horizontal symbolic relations between the respective countries. Such relations were exemplified by practices of mutual renaming (factories, collective farms, hospitals, etc.), and in the tendency to provide a "cultic" welcome to prominent Communist politicians on the occasion of official visits.

The internationalization of Stalin's imagery lent a transnational character to the cult in the late 1940s. Modes of representation, ideas, and technologies of cult building, as well as ready-made cult products, were transported across the national borders of Stalinist Eastern Europe. While such movements generally reflect Moscow's ambition to standardize and monitor the way the Soviet leader was portrayed abroad, the transfers were not always one-directional. The most remarkable event that triggered a flow of cultic objects from the periphery to the Soviet Union was Stalin's 70th birthday, when the countries of the Soviet Bloc flooded the symbolic seat of power with gifts that were delivered ceremoniously by special trains.[10] Some of those objects—or at least copies of them—actually traveled back after the end of the celebrations. A copy of Zsigmond Kisfaludi Strobl's statue, "To the great Stalin from the grateful Hungarian people," for example, was unveiled in Budapest a few months after the original had been displayed in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.[11]

The Communist leader cult, in general, and the worship of Stalin, in particular, were thus pivotal in the construction of the Second World after World War II. The orchestrated veneration of Communist Party Secretaries constituted a transnational system of myths and ritual practices that furthered the mobilization of citizens across the countries of the Soviet Bloc for the common (universal) cause, and contributed to the formation of a shared sense of belonging and emotional attachment.[12] The cult could also be interpreted as a method of imperial rule, with the mythical image of the Generalissimus being used as a means to control and integrate the newly conquered multi-ethnic borderlands. While Stalin's figure was projected as a supranational symbol of unity and peace for the citizens of the Soviet Bloc to rally around, the cult also provoked a symbolic competition among "the best disciples" for Stalin's favor. The dynamics of "working towards the *vozhd*'" therefore, shaped international relations in post-war Eastern Europe to a significant extent.[13] This chapter focuses on Hungarian strategies to "work towards Stalin" and the regime's contribution to the apotheosis of the Soviet dictator in the early Cold War years.

Stalin's Image in Post-War Eastern Europe

Attempts at creating a "national Stalin" notwithstanding, his image remained primarily a supranational one. He was most often portrayed as the personification of the universal ambitions of the Communist movement, and the physical embodiment of Soviet power in the Second World. This image originated in the 1930s, when Soviet propaganda turned Stalin into the symbol of the multi-ethnic federation. He emerged as "the father of peoples" that represented the notion of friendship (allegedly) linking the diverse nationalities of the Soviet Union together.[14] After World War II, the supranational dimension of Stalin's constructed persona gradually embraced the territories under Soviet political (and military) influence. The most important ritual act in the construction of the Second World was undoubtedly Stalin's 70th birthday in December 1949.[15] The celebrations reaffirmed the image of the Generalissimus as the global symbol of peace and socialism, and furthered the integration and Sovietization of the countries under the aegis of Soviet power.

Stalin's fictitious persona also displayed a significant appeal to national sentiments in post-war Eastern Europe. Since the foundations of the Second World had to be built locally, national and international themes were intricately linked to produce a myth of the Soviet leader that could be sold to domestic audiences. Localized representations of Stalin, therefore, linked the universal aspirations of the Bolshevik movement and the Soviet narrative of the war (the myth of liberation) to “progressive” elements of the national lore and the legacies of national working class movements. The emphasis remained on internationalism, yet local Stalin images were all characterized by a certain duality that reflected the dichotomy of legitimation campaigns—”national in form, socialist in content”—advanced by the local agents of Soviet power in the respective countries. Stalin was depicted primarily as the defender of peace in the world, and the liberator of Europe from Nazism, but he was also portrayed as the “best friend” of each and every nation—”the best friend of the German people,” “the best friend of the Hungarian people,” “the unbending friend of Poland,” etc.—in post-war Eastern Europe, as well as the guarantor of their interests on the international plane (the architect of German unity, the defender of Poland’s Western borders, etc.).[16]

Stalin’s image as the embodiment of the collective—the friendship community of the Second World—remained prevalent, but the process of adjusting his myth to diverse political cultures inevitably added a national dimension to his constructed persona. The leaders of Eastern European communist parties could only use what they had at their disposal: national traditions—techniques and languages—of cult construction. When Hungarian sculptors were invited to submit plans for a monument to Stalin, for example, one of them, Ferenc Medgyessy, came up with a design that bore a striking resemblance—in terms of posture and even facial characteristics—to representations of the romantic poet, Sándor Petőfi.[17] The historicization of the idea of Stalin as “the best friend of the nation” was another method to link the leader’s mythical image to the nation’s past. Communist propaganda claimed that he had always been a true friend of the nation, unlike the leaders of authoritarian regimes (Piłsudski, Horthy, etc.) of the inter-war period. The past was contrasted to the present in order to parade the Soviet leader as the man who had made the achievement of the nation’s unfulfilled desires possible.

As elsewhere in the Soviet Bloc, Communist propaganda in Hungary also celebrated Stalin as “the great friend” of the nation who liberated the country from the “Nazi beast,” and praised him as the culmination of a thousand years of Hungarian history. On the occasion of the unveiling of his statue in Budapest in 1951, for example, Communist newspapers portrayed him as “the greatest individual in Hungarian history,” who had realized the goals of the nation’s historical heroes, including King

Stephen, Hunyadi, Rákóczi, Kossuth, Petőfi, and so on.[18] At the same time, the imagery of the Soviet leader in Hungary was also characterized by the duality of internationalist and patriotic themes. The attempt to reconcile the universal aspirations of the movement with national traditions with the help of the cult was reflected in Révai's assertion that "only he is a good Hungarian patriot, who reveres and loves our great teacher, Generalissimus Stalin."[19] However, as in the rest of the Soviet Bloc, the two poles of the Stalin myth were not equal in Hungary either. The supranational/universal dimensions of his depictions eclipsed the patriotic appeal of his constructed persona. The hierarchical nature of Stalin's imagery was made crystal clear at the time of the celebrations of his 70th birthday. The meeting of the Secretariat on November 9, 1949 that discussed the ideological dimensions of the campaign (among others) approved a list of core themes, ranked in order of importance, that were meant to become the basis of cultic propaganda launched for the occasion: Stalin as the main guardian of peace; Stalin as the builder of socialism and communism; Stalin as the great friend of the Hungarian people; Stalin as the leader of the Bolsheviks and the international proletariat; and Stalin as Lenin's best comrade and disciple.[20] Despite the emphasis on patriotism, the list had little to do with the actual socio-political environment in which it was produced. It was, in fact, a comprehensive inventory of the most fundamental set of images that constituted Stalin's myth beyond the borders of the Soviet Union, and it could thus be interpreted as a template—adjusted to the Hungarian context—for personalized representations of the Second World.

The Stalin Cult in Hungary

The seeds of Stalin cult in Hungary were sowed well before the celebrations of the leader's 70th birthday. The mythical image of the Soviet dictator was promoted enthusiastically by the Hungarian Communist Party (*Magyar Kommunista Párt* or MKP, renamed *Magyar Dolgozók Pártja* or MDP in June 1948) as early as 1945. During the first May Day celebrations organized by the Communists after the war, Stalin's portraits dominated the spectacle on Heroes' Square in Budapest, and the audience applauded the Soviet leader alongside the Hungarian Party Secretary, Mátyás Rákosi.[21] Unsurprisingly, Rákosi emerged as the champion of the Stalin worship in the country. Already in May 1945, he set the tone for adulatory propaganda and introduced the vocabulary of the cult to

Communist sympathizers in his public communications. In a published, official telegram sent to the Soviet leader, he described Stalin as a "genius" possessing "unbending will," and during his report at the MKP's meeting, he called the Generalissimus "the best friend of the Hungarian nation."[22] Following Rákosi's attempts to implement the key concepts of the Soviet-type leader cult in Hungarian political rhetoric, the propaganda department approved a proposal in early June to start promoting the idea of Stalin's wisdom, through the publication of his speeches and writings.[23] The preliminary steps to link Hungary to the still amorphous Second World were taken.

Despite the disproportionate political influence of the Communists, however, the cult remained a party matter during the coalition period (1945–1947). Glorifications of Stalin were articulated mostly by Communist politicians and were published in Communist newspapers. Moreover, Stalin's symbolic authority in the immediate post-war years was not uncontested. Josip Broz Tito, the Yugoslav partisan leader, for example, remained extremely popular among Hungarian communists, and his public adulation occasionally overshadowed the veneration of the Soviet Party secretary.[24] At the same time, the limited worship of Stalin was countervailed by other mobilization campaigns in Communist propaganda. In 1945–1948, the most important theme the party promoted was nationalism. Communist politicians were portrayed as heirs to Hungary's freedom fighter traditions; the party used national symbols to emphasize its connection to the nation's symbolic lore; and it celebrated national holidays (March 15 and August 20) enthusiastically.[25] Moreover, the establishment of the one-party state, and Stalin's 70th birthday, actually coincided with the centenary celebrations of the 1848–1849 Revolution and War of Independence. Nationalism and internationalism were thus promoted together in propaganda in the early post-war years. In other words, the campaign for the creation of the Second World merged with attempts to instill the idea of socialist patriotism in Hungarian society.[26]

After the takeover of the Communist Party in Hungary in 1948–1949, the scope of the Stalin cult changed dramatically. The cult was no longer an internal party affair: it was now promoted by a wide variety of institutions—party and government departments, mass organizations, professional associations, cultural societies, and so on. The symbolic construction of the Second World through ritual means began in earnest. The most colossal manifestation of the process was undoubtedly the celebration of the Soviet leader's 70th birthday in December 1949. The monumental demonstration of loyalty, love, and gratitude toward the Soviet leader in the weeks preceding the anniversary meant the symbolic closure of Sovietization in Hungary, and the ritual integration of the country into the Stalinist Second World. Rákosi's Hungary played its due part in the apotheosis of the Soviet leader, and participated enthusiastically in this piece of international political theater. Moreover, Rákosi, eager to claim the position of Stalin's most eminent apprentice, strove to outdo his comrades in the Soviet Bloc in the ritual competition for Stalin's favor. As a prime agent of his master's cult in Hungary, he oversaw the committee responsible for organizing the celebrations, and supervised the preparations through his personal secretariat.[27] His zeal to excel in the glorification of Stalin was demonstrated in a letter he wrote to Suslov in early September 1949, in which he asked for clues from the Soviet leadership in relation to the permissible boundaries of cult construction.[28] Rákosi was not sure how far he could go in exalting Stalin, but he made it clear that he was willing to go as far as possible. Although there is no trace in the Hungarian archives of a direct Soviet decree in relation to the celebration of Stalin's birthday in foreign countries, the Kremlin did shape the events in the peripheries to a significant extent.[29] In general, the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries (VOKS) had a pivotal role in supplying the party leaderships in the Bloc with propaganda material about Stalin (biographies, images, music sheets, collected works, etc.), but Moscow's influence over the celebrations was also ensured through the active participation of national friendship societies in the events.[30] In Hungary, it was the Hungarian–Soviet Society (*Magyar-Szovjet Társaság*) that became responsible for organizing some of the most prominent cultural events (exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, etc.) in connection to the anniversary.

The most important decisions in relation to the birthday were made in the party headquarters. The Secretariat initiated and monitored the entire campaign, but it was up to the Central Committee's departments—Orgburo, Agitation and Propaganda Department, Press Department, etc.—to work out the details of the general plan. Preparations for the event started in mid-October 1949 with the Secretariat's decree—based on the proposal of the Department of Agitation—to establish two special committees responsible for overseeing the campaign.[31] The governmental committee that was officially created by the Council of Ministers a few days later nominated Rákosi as its chair, and its membership consisted of leading party and government officials, fellow-traveler public figures, as well as prominent artists and academics. The party committee was supervised by Révai and included some of the most prominent members of the *nomenklatura* responsible for propaganda affairs: Rákosi's brothers, the secretary of the Council of Trade Unions (Antal Apró), the minister of defense (Mihály Farkas), and so on. The meeting of the Secretariat also decreed the organization of a labor competition for the occasion (to be supervised by the Council of Trade Unions) and approved a preliminary list of gifts to be sent to Stalin. It seems that the Hungarian party elite knew Stalin's habits all too well: the list included, among others, a smoking set (including tobacco and pipes), two cupboards for storing alcohol (with the capacity to hold 118 bottles of booze altogether), a selection of weapons (rifles, a hunting knife, and a binocular), and so on.

The party's official newspaper, the *Szabad Nép*, prepared the grounds for the launching of the campaign. It reported the establishment of the governmental committee, and published a call to "the entire Hungarian nation" to participate in the celebration of "the wise leader and teacher of the working humanity."[32] The journalists ensured that the international significance of the campaign was understood by the population by claiming that involvement in the festive rituals would secure Hungary's place in the community of the "world's freedom- and peace-loving" nations. Hungarian citizens were invited to "act locally" while having the global aspirations of the movement—the formation of the Second World—in mind.

Following the pattern of celebrations in the rest of the Bloc—and in line with the Secretariat's decision—the birthday campaign kicked off on October 29 with the inauguration of the labor competition in honor of Stalin. The first pledge came from the Ganz Factory, but the official beginning of the production race was marked by the publication of the trade unions' plea to the workers to jump on the bandwagon.[33] No later than a day after the event, the *Szabad Nép* already reported about the rapid spread of the movement.[34] The competition, which lasted for two months and culminated in an orgy of overproduction on the day of Stalin's birthday, was supervised by the Orgburo, but the lion's share of organization fell on the trade unions.[35] Following the Orgburo's guidelines, the unions arranged the offerings in the factories, and mobilized the workers through the media. Trade union representatives—along with members of factory committees and local party cells—monitored the level of enthusiasm on the shop-floor, encouraged the decoration of industrial units, and generally tried to uphold a certain degree of motivation. The labor competition provided an opportunity for the regime to bolster the Stakhanovite movement in Hungary, and meet the production targets of the three-year plan ahead of schedule. Although both individual and group pledges, as well as the "Stalin shift" on December 21, were portrayed by propaganda as initiatives coming from below, the Orgburo remained in the driver's seat throughout the campaign.

Deploying the Stalin cult in the field of production signaled the integration of Hungary into the "economy of the gift" of the Second World.[36] The workers who promised to work harder, or sacrificed their holidays to help the state achieve its plan targets, defined their labor as a gift to Stalin. Work was thus represented as an expression of gratitude—or symbolic down payment—to Stalin for his efforts to build a bright new world (the Second), and a (supposedly) brighter future. The theme of gratitude, "however," was not merely a means to mobilize Hungarian workers for the completion of the economic plan. In fact, the notion—together with "love"—remained the key motif of the entire campaign; it was represented in literature and the arts, and dominated cultural events (concerts and exhibitions) organized in the framework of the birthday celebrations. Kisfaludi Strobl's statue that was sent to Stalin on the gift train was the allegorical representation of the concept, whereas the poet, Zoltán Zelk wrote an entire ode—"The Song of Loyalty and Gratitude"—on the theme, dedicated to Stalin.[37] Cultural activities depicting the theme of loyalty, love, and gratitude also included theater plays, (Soviet) film screenings, cultural programs in houses of culture, and art exhibitions.

The most momentous cultural events organized during the birthday campaign in Hungary were the two exhibitions organized in Stalin's honor in early December, and the gala in the Opera on December 21. The exhibition that represented the notions of gratitude and love in the most palpable way was the showcase of gifts for Stalin, displayed in the Műcsarnok art gallery. The gift exhibition was organized by the Hungarian–Soviet Society, following the precise guidelines of the Secretariat, and was visited by Rákosi himself, the day before it was opened to the public.[38] The gifts prepared by individuals, party committees, mass organizations, factory brigades, city councils, collective farm members, etc. were evaluated by a committee as they were delivered to the museum.[39] The grandiose opening ceremony took place on December 1 in the presence of prominent politicians and foreign dignitaries.[40] Thousands of Hungarian citizens were mobilized to attend the exhibition and pay their symbolic tribute to the Soviet party leader.[41] The monumental display of the tokens of gratitude ended on December 4. The gifts to be sent to the Kremlin were then transported to the Nyugati railway station, where they were guarded by the secret police until the departure of the "gift train" to Moscow.[42] The train eventually left Budapest—amidst festive celebrations—on December 6, carrying the exemplary products of the Hungarian economy (watch, telephone, cotton table cloth, smoking set, decorated bottles, and glass products), a china vase made by Rákosi's wife in the famous Herend factory, and a porcelain lamp—a model of the Kremlin—with a built-in musical clock, and a lampshade portraying Bolshevik leaders.[43] The train eventually arrived in Moscow on December 11.

The involvement of the security organs and Rákosi's personal secretariat in "Operation Gift" certainly demonstrates the paranoid nature of the regime. Even the process of wrapping was supervised by the secret police, and even a single spelling mistake on one of the carriages—Stalin's name written with a small "s"—could produce a paper trail in the Hungarian leader's office.[44] The Secretariat and the party's birthday committee were equally concerned with the prospect of sabotage: at some stage, they considered the idea of conducting a chemical analysis of the vintage wine—which would have meant opening them, of course—and the tobacco products, before sending them off to Stalin.[45] The paranoid fear from "enemy activity" was only part of the reason for implementing such extreme security measures. The main reason was symbolic and political. The regime's concern with the safe delivery of objects representing the collective gratitude of the Hungarian people demonstrates the significance of the notion of "gift" and the ritual of gift-giving in Stalinist political culture.[46] The production, display, and festive handing-over of such objects were part of the regime's campaign to re-shape collective identities. As gifts to Stalin were the products of a collective effort—all social groups were represented irrespective of age, gender, and social status—they were represented in propaganda as the material signs of unity and support for the leader and the cause. They were model products of the socialist economy, offering a taste of the promised future therefore, and they contributed to the sustaining of faith in the universal ambitions of the movement. Gifts, to use Ssorin-Chaikov's term, were "pre-gifts" that rewarded Stalin for his efforts in constructing the Second World.[47]

The second exhibition that revolved around Stalin's cultic persona opened on December 10 in the National Museum, and was dedicated to the Soviet leader's mythical life. "Stalin's stalwart life" was a gigantic demonstration of the communist master narrative, in personalized terms.[48] The exhibition, which was officially opened by President Árpád Szakasits, was dominated by visual representations of Stalin—paintings, photographs, posters, busts, etc.—complemented by excerpts from his official biography, and quotes from his theoretical writings.[49] The biography of the Soviet leader, in general, remained a crucial component of the party's propaganda during the celebrations of the anniversary. Stalin's official biography was actually translated to Hungarian on the occasion of his birthday, but his life story became the subject of numerous propaganda lectures, too.[50] The Soviet leader's life was taught to students in party schools and study circles, and special classes were organized on the same subject to students in primary and secondary schools. Textual representations of the biographical narrative were complemented with posters, wallpapers, and a published photo anthology on Stalin's life.[51] Having the indoctrination of the younger generations in mind, the party commissioned the translation of Giorgi Lenodize's epic poem about Stalin's childhood, which was also published, after some complications—the translator missed the deadline—on the occasion of the anniversary.[52]

In addition to the biography, Stalin's "superior wisdom" and his contribution to the ideological lore of Marxism–Leninism remained prominent themes in the campaign. Images of the Soviet party secretary as a wise teacher, a great theoretician, and the "corypheus of sciences" were celebrated through the publication Volume 1 (and then 2) of his collected works by the party's publishing house, *Szikra* (The Spark). The widespread distribution of the book was accompanied by propaganda lectures, special classes in party schools, cultural programs, and a series of newspaper articles popularizing the book.[53] The canonization of Stalin as the ultimate source of theoretical wisdom was reaffirmed by the celebratory meeting of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on September 19, where the prominent hardliner Marxist philosopher, László Rudas, offered a lengthy praise of the Soviet leader's contribution to the credo of Marxism–Leninism.[54]

The literary contributions to Stalin's anniversary were devised by the party's birthday committee and the Ministry of People's Education. At the time, both were under the personal direction of Révai, the ideological overlord of Stalinist Hungary. The majority of the books to be published for the occasion were—rather unsurprisingly—translations of Soviet propaganda works.[55] Apart from brochures, translated poems, and songs, the party also approved the publication of Leonidze's above-mentioned poem, the memoirs of workers from the Caucasus about Stalin, Vera

Schweizer's recollections of Stalin's time in Siberian exile, and the anthology of Soviet citizens' reflections on their "unforgettable encounter" with the leader.[56] The mobilization of Hungarian writers to contribute to the literary aggrandizement of the Soviet party secretary was the task of the ministry's Literature Department. The department approached individual authors through the Writers Union; it was responsible for shortlisting the submitted works; and it forwarded the selected ones to the birthday committee for final approval. One of the working plans of the unit illustrates the general expectations of the party in relation to the literary aspects of cult construction, while it also highlights the specific methods the Ministry applied to achieve its goals:

> Through the Writers Union we have mobilised the writers to write poems, novels, short stories and one-act plays, that express our people's gratitude and love for Stalin, and praise Stalin's role in defending peace, in leading the people of the world in their struggle against oppression, and to evaluate his role especially in the liberation of our country, and in our socialist development. We have placed special emphasis on producing the highest possible number of works by 10 November that could be published in separate repertory booklets, especially those that underline our peasantry's love towards Stalin's personality in particular.[57]

Despite the great ambitions of the department, the literary output of the Hungarian literati remained somewhat thin: the most representative examples of poetic eulogy of Stalin's persona were collected in an anthology, whereas Zelk's lengthy ode was published as a separate volume.[58] The themes addressed by the Hungarian poets in their paeans mirrored the Secretariat's list of images attributed to the Soviet leader that was approved in early November: gratitude and love to Stalin; Stalin, as the defender of peace; the leader of the freedom-loving peoples of the world; and the liberator and friend of Hungary.

The grand finale of the birthday campaign was undoubtedly the gala in the Opera house on December 21. The theater was packed with government and party officials, leaders of the Hungarian–Soviet Society, representatives of the countries of the Second World, heroes of labor, and Soviet dignitaries. The program of the show had been approved (and revised several times) by the birthday committee and the Secretariat, but the actual burden of organizing the event fell on the Hungarian–Soviet Society, and the task of promoting it was entrusted to the *Szabad Nép*.[59] The program included poems eulogizing Stalin, choir performances, dances, and musical pieces written, composed, or performed by Hungarian (Zelk, Kadosa, Devecseri, etc.) and Soviet (Mosolov, Khachaturian, Muradeli, etc.) artists. The show was concluded by Alexandrov's unavoidable "Stalin cantata." One of the highlights of the evening was Ernő Gerő's speech, in which the country's second most powerful politician outlined a simplified extract of Stalin's cultic image to the audience, reiterating the key themes Communist propaganda promoted throughout the campaign.

The birthday was commemorated by the Hungarian parliament at its special celebratory meeting earlier in the day, but the Budapest City Council also took its part in the overproduction of cultic events.[60] The council decided—in accordance with the Secretariat's instructions—to name the grandiose Andrássy Avenue after the Soviet leader, and it launched the first electric bus route—no. 70—in Budapest on the same day.[61] The series of events was concluded by magnificent fireworks launched from the top of Gellért hill in the evening.[62]

The Communist press provided excessive coverage of the events related to the birthday, and published congratulatory telegrams from foreign dignitaries as well as letters of Hungarian citizens to the Soviet leader. The birthday issue of the *Szabad Nép* was published with a giant picture of Stalin on the front page, and was devoted entirely to the anniversary.[63] It also contained the lengthy eulogy written by Rákosi, the prophet of the communist leader cult in Hungary.

The day before Stalin's birthday, on December 21, the Budapest City Council passed a resolution to erect a statue in honor of Stalin in Budapest.[64] While the authorities could not agree on the precise location of the monument for a long time (they eventually settled on a spot near Városliget), they swiftly arranged a competition, and invited a selection of artists to submit plans for the design of sculpture.[65] Out of the 24 models that were eventually presented to the reviewers (and the Soviet ambassador), none were actually deemed of acceptable quality; therefore, a second round of competition was organized, this time with only four artists.[66] The winner of the contest was the well-connected sculptor, György Mikus. Even before he was entrusted with the task, he had been sent to the Soviet Union to study the exemplary products of Stalinist art in the Tretiakov gallery. Rákosi and Révai both contributed to the development of the composition from an ideological-aesthetic point of view, and it was the latter who suggested the adding of a tribune to Stalin's bronze likeness. The significant delays in the realization of the project were largely due to the difficulties of finding the right sculptor, the right plan, and the most appropriate location. Stalin's eight-meter tall bronze figure was eventually unveiled on December 16, 1951, in the framework of lavish celebrations, in front of 80,000 people. No expense was spared during the statue project: the costs totaled around 9.45 million forints at a time when the average wage of a public sector worker per month was 683 forints.[67]

It was envisaged that the square with the statue of the leader of the Second World would eventually become the symbolic origo of Sovietized space in communist Hungary. Although the idea of raising the Millennium Monument on Heroes' Square to the ground to give way to the monolith of the new era was proposed at some stage, the statue was ultimately built a few hundred meters away from the square, on Dózsa Road. The road was widened during the construction, and a small church (Regnum Marianum) was also demolished during the process. The symbolic struggle between the heroes and deities of the past and the demi-gods of the new era was manifested in the melting down of statues of prominent Hungarian politicians from the period of the dual monarchy (Andrássy, Görgey, and Tisza), and the recycling of the material (bronze) for the construction of Stalin's effigy. Due to the delays in completing the tribune and the relief, the statue did not emerge as the focal point of mass parades until 1953. The square, therefore, was never really transformed into the sacred center of communist Hungary. The death of the Soviet leader in March 1953 and subsequent the proclamation of the reformist New Course a few months later, diminished the symbolic significance of the place significantly. While the statue never managed to play a significant role in the ritual manifestations of loyalty and gratitude toward the Soviet leader in Hungary, its destruction became the first—and arguably the most prominent—symbolic act during the 1956 uprising in Budapest.

The extravagant celebrations of Stalin's 70th birthday in Hungary were by no means unique, and contained few original elements. Despite the promotion of patriotic themes, and the involvement of the Hungarian party leadership, the government, mass organizations, artists unions, and so on in the process, the overall appearance of the festivities resembled—to a remarkable degree—the itinerary of the propaganda campaign for the Soviet leader's anniversary in the rest of the Second World. Labor competitions were organized for the occasion in every country; gala performances with a similar program (including the "Stalin cantata") were staged in the major capitals of the region; intellectuals and academics praised the Soviet leader for his theoretical insights; and gifts, representing the love and gratitude of the people, were sent to Moscow from all over the Bloc.

The streamlining of the festivities in the Second World was ensured by Moscow's involvement in the process. VOKS circulated the templates for cult construction to the imperial peripheries, while Soviet advisors based in the respective countries made sure that such templates were filled with the appropriate content. The national party elites, however, left little to chance: Soviet cultic publications—literature, memoirs, lyrics, and Stalin's collected works—were translated to the national languages for the occasion, Soviet musical compositions were performed by local orchestras at a multiplicity of venues, Soviet films were screened in cinemas, and copies of Soviet paintings about the leader were featured in exhibitions.

The standardization of Stalin's visual representations was a particularly serious matter: the face of the Second World was not supposed to be "distorted" by subjective artistic interpretations. In the Soviet Union, painters were often asked to make copies of their own pictures, but some of their colleagues in the Soviet Bloc—only the most trustworthy ones, of course—had an even less impressive task: to reproduce images photographed or painted by others.[68] The birthday committee in Hungary also tried to avoid potential violations of Stalin's established iconography during the celebrations of the anniversary. Following the example of their comrades in the Bloc, the leadership requested a transport of Stalin portraits—a few Gerasimovs among them—from the Soviet Union for propaganda purposes during the festivities.[69]

According to the notorious "mood reports" collected and analyzed by the party's propaganda apparatus, popular response to the birthday campaign was mixed at best.[70] The labor competition, for one, seems to have provoked substantial disgruntlement. The absurdity of the notion of overproduction as a "pre-gift" to Stalin for the promise of a better future was highlighted in comments that contrasted the practice of gift-giving to pre-war examples when the state had sent presents to workers on the occasion of Regent Horthy's namesdays. Rumors that workers would have to offer their entire salary to Stalin for his birthday also spread in some factories, amidst a general atmosphere of "bad mood."[71] The Council of Trade Unions complained repeatedly about the lack of enthusiasm in factory managements, the campaign-like nature of the production race, and the general indifference of young workers. It informed the Rákosi Secretariat about a growing disbelief in the sensational results of the competition, and about rumors claiming that the fruits of production were being shipped off straight to Moscow.[72] Negative responses to Stalin's 70th birthday were often fueled by one's religious convictions. Clergymen in Nagydorog were reported to have preached about the evanescence of pharaohs on the occasion of the anniversary, while the priest of Abavár called the event the day of the Doubting Thomas.[73] Critical reflections notwithstanding, the party apparatus was seemingly satisfied with the overall results of the campaign. Reports of the party's propaganda department spoke of the most successful mobilization campaign ever that had allegedly resulted in the deepening of love toward Stalin across the country.[74]

The Decay of the Stalin Cult

The last international display of the Stalin cult was the collective mourning of the countries of the Second World after the Soviet leader's death in March 1953. Joy and gratitude were supposed to give way to sorrow in the Soviet universe after the "teacher of humanity" had passed away. As elsewhere in the Bloc, the main newspaper in Hungary—the *Szabad Nép*—declared the compassion of the Hungarian people with Soviet citizens, and published the official letters of condolence sent by the leaders of communist parties across the world. The Second World demonstrated emotional unity one last time.[75] The notion of mourning continued to dominate news reports in Hungary for several weeks after Stalin's death. Grief was expressed in the lengthy articles about the planning of the funeral in Moscow, as well as the tsunami of letters sent to the newspaper or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) by ordinary citizens and public figures alike. The response of the party and the government to the demise of the Soviet leader was also swift. The Hungarian parliament codified Stalin's memory as early as March 8, while the city council of the capital decided to name the square, where the Stalin statue had been erected, after the Generalissimus.[76] The square also became the location of the official mass meeting that was organized on the day of the funeral. The most theatrical episode of the event was the moment when Stalin was laid to rest: shots were fired simultaneously from various points of the city, followed by the sounding of sirens, train whistles, and factory horns across the country.[77]

The death of the Soviet leader prompted the gradual erosion of his cult in the Soviet Union. However, Stalin's constructed persona proved hard to eradicate. Although his myth started to fade soon after his demise in 1953, his images continued to haunt Soviet symbolic space, and even his birthdays were observed—his 75th in particular—by the main newspapers in subsequent years.[78] The ambivalent status of the cult provoked confusion among the party rank-and-file and members of the *nomenklatura* alike. And confusion spread fast to the countries of the Second World. It seems that the decline of the Stalin Cult in the Soviet Union was a sign only a few Communists were prepared to read in 1953. The fact that Stalin was never criticized in public by his successors made the leaders of the Soviet Bloc believe that cultic representations of the "corypheus of sciences" were still the order of the day. The Czechoslovak leadership's dedication to the completion of one of the last—and probably the largest—monuments dedicated to Stalin in the Bloc illustrates this point. The statue of the dictator in Prague was eventually unveiled on May Day 1955, more than two years after the Soviet leader's death.[79]

The situation changed dramatically in February 1956 as a result of Khrushchev's "Secret Speech," which glued Stalin's name to the infamous term, "cult of personality." The de-Stalinization campaign that followed in the subsequent years eventually put an end to the practice of representing the Second World in personalized terms. After Khrushchev's denunciation, it was no longer possible to posit Stalin as the face of the "friendship community," and to use his cult for the purposes of creating an internationalist sense of collective identity.

As elsewhere in the Bloc, Hungarian rank-and-file party members reacted to Stalin's sudden denigration with shock and confusion.[80] Mood reports from early March informed the party headquarters about workers refusing to believe Khrushchev's accusations, while others demanded the cleansing of public spaces from the Soviet leader's images.[81] Extreme emotional responses (love or hate) were also noted among party functionaries.[82] A growing frustration among the wider population contributed to the intensification of oppositionist mood in the country during the spring. The party leadership was eventually compelled to address the uncomfortable legacy of the infamous "cult of personality."[83] Rákosi made several unconvincing attempts at self-criticism in the late spring, yet his symbolic reputation was now beyond repair. He was perceived by many, including the new Soviet leadership, as the prophet of Stalinism in Hungary, therefore, his resignation from the position of party secretary in July 1956 prompted relief rather than disappointment. The October Revolution swiftly eliminated the remnants of the Stalin cult in the country. Popular discontent during the uprising often turned against the main symbols of the regime. The destruction of the iconography of the Second World started with the demolition of the Stalin statue in Budapest on October 23,[84] but pictures of the Soviet leader were not spared either: his portraits were enkindled and his busts were smashed.[85]

Despite the suppression of the uprising by Soviet troops, the Stalin cult never returned to Hungary. The "cult of personality" was condemned on several occasions by Kádár and the new Communist leadership in and after 1956, and it was consistently defined as one of the main reasons that led to the outbreak of the so-called "October events." Elements of the Stalin Cult crept back into the public sphere of Brezhnev's Soviet Union, but Kádár's Hungary remained reluctant to return to the myths and symbols of the Stalin era.[86]

CONCLUSIONS

The effort to promote an internationalist sense of belonging with the help of the Stalin cult's symbolic repository had dubious results in the Soviet Bloc. Due to the asynchrony of myth ("the best friend of the nation") and reality (the loss of national sovereignty), the cult had failed to harmonize internationalist claims with national aspirations. On the contrary, it continued to engender perceptions of subjugation. It seems that the prospect of establishing close ties with the Second World—associated with Soviet rule—provoked little enthusiasm in the respective societies. In fact, the emphasis in Communist propaganda on such ties provoked rumors in the Bloc that envisaged the incorporation of the countries of the region into the Soviet Union.[87] Deep-seated Russo-phobia, reaffirmed by wartime experiences; the physical and symbolic distance of Stalin—he never visited any of the "people's democracies"; as well as the brevity of his cult were all responsible for the limited mobilizing potential of his worship in post-war Eastern Europe.[88] The supranational components of his myth remained too abstract and vague for the majority of the population to comprehend, whereas the notion of Stalin as "the best friend" of the nation displayed little credibility. The endeavor to advance the formation of the Second World with the help of the Stalin cult therefore ultimately failed.

NOTES

1. *Magyar Nemzet*, December 18, 1951.
2. Tikhomirov, "The Stalin Cult," 311–312.
3. For a detailed history of the Stalin statue, see Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei,* 169–234, and Fowkes, "The Role of Monumental Sculpture," 65–84.
4. The "father of people" image of Stalin was analyzed in detail in Plamper, "Georgian Koba," 123–140. See also Idem., *The Stalin Cult*, 29–86.

5. I examine the Rákosi cult in its broader East European context in my forthcoming monograph titled *The "Invisible Shining": The Cult of Mátyás Rákosi in Stalinist Hungary, 1945-1956* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2017).
6. For a comparative assessment of Stalinist leader cults in Eastern Europe see Apor et al., *The Leader Cult.*
7. The burdensome legacy of the Hitler cult in East Germany, or the traumatic memories of Soviet occupation in Poland, for example, hampered the implementation of the cult to a significant extent. On the cult of Stalin in East Germany see Plamper, "The Hitlers Come and Go…," 301–329; and Tikhomirov, "The Stalin Cult." For a comparative assessment of the cult in Poland and the GDR see Behrends, "Exporting the Leader," 161–178.
8. On the cults of lesser party functionaries in the Soviet Union see Ennker, "The Stalin Cult, Bolshevik Rule"; Rolf, "The Leader's Many Bodies", 197–206; and Idem., "Working Towards the Centre", 141–157. See also Getty, *Practicing Stalinism*, 67–95.
9. It was Władysław Gomułka who first compared the Stalinist cultic hierarchy to a ladder. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc*, 65.
10. The majority of these objects were exhibited in Moscow's main museums, although the East German planetarium, the Czechoslovak airplane, and the horses sent by several countries had to be stored elsewhere. Devlin, "Soviet Power and Its Images," 36–37.
11. Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei*, 173.
12. The term 'transnational' is used here in accordance with recent interpretations. See, for example, Apor and Iordachi, "Studying Communist Dictatorships," 1–35; Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," 421–439; and David-Fox, "The Implications of Transnationalism," 885–904. See also the entries 'history' and 'transnational' in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, ed. Iriye and Saunier, 493–496, 1047–1055.
13. Ian Kershaw's phrase has been applied to the Soviet context by a number of authors, including Ennker, "The Stalin Cult, Bolshevik Rule"; and Rolf, "Working Towards the Centre".
14. Plamper, "Georgian Koba," 123–140.
15. On the emergence of the Stalin-cult in the GDR and Poland see Behrends, "Exporting the Leader"; and Tikhomirov, "The Stalin Cult," 297–321.
16. Behrends, "Exporting the Leader," 164 and 169.
17. Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei*, 191.
18. Quoted in ibid, 172.

19. Quoted in Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, 262.
20. Magyar Országos Levéltár (MOL), 276. Fond 54/71.
21. *Szabad Nép*, May 3, 1945.
22. The telegram was published in *Szabad Nép*, May 10, 1945. His speech appeared in the same newspaper on May 23, 1945.
23. Politikatörténeti Intézet Levéltára (PIL), 274. Fond 21/1.
24. On the attitude of Hungarian communists towards Tito and Yugoslavia see Ripp, "Példaképből ellenség", 45–62.
25. On the role of national traditions in the construction of Stalinist leader cults see Apor, "National Traditions," 50–71.
26. The importance of nationalism in Communist propaganda in Stalinist Hungary has been analyzed in detail in Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*. The history of the anniversary of 1848 is discussed in Gyarmati, *Március hatalma*.
27. The Rákosi Secretariat's records contain a separate file on the birthday celebrations. MOL, 276. Fond 65/76.
28. "Dear Comrade Suslov! We would very much like to know whether there will be any decision on the celebration of the 70th birthday of Comrade Stalin, especially in relation to how far foreign parties can go, that is, the parties of the People's Democracies. I would be very much obliged to you, if you could communicate whether there will be such a decision and whether there will be a definite line which we can adhere to." MOL 276. Fond 65/213. Quoted in Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, 256.
29. This seems to tally with the East German case. See Plamper, "The Hitlers Come and Go…," 311.
30. On the role of the German-Soviet Friendship Society in organizing events for Stalin's birthday see Tikhomirov, "The Stalin Cult," 303–304. For a comparative assessment of the contribution of friendship societies to the escalation of the Stalin cult in Poland and the GDR see Behrends, *Die erfundene Freundschaft,* 171–225.
31. MOL, 276. Fond 54/66.
32. *Szabad Nép*, October 23, 1949. The formation of the governmental committee was reported on October 15, 1949.
33. *Szabad Nép*, October 29, 1949.
34. Ibid.
35. For the original proposal of the Council of Trade Unions and the Orgburo's recommendations see MOL, 276. Fond 55/93.
36. The notion was applied to the Stalinist context by Jeffrey Brooks. See Brooks, *Thank You Comrade Stalin!*

37. Zelk, *A hűség és a hála éneke.*
38. The Secretariat's records on the subject are located at MOL, 276. Fond 54/71, 72, and 74.
39. The Committee consisted of six people, prominent party functionaries, and artists loyal to the regime. MOL, 276. Fond 54/74.
40. *Szabad Nép*, December 2, 1949.
41. The *Szabad Nép* claimed that a quarter of a million people had watched the exhibition in the matter of four days. *Szabad Nép*, December 5, 1949.
42. MOL, 76. Fond 65/76. See also Kocsis, "Sztálinhoz száll a hálaének."
43. *Szabad Nép*, November 30, 1949; and November 27, 1949.
44. MOL, 276. Fond 65/76.
45. MOL, 276. Fond 54/74.
46. On the significance of gifts in the Stalinist Soviet Union see Brooks, *Thank You Comrade Stalin!* For alternative analyses see Ssorin-Chaikov and Sosnina, "The Faculty of Useless Things," 277–300; and Ssorin-Chaikov, "On heterochrony," 355–375.
47. The notion of 'pre-gift' was used in Ssorin-Chaikov, "The Faculty of Useless Things," 281.
48. For the published version of the catalogue of the exhibition see *A nagy Sztálin harcos élete.*
49. The *Szabad Nép* published extensive reports about the exhibition on December 11 and 13, 1949.
50. *Joszif Visszarionovics Sztálin.*
51. The photo album on Stalin's life: *Sztálin élete képekben.*
52. Leonidze, *Sztálin ifjúsága*. The Secretariat actually had to find a second translator to complete the job, while the first one was reprimanded by the party's Control Commission. MOL, 276. Fond 54/74.
53. Kocsis, "Sztálinhoz száll."
54. *Szabad Nép*, December 18, 1948.
55. The publication plan was coordinated by the birthday committee and was approved by the Secterariat on November 22, 1949. MOL, 276. Fond 54/72.
56. *Öreg munkások a nagy Sztálinról*; *Találkozás Sztálin elvtárssal*; and Svejcer, *Sztálin az északszibériai számüzetésben.*
57. Népművelési Minisztérium, Kollégiumi értekezletek, MOL XIX-I-3-n, 1. doboz

58. *Sztálint köszöntjük.*
59. The program was discussed in detail on 30 November, and it was eventually approved by the Secretariat on December 14. MOL, 276. Fond 54/75 and 77. For the *Szabad Nép*'s coverage of the event see *Szabad Nép*, December 20 and 22, 1949.
60. *Szabad Nép*, December 22, 1949.
61. The Secretariat approved the renaming of the street at its meeting on November 22 1949. MOL, 276. Fond 54/72. For a report on the celebratory meeting of the Budapest council see *Szabad Nép*, December 21, 1949.
62. *Szabad Nép*, December 20, 1949.
63. *Szabad Nép*, December 21, 1949.
64. The proposal was put forward by the birthday committee and was approved by the Secretariat at its meeting on December 14. MOL, 276. Fond 54/77.
65. The history of the Stalin statue is analyzed in detail in Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei;* and and Fowkes, "The Role of Monumental Sculpture."
66. For a discussion of the competition see Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei*, 176–204.
67. Ibid, 220.
68. Zwickl, "Copyright," 58–66.
69. MOL, 276. Fond 54/69.
70. For the most recent comparative analysis of popular mood in totalitarian regimes see Corner, *Popular Opinion in Totalitarian Regimes.*
71. MOL, 276. Fond 108/8.
72. MOL, 276. Fond 65/76.
73. MOL, 276. Fond 108/19, and MOL 276. Fond 108/8.
74. MOL, 276. Fond 108/26.
75. *Szabad Nép*, March 6, 1953.
76. *Szabad Nép*, March 9, 1953.
77. *Szabad Nép*, March 10, 1953.
78. On the afterlife of the Stalin cult following the dictator's death see Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*. See also Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*, 233–247, and Pyzhikov, "The Cult of Personality During the Khrushchev Thaw," 11–27.
79. For the history of the Stalin statue in Prague see Pichova, "The Lineup for Meat," 614–630.
80. Pünkösti, *Rákosi bukása és halála*, 349.

81. Nemes, *Rákosi Mátyás születésnapja*, 137; and MOL, 276. Fond 65/70.
82. MOL, 276. Fond 53/279.
83. On the impact of the speech in Hungary see Apor, "The Secret Speech," 229–247.
84. Pótó, *Az emlékeztetés helyei*, 226–232.
85. ÁBTL 3.1.5. 0-14975/181.
86. On the renaissance of the Stalin-cult in the Brezhnev period, see Zaslavsky, "The Rebirth of the Stalin Cult in the USSR," 3–21.
87. Such rumors in Hungary were recorded by mood reports collected before the May 1949 general elections, for example. MOL, 276. Fond 108 /11. For Poland see Behrends, "Exporting the Leader," 167.
88. Behrends, "Exporting the Leader," 172.

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PART II

Post-Stalinist Entanglements in the Second World

CHAPTER 4

Two Stairways to Socialism: Soviet Youth Activists in Polish Spaces, 1957–1964

Patryk Babiracki

“Some see it as a Russki fist, others are speechless with delight,” noted the Polish writer Leopold Tyrmand in his diary on February 14, 1954. He had just attended an exhibition of the development project for the Stalin Square, in the heart of Warsaw. In the center of the Square stood the controversial Palace of Culture and Science, a layer-cake skyscraper, which the USSR had offered to Poland as a gift.[1] Tyrmand was among those who “spat” on its “proportions, an un-Warsaw scale, the pompous style.”[2] The steel frame would have been acceptable, in the writer’s eyes; what made it intolerable was the architects’ choice to cover the building with pre-fabricated sand-colored facing, stick on it a pseudo-Renaissance tower-dome, layer-cake attics and finials, and other such elements. “The horror of socialist realism materialized in the very center of the city like a blooming growth on a drunkard’s nose,” Tyrmand wrote. Had the tall building been covered with glass instead, he would have rejoiced and even “forgave them” for the Russian General Suvorov, who slaughtered the

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population of Warsaw as he quelled an anti-Russian rebellion at the end of the eighteenth century.[3]

Tyrmand's cocky criticisms surpassed aesthetic outrage and Russophobic rant. It also went beyond the critique of the Palace of Culture and Science. The writer attacked the idea that architects, like all artists under socialism, had to produce works that were "modern in function" and "traditional in form," a guiding principle of socialist realism. The "function of architecture has not changed since the dawn of human history on this earth," he argued; while the idea that today's architecture must, "for the good of man," resemble architectural forms from "yesterday, yesteryear, and four centuries before carries within itself an undisguised folly."[4] Like some of his French mentors—Tyrmand had studied architecture in Paris—the writer viewed a city as an "accumulation." Even ugly buildings become beautiful as they age—"something condenses around them, which can be called atmosphere, ambiance, or style. They collect events and experiences, individual and communal"; overtime, they "blend into the shape and detail of the facades, which become unique memorials and symbols."[5] Consistently with this view, the one thing one mustn't do is to build "in a past style," for the fruits of such efforts are doomed to become a parody and kitsch. And the Palace of Culture and Science constituted only a part of the problem; the nearby Warsaw Residential Quarter (MDM) for the new elites—Tyrmand mocked its "bedding hung out to air" amidst the "monumental column caps" and "the chickens slaughtered for Sunday supper"—was unlikely to acquire a pleasant patina as well.[6] The writer forecast that the rest of Poland's capital would become just like the MDM: "a rather nightmarish vision."[7]

But few known Soviet visitors to Poland shared Tyrmand's repulsion. The journalist Nikolai Bubnov, who walked past the Palace on his way to the Soviet Embassy in August 1954, clearly relished the view of its rising skeleton. He noted with a certain pride in his diary that when finished, the Palace would be more than 100 meters high.[8] Upon its completion on July 23, 1955, the building measured 237 meters, twice what the journalist had imagined it would be. Soviet tourists visited the Palace regularly on the ever more frequent tours of Eastern Europe. *Ogonek*, the Soviet illustrated weekly, described the Palace as "embody[ing] all the Soviet Union's many gifts to Poland, as well as its brotherly superiority."[9] Stalin's gift to the Polish people was to bear witness to the newfound friendship between Soviet and Polish peoples; instead, it became a source of new divisions.

The meaning of Poland's tallest building may have become the most obvious center of contestation, but differences of opinion about the place of space in the Soviet–East European relationship went much farther. In fact, the 35-year-old Tyrmand captured eloquently what could be called the official Stalinist "chronotope" of the Soviet empire and the expanding "Second World." The literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin had coined the term to refer to an "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships."[10] "In the literary artistic chronotope," Bakhtin wrote, "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history." As the Soviets exported its architectural models and political culture abroad, the region borrowed the Stalinist spatial arrangements from the USSR. With their new broad arteries, expansive squares, and tall buildings, the East European capitals' new topographies turned into a form of totalitarian control, rendering the average human being smaller, more exposed, and more vulnerable. From Berlin and Budapest to Prague and Warsaw, the new organization of space reminded everyone about the ongoing revolution and about the heroes who made it possible.[11] The new spatial order also functioned as a souvenir of the glorious future that awaited the countries' inhabitants. Thus, the Stalinist authorities in East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and beyond linked new spatial arrangements to a novel understanding of time.

Yet at the time when Tyrmand was jotting down his observations, he could not have known that over the next few decades, the unique Stalinist spatial–temporal order would gradually come undone both in Poland and in the USSR. The writer's entropic vision would never be realized, and Warsaw would not turn into a supersized MDM. The Sovietization of East European space was an important and by far the most dramatic stage in the development of the imperial chronotope. But what about its less spectacular, gradual withering away? How did people *experience* the evolving spatial–temporal order? How did those who "spat" on it like Tyrmand negotiate the spatial order with those who "fell speechless with delight" upon seeing the new designs? And how did the Soviets understand the new fixing of Polish time and space? Drawing on secondary literature and a small sample of archival documents, in this chapter I will examine these questions in the context of Soviet–Polish youth contacts during the first five years after the famous 20th Congress of the CPSU (The Communist

Party of the Soviet Union) in February 1956, during which Nikita Khrushchev attacked Stalin's policies and his cult of personality.

After 1956 the term "Polish road to socialism" was becoming awkward to the Polish authorities, who were eager to mend relations with the Soviets; after the return of the pro-Soviet but strong-willed Władysław Gomułka and in the atmosphere of widespread, open anti-Sovietism, referring to "that unfortunate road" rubbed the Soviets the wrong way.[12] Yet the fact remains that, although the USSR and Poland were becoming more connected through more vigorous tourist travel, student exchanges, and cultural contacts, the combination of Polish pull and Soviet push factors also caused the countries to drift apart. "What's the difference between Khrushchev and Gomułka?" Poles asked themselves jokingly in 1958. "In the USSR, the leader can say whatever he wants, but the society cannot," they answered, "whereas in Poland, it's the other way around."[13] Here I focus on what the drifting apart meant in spatial terms, to those who betrayed no amusement as they scrutinized "the Polish path": the Komsomol activists who visited Poland after 1956. In so doing, I explore the ways in which the Soviet–Polish spatial rift reflected political divergences, and therefore deeper structural contradictions within the Soviet Bloc, at this important political juncture.

Comparisons: The Two "Thaws"

Scholars have compared Soviet Bloc countries largely in order to explain differences between them—for instance, their various degrees of "Sovietization," de-Stalinization or communist authorities' contrasting responses to crises.[14] But comparing communist contexts can also be useful for understanding the reactions of those people who traveled internationally within the socialist second world. The subsequent efforts to juxtapose Soviet and Polish "Thaws" is an attempt to construct what Clifford Geertz has called a "thick description," a way of "finding our feet" with the historical actors who lived in a world different than our own—in this case Komsomol activists who visited Poland between 1957 and 1964.[15]

Leopold Tyrmand was penning his scathing though private reviews of Warsaw's Stalinist cityscape in late winter of 1954. By early spring, the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg published a critique of a bygone era that was cautious, but public. His novel *The Thaw* appeared in the famous journal *Novyi Mir*. The work both captivated and provoked the contemporaries with the unusually honest discussion of the hitherto taboo topic, the shortcomings of Stalinism. In dividing the characters into Stalinist artists, old-timers, and party hacks on the one hand, and a younger generation of industrious engineers and activists, Ehrenburg struck a sensitive cord in Soviet society: *The Thaw* painted a picture of present conflicts that many found accurate, if convenient. The novel came out at a time when nobody could really know whither Soviet politics was heading. To some extent, therefore, Ehrenburg's work of fiction constituted a commentary on an unpleasant past and a hopeful anticipation of the future. The Soviet writer spoke with an optimism, which Tyrmand, in his personal forecasts, was unable to muster. Ehrenburg constructed through his novel a kind of liberal time, set in, and articulated through, the language of physical geography of the natural world—therefore, a chronotope in its own right. And although a work of fiction, filled with wishful thinking about the future, the appearance of *The Thaw* reflected a new period in the history of relations between the Soviet authorities and the Soviet society.

Moreover, that the novel appeared in different parts of the Soviet Bloc at different times foreshadowed a new kind of relations between socialist countries. Stephen Bittner has traced many distinct waves of liberalization under Nikita Khrushchev on Moscow's famed Arbat Street alone.[16] But in addition, in each country of the Soviet Bloc, "the Thaw" meant something else. Ehrenburg's book appeared in several East European translations and elites throughout the region used the metaphor. In the USSR, *The Thaw* offended the authorities who condemned the work and fired the chief editor of *Novyi Mir*. Anyone who looked over the Soviet–Polish border between 1953 and 1956 noticed the differences between seasons. The differences had many causes. They may have been small at times, but they were still significant. And anyone living under socialism had been perfectly trained to see them: when Vladimir Pomerantsev's "On Sincerity in Literature," an article moderately critical of socialist realism, appeared in *Novyi Mir* in December 1953, Polish writers read it as a green light to push for freedom of creative activity.[17] In the USSR, the frost lasted until February 1956, when Khrushchev criticized Stalinist methods, policies, and legacies, thus opening the floodgate and making possible a Picasso exhibition later that year.[18] Not so in Poland, where the Communists proved too weak, too divided, and in some cases too reluctant to counter the cultural challenge to Stalinism. By 1955, journalists and students in particular voiced their discontent and pushed the boundaries of what was possible to say, do, or show. Only the popular Władyslaw Gomułka, elected first secretary of the PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, or

Polish United Workers' Party) in October 1956, set certain limits. He was driven to do so by his commitment to communism, his apodictic character, and his fear of the Soviet tanks. Thus, the proper "Thaw" was ending in Poland by 1957, giving way to the anti-climax called "Little Stabilization"; in the USSR, after much anticipation and a false start, that year marked the beginning of the Thaw.

Despite the different vectors of change during the decade after 1956, a chasm separated the Soviet and Polish contexts. As they were thawing out, each country developed its own microclimate, and the Polish one was warmer still. Polish media offered a more thorough coverage of international events. Polish censors intervened less than their Soviet counterparts in domestic literary and artistic life. Polish artists, far less broken by the brutal but shorter and relatively milder Stalinist interlude than those in the USSR, retained strength, independence, and daring which the Soviets artists had lost. As a result, while the Soviet writers discussed the broadening of the definition of socialist realism in 1958, the Polish literati deleted all references to "the method" from their Union's statute. Poles enjoyed better access to Western culture than the Soviets. When historian Wiktoria Śliwowska and her husband René went to an exhibition of illegal art in Moscow, organized by friends of their friends in early 1960s they were surprised to see that the show's "greatest sensation," were "imitations of Paul Klee." These were not things "that these young artists could have seen" personally, unless they saw it in "the cheap, little French albums sold in Poland and often imported from us," the two reasoned, and their hosts seemed also embarrassed by the derivative nature of the displayed art.[19] The struggle against "revisionism," an official term of opprobrium for liberalization, took a more aggressive turn in the USSR than in Poland; while Stalin's name disappeared from official Polish narratives by the late 1950s, in the USSR it persisted into the late 1960s.[20] There were other reasons behind these political and cultural differences. Vladislav Zubok wrote of the 1990s that East European intellectuals and artists "had the luxury of pretending that the communist phase was not their own, that it had been imposed from outside," while "in Russia, few intellectuals and cultural figures could feel or think that way."[21] During the Thaw, it also mattered that while Poles found it relatively easy to reject the legacy of a regime imported from abroad, the Soviet citizens had to square accounts with self-inflicted pain.

The Soviet–Polish differential extended beyond the realm of ideas or consumer culture. In the wake of Stalin's death, the Polish and Soviet authorities transformed their countries' spatial regimes. Here, too, they proceeded asymmetrically. Both Khrushchev and Gomułka put an end to the grand-style, decorative architecture of the Stalinist era and began promoting cheaper, more efficient designs, in part to solve each country's housing problems.[22] Major similarities ended here, however. According the deal struck between the two leaders in October 1956, the Soviet Union would not interfere in Poland's domestic affairs. This gave the Polish communists a free hand in areas that many Poles deemed important. The new arrangement enabled the authorities to hammer out new terms with the Catholic Church, whose leaders promised not to interfere with politics in exchange for greater institutional freedoms. The Polish communists abolished collective farms, which stayed in the USSR and most other countries of the Soviet Bloc. They also allowed private farming. The Polish authorities liquidated the famous "shops behind yellow window curtains," in which members of the communist elite had been able to purchase otherwise unavailable goods at low prices.[23] At the same time, the communists relaxed the state monopoly on trade, allowing some people to open private shops; "hidden away in small lanes," they "sold all kinds of things," reported a reporter from *Ogonek* in 1956 clearly aiming to mystify and intrigue his readers.[24] As Anne White has shown, Polish communists and activists, as well as the rural and urban populations, began to dismantle the Stalinist, state-sponsored, and highly centralized system of "cultural enlightenment"—a phenomenon absent in the USSR and somewhat slower even in Hungary before the mid-1960s. The Polish communists partly relinquished and partly lost control of the system's flagship propaganda institutions, such as "houses of culture" and rural reading rooms. As a result, these largely eviscerated venues together with the new ones, set up on the initiative from below, offered ample opportunities for the Polish population to engage in largely apolitical activities.[25]

Soviet and Polish private spaces in particular transformed at an uneven pace. In these years, the Soviet authorities did depart from the most violent Stalinist methods of coercion. But, as sociologist Oleg Kharkhordin has shown, they simultaneously intensified methods of "horizontal" social surveillance in order to increase control through augmenting a sense of collectivism in everyday life. The Soviet leaders emphasized the collective responsibility of teams of workers for discipline and productivity; they instituted "people's patrols" and "comrades' courts," whose members "surveyed, admonished and controlled" ordinary Soviet citizens who offended the socialist decorum through excessively individualistic behavior or appearance. The result, Kharkhordin argues, was a regime that was less violent, but more efficient and effective than the Stalinist one, for "what the earlier uneven and frequently chaotic terror still allowed for was a space of uncompromised human freedom and dignity that the later orderly mutual surveillance erased."[26]

Gomułka's Poland differed in that respect. Even those who rightly acknowledge the first secretary's "totalitarian" leanings acknowledge his reluctance to "script" people's private lives. In the period of the "Little Stabilization," wrote eminent sociologist Hanna Świda-Ziemba, "during family or social meetings, and even (partially) during faculty meetings, scholarly societies or in the Clubs of the Catholic Intelligentsia, one could express all kinds of judgments that were critical of the political reality"; moreover, privately, "one could joke about the first secretary or the party itself (including in the presence of party members), complain about its current directives," and express hope for future improvement.[27] Perhaps one of the ironies of the period was that while the official discourse in the USSR at that time increasingly defined the Soviet identity around the vastness of spatial expanses, it was a small country such as Poland that offered people a little more space of their own.[28]

As a result, unlike in the USSR, Polish citizens living in the late 1950s and 1960s enjoyed the full mandate to think of their (state-owned) apartments as private spaces—areas outside of the state's authority to intervene. Comparing the two contexts, art historian David Crowley observed that as they "returned to Leninist principles," Soviet authorities emphasized modern functional designs and technological solutions rooted in Constructivism and the 1920s avant-garde in order to instill the home with the values of collective—read socialist—production and consumption. Not so in Poland where the popular press promoted the aesthetic of the modern home through "proto-consumerist discourses of individual taste and fashion."[29]

The Śliwowski couple also remembered noticing how the Soviet private space automatically challenged official Soviet values as soon as it departed from them. These "shy nudes" and abstract paintings had to be displayed secretly, even though the organizers had already confined the pieces to the private space of a newly built, still empty apartment. Moreover, the exhibition took place on the outskirts of the city, in what still resembled a construction site more than a finished residential area.[30] Through its remoteness, chaos, emptiness, and opacity, this unlit, muddy maze of unfinished Khrushchev-era apartment buildings provided another layer of safety from the all-intrusive Soviet state.

Space Explorers

Young people played leading roles in the carnival of the Thaws.[31] Yet hardly all youth expressed liberal leanings. Benjamin Tromly found that outside the small circles of radicals large sections of the Soviet youth hardly supported the ferment in Eastern Europe, much less drew inspiration from it. "Faced with the destabilization of the Bloc," he wrote, "many students, like other Soviet citizens, accepted with little hesitation the official explanation that the Hungarian 'events' constituted a counterrevolution that had to be put down by Soviet troops." In Tromly's view, "perhaps the majority" of the students "had a narrow, etatist vision of Soviet patriotism that was at odds with the internationally engaged socialism of the revisionists."[32] There had been Soviet and East European students engaged in verbal clashes in Soviet university hallways, as they exchanged views on the meaning of socialism and Soviet policies in Eastern Europe.[33] De-Stalinization "had led to solidarity and pan-bloc thinking"; but "the Hungarian events triggered a retreat from internationalism," Tromly argued, pointing to the popular attitudes.[34] The leaders of the Soviet youth organization Komsomol in particular resented many aspects of de-Stalinization.[35] Many lower-level Komsomol members shared their leaders' conservative views. They participated vigorously in the campaigns to define distinct Soviet values among youth in collective and often anti-Western terms.[36] The most conservative activists traveled to Eastern Europe, because they were considered most reliable. They would stay for a few days or weeks, at the most. This was little time, but they tried to understand Poland's transition from Stalinism to post-Stalinism by taking visual snapshots of Polish spaces.

Consider the case of the five students from the Azerbaijani Polytechnical Institute who spent 12 days in Poland in late December, 1960. They left Baku and the Transcaucasus slopes to "learn about the organization of mass work" among Polish students, to "tell" the Polish peers "about the successes of communist building in our country," and about the scientific, cultural, and educational achievements of Soviet Azerbaijan."[37] They voyaged to see sites that showcased the socialist Poland: Warsaw, the country's capital with its domineering Palace of Culture and Science; Wrocław, a city which the Poles, with Stalin's support, had "recovered" from Germany; the New Steel Mill, a massive settlement around the new industrial plant near Cracow, Poland's cultural capital and historically most conservative city; and Katowice, the coal mining city in the Lower Silesia.

The mountainous resort town of Zakopane, another stop on the agenda, lay nearby Poronin, where Lenin had spent part of his exile before 1917. The final stop was to be Auschwitz, the death camp which the Poles had been commemorating as a place of national martyrdom, and which Red Army soldiers had liberated in early 1945. Like Soviet tourists to Eastern Europe examined by Anne Gorsuch, they set off to visit "two kinds of Soviet past: the heroic past of revolutionary construction, a more recent Stalinist past," a process that reinforced the discourse of Soviet superiority.[38] But the youth activists also differed from Soviet tourists in showing keen interest in spaces that ostensibly marginalized Soviet agency, and played down the significance of socialist ideological precepts. Much more than "time travelers," they acted as "space explorers" of sorts.

Upon their arrival on December 24, the Baku students spent a quick evening in Warsaw and then relaxed for two days in the Zakopane, with its "picturesque" surroundings. Yet no urban vista and no mountain view stirred such surprise among the guests as the *interiors* of several cities' student clubs. In Cracow, they were to meet with representatives of Poland's Union of Polish Students in a venue called "Under the Lizards," named this way after the reptilian bas-relief on the façade of the Renaissance building that housed the club.[39] The leader of the Soviet delegation A. Fataliev described what he saw in his report:

> The club operates several rooms on the ground and basement floors. The biggest room, one that could hold approximately three hundred people, is lined with small tables, at which [young people] drink coffee. The Club's Council also organizes rare mass events in this room.[40]

Fataliev was describing the "Gothic" room; just like in Wrocław's "Piwnica Świdnicka," another club they visited, the names and decors of the interiors evoked Poland's pre-industrial past.[41] The five youngsters then followed a "spiral staircase" into the basement, where they noticed a bar and "a special room for playing of a rather popular card game [called] bridge." The downstairs struck them with its peculiar atmosphere. "A near-dusk reigns in all rooms belonging to the club; they have been artificially divided into nooks with single tables, as it's been explained to us, for lovers and romantics," wrote Fataliev. "As a result of excessive consumption of cigarettes, in all the rooms hangs a cloud of smoke."[42]

Between the lines of this extensive description, Soviets articulated a palpable concern. They raised their eyebrows upon seeing that the Poles had turned transparent, public spaces which should be serving the political cause of socialism into opaque, smoke-filled dens of personal pleasure and romantic intimacy. They soon learned that little political work had been going on in the club. Talking to a member of the club's Executive Committee, the Soviet students observed that "there's really no place to conduct section activities, because all rooms are already occupied." The "Polish comrades" answered somewhat lamely that they "would think of something."[43] In Fataliev's words, "our guys wondered: have there been organized meetings with factory workers, University professors, with older comrades? The response was: not yet."[44] Having scrutinized Polish spaces, the Soviets understandably began to raise questions about the ideological integrity of their hosts. And in defending themselves, the Poles only confirmed the Soviet suspicions.

Part of the Soviet effort to promote internationalism among the young, dozens of Soviet youth delegations visited Poland in the half-decade after 1956.[45] Each time, the Soviets paid keen attention to the spaces into which the Poles had brought them. Youth clubs in particular elicited in these guests a mixture of disapproval and disbelief. The Soviets complained that on the walls, the Poles put up few political slogans and plenty of abstract art. In the clubs' rooms, unstructured discussion over coffee took precedence over collective activities. Young Polish men and women smoked and gambled there. On Saturdays, they gathered in the clubs to listen to jazz and dance to rock-and-roll, although the popular culture spilled beyond the club walls. As one Komsomol activist pointed out after his trip to Poland in 1960, "in youth clubs and on stages Western music and dances dominate."[46] As the head of one Soviet delegation to Poland from late 1958, A. Torsuev observed, "most activists with whom we spoke approve the building of socialism in Poland, but they often emphasize the particularities of the Polish path." According to Torsuev, ZSP (Zrzeszenie Studentów Polskich or Polish Students' Association) student organizations "do not actively participate in the building of socialism" and "there's not a big cause which would bring concrete benefits to the party and the state, which would nourish its members." He characterized the activists as "generally passive… afraid to exert their influence, for instance in clubs, among the faithful, etc…"[47] Torsuev added that "a significant portion" of the activists believed that "they could connect with students only through entertainment and instructional work," while the pursuit of direct party-minded questions about socialism and its ideas "can frighten masses of students away from the clubs." Many activists, Torsuev opined, believe "that the best strategy is to stay passive and observe"; according to them, "youth should come to understand socialist art, socialist aesthetics, et cetera, by themselves."[48]

Polish student clubs only seemed like natural places for Soviet–Polish youth meetings. They emerged as centers of the reinvigorated post-1956 student mass cultural movement, which put a premium on unconstrained sociability, experimentation and also various forms of entertainment. They were part of a network which also included discussion clubs that focused on highbrow cultural affairs, as well as student theaters, choirs, but also—after their fortunes have waned, or during slow seasons—night clubs and dance floors. They mushroomed in Poland's major cities and rapidly grew in number from nine in 1958 to 116 in 1965.[49] One ZSP activist called them "home to all anxious student minds," a place that "concentrates social, intellectual, and creative life, which poses questions and searches for answers." Their founders and participants consciously sought an alternative to the reading room model that prevailed before 1955, and which emphasized socialist education; they opposed the salons, with their strict rules of conduct; they wanted to create "a platform for intimate intellectual contact," a counter-space to "a political rally."[50] Soviets saw them as insufficiently political. But in reality, they reflected a more capacious idea of politics. "Political," noted authors of a 1968 almanac summarizing post-1956 student cultural achievements, meant not "ideological verbiage, skin-deep engagement, speaking out loud about obvious things"; but rather: "an ability to keep up pace with the issues of the day," for example, "finding thought and artistic formulas to the postulates put forth by cultural policy."[51] The youth followed the party line, promoting "democratic" culture, popular engagement, creativity, and critical reflection about life and society. In the previous era—and now, to some Komsomol activists—"democratic" meant simplifying, finding the lowest common denominator. Explicitly breaking with such a practice, Polish students aimed to democratize culture by popularizing elite forms of artistic expression.

Fundamentally, the Soviet–Polish differences over club spaces reflected the uneven transformations in the respective countries' youth organizations. The Soviet Komsomol remained a unitary, monopolistic youth organization. During the intellectual ferment of 1956 the organization opened student clubs and then shut them down when they departed from their traditional role as "mediums of socialist socialization," and turned into "physical and discursive space" which students used "to push for deepening de-Stalinization—and to affirm their identities as critical thinkers in the process."[52] Lacking institutional space to socialize on their own terms, Soviet youth embraced *kompanii*—informal groups of friends who spent time together anywhere and everywhere.[53]

In Poland, the Stalinist youth organization, the ZMP (*Związek Młodzieży Polskiej* or Polish Youth Association), fell apart in early 1957; behind the decision to dissolve it stood both its activist members who felt disenchanted by the extremely instrumental way with which the organization treated its card holders, as well as upper echelon party members who wished to distance themselves from the previous epoch.[54] Several youth organizations replaced the ZMP. One was the ZMS (*Związek Młodzieży Socjalistycznej* or Socialist Youth Association), which reached out to primarily urban youth. It emerged from the post-1956 upheavals as an organization most closely tied to the Party, but which was characterized, until 1964, by internal divisions and a fair amount of institutional autonomy.[55] Another was the ZSP, which catered to Polish university students. The Soviet authorities frowned upon this Polish departure from the Leninist model of a unitary youth organization. The Polish communists made the case that despite the divisions, the ideological unity within youth institutions had been preserved.[56] But reality failed to live up to such assertions. Even the ostensibly political ZMS sought to attract members by minimizing the discredited, and often abhorred, forms of "political training," and by focusing on engaging them through culture, arts, and entertainment, and also by addressing social needs of youth, such as stipends, vacations, and foreign internships.[57] At the universities, the ZSP exercised its competitive advantage over the ZMS by attending to the students' daily needs. For that reason, the ZSP emerged as the more popular organization.[58] Unlike Soviet authorities with regards to the Komsomol, the Polish communists welcomed a degree of apoliticism within the student body, justifiably fearing that discussions might backfire and turn into criticism very quickly.[59] The ZMS or the Komsomol were considered boring.[60] But the ZSP had no such troubles. The ZSP ran the student clubs. The ZSP was far more fun.

Space, therefore, reflected the political strategy of the Polish activists. And the Poles defended it with defiance against Soviet critics. In 1960, the delegates from Baku who visited another club in Wrocław "expressed their perfectly justified incredulity at [the organizations'] negligence of visual agitation in the club, and the weak organization of educational */vospitatel'noi/* work in the club." Especially Kulski, the secretary of the *voivodship* committee of ZMS, objected to such reprimands. "He said that if we hung up on the wall a portrait of an exemplary worker, or talk about him, tomorrow everybody will laugh at (?!) him." And then, the Pole added, "where the guarantee that tomorrow that same worker will not be doing a worse job, and then we will be in trouble."[61] The temperature of the meeting went up the moment one Soviet student asked, "isn't there too much dance and bridge?" To this, visibly irritated Kulski responded: "And what would you want instead, a political circle?" Kulski may have been right, but he also misrepresented the exact nature of Soviet demands with typical post-Stalinist sarcasm.

The Soviets welcomed cultural diversity, but they also wanted to see Polish comrades firmly in control. Another Wrocław student club called Little Palace (*Pałacyk*) impressed Fataliev, because it was "organized differently."[62] Through offering various activities, section leaders provided the club with both the necessary energy and structure. Yes, there was the "the Club of Political Thought"; but the attending students met not only with party *apparatchiks* but also with journalists and other professionals who discussed their work. The Club organized thematic lecture series, such as the ones devoted to Africa. During one of the first meetings, noted Fataliev approvingly, "the journalist Kapuściński came and discussed his impressions from this continent." What could have that been like? Ryszard Kapuściński later became famous for his beautiful, riveting reportages from the war-torn areas of the Third World. In his early twenties, as late as 1958, and on the cusp of the enormous popular interest in the exotic, postcolonial world, he was still finding his voice—often through embarrassing references to "some kind of Sudan," the "savage country" of Afghanistan, and through his support for British colonial policies in Ghana.[63] But by 1960, the time when the Little Palace began functioning, Africa had grown on Kapuściński and Kapuściński himself had matured. He traded his naïve pro-capitalism—perhaps a reaction to discredited Stalinism, which he himself had embraced—for a passionate curiosity about the Third World as a terrain of anti-colonial struggle, a political unknown, and a possible hope for socialist renewal. During countless meetings with students and the general public he disabused his listeners of simplistic and racist notions about the faraway lands he had embraced only a few months before.[64] This is the Kapuściński Fataliev would have heard about. The Soviet activist was pleased that the Cinema Discussion Club featured films by Eisenstein and Pudovkin. In short, they wanted the clubs to explore the world in a much less heavy-handed way than the Poles made it out to be; but it had to be the world that affirmed

Soviet values, in which socialism was victorious and sacrosanct. In order to promote such a mission, clubs had to offer suitable spaces.

One after another, Soviet youth delegations voiced their discomfort with de-Stalinized Polish spaces. Young Soviet women who visited Poland in 1958 to attend a congress observed that "during visits to industrial sites, kindergartens, schools we saw not a single slogan, poster, commitment; elements of any kind of competition are completely absent." This, stated the delegation's leader M. S. Garkhusha in her report, "creates the impression that workers do not know what they strive for, they live for today only."[65] Lithuanian Komsomol activists visiting Poland in 1959 also emphasized that any visual agitation targeting youth in industrial plants and factories was "completely missing"[66] That same delegation visited the Auschwitz concentration camp a few days later; it struck them that informational brochures were available in Polish, German, and English but not in Russian. Then on May 10, the Lithuanian group paid a visit to the Soviet cemetery in Gdańsk. Nothing betrayed the passing of the all-important Victory Day the day before: "at midday, when we headed for the cemetery, the gates were closed and locked; on the graveyard, there were no people, not a single bunch of flowers, not even from the Soviet consulate in Gdańsk"[67] De-Stalinization was about re-appropriating spaces just as much as it was about creating new openings and closures.

The youngest generations of Polish youth likewise re-appropriated space. In July 1960, a Komsomol delegation which attended an all-Polish Congress of Youth made it an occasion to visit five camps of Polish scouts. The Soviets noticed that "the scouts attach considerable weight to symbolism," and so each tent, in each group has its own name, which the boys or girls choose by themselves. They pointed to the Little Bears unit of which each member "carries a figure of a little bear on a rope; at the entrance to a tent lays an emblem with the head of a bear from sand, rocks and tree cones."[68] But they saw the most stunning things in the camp near Mielno, close to the Baltic Sea. "In the 'café' constructed by the kids from blocks/stools and boards/desks, right at the entrance there stands something incomprehensible, made of bits of wires, stones, bones and wood." The guests from the Komsomol asked about the significance of the strange sculpture. The Poles explained that this is "the Man of the future—a robot; he stands there to invite everyone to the café, instead of a real human being; the long branches with blue wire isolations symbolize hands; they are extended towards the entrance, in the gesture of invitation for the passersby." In the report to Moscow, the Soviets used this example to illustrate the extent to which the work of the Scouts relied on “entertainment, romanticism and adventurism,” clearly elements that distinguished the Polish from the Soviet style.[69]

Unlike under Stalin, the members of the Soviet youth delegations to Poland rarely felt entitled to enforce the imperial chronotope. But they actively looked for signs of its maintenance and survival. The Soviet female delegates who attended the 1958 Women’s Congress later wrote that “it caught our attention that during none of the meetings with youth from the countryside did we meet a young man or a woman from a collective farm, although we tried to, and during each meeting we asked about the place of work.” Such interviews proved disappointing, for “unfortunately, the answer was always: ‘I work for myself.’”[70] The author of the report added that out of Poland’s 10,000 agricultural cooperatives only 1800 remained after 1956. To those Soviet travelers who sought in the Polish spaces a confirmation of Soviet values, this was bad news. Members of another Komsomol delegation repeatedly approached Polish students by asking about what they were proud of in their country. They asked: “which one of the achievements of People’s Poland makes you particularly proud?” Someone from Cracow mentioned the Royal Castle. One respondent from Łódź cited the 1905 weavers’ revolt. Most people, however, were unable to give any answer. “Above all, we were disappointed by the absence in our interlocutors of any pride in the achievements of today’s People’s Republic of Poland,” concluded the trip leader despondently.[71]

In certain cases, the Poles consciously crafted their own chronotope by showing the Soviets some sites and deliberately hiding others; and in some instances, the Soviets aggressively demanded exposure to their own, preferred vision of Poland. One male Komsomol activist who came from Uzbekistan with a group of Soviet tourists in June 1958 complained that “during our six-day stay in Poland, we visited not a single industrial enterprise.” Avasenov had been hoping to see “Nowa Huta,” or the “New Steel Mill,” Poland’s first socialist city. Built around the newly constructed Lenin Steel Mill near Cracow, it was Poland’s response to Soviet Komsomolsk and Magnitogorsk; far larger than any such project in the USSR or Eastern Europe, it was to be “a city of labor and progress, inhabited by ‘new men’ full of faith in socialism and the future.”[72] He was disappointed. “They showed [it to] us from a distance of 500 meters; as a result, we saw only parts of furnaces and factory chimneys. […] Łódź, one of Poland’s major industrial centers, was not included in the program at all.” In contrast, commented R. Avanesov with a bitter passion, the

Poles "delighted in showing us a good dozen churches—some on a hill, some on the ground, some underground—many of which," he opined, "represent neither historical nor artistic value."[73] This may have been true. After 1956, Poles scrambled to build new churches not only to create places of worship but also to challenge the communist authorities at the same time.[74] Showing the churches to the Soviets, too, was a way of flaunting a post-Stalinist present. With considerable difficulty, Avanesov convinced the guides to take the group to the Lenin museum in Cracow; the Poles complied "very reluctantly," but then "in the museum dragged their feet."[75] The young man reached his fill and personally went to the Polish travel agency "Orbis" to file a grievance as a Komsomol activist; but there, the employees reminded Avanesov that he was visiting Poland as a tourist, not a representative of a youth organization, and refused to help him.[76] Avasenov no longer enjoyed the clout that Soviet visitors to Eastern Europe enjoyed under Stalin. But some countries honored the Soviet presence more than others. Shortly thereafter, Avasenov visited Czechoslovakia and found the host much more accommodating.[77] "There are people in Orbis," he concluded in words that echoed the previous era, "who sabotaged our attempts to become familiar with the life of the Polish people; for that reason, we were unable to see that, for which we had come to Poland in the first place: the ways in which the Polish people builds socialism."[78]

Avasenov sounded like a Komsomol fanatic; however, his organization's correspondence with the USSR's tourist agency Inturist shows that indeed, the Poles deliberately manipulated the Soviets' spatial experience. In 1957, the Cracovians took the conservative Soviet literary critic to one of the student clubs, whose program, unsurprisingly, he deemed offensive.[79] Writing in early August 1958, Inturist's deputy chair A. Erokhin informed the Komsomol's Central committee that they were negotiating with the Poles "the possible inclusion of industrial and agricultural sites into the tour programs." But the Poles insisted that "they are not ready yet, although they are willing to return to this question later."[80] Others also voiced frustrations. Another delegation of Soviet women who visited Poland in February–March 1961 reported that "during the tours of historical places in Warsaw, Cracow, [the Poles] speak little about the revolutionary or working-class traditions." In Cracow, the Komsomol activists spent "much of the time touring old monuments, churches, especially Wawel, with the tombs of the Polish kings." They found guides' comments about Pilsudski's role to be “tendentious,” and seemed surprised that on the Marshall’s tomb there were “always fresh flowers.” When they inquired about “how to explain the nation’s ‘love’ for Piłsudski,” one top Cracow district official explained “Alas, Piłsudski is to Poland what Lenin is to Russia. Except that Piłsudskii was a reactionary.”[81] The Soviets measured the Polish politics of space by the rules of Marxist–Leninist geometry; in their minds, by enshrining Piłsudski in the revolutionary canon, the Poles tried to square a circle.

Conclusion

It has become an axiom in recent historiography that space and society co-produce each other.[82] In the 1940s, the landscapes and interiors did more than serve as a backdrop to political and social consolidation of the Stalinist Empire. During the period of de-Stalinization, too, space more than simply contained Soviet–Polish contestation of ideas. On the contrary, it reflected a new stage in Soviet–Polish relations, which, in turn, unveiled ruptures within the Second World. Space also shaped patters of mid-level crossborder interactions. To the Komsomol activists, the Polish management of space immediately revealed differences between political paths taken. This perceptible chasm prompted further discussions about social policies of the youth organizations and political strategies of the Polish communists. This in turn put into relief deeper divisions between Polish and Soviet activists concerning the ways in which to engage youth in the building of socialism.

Many Poles relished their newfound empowerment vis-à-vis the Soviets. They showed their guests around places and spaces that were unlikely to elicit Soviet enthusiasm, but which reflected the hosts’ own values and identities. Some Polish youth activists shared the Soviet opinions about excessive divisions within and autonomy of Polish youth organization. They felt somewhat embarrassed about the “revisionist” trends in Polish society–which they compared to pneumonia—in contrast to the Stalinist “cold.”[83] But the persistence with which many other Polish guides refused to honor orthodox Soviet sensibilities testified to the resentment against Moscow’s policies of the preceding decade. The Polish sense of confidence also clearly reflected their conviction, only rarely shared by the opposite side, that now the Soviets should be learning from the Poles. As the young Polish writer Igor Abramow-Newerly told his Soviet hosts when he arrived with a delegation of students in 1957, the Komsomol, like the ZMP, would "inevitably" undergo a breakup as well, just as the USSR needed its own "October."[84] But in contesting the post-1956 chronotope, Soviet and Polish youth activists contested the proper shape of the socialist future.

What could these experiences in Polish spaces have meant to the Komsomol activists? In 1945, the Polish writer Czesław Miłosz read "compassionate *superiority*" comparable to the feeling of a housewife for "a mouse caught in her trap" in the smile of the elderly Soviet journalist who visited Poland and toured several provincial cities. Miłosz sensed that the man "was flattered to be a representative of a country ruled according to infallible predictions; for nation after nation had indeed become part of its Empire, according to schedule."[85] The disruption of the schedule appears to have piqued the pride of the Soviets. Komsomol activists saw Poland's changing interior landscapes as a symbol of their country's power; now, the Poles' unwillingness to imitate things Soviet, and the Soviet inability to force the Poles into the Soviet "stairwell to communism," caused humiliation. Paradoxically, the Komsomol activists' impulses to stop the transformation of Polish spaces may have had something to do with their organization's growing alienation back home. The Komsomol leadership resented the seemingly fast pace of Khrushchevian de-Stalinization, and the antipathy was, to some extent, mutual. The Komsomol proved increasingly unpopular with the Soviet youth as well; poems about collective farms, which the organization promoted as a panacea to indifference, hardly moved these young men and women who had access to rock-and-roll. In a very different context, David Cannadine has argued that nineteenth-century British colonial officials valued the empire's overseas domains because they offered opportunities to underscore one's social status through ceremony and display, for example, in a way that was becoming anachronistic—and therefore increasingly unavailable—at home.[86] Could it have been that the Soviet activists also yearned to re-create a different kind of vanishing world?

This chapter began with an attempt to identify the distinct spatial arrangements in the post-Stalinist USSR and Poland through the conceptual prism of the Bakhtinian "chronotope." But perhaps the work of Henri Lefebvre may serve as a more useful starting point for considering the ways in which these distinct spatial orders interacted with each other within the framework of broader structures of power. In his classic neo-Marxist *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre examined the ways in which spatial arrangements characteristic of capitalism both embody and generate systemic conflicts, or "contradictions." Of note is the tension between two tendencies. The first is capitalism's "strategy" to appropriate space, subordinate it to narrow, functional use, force it to serve the profit-making interests of the dominant classes, and homogenize it into an "abstract space" filled with "banks, business centres, and major productive entities," as well as "motorways, airports, and information lattices."[87] The second is the grassroots struggle to carve out "counter-spaces," such as "'amenities' or empty spaces for play and encounter," "deviant or diverted spaces" which challenge the status quo by reflecting broader social interest and introducing heterogeneity.[88] The Soviet youth activists and their Polish counterparts similarly contested different spatial regimes within the perimeter of a certain political, cultural, and social whole. Yet to the extent that each spatial order stemmed from the half-hearted and somewhat vague top-level consensus among the communists that the Poles could ascend their own stairway to socialism, the conflicts over space point to the continued difficulty with which socialism after Stalin reconciled cultural flexibility with control.

NOTES

1. It was a gift that even the Polish communists failed to appreciate, for, as David Crowley observed, "it was more like a tribute to a king than a gift to a people." See *Warsaw*, 40, 42.
2. Tyrmand, *Diary*, 201.
3. Ibid., 202. He was hardly alone. A student delegation to the Ukraine told the Soviet hosts that the building "cost the Polish society too much," and that it "spoiled Warsaw's architectural harmony." RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 36, l. 15.
4. Tyrmand, *Diary*, 202.
5. Ibid., 203.
6. Ibid., 205.
7. Ibid., 203.
8. Bubnov, "Zapiski," 410.
9. As found by Gorsuch, "Time Travelers," 213.
10. Bakhtin, "Forms of Time," 84.
11. Clark, "Socialist Realism," 9.
12. Rakowski, *Dzienniki polityczne*, vol. 1, 35, entry for August 24, 1957. On the social history of 1956 in Poland, see Machcewicz, *Rebellious Satellite*.

13. Rakowski, *Dzienniki polityczne 1958–1962*, 23. Entry for June 2, 1957.
14. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc*; White, *De-Stalinization*; Ekiert, *The State Against Society*; Connelly, *Captive University*; and Behrends, *Die erfundene freundschaft.*
15. Geertz, “Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture.”
16. Bittner, *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw*. For an interesting analysis of East-West literary politics during that time, see also Jones, “The Thaw Goes International.”
17. Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi Mir*, 55.
18. On this episode, see Gilburd, “Picasso in Thaw Culture.”
19. Śliwowski and Śliwowski, *Rosja*, 230.
20. On the USSR, see Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, 11; on Poland, see Kupiecki, *Natchnienie milionów.*
21. Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 357.
22. On Poland, see Crowley, “Warsaw Interiors,” 193; on USSR, see Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street.*
23. Świda-Ziemba, *Młodzież PRL*, 243, 263.
24. Cited in Gorsuch, “Time Travelers,” 218.
25. White, *De-Stalinization*, esp. 45–68, 78.
26. Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia*, 303. In contrast, Vladimir Shlapentokh found a growing “privatization” of life in post-Stalinist USSR. Drawing mostly on the examples from the 1970s and 1980s, he pointed to such evidence as the growth of private property among Soviet citizens, the increased role of the family and friends as means of disengagement from the state, and the pervasive practice of lying as a way to defend one's privacy against state incursions. But these phenomena often contradicted state policies and often developed precisely as responses to the state attempts to control the individuals, and are, therefore, largely consistent with the findings of Kharkhordin. See Shlapentokh, *Public and Private Life*, 153–189. Interestingly, Kharkhordin's conclusions echo those of White, *De-Stalinization*, 38.
27. Świda-Ziemba, *Młodzież PRL*, 327, developing ideas of Aleksander Smolar, “Czy 13. XII. 1981 Polska była państwem totalitarnym?”
28. On the spatial discourse in the 1960s USSR, see Turoma, “*Imperiia* Re/Constructed.”
29. Crowley, “Warsaw Interiors,” 195–6. Susan E. Reid also locates the Soviet apartment after the mid-1950s within the state campaign

to promote collective values. Reid's analysis supports Kharkhordin's thesis, with which she engages directly; but she also finds that despite the pressure from above, Soviet citizens found ways of "privatizing" their living spaces through decoration and handiwork. See "The Meaning of Home."

30. Śliwowski and Śliwowski, *Rosja*, 228–230.
31. Lygo, "The Need for New Voices," 194–195.
32. Tromly, "Re-imagining," 294, and idem, *Making the Soviet Intelligentsia*.
33. Tromly, "Re-imagining," 295; see also idem, "Brother or Other?"
34. On p. 295 of "Re-imagining" Tromly cites one Russian interviewee's opinion that some 95% of Soviet students "saw nothing wrong with the suppression of the Hungarian revolution." Yet on the official level, 1956 coincided with the more vigorous engagement with the broader world, a circumstance that supports this volume's argument that there existed various types of internationalism.
35. Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation*, 342–365.
36. Kharkhordin, *The Collective*, 290.
37. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 10.
38. Gorsuch, "Time Travelers," 213.
39. Dziedzic, *Monografia*, 14.
40. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 11.
41. On Piwnica Świdnicka, see RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 20.
42. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, ll. 11-12.
43. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 12.
44. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 12.
45. A cursory discussion of the Komsomol's role in the promotion of internationalism in 1959-65 can be found in the extensive though self-congratulatory account by an editorial team led by the Komsomol secretary Tiazhel'nikov, *Slavnyi put'*, vol. 2, 493–504.
46. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 180, l. 16.
47. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 36, l. 42.
48. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 36, l. 45.
49. The entire network of institutions grew from 79 in 1957 to 405 in 1968. ZMS and ZMW (Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej, or Rural Youth Association) ran but a handful of similar youth clubs. See Walczak, *Ruch studencki*, 210.
50. Ibid., 210; Dziedzic, *Monografia*, 7, 10.
51. Sandecki and Leszin, *Almanach*, 7.
52. Tromly, "Re-imagining," 253.

53. Ibid., 253, 289; Fürst, "Friends in Private;" and Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 48–51.
54. Sadowska, *Sercem i myślą*, 49–50.
55. On divisions, and aspirations of autonomy, even within the growing trend to subordinate the ZMS to the party which culminated in 1964, see Sadowska, *Sercem i myślą*, 73–84, 93–98, 191.
56. Ibid., 70. On p. 89, Sadowska further points out that during its First Congress on April 25–26, 1957, Moscow tried to change the language of the programmatic declaration of the ZMS through one of the delegates. In the document, the ZMS cut itself off from Stalinism; the Soviets wanted to see Stalinism defined precisely. They failed to make the changes which, as Sadowska suggests, testifies to "the delegates' sense of independence."
57. Ibid., 211, 326–328.
58. In the 2nd half of 1959 about 7% of students (about 7000) belonged to the ZMS; in 1960, 74% of students belonged to the ZSP. Ibid., 313, 325.
59. Environmental historians have introduced the term "rewilding" to capture the process whereby people—policymakers, regional officials, national park authorities, and environmental groups—work together to restore the pristine natural state of a given territory. In social terms, the Polish communists were doing something similar. On "rewilding," see Cronon, "The Riddle."
60. Tromly observed that Komsomol meetings also became "formulaic and managed," "looking to the past rather than the future," producing a gap between top activists and rank-and-file members and decreased participation. See Tromly, "Re-imagining the Soviet Intelligentsia," 304–305. For examples of such ways of engaging the youth, see, e.g., Tiazhel'nikov, *Slavnyi put'* and the more recent, but equally uncritical, account by Kuznetsov, *Komsomol*.
61. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 211, l. 21.
62. On Pałacyk see Michalewicz, *Pałacyk*.
63. Domosławski, *Kapuściński*, 144–45.
64. Ibid., 155.
65. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 133.
66. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 137, l. 5.
67. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 137, l. 10.
68. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 180, ll. 48–49.
69. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 180, l. 49.

70. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 193, l. 132.
71. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 180, l. 16. In her memoirs, Polish historian Wiktoria Śliwowska described her experience with a delegation of generals from the Soviet Military Historical Institute, who attended a conference in Warsaw on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. Debating whether it was worth visiting Cracow, one of the generals replied: "Yes, there are two houses in which Lenin had lived over there." Śliwowski and Śliwowski, *Rosja*, 169.
72. Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, 2.
73. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 64.
74. On the dramatic efforts to build a church in Nowa Huta, see Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, 161–69.
75. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 65.
76. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 65.
77. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 66.
78. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 66.
79. Rakowski, *Dzienniki*, vol. 1, 181, entry for February 17, 1957.
80. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 93, l. 67.
81. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 180, l. 36.
82. Warf and Arias, "Introduction"; "Introduction: Russian Space," in Bassin, Ely, and Stockdale, *Space, Place, and Power*; and Turoma and Waldstein, *Empire De/Centered*, 16.
83. Świda-Ziemba, *Młodzież PRL*, 270.
84. RGASPI, f. 1M, op. 30, d. 36, l. 15; on cases of Soviet youth sympathy with that view, see Tromly, "Re-imagining the Soviet Intelligentsia," 278–9.
85. Miłosz, *The Captive Mind*, 21. Italics there.
86. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, 8.
87. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 53.
88. Ibid., 381–382, 383.

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CHAPTER 5

Staging for the End of History: Avant-garde Visions at the Beginning and the End of Communism in Eastern Europe

David Crowley

In 1967 Stanislav Kolibal, the Czech artist, was commissioned to design the August–September cover of *Výtvarné Umĕni* (Fine Arts) (see Fig. 5.1). This was to be a special issue of the periodical, commemorating—like many other magazines and newspapers published in the Eastern Bloc that autumn—the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution. He adapted a 1919 photograph of Tatlin at work with two assistants on the timber model of the *Monument to the Third International* (1919–1925). Erasing the background and with the image blending from black to red like a split-color screen print, Kolibal turned this historic image into a symbol of unfulfilled aspiration. In a year of booming triumphs (including the opening of the Ostankino Tower, the world's tallest building serving the world's largest broadcasting complex, and the massive hydroelectric plant in Bratsk, in south-eastern Siberia), Kolibal's design seemed to point to incompleteness, perhaps provocatively.

This appearance of Tatlin's Tower on the cover of this magazine was, of course, just one minor and forgotten episode in the afterlife of this

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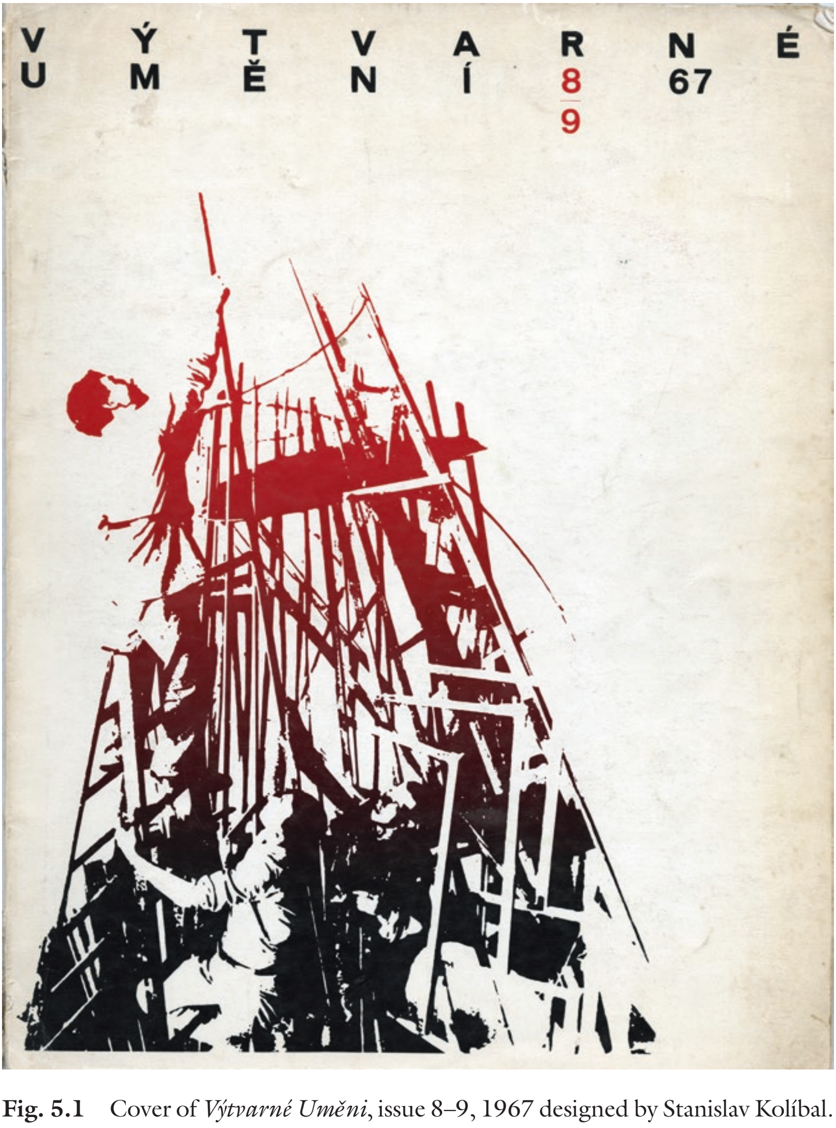
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Fig. 5.1 Cover of *Výtvarné Uměni*, issue 8–9, 1967 designed by Stanislav Kolíbal. Courtesy of Stanislav Kolíbal

mythical structure. As Svetlana Boym has charted, the *Monument to the Third International* has moved through history in an "off-modern" fashion, not on the straight tracks of progress but in the diagonal, serpentine moves of the knight on the chess board (an idea which she derives from the writings of Viktor Shklovsky).[1] It was paraded, as a large model, through the streets of the Petrograd in the early 1920s; its spiral was straightened out and capped with Lenin when Stalin planned what she calls "the revolutionary building *par excellence*," Boris Iofan's Palace of Soviets[2]; it reappeared in numerous reconstructions in exhibitions around the world—in Stockholm in 1968, in London in 1971, in Paris in 1979, and elsewhere; and then it returned to Russia when sots-artists adopted the spiral structure to reflect on the folds in Soviet history. The Soviet Union, the social experiment to which Tatlin's Tower is so closely tied may be over, but, for Boym, it still has an unpredictable, even adventurous, future. The "off-modern perspective," she writes, "allows us to frame utopian projects as dialectical ruins—not to discard or to frame them but rather to confront and incorporate them into our own fleeting present."[3]

Other fantastic visions produced by the Soviet avant-garde have formed different constellations across time and geography. Iakov Chernikov's machine-inspired architectural schemes were summoned up in the 1960s on both sides of what was once called the Iron Curtain. Peter Cook of the Archigram group in the United Kingdom, for instance, republished the Soviet architect's works regularly in his books.[4] Chernikov's 1931 portfolio *Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms (Konstruktsiia arkhitekturykh i mashinnykh form)* presented stirring images of architecture in movement, as well as a "rational" logic for the design of forms appropriate to the new revolutionary era. Cranes, gantries, and rails, as well as machine parts, suggested the means by which architecture could escape its static condition. Thirty years later, the same desire for architectural motion was directed by Archigram into its "plug-in" and "walking cities."[5] At the same time in Czechoslovakia, Jiři Hrůza argued—perhaps boldly—in his 1967 book *The Utopian City* (*Město Utopistů*), surveying many speculative projects including those designed by Ivan Leonidov and Chernikov in the 1920s, as well as those of his contemporaries such as Karel Honzík, that the future could operate as a critique of the present: "Just as we can find in the concepts of utopian architectural avant-garde both audacious and prescient anticipations of the future, we can also find escapism from the coarse and prosaic reality of life, an ideal dream formed in disillusionment with the present…"[6] Another constellation was formed when the fashion for Deconstruction in architecture emerged in the 1980s: the movement's champions sought forebears in the Soviet avant-garde. *Deconstructivist Architecture*, the landmark 1988 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York put the largely unbuilt visions of seven European and American architects (Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, Rem Koolhaas, Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid, Bernard Tschumi, and the firm Coop Himmelb(l)au) in the company of sketches and drawings by those members of the Soviet avant-garde, Ivan Leonidov, El Lissitzky, and Chernikov, whose work seemed to trouble the "structural order…of stability, unity and harmony."[7] Their designs on paper were adopted as precedents for "…provocative architectural design which appears to take structure apart—whether it be the simple breaking of an object or (its) complex dissimulation into a collage of traces."[8] However, it seems clear in retrospect that the Soviet avant-garde provided less a model for a radical interrogation of convention than a clutch of techniques for fragmenting and torquing space. In fact, the connection turned out to be just as tenuous as the movement's engagement with Jacques Derrida's philosophy from which it borrowed its name.

Never constructed, Tatlin's Tower and Chernikov's architectural fantasies belong, it seems, to an immaterial and somewhat mythic wing of art and architecture which has been written into history by seizing the imagination of architects, filmmakers, and artists, as well as historians and curators, particularly in the West. This engagement with the Soviet past has never been disinterested. Éva Forgács has, for instance, argued that the category of Eastern European modernism was invented by the New Left in the West, charting events like London's Hayward Gallery exhibition, *Art in Revolution*, organized with the support of the Soviet Ministry of Culture in 1971, as a kind of hopeful act of wish-fulfillment, particularly after 1968. Such exhibitions sought to reforge the broken link between revolutionary aesthetics and revolutionary politics.[9]

The merits of Forgács's argument notwithstanding, what kind of assessment should be made of the afterlives of Soviet architectural experiments in what might seem to be a far less auspicious setting, namely that of the People's Republics of Eastern Europe? Here, particularly after 1968, the meanings allocated to Soviet culture by the intelligentsia were increasingly negative, yet the engagement with the Soviet avant-garde was, as I will show, often expert and sometimes profound. Researchers from Central Europe did much to excavate the art history of the Soviet avant-garde. Keen consumers of this scholarship, artists, and architects from the Bloc were drawn to the models of practice and artistic languages that this intellectual archaeology provided. But what motivated these revivals? Should we adopt Boym's concept of the off-modern "architecture of adventure" to make sense of these appearances? Or perhaps we might see these afterimages of constructivism and other unfinished Soviet experiments in darker terms as *hauntings*, a conceptualization of the past which affords agency to the dead. In 1994, Derrida invented a playful pun, "hauntology," to reflect on the ways in which Marxism would haunt the world, and perhaps the left-wing intelligentsia, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Unsurprisingly, for philosopher-prophet of Deconstruction, a return is always its opposite, a new event:

> Repetition and first time: this is perhaps the question of the event as question of the ghost. What is a ghost? What is the effectivity or the presence of a spectre, that is, of what seems to remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial as a simulacrum? Is there there, between the thing itself and its simulacrum, an opposition that holds up? Repetition and first time, but also repetition and last time, since the singularity of any first time makes of it also a last time. Each time it is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Altogether other. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it a hauntology.[10]

In what follows, I would like to adapt Derrida's question—if not his method—to ask: What was the effectivity of the specters of the Soviet avant-garde in Eastern Europe under communist rule? And, in particular, what kind of ghostly role did they play at its end in Eastern Europe? How was the revolutionary culture which formed at its beginning summoned at its end?

Thaw Ghosts

Of course, the Soviet imaginary was already full of its own ghosts. After his death in January 1924, Lenin was regularly conjured up by those who claimed to be his successors. The "Leninist spirit" was invoked at every crisis in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc as a kind of energizing, restorative force. After the disaster of Stalinism, for instance, loyal Soviet citizens were encouraged to "return to Leninism" and the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost channeled the Bolshevik leader, at least according to their authors in the Kremlin. Lenin was even issued a subpoena in Prague in 1968 as Warsaw Pact tanks rolled into the city: sardonic graffiti appeared on the city's walls calling for the Bolshevik leader—"Wake up Lenin, Brezhnev's gone mad."[11] Gallows humor to be sure, but the idea that Lenin was only sleeping was not, however, an entirely ironic one. When the Bolshevik leader died in 1924, a scheme was hatched by the faithful to ensure that he would be brought back to life one day. Embalming his body was just the first step in a complete program of rejuvenation: "Our duty, our task, consists in bringing back to life *all* who have died…"[12] The Bolshevik project sought, as Nina Tumarkin describes, to abolish death. Lenin's tomb would be the symbol of this great program of salvation. It was built in the form of three great cubes, following the teachings of Kazimir Malevich: "The cube is no longer a geometric body," he announced. "It is a new object with which we try to portray eternity, to create a new set of circumstances, with which we can maintain Lenin's eternal life."[13]

Malevich was—in turn—a spectral presence in the communist world long after his death in 1935. Artists, writers, architects, and poets in Eastern Europe felt compelled to search for and discover the Suprematist artist particularly after Stalinism. Malevich's art flickered between visibility and obscurity, and myth and experience. It was known but rarely seen. For instance, one of the pioneering scholars of Soviet modernism, Szymon Bojko, a Pole, recalled his visits in the late 1950s and early 1960s to seek out his art—which he knew was in reproduction in the avant-garde press in inter-war Poland—but then hidden in the stores of the Russian Museum in Leningrad. His fluent Russian, official invitations from the USSR Fine Arts Association, and high-ranking status as a Central Committee member from a fraternal nation did little to improve his chances of seeing these suppressed works, such was the extent of the "embarrassment" and "fear" attached to Malevich's art.[14]

Even though a posthumous injunction was placed on his art, Malevich could still be invoked. During the Zhdanovshchina in Poland, Polish modernist architects Helena and Szymon Syrkus—figures of considerable authority in the pre-war avant-garde—found that their friendship with the Suprematist artist 20 years earlier could be turned into a threatening indictment. Reflecting on their 1947 schemes for the Koło Housing Estate in Warsaw, Jan Minorski, an architect working in the Institute of Urbanism and Architecture, attacked the Syrkuses: "These architects often stress that their teacher was Malevich, who stressed the "tension" between solid forms and those of Suprematism. But why refer to a prophet if, in the new reality, the former "master" has nothing to say? This is poor advisor without authority! If Lachert's work [a modernist architect—DC] is not understandable, how much more so is the work of the Syrkuses. Their forms, one must say, disturb the viewer."[15] This was June 1949 but Minorski had already fully absorbed Soviet techniques of character assassination. Helena Syrkus had too: taking the stage at the international gathering of modernist architects, CIAM 7 (*Congrès international d'architecture modern*), in Bergamo later in the summer of the same year, she famously gave her audience a public demonstration of the Soviet mania for "*samokrytyka*," a public confession of the "errors" in one's earlier thinking or actions.[16] She argued that the kind of technological invention and abstract volumes, to which the CIAM members in the audience were committed (and that she herself had promoted so vigorously until recently), were already outmoded in the age of Soviet progress.

Malevich was "rehabilitated" in Poland during the Thaw. The art press—enjoying a new found tolerance of abstract art—reproduced images of his architectons and the "Black Square" (1913) copied from the pages of pre-war avant-garde periodicals.[17] These wan images were animated by memories of the artist's month-long visit to Warsaw in 1927 from surviving members of the pre-war avant-garde, Henryk Stażewski and Jonasz Stern.[18] And when modernist Polish poet Julian Przyboś curated an exhibition, *Précurseurs de l'art abstrait en Pologne*, at the Galerie Denise René in Paris in 1957, he included works by Malevich, a gesture which claimed the artist as Pole (identified as Kazimierz Malewicz) and, more importantly, reconnected Warsaw with the twin capitals of pre-war modernism, Paris and Moscow. As the two works by Malevich which had been given to the Syrkuses after his exhibition in Berlin in 1927—a suprematist composition on canvas and a maquette of an architecton—were lost (stolen from their studio in the winter of 1945), Przyboś had to borrow two canvases from the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.[19]

The Czechoslovak engagement with Malevich runs on parallel tracks, even if the effects of the Thaw were felt there later than in Poland. Artists were drawn to his non-objective world from the late 1950s. In 1959, writer and collage artist Jiří Kolář created a concrete poem dedicated to the artist, "Pocta Kazimíru Malevičovi," in which, according to Raoul-Jean Moulin, "a page was torn in a gesture symbolizing the repudiation of the traditional painter."[20] Six years later Kolář's compatriot, composer Rudolf Komorous, created the first piece of electronic music in the country. Entitled "Malevich's Grave" ("Náhrobek Malevičův"), the piece eschewed melody, perhaps deriving its long tones and occasional pulses from the artist's floating geometric masses and lines. In 1968 artist Stanislav Zippe of the Synteza group used a recording of Komorous' "Malevich's Grave" to lend synesthetic effects to one of his kinetic artworks, *Transformation* (*Proměna*). Installed in the exhibition hall of the Music Theatre (Divadlo hudby) in Prague, the piece featured four white square surfaces placed on the ground and lit with lamps. A central light overhead changed color while four light sources closer to the squares gained and reduced in brightness.

It is perhaps not surprising that Malevich was the first figure of the Soviet avant-garde to be excavated so thoroughly (in the West too[21]). Suprematism lent itself to these kinds of modern séances, bringing a measure of mysticism to an environment which was, by dint of official ideology, now to be organized by rational principles. In 1956, the Bloc had been signed up by Nikolai Bulganin in the Kremlin to Scientific-Technological Revolution. This was to be a new rational program which would put Eastern Bloc societies, after Stalin, back on the path to full-blown communism. Yet, what is striking is the way in which the embrace of science contained a cosmic or even a spiritual aspect, even in the heart of the empire. *Dvizhenie* (*Movement*)—a group founded in Moscow art schools in the early 1960s by a group of seven young artists including Francisco Infante and Lev Nussberg—included the most eager acolytes of Malevich. Ambitious and resourceful, Nussberg and Infante developed a sophisticated practice from their still incomplete understanding of the activities of the Soviet avant-garde in the early 1920s. A fascination in infinite forms, derived from geometry, was combined, for instance, with a shrewd understanding that the emerging design and technology infrastructure of the Scientific-Technological Revolution presented new opportunities for modern art. Exhibited in public institutions like the Kurchatov Institute for Atomic Energy and the Institute of High Temperatures in Moscow, their abstract works could be characterized as research. This was not a matter of rhetorical camouflage: science seemed to be offering novel materials for the production of a new order of synthetic art. Nussberg wrote:

> The synthesis of different technical means and art forms is [an] important side of our searches. An artist must take all the basic means that exist in nature-light-color, sound, movement (not just in time and space), scents, changing temperatures, gases and liquids, optical effects, electromagnetic fields…, etc. All depends on the creative fire of the individual.[22]

This sense of excitement is captured in early works like Infante's 1963 *Space-Movement-Infinity*, an exercise in geometry in which a series of two-dimensional crystal forms are overlaid. Turning in an infinite space, they seem to recede to a luminous red point. Subtitled *Design for a Kinetic Object*, Infante developed his "design" into a sculpture fashioned from revolving cubes illuminated with small lights (see Fig. 5.2). While such schemes—ostensibly—might be presented as models or prototypes for some unspecified public art, they are better understood as explorations into what Malevich had famously called the non-objective world in 1916.[23] Their philosophy of art combined a "politically correct" enthusiasm for Soviet science with an illicit interest in metaphysics. Space exploration had opened—at least in the minds of young artists—a perspective on the

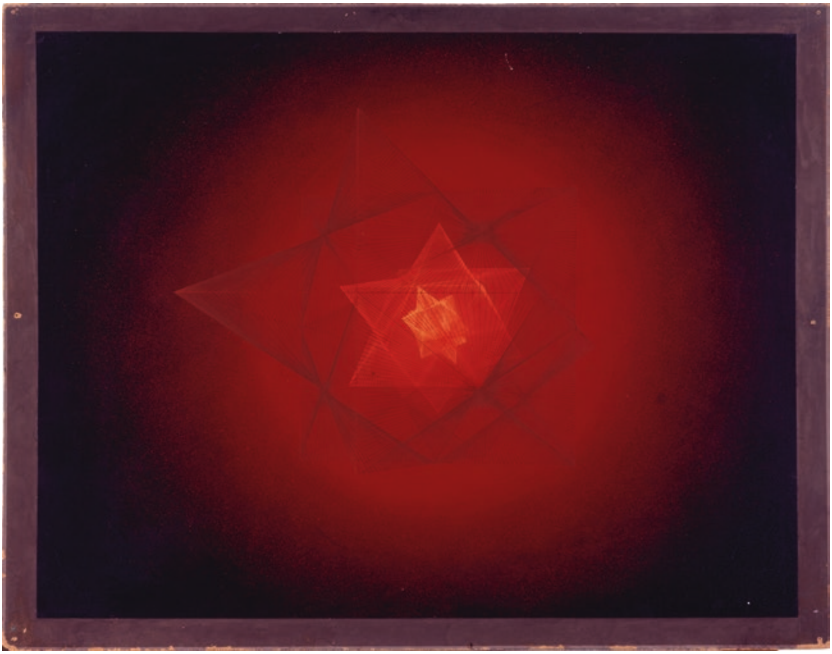

Fig. 5.2 Francisco Infante-Arana, *Space – Movement – Infinity (Design for a Kinetic Object)* Tempera and ink on paper mounted on fiberboard, 1963. Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, The Norton and Nancy Dodge Collection of Nonconformist Art from the Soviet Union, New Brunswick, NJ

infinite. The group's 1966 manifesto, broadcasting their commitment to Kineticism, announced the dawn of a new sensibility:

> We are pioneers.
> We unite the WORLD to KINETICISM
> TODAY'S man is torn apart, sick. "Man, are you not tired of destruction?"
> TODAY'S child is already the cosmic generation.
> The stars have come nearer. Then let ART draw people together through the breath of the stars![24]

Formally, many of the group's artworks eschewed the dynamic and dissonant forms favored by the Soviet avant-garde (typified by Lissitzky's *Red Wedge*, 1920). Symmetry and balance pointed to a hidden order in the universe. Nussberg wrote, "It is more rational to try with the help of absolute regularity—symmetry (asymmetry belongs here as well, it is a symmetry of a higher order, only more universal and more hidden!) to shape all the richness of the human spirit."[25]

While abstract art remained a matter of considerable controversy in the Soviet Union throughout the 1960s, Dvizhenie operated with official imprimatur, only occasionally falling foul of its patrons in the party-state. The group's chief ideologue, Lev Nussberg, was a well-connected and skillful operator, adept at persuading the Soviet authorities to support the group's projects. In the late 1960s, Dvizhenie's works traveled abroad, first in the Eastern Bloc and then in Western Germany.[26] They were widely reported in the international press too, providing vivid evidence of the creativity of Soviet culture after its apparent ossification during the Stalin years.

Back to the Future

To find examples where Soviet avant-garde and politics intersect *critically* we have to look to the late 1960s or, more precisely, the anniversary of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution in the autumn of 1967. This event—as I've noted above—was embraced by communist authorities across the Bloc as a way of asserting the authority of the Soviet Union as the leading force in world history. Throughout the 1960s, the impending anniversary formed an important, magnetic point on the horizon. Numerous Soviet achievements in the fields of science, engineering, and technology were timed for completion in 1967. The "eternal" figure of Lenin was central to these anniversary events too. A new print of Eisenstein's film *October* (1927) was reissued with many of the cuts made during the Stalin years restored and a new soundtrack composed by Dmitry Shostakovich (op. 131, *October—a symphonic poem in C minor*). The film played an ambassadorial role, traveling around the world. Similarly, Dvizhenie—the group of young artists who had been such keen enthusiasts for Malevich's art—orchestrated an electric tribute to Lenin in Leningrad. Four enormous screens were placed around the monument to the Bolshevik leader outside the Finland Station, the historic site of his return to Russia in 1917. Historic film footage, as well as Soviet movies dramatizing the revolution, was projected onto three screens while three beams of color brought a suggestion of movement to Lenin's looming silhouette on the fourth. A sound collage of music, poems, and Lenin's speeches filled the air.

The festive rediscovery of the "spirit of October" was also stage-managed across the Bloc. Numerous exhibitions were organized and publications issued with official imprimatur. The August–September 1967 issue of *Výtvarné Umění*—with Kolibal's cover—was dedicated to the Soviet avant-garde, much of the content drawn from research which had been conducted in Soviet archives and collections by Miroslav Lamač and Jiří Padrta since the early 1960s.[27] It was a remarkably rich visual and textual archive: alongside numerous high-quality images of works by Gabo, El Lissitzky, and others, it featured translations of historic documents such as extracts of Malevich's 1919 book *On New Systems in Art* (*O Novykh Sistemakh Visk*) and Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner's 1920 *Realist Manifesto* (*Realisticheskii manifest*).[28]

In Warsaw, the Współczesna Gallery under director Janusz Bogucki opened a show on 8th November 1967 (the 50th anniversary in the Gregorian Calendar) entitled *New Art at the Time of the October Revolution* (*Nowa sztuka czasów Rewolucji Październikowej*). The interior of the gallery was organized as "agit-tram" to represent the propaganda work of the avant-garde during the Civil War period. The artworks included prints, architectural models, books, and magazines, as well as ceramics produced by the Soviet artists, many of which were drawn from the collection of Szymon Bojko. Efsir Shub's *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* (1927) and Sergei Eisenstein's *Strike* (1925) were screened and pre-war leftist artists, including Futurist poet and gulag-survivor Anatol Stern, were invited to speak in the gallery. Similarly, in Budapest, students from the Faculty of Architecture at Budapest Technical University operated a semi-official gallery (i.e., tolerated, meaning uncensored and unfunded) in their student center at ut. Bercsenyi 28-30. One 1968 show, curated by Tihamér

Gyarmathy, an abstract painter whose career began before the Second World War, explored the heritage of the Soviet avant-garde.[29] Copies of works by Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky and Tatlin were put on display.

On one hand, these investigations into the history of the avant-garde enjoyed official imprimatur and, as such, belong to a history of rehabilitation of inter-war modernism which can be traced back to the Khrushchev Thaw. As Susan Reid has noted of the Soviet context: "Under the protection of the regime-led reorientation of archive, practitioners and historians particularly rehabilitated Constructivism and other modernist tendencies in disgrace since the early thirties, retrieving them as instructive precedents for contemporary architectural and design tasks…"[30] On the other, the concept of revolution appears to have been a matter of some concern to the Polish authorities and perhaps others around the Bloc in 1967 and 1968. The original title planned for the anniversary exhibition in the Współczesna Gallery in Warsaw, *Avant-garde and Revolution* (*Awangarda i rewolucja*) was, seemingly, too inflammatory, too prospective. Officials working for the state press agency, the International Press and Book Club (Klub Międzynarodowej Prasy i Książki, or KMPiK) KMPiK which provided the space for the Gallery in the Great Theater (*Teatr Wielki*), demanded the unmistakably retrospective title *New Art of the Time of the October Revolution*.[31]

What triggered this anxious reaction on the part of the Polish authorities remains obscure. But the answer may be found in the emergence of the New Left—often student radicals—across the People's Republics. Critical voices in Czechoslovakia on the eve of the Prague Spring and Hungary were becoming increasingly bold making "revolutionary" demands: famously Milan Kundera, for instance, took to the stage at the Writers' Congress in June 1967 demanding freedom of speech and denouncing the "degeneration" of socialism under Soviet rule of Czechoslovakia.[32] In spring 1968 in Hungary, the state rounded up and prosecuted radical socialists—many children of prominent communists—for conspiracy. Their crimes were negligible: inserting leaflets denouncing "the red bourgeoisie" in Hungary and the Soviet Union into library books, and attempting to make contacts with hard-liners in Albania and China (lending the accused the badge of Maoism). Nevertheless, around 50 were put on trial and some imprisoned.[33]

By a curious turn of events, some of the Hungarian radicals in the dock in 1968 stood before the camera in 1969 as actors when the Béla Balázs Studio commissioned director Dezső Magyar to make *The Agitators* (*Agitatorok*), an experimental feature film marking the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Magyar and Gábor Bódy adapted Ervin Sinkó's novel *The Optimists* (*Optimistak*) by combining it with other historical and contemporary sources. In the manner of Godard's film *La Chinoise*, the student actors "ventriloquize" the words of György Lukács as well as Mao and Che, and the soundtrack includes music by the Rolling Stones. By folding past and present together, this cinematic portrait of Hungary's short-lived 1919 commune asked what happened to the "spirit of revolution" in Eastern Europe after the repression of the Prague Spring and Kádárism.

The Agitators is also a reminder of the fact that the rediscovery of the Soviet avant-garde took place alongside that of "local" constructivists like the Blok group in Poland and Lajos Kassák, the Hungarian activist.[34] The fact that "living" connections to the avant-garde could be established in the late 1960s and early 1970s was significant. In Hungary, for instance, artist, poet, and activist Kassák carried a particular kind of moral authority. In 1967, in the final year of his life, his *Képarchitektúra* (*Picture Architecture*) works of the late 1910s and 1920s were exhibited in the Adolf Fényes Hall in Budapest (another "tolerated" zone). These abstract schemes—based on the dynamic organization of geometric shapes and volumes—eschewed conventional and immediate architectural concerns in favor of a universal architectural language, perhaps belonging to the future. In his manifesto-like statement of 1922, Kassák announced:

> *Képarchitektúra* rejects all schools—including the schooling of ourselves.
>
> *Képarchitektúra* does not confine itself to particular materials and particular means; like Merz-art it regards all kinds of materials and means as useful to express itself.
>
> *Képarchitektúra* does not dabble in psychology.
>
> *Képarchitektúra* does not want anything.
>
> *Képarchitektúra* wants everything…[35]

The majority of the visitors to the Adolf Fényes Hall in 1967 saw these works for the first time. ("This," wrote Kassák, "will be the first introduction of constructivism. The gate has opened, and I am walking through it."[36]) This added to his myth as what Forgács has called "an anti-authoritarian authority"[37]: a poet, artist, and activist, he began his career before the First World War and died in 1967. He was opposed to the bourgeois culture of the Dual Monarchy and antagonistic to György Lukács's *Nyugat* progressives; an active figure during the Commune in

1919 who was said to have resisted the instrumentalization of his art as propaganda[38]; harassed by the Police in Hungary in the 1930s and the new regime which took hold in Hungary in 1949. Paradoxically perhaps, Kassák—the polemical and abrasive writer and artist associated with montage and other fragmented aesthetics—offered some kind of continuity in a broken chain of catastrophes in Hungary in the twentieth century. At the end of his life, Kassák was adopted by the emerging neo-avant-garde as the symbol of intellectual independence (despite being awarded the Kossuth Prize). Often it was Kassák's positions in relation to power which drew his adherents, but some were drawn to his art as well. In 1973, for instance, neo-avant-garde artist and film-maker Dóra Maurer printed three issues of *Ma*, the first of which not only adopted the title but also the layout of Kassák's avant-garde magazine (1916–1925).

Reclaiming the Past

The generation of artists and architects who had engaged with Soviet Suprematism and Constructivism after the Thaw did so in order to reflect on the future, perhaps optimistically. Another order of schemes emerged across the Eastern Bloc in the 1970s and 1980s which were concerned with *the past*. This was evident within the phenomenon of "paper architecture," fantastic schemes designed by architects, often as entries in international competitions.[39] Russian architect Yuri Avvakumov made models which invoked the tribunes and propaganda structures designed by Gustav Klutsis and El Lissitzky at the end of the Soviet Union, while his compatriots Dmitry Bush and Dmitry Podyapolsky imagined a mirror structure in the center of a teaming megalopolis as a white square. Their 1986 drawing carried the evocative and unmistakable title *The Cube of Infinity*. Widely exhibited and published, the schemes were firmly associated with Soviet Russia, with Avvakumov reintroducing the term for the title of an exhibition in Moscow in the offices of a literary magazine, *Jonost* (*Youth*), in 1984.[40] But the phenomenon predated Avvakumov's act of nomination. Artists and architects associated with the Tallinn School produced an exceptional body of paper architectural schemes through the course of the 1970s which often used the vocabularies of Constructivism and Suprematism somewhat ironically: Leonhard Lapin designed, for instance, an *Anti-International Monument. Tower (Stable) For Artist Valdur Ohakas' Donkey* in 1974, alluding perhaps to the primitive techniques employed in the construction of the first Soviet monuments.[41] Moreover, the phenomenon of paper architecture was spread more widely across the Bloc than is generally recognized: young Czech architects Lukas Velíšek, Martin Suchánek, and Michal Šourek, also revisited Tatlin's Tower in a scheme in the early 1980s which envisaged this symbol of "permanent revolution" as a metaphor for a human life, one which necessarily results in death. Their tower was organized as a kind of instrument for recycling the remains of dead buildings. Perhaps it is easy to read such schemes with the hindsight of history, nevertheless, it seems that these paper projects often took pastness, entropy, and breakdown as their themes.

One scheme produced in Hungary in 1985, *The Striker's House*, stands out. Created in response to a competition announced in *Japan Architect* with superstar architect Tadao Ando as the judge, *The Striker's House* is an unorthodox axonometric drawing combining photographic elements and dynamic arrangements of lettering (see Fig. 5.3). The house is an angular structure formed of black and red "wedges" arranged on a structure

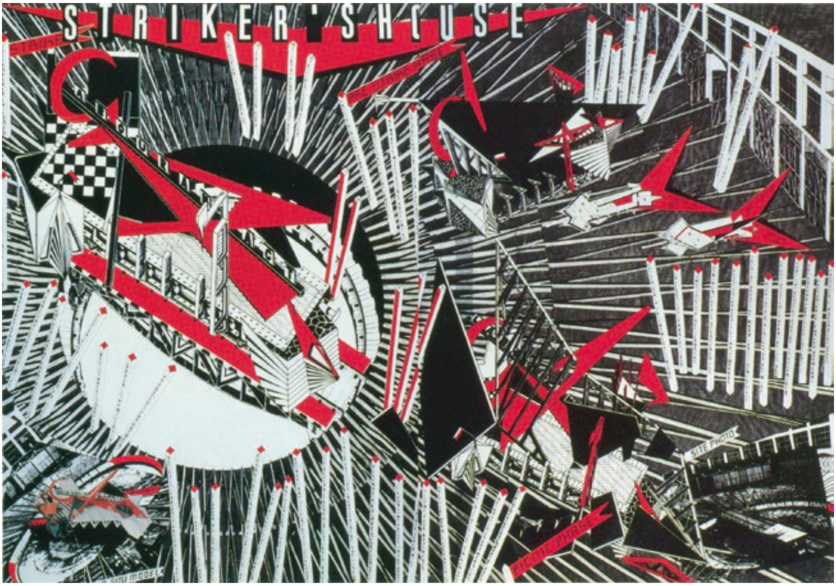

Fig. 5.3 Gábor Bachman, Miklós Haraszti, György Konrád and László Rajk, The Striker's House, entry into the Bulwark of Resistance competition, Japan Architect, 1986. Courtesy of László Rajk

fashioned from what seem to be industrial materials. Revolving on a locomotive turntable, it is an agit-train wagon as if designed by a latter-day Constructivist. Train tracks radiate in all directions and the railway shed is filled with posts and banners dressed with slogans to motivate the striker. Perhaps these are the tools of the commissar or the activist, ready to travel wherever he or she is needed.

The Striker's House was the invention of a remarkable quartet of intellectuals who combined New Left and neo-avant-garde pedigrees. They were artist Gábor Bachman and architect László Rajk, the son of the victim of the first show trial in Hungary in 1949, László Rajk, Sr. A samizdat publisher and distributor, Rajk designed covers for books published by AB Kiadó (AB Press)—including Tibor Méray's notes on the trial of Imre Nagy, *Why Did They Have to Die?* (*Miért kellett meghalniuk*, 1982) and reports of strikes in Poland, *Radom-URSUS 1976* (1983). He also illustrated György Dalos's *1985*, a samizdat extension of Orwell's dystopian novel, imagining the death of Big Brother and the end of his authoritarian rule.[42] Rajk and Bachman founded their creative partnership in 1981, designing interiors and film sets, often in a modish neo-constructivist style. In fact, Rajk had been involved in publishing Soviet designs even earlier, lending materials which he had sourced as a student in Canada, for an issue of the semi-official periodical, *Bercsényi 28–30*, published in 1977 by students of the architecture faculty at the Technical University. In conceiving *The Striker's House*, they were joined by the dissident writers György Konrád and Miklós Haraszti whose books had indicted the communist state for its betrayal of socialism. Haraszti, a former Maoist, for instance, had written *Darabbér* (which appeared in English as *A Worker in a Worker's State*[43]), a book about the exploitative use of piece rates in Hungarian factories in 1973. Circulated as samizdat in just 11 copies, he was arrested and charged with incitement against the state. In jail, he went on a hunger strike and had to be force-fed.

The Striker's House was a memorial work, commemorating the wave of strikes in Poland in 1979 which had led to the Gdansk Accords between the state and the Solidarity Trade Union.

> What we discussed with Konrád and Haraszti, and then finally decided on was the idea that the strike is the *extreme extreme* of peaceful resistance. It is not only peaceful but you put yourself and your family in danger. It is like standing in front of the guns naked. The resistance is your own self-sacrifice.

> This is what we want to demonstrate with a house which first loses its exterior and finally stands naked.[44]

This theme—even though expressed in a coded fashion—was sufficient to make this drawing a threatening object in 1985 (by which time Solidarity had been forced underground). As a result, its authors were only able to send it to Japan with the help of a friendly contact in the American embassy in Budapest. This was, in effect, samizdat architectural design.

One reading of *The Striker's House* scheme is to see it as an ironic object, commemorating anti-Soviet politics in a proto-Soviet style. But its Leftism should not be read as dissimulation. Perhaps this image is evidence both a kind of nostalgia for revolutionary politics, as well a note of envy on the part of these Hungarian writers and artists for the alliance between the workers—expressed here in the leftist iconography of industrial civilization—and the intelligentsia which had given Solidarity such force in Poland. This is something that Konrád and Iván Szelényi had argued for in their *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, written in the summer of 1973 and published in samizdat.[45] On its pages, we find another expression of the desire of Hungarian intellectuals on the Left to be "anti-authoritarian authorities."

The Striker's House was not built: it was paper architecture after all. But, remarkably, it was given material form as the subject of a 1985 film made by Bachman and shot in the industrial ruins of the gas plant near the Óbuda district of the capital. This facility had been closed down in the previous year. Shot illegally on video with Gábor Bódy (an artist, film director, and actor who had written the screenplay for *The Agitators*), the film records *The Striker's House* being pushed on rails by a group of men into the decaying factory. Like the demonstrations from the 1920s during which Tatlin's Tower had been wheeled through the streets of Petrograd, this object of the machine age is moved by human power. The structure is decorated with the slogan "*Munka és Tett*" ("Work and Action"), a combination of the title of two journals published by Kassák in the 1910s and 1920s. The block lettering makes the connection explicit. One of the figures delivers a speech with a megaphone, accompanied by workers beating and welding. Like a concert of industrial sounds played out in these industrial ruins, Bachman seems to forge a link with the then-fashionable style of Industrial Music (created by Einsturzende Neubauten and others). Delivered in the hectoring tones of a commissar, this monologue sounds like an absurd manifesto. Philosophic and poetic at the same time, it points to the uselessness of art. "The aim of art is to describe what cannot be described…Increasingly decaying into irrationalism…Hunger is not the only reason for our insomnia… It is impossible to fill even only one hour of my existence with that, I want someone to cut my throat with a sharp stone!" Bachman's film took its title, *The Construction of Nothing* and commissar's sloganeering from a text by János Megyik, an émigré Hungarian artist living in Vienna.[46] Absurdity and irrationalism conjoin with these images of ruination to point to the utter exhaustion of utopianism. *The Striker's House*—in this second iteration—was a symbol of entropy.

The Striker's House was a self-conscious attempt to form a loop between the start and the end of the Soviet system. It was, after all, an expression of anti-Soviet sentiment by some of its most active opponents. But it did not actually mark the end. That role was, perhaps, played by another design by Bachman and Rajk four years later. In 1989, they were commissioned to design the setting for one of the milestone events at the end of communist rule in Eastern Europe, the reburial of Prime Minister Imre Nagy and the leadership of the 1956 Uprising. Nagy and his colleagues had been executed two years after the suppression of the Uprising, their bodies buried—face down and bound—in unmarked graves. The question of how to remember the Uprising and its victims was one of the tensions between official and dissenting culture in Hungary in the 1980s. In 1988, the state made a concession by establishing a Committee for Historical Justice (*Történelmi Igazságtétel Bizottság*) which began a process of reassessing the show trials and the cases of those executed after 1956. Within a year the state had agreed to the reburial of those executed on 16 June 1958, the date of Nagy's death. That event—which took place in June 1989—became a milestone in Hungary's transition to a new, more democratic regime.

The ceremony took place in Heroes' Square (*Hősök tere*) in the center of Budapest. Six coffins—placed in different wedge-shaped, angular forms—were organized in ranks in front of the Műcsarnok, a neo-classical art gallery (see Fig. 5.4). Five contained remains of the leaders of the Uprising, while the sixth remained empty to symbolize more than 300 others who were executed. Bachman and Rajk designed symbolic objects which narrated the Hungarian experience of communist rule. The slanted rostrum echoed the propaganda structures designed by Gustav Klutsis and El Lissitzky in the 1920s but now had the appearance of

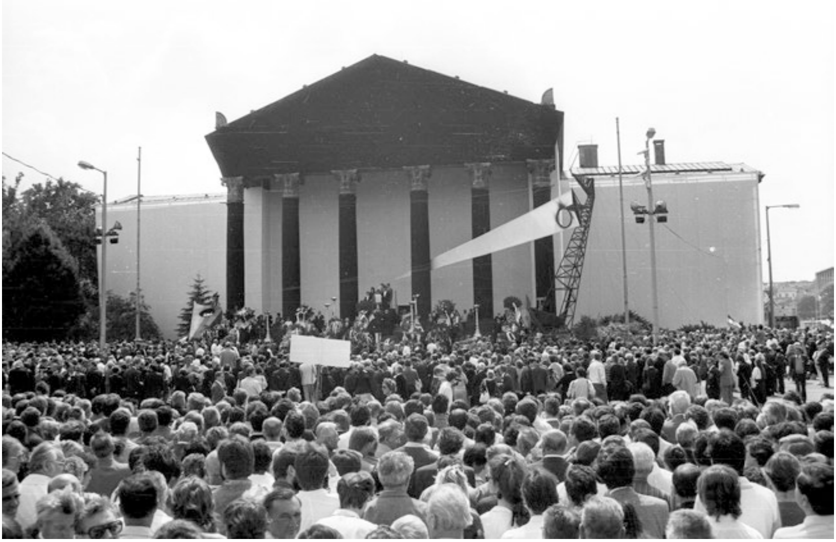

Fig. 5.4 Gábor Bachman and László Rajk, decorations for the reburial of Imre Nagy and his associates, Műcsarnok Gallery, Budapest, 16 June 1989. Photograph: FORTEPAN

age, seemingly rusty. It supported an angular "white wedge" featuring a burned-out circular form, reminiscent of the Hungarian flags which were stripped of their communist insignia during the 1956 Uprising. These were not the only historical allusions. László Rajk—Rajk's own father—had been the victim of a show trial in 1949 and had been reburied as a hero during the short Nagy government in October 1956. His catafalque been displayed outside the Kossuth Mausoleum before his remains were buried in the Kerepesi Cemetery. The theatrical treatment of the setting in 1989 had other historical echoes. Dressed in black and white linen for the event, the Műcsarnok overlooks Heroes Square. During the Commune in 1919, the national figures on the Millennium Monument of 1900 (which lend the square its name) were also covered in red fabric and a temporary statue of Karl Marx embracing the workers was erected. For an event marking the end of communist rule, the reburial of the victims of 1956 was suffused with traces of its beginning, namely the Commune. The event was intended by the authorities to be an act of atonement: Bachman and Rajk's design sought to lay much more to rest.

Conclusion

The diverse encounters of Eastern European intellectuals with the Soviet avant-garde never cohered into an orderly body of knowledge or a coherent historical project. Images of abstract art and fantastic architectural schemes were summoned up, often at moments of political tension, because they provided the means to reflect on revolution. Copies or facsimiles of original Soviet works, these were invariably short-lived apparitions. Moreover, the interest was a somewhat specialist taste on the part of some Eastern European intellectuals. This, as I have suggested, was threaded with a latent concern about their own role in relation to power. Here, perhaps, another important difference with the rediscovery of the Soviet avant-garde in the West can be drawn. Constructivism and Suprematism were the subject of considerable market interest in the 1970s and 1980s as well as ‘blockbuster’ exhibitions like the *Paris-Moscow 1900–1930* curated by Pontus Hulton at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris in 1979. Only in the final years of the communist rule in Eastern Europe was something similar attempted. In 1987 the Műcsarnok Gallery in Budapest (which had lent its entrance to the ceremony for the reburial of Nagy and the other victims of 1956) mounted *Art and Revolution: Soviet Art, 1910–1932* (*Muvészet és forradalom: Orosz-Szovjet muvészet, 1910–1932*) with the support of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A pioneering and extensive review of the Soviet avant-garde featuring original artworks by Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, Malevich, Kandinsky, Tatlin, Rodchenko, and others from Soviet collections, the response of the public to the show was muted. Art critic and curator Katalin Keserü recalls an “almost ghostly visit paid by János Kádár on New Year’s Day 1987.” What the secretary of the communist party and prime minister who had been given the reigns of power after the Soviet repression of the Uprising in 1956 thought of the exhibits is not known. “Most probably he had expected to see a social realist exhibition,” speculates Keserü, “but it is to his credit that he thoroughly examined the entire show, presenting the work of the avant-garde leading forward to that of Stalinism.”[47] Perhaps the Kremlin’s long-serving and loyal retainer was haunted by a sense of what-might-have-been.

Notes

1. Boym, *Architecture of the Off-Modern.*
2. Ibid., 14.

3. Ibid., 36. See also Nathalie Leleu, “Mettre le regard sous le contrôle du toucher,” 84–10.
4. Cook, *Architecture.*
5. See Sadler, *Archigram.*
6. Hrůza, *Město Utopistů*, 163.
7. Johnson and Wigley, *Deconstructivist Architecture*, 133.
8. Ibid., 11.
9. Forgács, “How the New Left Invented East-European Art,” 97–100.
10. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 10.
11. Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia*, 244.
12. Malevich, cited in Ryan, *Stalin in Russian Satire*, 159.
13. Tumarkin, *Lenin Lives!*, 190.
14. See Bojko, “Kazimierz Malewicz – bohater tragiczny?” accessed 2 January 2015, www.obieg.pl/teksty/11249.
15. Minorski in *O polską architekturę socjalistyczną*, 65–6.
16. Helena Syrkus later came to regret her forthright support for the Stalinist regime. See Syrkus in *Ogólnopolska Narada Architektów*, 485.
17. See, for instance, the February 1958 issue of *Przegląd Artystyczny*, which takes the form of a 30-page calendar of the history of Polish avant-garde art that takes Malevich’s Black Square (1913) as a point of origin and ends with the 1957 exhibition, *Précurseurs de l'art abstrait en Pologne* at the Galerie Denise René in Paris in 1957 which featured the suprematist’s works.
18. On this visit see Turowski, *Malewicz w Warszawie.*
19. Syrkus, “Kazimierz Malewicz,” 153.
20. Moulin, “Une demystification de la parole et de l’image,” 20.
21. Margarita Tupitsyn has surveyed the shadow cast by Malevich’s “Black Square” over abstract art and minimalism in the West since the 1960s in her book *Malevich and Film.*
22. Nussberg, notes from an undated manuscript, cited by Vyacheslav F. Koleychuk, “The Dvizheniye Group,” 433–436.
23. Malevich, *The Non-Objective World.*
24. Nussberg, “Manifesto of Russian Kineticists” (1966), as translated in Golomshtok and Glezer, *Soviet Art in Exile*, 164.
25. Nussberg (1964) cited by Havránek, “Transient and Dispersed.”
26. With close contacts in Prague, Dvizhenie played a key channel for knowledge about the work of Soviet Constructivists in

Czechoslovakia. Dušan Konečný, a Russophile art critic, was instrumental in publishing the group's work in the Czech press as early as 1964 and bringing it to the city for an exhibition in 1965 (a show entitled *Moskvské kinetické umĕni* (*Moscow Kinetic Art*) at the Karlové Námĕsti Gallery in Prague). Art critics Jindřich Chalupecký, Miroslav Lamačand, and Jiří Padrta—each of whom wrote about Malevich—were visitors to Nussberg's Moscow studio too. For detail on these exchanges, see Vít Havránek, "Transient and Dispersed," 379–82. Dvizhenie were given exhibitions in Galerie Gmurzynska in Cologne in 1973 and Museum Bochum in 1978.

27. They were commissioned by Carl Gutbrot, the director of the Dumont-Schauberg publishing house in Cologne. Their research was published in a book of Malevich's texts and artwork edited by von Riesen, *Suprematismus*. See also Nakov, "Art Historian," accessed 2 January 2015, http://www.andrei-nakov.org/en/malewicz.html
28. The only engagement with the Soviet present in this issue was a lengthy section on the Dvizhenie group including a translation of the group's 1966 manifesto.
29. Gyarmathy's career began in the early 1930s and reached an early peak when his work was shown at the Salon des Réalites Nouvelles in Paris in 1947. During the 1950s he went into "internal exile" by refusing to exhibit his work.
30. Reid, "Design, Stalin and the Thaw," 112.
31. Jarecka, "Janusz Bogucki, polski Szeemann?" 26.

    Two weeks later, the National Theatre staged Adam Mickiewicz's poetic drama "Forefather's Eve" (Dziady, 1822) in the same building complex. It too was planned as a 50th anniversary event: the play's references to dull-witted bureaucrats and Tsarist despotism were in tune with Lenin's attack on Tsarist Russia. But the Polish audience read the 1967 performance as allegory for the present. They jeered the imperial characters and applauded anti-Russian sentiment. The early closure of the play in late January 1968—allegedly at the request of the Russian Embassy—was one trigger for a period of public protests and high tension in 1968 that has come to be known as the "March events" ("*wydarzenia marcowe*").
32. See Hamšík, *Writers Against Rulers*, 168.
33. See Gildea, Mark, and Warring, eds., *Europe's 1968*, passim.

34. By the strange and brutal twists of intellectual history in Eastern Europe, prominent figures who had been conscripted to damn the avant-garde during the Stalinist years now lent their names and, sometimes, their memories to this project of historical disinterment. Pre-war modernist and apologist for Socialist Realism in the 1950s Jiří Kroha published a substantial study (with Jiří Hrůza) entitled *Sovětská Architektonická Avantgarda* (*The Soviet Architectural Avant-garde*), and Helena Syrkus wrote a vivid and detailed essay recalling her life-long engagement with Malevich—see footnote 18.
35. Lajos Kassák, "Képarchitektúra" ("Picture Architecture"), 116.
36. Kassák, cited by Ferenc Csaplár, "From Prohibition to Tolerance."
37. Forgács, "'You Feed Us So that We Can Fight Against You,'" 264.
38. Ibid., 267.
39. See Deutsches Architektur Museum, *Paper Architecture*; Yurakovsky and Ovenden, *Post-Soviet Art and Architecture.*
40. The first uses of the term in the Soviet context were critical, even self-critical. Viktor Vesnin in 1934, after the official adoption of Socialist Realism, reflected on his own post-revolutionary schemes: "The greatest sin of our modern architecture was that is had been mostly on paper, and this paper had been completely divorced from real practice." See Boym, *New Russian Design*, 40.
41. See Kurg and Laanemets' essays in *Keskkonnad, projektid, kontseptsioonid Tallinna kooli arhitektid 1972–1985.*
42. Dalos, *1985.*
43. Haraszti, *A Worker in a Worker's State.*
44. László Rajk interview with the author, Budapest, July 2012.
45. Konrád and Szelényi, *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power.*
46. Megyik, "A semmi konstrukciója," 33–39.
47. On the history of the Műcsarnok, see Keserü—http://www.mucsarnok.hu/new_site/index.php?lang=en&about=5&curmenu=305—accessed 2 January 2015.

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PART III

Second World Cultures

CHAPTER 6

Ties That Bind, Ties That Divide: Second World Cultural Exchange at the Grassroots

Kyrill Kunakhovich

In February 1962, a delegation of painters from the East German city of Leipzig visited the All-Union Art Exhibition in Moscow. The exhibition featured new artwork from across the USSR, but the East German visitors were left unimpressed. "We were struck by modernist influences and manifestations of symbolism," the group's leader wrote in his report back home.[1] Under Nikita Khrushchev's Thaw, many Soviet artists had begun to deviate from the rigid rules that still governed art in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and the Leipzig painters were outraged. The only display that appealed to them was the exhibition's Ukrainian pavilion, which their young Soviet tour guide dismissed as "particularly conservative and old-fashioned." While the visitors acknowledged that a certain degree of "innovation" could be useful, they worried that their Soviet colleagues had abandoned the principles of Socialist Realism, "throwing out the baby with the bathwater." Far from a model to emulate, Soviet art had become a corrupting influence—and yet it could not simply be ignored. Just six months later, a selection of works from the All-Union Exhibition came to Leipzig, where they were shown under the title "Soviet Art." To demonstrate their loyalty to Big Brother, city officials ordered youth groups and trade unions to recruit viewers en masse.[2] The exhibition ultimately

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received some 27,000 visitors—four times as many as had seen the Leipzig Painters' Union's own show the year before.[3]

The story of the All-Union Art Exhibition illuminates both the promise and the problems of socialist cultural exchange. Socialist states relied on the arts to bridge national differences and forge an international community. Culture was thought to be uniquely suited to this task since it could transcend languages and influence people's emotions. By deploying cultural exports abroad, state officials hoped to foster a spirit of socialist brotherhood that would create an integrated "Second World." This was all the more important since the Second World always had to compete with the First: cultural exchange among socialist states was meant to disentangle them from capitalist ones while providing a counterweight to American mass culture. In practice, though, exchange divided the socialist world as much as it united it. Foreign performances highlighted distances between national cultures along with disconnects in national cultural policies. Meanwhile, the cross-border flows of artists and artworks challenged states' control of their own territory and their monopoly over the public sphere. As in the case of the Leipzig Painters' Union, officials often worried that outside influences could derail their country's internal development. At worst, they saw cultural imports as a kind of Trojan Horse, sneaking Western decadence and corruption through the back door. Exchange ultimately proved to be a double-edged sword. In trying to create a new Second World, it also exposed all of that world's tensions and contradictions.

This chapter explores the paradoxes of socialist cultural exchange through the lens of a single city, Leipzig, in East Germany. Leipzig was not just one of the largest cities in the Soviet Bloc but also an international trade center, with a biannual trade fair that took place each spring and fall and attracted over half a million visitors.[4] Since the fair was open to the West, Leipzig became a global showcase of socialist development, socialist architecture, and especially socialist culture. As the home of J.S. Bach and Richard Wagner, the city is world famous for its musical institutions, which include the Gewandhaus Orchestra and the St. Thomas Church Choir. It is also the site of one of Europe's great universities, whose students have ranged from J.W. Goethe and Friedrich Nietzsche to Angela Merkel. Both culture and exchange, in short, have long been central to Leipzig's history, and both gained added significance under the GDR, which was formed in 1949. As one half of a divided Germany, the new state had to differentiate itself from its western neighbor while maintaining a claim to cherished national traditions. On the one hand, the GDR embraced high culture as a focal point of national identity, presenting itself as the “land of poets and thinkers.”[5] On the other hand, it sought to establish close ties with the socialist world so as to distance itself from the West. Culture and exchange became key aspects of East Germany’s image, both at home and abroad. In this environment, it is little wonder that GDR officials resolved to turn Leipzig into “a cultural manifestation of the entire socialist camp.”[6]

The task of realizing this mission fell to the city government’s Culture Department, an underfunded office with roughly a dozen full-time employees.[7] The Department was responsible for supervising all local artists and bringing culture to the city’s factories; while East Germany’s ruling Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, or SED) set the broad outlines of cultural policy, it was the Department that actually monitored and funded every artistic event in town. It was also in charge of organizing international cultural exchange—a job that one functionary described as “the foundation of our entire activity.”[8] The Culture Department hosted foreign visitors in Leipzig and helped coordinate local artists’ trips abroad. Even more importantly, it oversaw the repertoires at Leipzig’s cultural institutions to make sure that foreign works were duly represented. It was up to the Culture Department to set both the image that Leipzig presented to the outside world and the image of the world that Leipzig residents saw at home. Drawing on the internal records of the Culture Department, this chapter explores how those images evolved from the Soviet occupation in 1945 to the fall of the GDR in 1989. It considers what foreign art Leipzig residents could see and what foreign countries Leipzig artists could visit. By tracing the boundaries and networks of cultural exchange, it seeks to map Leipzig’s place in the Second World—as well as in the world at large.

The chapter identifies three phases of exchange in socialist Leipzig, each of which reflected one of the GDR’s political priorities. The first began with the end of World War II, when city officials used foreign art to rebuild German culture on antifascist foundations. After 13 years of Nazi rule, all native artists and traditions were considered potentially suspect. In their place, administrators turned to Allied imports—and Soviet culture in particular—to provide a model for East Germany’s development as well as an antidote to pernicious influences. Following Stalin’s death, however, the Soviet model became increasingly troublesome for East German authorities, who began to grow wary of cultural exchange. Contacts with other socialist states exposed divergent political trajectories while introducing pressures to reform. For a state based on being different from West Germany, any deviation from communist orthodoxy threatened to undermine its distinctiveness and thereby threaten its right to exist. At the same time, ties with socialist states also helped safeguard the GDR's identity, especially after it restored formal relations with West Germany in 1972. In this third phase, socialist exchange only intensified, as East German officials sought to differentiate their country from the West and anchor it in the Second World. They found that cultural imports did bring the GDR in line with its eastern neighbors, but only by eroding its own culture. Ironically, artistic exchange with other socialist states hampered the development of socialism in the GDR. It both integrated East Germany into a Second World and undermined that world at the same time.

Learning to Win

World War II ended in Leipzig on April 19, 1945, when the city fell to the 2nd and 69th Infantry Divisions of the US Army. Under the terms of Allied zone agreements, however, Leipzig was placed in the Soviet Zone of Occupation, and so American troops gave way to Soviet ones by early July. Over the next four years, the city was ruled by a representative of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany, who had full jurisdiction over local government—including the Culture Department of the City Council. Unlike the Americans, who had banned all public performances, Soviet authorities were eager to revive Leipzig's arts scene. The Gewandhaus Orchestra gave a "welcome concert" for the Red Army just days after its arrival, launching a new age of Leipzig culture with a performance of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony.[9] The Orchestra's choice of a Russian work was not just a goodwill gesture but a reflection of Soviet authority: from the first days of the occupation, Soviet officials imposed quotas for Russian plays, films, and musical works in all city-owned institutions. While Gogol and Chekhov played on stage, movies like *Lenin in October* became ubiquitous in local cinemas.[10] Soviet culture filled Leipzig much like Soviet troops, always reminding city residents that they lived under military rule.

At the same time, art from the USSR had to share space with imports from the West. Between 1945 and 1950, Leipzig's main theater performed works by Americans Eugene O'Neill and Clifford Odets, as well as English crime writer J.B. Priestley and French existentialist Jean Anouilh. Since Germany was under joint Allied control, each of the Four

Powers exercised considerable cultural influence, even outside its own Zone. Moreover, all four Allies agreed that this influence was essential for German society, which had become contaminated by fascism. After 13 years of Nazi rule, the threat of contagion hung over every German artist; all German culture, no matter how "progressive," had been potentially perverted or misused. Just to be safe, Leipzig officials sidelined national traditions and promoted foreign culture in their place. Across the city's theaters, the proportion of works by German authors fell from 77 percent during the Nazi era to just 44 percent over the postwar decade.[11] Cinemas, too, avoided German films despite their overwhelming popularity, or else paired them in "double screenings" with movies from abroad. Foreign art came to be seen as national salvation—both a model and a starting point for Germany's renewal. The country's postwar crisis meant that cultural exchange was almost entirely one sided. Occupied Leipzig received a great deal of cultural imports, from the East as well as from the West, but sent out little in return.

The situation changed in 1949, when Allied relations degenerated and Germany split into two sovereign states. Once the Soviet Zone morphed into the GDR, it became a full-fledged member of the international socialist camp, with a cultural heritage worth sharing. Foreign art also took on a different role, helping to introduce East Germany to its new allies. In 1950, Leipzig's main theater debuted a series of Sunday matinees under the title "Peoples' Voices," which showcased the cultures of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and even China in variety show form. The Chinese matinee, entitled "Song of the Yellow Earth," featured a performance of the country's national anthem, a lecture by the director of Leipzig's East Asian Institute, recitations of Chinese poetry, and a scene from a Chinese opera.[12] Besides promoting foreign art, city officials also brought in foreign artists, above all from the "People's Democracies" of the Soviet Bloc. In 1949, for instance, Leipzig hosted Polish pianist Stanisław Szpinalski and Polish conductor Grzegorz Fitelberg, along with several dance ensembles from Czechoslovakia and Hungary.[13] Leipzig artists, too, began to go on tour in order to present the "progressive" culture of the GDR. Besides mainstays like Bach and Beethoven, they performed works by contemporary playwrights Friedrich Wolf and Bertold Brecht, two icons of the antifascist resistance. Even Leipzig's zoo got involved in the Soviet Bloc's friendship campaign: in 1954, it sent the city of Warsaw a lion cub to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Nazi withdrawal.[14] Such exchange aimed to integrate East Germany into the socialist community of nations, promoting the idea of an international "peoples' friendship." So ingrained was this concept that the word "friendship" became a term of greeting at Leipzig's newly renamed Karl Marx University, replacing "good day" among working-class students.[15]

The highest level of friendship was reserved for the Soviet Union, the first among equals in the socialist camp. A Society for German-Soviet Friendship was set up in 1949 and quickly enrolled more than a million members across the GDR—including two thirds of all Leipzig artists.[16] Its main goal was to introduce East Germans to the great achievements of Soviet culture, especially during the annual Friendship Month that took place each November. In 1952, the list of festivities in Leipzig included daily screenings of Soviet films, readings by Soviet writers, 11 performances of Soviet plays, and a two-week-long celebration of Soviet folk ensembles.[17] Fifteen years later, on the 15th anniversary of the October Revolution, Leipzig officials put on a whopping 313 events, highlighted by visits from the Moscow State Circus, the Kazakh Song and Dance Ensemble, and the Leningrad Maly Theater.[18] Even outside of the Friendship Month, the Culture Department afforded pride of place to imports from the USSR, which it described as "always giving direction to our own undertakings."[19] It not only scheduled Soviet works at the best times and venues but also organized collective attendance, busing thousands of workers from the city's factories. Thanks to their efforts, "particularly valuable" productions—such as Sergei Bondarchuk's *Fate of a Man*, a story of the Soviet home front during World War II—were seen by almost half the city's adult population.[20] "The more people view such films, the faster we will change their mentality and the faster we will advance along the road to a better life," city officials explained in 1953.[21] Even in an independent GDR, Soviet works retained a leading role that harkened back to the time of occupation.[22] Only the USSR served as a model for East Germany's own culture, teaching both artists and audiences what socialist art really was.

As cultural ties with the Soviet Bloc intensified, art from the capitalist world gradually faded from view. After some efforts to appeal to artists in the West, the SED changed course in the early 1950s and explicitly condemned Western culture as "formalist," "decadent," and even "barbaric." While it praised cultural exchange among socialist states, it warned that capitalist exchange only produced a sterile "cosmopolitanism," which empowered global capital at the expense of national traditions. Leipzig officials echoed the Party's attacks by striking Western works from city repertoires. Between 1951 and 1954, Leipzig theaters performed just one play by an author living in the capitalist world: William Gates' *The Earth*

Remains, a social drama about Australian farmers. Contacts with Western artists also dried up, since East Germans were banned from traveling to Western Europe—with the exception of the Federal Republic. In the hope of converting all Germans to the socialist cause, Culture Department officials continued to send local artists on tour in West Germany and to allow performances from West German artists in Leipzig. However, the scope of these contacts declined over time, especially after West Germany joined NATO in 1955.[23] Within a few years, Leipzig was disconnected from the West and reoriented toward Moscow. Patterns of cultural exchange not only reflected East Germany's new world but also helped define it.

The process of integrating Leipzig into the socialist camp was anything but smooth. Despite the German-Soviet Friendship Society's best efforts, texts and scores from the USSR were often impossible to find. When Leipzig's opera house decided to put on Alexander Borodin's classic opera *Prince Igor*, it was forced to contact the West German office of the English music publishers Boosey and Hawkes, which replied that it could not do business with the GDR.[24] Even when Soviet materials were available, they were not always favorably received. Films from the USSR were far less popular in Leipzig than those from abroad, not least because so many dealt with painful wartime themes. "It is not enough that we have lost the war, now we have to watch it!," one viewer complained after a screening of the movie *Stalingrad*.[25] Leipzig artists, meanwhile, griped about the Soviet paintings they were told to emulate, dismissing Socialist Realism as "purely photographic" and "inartistic."[26] Their work met with an equally chilly reception in Moscow, where critics accused it of "bourgeois liberalism."[27] Such challenges constantly hampered exchange between East Germany and its allies, yet they were also entirely expected. Leipzig officials, like most city residents, understood that they had to develop a new culture after the twin ravages of Nazism and war. This was sure to be a slow and laborious process that would encounter heavy opposition. Temporary difficulties only proved that German culture was at a crossroads, and that the USSR pointed the way forward. An early slogan of the German-Soviet Friendship Society put it best: "To learn from the Soviet Union is to learn to win.[28]"

The Happy Barracks of the Socialist Camp

Joseph Stalin's death on March 5, 1953 sent shockwaves through the socialist world and toppled its balance of power. In Leipzig as elsewhere, the Leader's passing unleashed a flood of panegyrics, memorial concerts, and promises to follow Stalin's teachings. Within three months, however, the Soviet government set East Germany on a New Course that shunned many Stalinist methods. The new measures repealed certain raises in prices and work norms while dissolving large numbers of collective farms. Above all, they admitted that the SED had made a series of mistakes, shattering communism's claims of infallibility and casting all its policies in doubt. On June 17, less than a week after the New Course was announced, workers across the GDR took to the streets to call for further cuts in quotas and restrictions. Some 30,000 to 40,000 people converged on Leipzig's Karl Marx Square, carrying banners like "We want butter not cannons, freedom, and more pay."[29] After the crowd set fire to SED headquarters, Soviet tanks were called in to disperse the demonstrators, killing 3 and injuring 54; in the GDR as a whole, the death toll was above 50. The East German leadership dismissed the entire episode as a "fascist provocation," even though close to a million people had joined the protests countrywide. Those who expressed sympathy with the strikers—including many members of the Leipzig Writers' Union—were forced to recant their "false thoughts" and reaffirm their loyalty to the regime.[30] "De-Stalinization," it turned out, was a fundamentally destabilizing process, too dangerous for the SED to carry out in the open. In order to preserve their grip on power, East German officials had to contain reformist influences from abroad—even from the USSR.

The foreign danger crested in 1956, after Nikita Khrushchev condemned Stalin's "cult of personality" at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. Khrushchev's Secret Speech was widely discussed in Eastern Europe, where it helped spur popular unrest in Poland and Hungary. The East German regime, however, took great pains to hide the Speech from its citizens, as well as to distance itself from its eastern neighbors. Leipzig's Culture Department cautioned that Polish journalists were not to be trusted, since they "exhibit[ed] harmful tendencies."[31] It was even more critical of Polish art and culture, which may have seemed perfectly innocent but actually contained "the germ of counter-revolution."[32] In rejecting Socialist Realism, Leipzig officials explained, "people in Hungary and other socialist lands tried to lay the ideological groundwork" for overt political rebellion.[33] City authorities tackled this danger head-on by launching a witch-hunt against all "revisionist tendencies." They held countless meetings with Leipzig artists, shut down dozens of performances across town, and even arrested several prominent intellectuals—including the writer Erich Loest, who spent more than six years in prison. By 1960, Leipzig officials announced that all manifestations of “decadence” had been “decisively overcome,” yet the fear of eastern contagion still lingered.[34] A full decade after the Secret Speech, the writer and bureaucrat Alfred Kurella warned the GDR to be on guard “against massive revisionist tendencies by our colleagues in the socialist and communist camp.”[35]

The threat of revisionism put Leipzig officials in a difficult position. On the one hand, the only way to mitigate this danger was to reassert doctrinal purity, using classic socialist works from the USSR. Leipzig theaters thus performed 11 Soviet plays between 1958 and 1962, up from just 3 in the half-decade after Stalin’s death. On the other hand, officials could no longer be sure that all Soviet art was doctrinally pure—as the delegation of Leipzig painters learned firsthand at the All-Union Art Exhibition in 1962. The Leipzig writer Hanns Maaßen went so far as to say that Soviet art had begun to “deviate from the line of the socialist camp.”[36] After news of the exhibition spread, the Culture Department had to contend with “widespread amazement” among artists that “the Soviet Union would organize a show of abstract works.”[37] Officials were forced to toe a fine line, explaining that “our artists should reject such manifestations of abstract art and orient themselves towards the many positive and fruitful examples of art in the USSR, which still have a great deal to teach them.”[38] Under the influence of Khrushchev’s Thaw, Soviet culture had become an ambiguous model for the GDR. It was a source of inspiration and corruption at the same time, complicating officials’ efforts to define what an East German art should look like.

As the Soviet model lost its unquestioned authority, many Soviet Bloc states developed their own brands of socialist culture. This pluralism came into sharp relief at international festivals like the Leipzig Week of Short and Documentary Films, which debuted in 1955.[39] The Week was initially conceived as a vehicle for cultural exchange between East and West Germany, but the SED’s enthusiasm for such ventures waned with the anti-revisionist campaign. GDR officials canceled the event in 1957, 1958, and 1959 before re-launching it as an international festival of socialist cinema in 1960. Though the Week was meant to showcase films from the Soviet Bloc, its organizing committee often found them inappropriate for the GDR. In 1967 and 1968, for instance, it banned a series of Czechoslovak documentaries inspired by the developing Prague Spring, which it considered a perversion of socialist ideals. Such problems became even more common after the festival eliminated its selection jury in a show of "people's friendship," allowing socialist states to choose their own submissions. Since films could no longer be cut from the program, one Polish documentary had to be buried at a midnight slot, where it would not have a "great public effect."[40] Festival organizers did manage to remove a Soviet film about Chairman Mao, but only by appealing directly to the Central Committee of the SED—which in turn discussed the matter with the Soviet embassy. Faced with these challenges, the Leipzig Film Week came to include more movies from the Third World, or even from "progressive" filmmakers in the West. Socialist states, it turned out, simply could not be trusted to make acceptable socialist art.

What upset Leipzig officials most of all, though, was that socialist visitors openly mocked East German culture. In November 1967, the city's Literature Institute hosted two authors from the Soviet Union: the Russian short story writer Yuri Kazakov and the Lithuanian novelist Alfonsas Bieliauskas. When they met with Leipzig students, Kazakov began by questioning why the Institute even existed. He had just come back from Paris, he explained, where "literary life in cafes" was far more active than in any formal institution.[41] The two guests went on to criticize Soviet Bloc literature for dealing "too much with questions of labor and so on." Since attention to "the life of the working class" was one of the Literature Institute's stated goals, the critique must have hit close to home. Asked about their favorite East German authors, Kazakov and Bieliauskas mentioned Heinrich Böll, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, and Martin Walser—all German-language writers from outside the GDR. When pressed, they retorted that "German writers are all the same, there are antifascists in both East and West Germany." This comment not only offended national pride but struck at the heart of East German identity: if the GDR could not distinguish itself from West Germany, it had no reason to exist. In this case as in many others, cultural exchange proved entirely counterproductive, driving states apart rather than bringing them together. Far from strengthening East German culture, it actively subverted the GDR's cultural policies.

The risks of subversion were even greater when Leipzig artists traveled abroad. In August 1962—just days after the exhibition "Soviet Art" opened in Leipzig—two local painters went on a "study trip" to Poland. Heinz Völkel and Johanna Starke spent nearly three weeks in Warsaw and Cracow, visiting dozens of artists and speaking with cultural officials. They were shocked to discover that Poland's art scene looked nothing like the GDR's: there was almost no state patronage, no talk of Socialist

Realism, and utter disdain for the mass public and its tastes. As the artists reported, their Polish colleagues “lived isolated as in an ivory tower,” struggling to get by on sales abroad but also extolling their creative freedom. Their paintings “showed no sign that Poland has become a People’s Democracy,” since even party members were “infected with the Western bug.” Having embraced abstraction, most Polish artists dismissed East German painting as “old-fashioned” and “depressing” while noting that state patronage “could never inspire true creative expression.” Völkel and Starke found that “it was often difficult to talk to our [Polish] colleagues about art, since their prejudice against state oversight was so strong.” One Cracow artist even called his guests “true Stalinist Socialist Realists in the happy barracks of the socialist camp.”[42]

In their official reports, both Völkel and Starke praised East Germany’s “developed patronage system” and its attention to “the worker and his problems,” but the Polish trip had clearly left its mark. “Even for us in Leipzig, it couldn’t hurt to develop some more daring and originality in form and color, and also to experiment a bit—of course, without losing our connection to the masses,” Starke wrote.[43] Over the next few months, other Leipzig artists started to express the same concerns, prompting the Culture Department to set up a meeting to clear the air. Most of the participants had already talked to Völkel and Starke, and many were intrigued by Poland’s decentralized art market. While they admitted that the lack of state patronage could have “negative consequences for some,” they also believed that it would “allow for greater artistic freedom in our work.”[44] The painter Gerhard Eichhorn, a member of the SED, openly lamented that “Polish modernists and abstract artists live better than us: at least they can go abroad and we can’t.” A glimpse into Poland’s art world had illuminated Leipzig’s, spurring local artists to voice criticisms of the GDR. They forced state officials to explain why the policies of one socialist state did not apply to another, and amid all the talk of socialist brotherhood, this was no easy to task. At the same meeting in January 1963, several speakers brought up the All-Union Art Exhibition from the year before. “If such things are happening in the Soviet Union, then why is the GDR being so stubborn?” “Why doesn’t East Germany allow any modernist art, unlike other socialist states?” One painter explained that developments in the Soviet Bloc had forced him to reevaluate his whole career: “When I look at what’s going on there, I have to ask if we’ve been working incorrectly all along.”[45] Socialist states had suddenly become a bad influence, threatening to derail the socialist development of the GDR.

For some Leipzig officials, in fact, socialist works were even more threatening than capitalist ones. Hans Michael Richter, the chief dramaturge at Leipzig's main theater, wrote in 1964 that "geographical and ideological concepts have become misaligned": the East was no longer synonymous with socialism, nor the West with capitalism.[46] Many western plays, Richter maintained, were actually "closer" to East German culture than those from the Soviet Bloc. As evidence, he cited a recent work by the Polish playwright Kazimierz Brandys, "whose lack of contact to socialist reality produces a poorly written, convoluted nothingness." The Culture Department felt the same way about another Polish play, *The Witnesses* by Tadeusz Różewicz, which was pulled from a Leipzig student theater in 1965. As Department officials explained, the play dealt with questions of "nihilism, angst, and alienation," but this was not its primary fault. While it would have been fine to "show these phenomena there where they naturally belong, i.e. in West Germany or in the capitalist world," *The Witnesses* was set in contemporary Poland, "imputing to socialist society behaviors that are specific to capitalism."[47] Like Brandys's plays, in other words, *The Witnesses* smuggled capitalism in through the back door. To Leipzig officials, socialist imports such as these undermined the very purpose of the socialist community. They had become a kind of Trojan Horse, all the more dangerous for being deceptive.

The Unsatisfactory Repercussions of Soviet Drama

Despite its many problems, socialist cultural exchange did have real value for the GDR. Though imports from other socialist states often contravened official policy, and though they sometimes threatened to corrupt East German artists, they also reminded Leipzig residents that the GDR was part of the socialist camp. The sheer visibility of Soviet and East European art helped to distinguish East Germany from the West while integrating it into a different international community. This became particularly important during the early 1970s, as improved relations with the West sparked greater cultural contact. In December 1972, after years of negotiation, East and West Germany recognized each other as sovereign states, paving the way for both to join the United Nations. The GDR was finally able to showcase itself on the world stage, and turned to the arts to raise its international profile. "Peaceful coexistence between different social orders forces us to represent the development of socialist national culture in the GDR in a worthy way," the Leipzig Culture Department proclaimed in 1973.[48] All of the city's cultural institutions were told to prepare themselves for "foreign work"; the most prominent, like the Gewandhaus Orchestra and the St. Thomas Church Choir, were explicitly classified as "travel ensembles." In 1974 alone, these two troupes performed in Italy, Belgium, Great Britain, and the USA. Tours in capitalist states became so frequent that they began to interfere with repertoires at home. Already in July 1973, city officials complained that artists' "international obligations" had caused serious "cuts in the number of performances in Leipzig."[49]

As cultural contacts with the West intensified, socialist exchange was forced to keep pace. Someone had to fill in for Leipzig artists when they went on tour, and performers from the Soviet Bloc were considerably cheaper than those from the West.[50] More importantly, closer links with the East were meant to counteract the rising tide of Western pop culture: in the words of the Leipzig Culture Department, "greater cultural collaboration among socialist states" was necessary to "anchor the GDR in the unbreakable socialist community."[51] Starting in 1974, Leipzig officials organized annual "Days of Friendship and Culture" for countries like Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and the USSR. They also renewed ties with Leipzig's "sister cities" in the socialist world, staging "Cracow Days" in Leipzig in July 1974 and "Leipzig Days" in Cracow the following year.[52] All these events combined art shows, poetry readings, and pop concerts with lectures on socialist internationalism or American aggression in Vietnam. Cultural exchange with East Germany's allies aimed to safeguard the country's socialist identity at a time when it was opening up to the capitalist world, but in practice the results were mixed. East German culture certainly became more integrated into the socialist world, but whether it became more socialist is anything but clear.

We can explore this paradox through the career of Karl Kayser (1914–1995), the longtime director of the Leipzig City Theaters (*Städtische Theater Leipzig*, or STL).[53] The STL was set up in 1950 as a conglomerate of five Leipzig stages: an opera house, an operetta company, and three theaters, including one for children. Often called the largest theater in Europe, it employed over 1400 people and received up to 1.4 million visitors per year (in a city of just half a million!).[54] Karl Kayser served as the STL's director-general for more than 30 years, from 1958 to 1989, becoming one of the most powerful cultural figures in the GDR. He was a member of the SED Central Committee, a delegate to East Germany's parliament, and vice president of the country's Theater Workers Union, among many honorific appointments. The son of a Leipzig labor organizer, Kayser, joined the SED when it was formed in 1946 and remained faithful to the party until the bitter end. “I believed in the party, I received it with my mother’s milk,” he told the Central Committee after the fall of the Berlin Wall; “I am shocked at what I’ve heard here today. Everything in me is broken! My life is destroyed!”[55] At the Leipzig City Theaters, Kayser worked ceaselessly to create a party-minded socialist culture, but his vision for this culture changed considerably over time. Tracing the director’s creative development helps to illuminate both the evolution of East German cultural policy and the shifting role of socialist exchange.

Kayser’s first appointment as director was at the German National Theater in Weimar, where he was hired as a 36-year-old in 1950. In his opening address, he stated that it was theater’s responsibility to “show the way forward and fight for a new social order”; no less than factory workers or collective farmers, actors would advance the “planned construction of socialism” in the GDR.[56] To this end, Kayser relied on plays from the Soviet Union, which he described as “the starting point and foundation” of all his efforts.[57] Kayser first visited the USSR in 1952, bringing back a reverence for “our great teacher and friend J.V. Stalin” along with a trove of new Soviet works.[58] Not only did such works hold “contemporary relevance” for East German viewers, he argued, they were also a “source of strength” for the theater’s ensemble: “Soviet characters are so psychologically deep and strongly profiled [that they] transform the consciousness of the actors who play them.”[59] Socialist exchange, in other words, was essential for making socialist people. Only by following the Soviet Union, which Kayser called “the land of hope,” could a theater fulfill its mission and advance the GDR.[60]

By the time he came to Leipzig, though, the director’s view of the socialist world had become more complex. Kayser was named head of the STL in 1958, after the previous director was dismissed for ideological “softening” in the wake of Khrushchev’s Secret Speech.[61] Fearing further corruption from the East, Kayser forced the entire ensemble to hold “aggressive discussions of ideological questions.” He explained that calls for cultural freedom in the USSR and other socialist countries were not really about culture at all, rather “they were simply tirades about the role of the party.”[62] In 1965, Kayser expanded on these views in a private letter to the head of Leipzig’s SED. “I’m afraid that we’re getting ourselves into the same predicament as Poland and Czechoslovakia, where officials believed that they had to respond to certain circles of the petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia," Kayser wrote; "these circles demanded that we show more plays …that were 'interesting' and 'modern,' though they weren't really interesting or modern at all." In actuality, he concluded, "such people were only trying to destroy our way of life and force us to turn away from Socialist Realism."[63] The Soviet Bloc, and even the Soviet Union, had been overrun by hostile forces that threatened the very existence of the GDR. To minimize their influence, Kayser practically eliminated socialist works from his repertoire. Between 1964 and 1969, the STL performed just seven works from the Soviet Bloc, as compared to 20 productions by authors living in the capitalist West.

Yet for Kayser, as for the Leipzig Culture Department, closer contacts with the West sparked renewed exchanges with the East. After the GDR gained international recognition, artists from the Leipzig City Theaters began to travel to Italy, Belgium, Finland, and West Germany. They became exposed to the temptations of the capitalist world and, to Kayser's mind, required a strengthened dose of socialist culture. "To show that life under socialism is beautiful," the director starkly increased the number of plays from the USSR, staging some 20 productions over the course of the 1970s.[64] With the end of Khrushchev's Thaw and Leonid Brezhnev's rise to power, a less reformist Soviet Union had become a more trustworthy model for the GDR. Soviet drama was both "an inspiration and an example" to East Germans, Kayser wrote; "every director, every actor, every administrator will seize on these plays because they tackle the burning questions of our day, because they concern our politics and our very existence, because they move us and provoke us."[65] To complement his new repertoire, Kayser launched the so-called Workshops of Socialist Theater, at which young authors from across the Second World could share their experiences and ideas. It was socialist exchange, he argued, that "defined the profile" of the Leipzig City Theaters, helping them to "develop the socialist personality."[66]

While Kayser saw socialist imports as a way to stabilize the STL, they actually transformed his creative approach. For years, the director had insisted that theater had a single goal: "to turn people into active members of our society and patriots of socialism."[67] This meant that there was no room for artistic "experiments" or excessive variety. Rather than "giving in to individual desires," the STL would "follow the priorities of cultural policy," forcing viewers to see the "most valuable" plays—whether they liked these or not. Each night, the Leipzig City Theaters filled 97 percent of available seats by striking contracts with city factories, which bused in groups of workers after their shift. As Kayser put it, the STL was itself "a factory—a large factory in the theater sector." Yet the director's attitudes began to change after a trip to Poland in the late 1960s. His son, Karl Georg Kayser, recalled that the two men "saw a tremendous performance in a Cracow basement theater, and my father immediately wanted to create just such a stage in Leipzig."[68] The Leipzig Kellertheater, or "basement theater," opened in the bowels of the STL's Opera House in April 1969. Unlike all other venues of the Leipzig City Theaters, the Kellertheater sat only a hundred viewers and did not sell annual subscriptions. It performed works that were considered too complex or avant-garde for the average factory worker, including plays by Arthur Miller and J.M. Synge. The Kellertheater's first playbill explained its mission in words that would have been anathema to Kayser just a few years before. It devoted itself to "experiments," both in the "contents and forms" of the plays it performed and in its "means of implementation." It also promised to "entertain" its audience instead of resorting to constant ideological "agitation."[69] The Kellertheater was the first stage in socialist Leipzig that treated its viewers as partners rather than schoolchildren. Exposure to Polish culture not only inspired Kayser to build a new venue but forced him to rethink his theater's purpose.

Socialist exchange also defined the kind of plays the STL performed. In 1972, Kayser traveled to Moscow and Leningrad "to search for Soviet plays that could be shown in Leipzig."[70] According to his son, this trip was "particularly inspiring" for the director, who was reminded of the politically engaged agitprop theater he had known in Weimar Germany.[71] Two of the plays Kayser saw in the USSR appeared a few months later at the Leipzig City Theaters, which quickly gained a reputation for premiering Soviet drama. During the 1970s and 1980s, the STL introduced East Germany to Chinghiz Aitmatov, Mikhail Roshchin, and Mikhail Shatrov, young Soviet playwrights who often explored the challenges and problems of socialist society. Karl Kayser had long avoided such sensitive topics in the belief that theater should focus on "the beauty" of life under socialism, but Soviet productions had begun to change his mind.[72] The plays he had seen in the Soviet Union convinced him that "theater [was] not a pulpit," he explained.[73] In order to stay relevant, the STL had to abandon all "whitewashing, half-truths, and empty declarations," and instead illuminate "the contradictory processes of our life."[74] The chief virtue of Soviet drama, Kayser argued, was that it explored the tensions "between ideals and reality, between individuals and their society."[75] Even more than works from the GDR, it spoke directly to the Leipzig audience, turning theater into “a forum for open and public self-understanding.”[76]

The STL’s new repertoire required a new means of acting, which Kayser also took from the Soviet Bloc. “For years Leipzig theaters have cultivated a particular aesthetic, which can be called ‘realistic,’ ‘true to the author’s word,’” Kayser told his ensemble in 1987. “The time has come for me to admit that further improvement along these lines is impossible. The only possibility is to introduce aesthetic openness.”[77] This meant giving free reign to the STL’s other directors, including Kayser’s son, who put on many innovative shows in the Kellertheater. “I used to be a frequent visitor to Poland, where I could buy wonderful jazz records and see imaginative, provocative theater,” Karl Georg Kayser recalled; “these trips taught me new aesthetic forms and new ways of acting.”[78] He was particularly proud of his productions of Tadeusz Różewicz, the same writer whose play *The Witnesses* had been banned by the Leipzig Culture Department in 1965. As he put it, “Różewicz’s plays really made me feel alive; they were my gateway to the theater of the absurd.”[79] By the 1980s, STL productions featured increasingly fanciful costumes and stage sets, a far cry from the rigid realism of the 1950s and 1960s. Even an old, conservative director like Karl Kayser learned to change his ways under the influence of cultural exchange.

Though Kayser was a major figure in GDR cultural policy, many of his colleagues were not happy with his work. Hardliners believed that East Germany was not ready for the kind of Soviet plays that Kayser produced; in 1985, a fellow member of the SED Central Committee told the director that he had “gone completely off the rails.”[80] Kayser himself denied that socialist imports could have “unsatisfactory repercussions” for socialism in the GDR, yet their impact on the STL was highly ambiguous.[81] While the director always professed support for Socialist Realism, the “aesthetic openness” he championed struck at the very foundations of cultural policy, calling into question why state oversight existed in the first place. Meanwhile, many of the Soviet plays he put on raised issues that the SED was not willing to broach, especially after the onset of Mikhail Gorbachev’s *perestroika*. One play that premiered in 1986 featured a frank discussion of Stalinist repression; another, from the following season, involved a mock trial of Vladimir Lenin. In Leipzig as in Moscow, such works unleashed a flood of open political debate that proved impossible to rein in. Above all, the small, intimate venues that Kayser developed at the STL provided space for public gathering and conversation, becoming “niches” of civil society in the GDR. Discussions of the country's future eventually spilled out from the Kellertheater to the square above it—the site of the Monday Demonstrations that rocked East Germany in 1989. Kayser's theaters had helped develop the kind of civic activism that culminated in the fall of the Berlin Wall. By turning to socialist theater from abroad, a lifelong communist accidentally weakened socialism in East Germany.

Conclusion

Today, Leipzig's Culture Department still oversees the St. Thomas Church Choir, provides financial support for the city's artists, and promotes "the development of free art in Leipzig."[82] It even coordinates contacts with Leipzig's partner cities, such as Cracow, Kiev, and Houston, though the nature of those contacts has changed tremendously since the GDR's collapse. Under socialism, cultural exchange aimed to do more than "raise awareness" and "advance international cooperation," as it is tasked with doing now. Its goals were no less than to transform East German society, to integrate the country into the socialist world, and to forge a new transnational community. It is for this reason that socialist exchange was always unequal: Leipzig took in more than it sent out, immersing itself in the socialist camp. It is also for this reason that socialist exchange depended so much on contacts with the West, which was the Second World's constant frame of reference. Western influence is what inspired Leipzig officials to forge ties with the East in the 1940s, and then to strengthen those ties in the 1970s. Western influence also made the Culture Department suspicious of Soviet Bloc artists, whom it regarded as wolves in sheep's clothing. Even when the West was out of sight, its influence was never far from view. Leipzig's connections to the Second World always reflected its relations with the First.

Those connections help illuminate how the Second World worked, and how its internal dynamics shifted over time. In the years after World War II, Leipzig cultural exchange was focused on a single center: Moscow. City officials presented themselves as both students and subjects of the Soviet Union while maintaining only cursory contacts with their eastern neighbors. However, Stalin's death—and especially his public condemnation—introduced a new pluralism into the socialist camp. With the Soviet model cast in doubt, all states were forced to reevaluate their political trajectory, and many embarked on liberalizing reforms. In the USSR or in Poland, such reforms promised to make socialism more popular and successful; in the GDR, by contrast, they threatened to undermine the very foundations of the state. As one half of a divided nation, the GDR always had to differentiate itself from the Federal Republic of Germany. If it compromised its founding principles or converged with its western neighbor, it would lose all reason to exist. This pervasive fear made GDR leaders allergic to reform both at home and abroad, complicating their relations with the Second World. On the one hand, cultural exchange with socialist states helped to separate East Germany from the West and root it in the socialist community. On the other hand, it introduced corrupting influences that risked eroding socialism from within. Leipzig's cultural contacts with the Second World became more extensive and more threatening at the same time. Increased interactions with the socialist camp actually exposed its many fault lines: divergent cultural policies, different views of the past, and contradictory attitudes to the West.

And yet cultural exchange did help to forge an international community, even if this was not as unified as Leipzig officials might have wished. City residents were constantly exposed to artworks from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR; local artists traveled and performed in the socialist world much more than in the world at large. While they were often critical or even contemptuous of their eastern colleagues, they frequently looked east for inspiration, reassurance, or comparison. The Second World never developed a singular identity, and it may never have eclipsed the first, but it was a ubiquitous presence in socialist Leipzig. As a new state, East Germany relied on international exchange to create its own national culture, perhaps to a greater extent than any other country in the Soviet Bloc. In fact, the need for contact with other socialist states sometimes outweighed the need to preserve a distinctive East German identity, as Karl Kayser's career reveals. The director was so reliant on cultural exchange that he ended up subverting his own theater. Ultimately, East Germany's ties to the socialist world may have undermined socialism in the GDR.

NOTES

1. Report by Norbert Mader, February 21, 1962. Sächsisches Staatsarchiv Leipzig (SStAL) SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/517/180-188.
2. SStAL Bezirkstag und Rat des Bezirkes Leipzig 4852.
3. "Die Aktivität der Stadtorganisation Leipzig der SED," 1963. SStAL SED-Stadtleitung IV/A/5/1/232.

4. On the Leipzig trade fair, see Rudolph and Wüstenhagen. *Große Politik, kleine Begegnungen*.
5. See, e.g., Nothnagle, *Building the East German*.
6. Culture Department report from 1960. Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 8169: 107–122.
7. For more on the Leipzig Culture Deparment, see Höpel, *"Die Kunst dem Volke."*
8. "Kulturpolitische Grundlinien und Aufgaben," July 31, 1973. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung, IV/C/2/9/2/685/191-219.
9. The concert took place on July 8, 1945. "Das Kulturellen Leben Leipzigs," SStAL Bezirkstag und Rat des Bezirkes Leipzig 30538.
10. On Leipzig cinema, see Kunakhovich and Skopal, "Cinema Cultures of Integration."
11. Statistics on the Nazi era refer to the decade from August 1933 to July 1943. "Bühnen der Reichsmessestadt Leipzig. Rückblick auf die Spielzeit 1939/40." Available in the *Programmhefte* collection of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek Leipzig. Postwar figures refer to the Schauspielhaus and the Kammerspiele. They are compiled from files at the Stadtarchiv Leipzig, especially StVuR(1) 8214 and 8200, for the years 1945–1950; *Leipziger Bühnen* for the years 1950–1956; and Engel and Stephan, eds., *Theater in der Übergangsgesellschaft* for the period 1957–1989.
12. Städtische Theater Leipzig, "Spielzeit 1950/1." Available in the *Programmhefte* collection of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek Leipzig.
13. "Zur Kulturverordnung—Kulturplan 1950." Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 7973: 216–231;"Bericht über das Kulturleben in Leipzig 1950." Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 2139: 66–68.
14. *Plan des Nationalen Aufbauwerkes der Stadt Leipzig 1955* (Leipzig: Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1955), 78.
15. Herr Imscher, quoted in Ahbe and Hofmann, *Es kann nur besser werden*, 158.
16. In March 1953, 69 percent of Leipzig artists belonged to the German-Soviet Friendship Society. "Statistische Angaben über die Intelligenz in Leipzig." Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 8152. For more on the Society, see Behrends, *Die erfundene Freundschaft*.
17. Culture Department report from November 1952. Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 2147.

18. *Festprogramm der Stadt Leipzig zum Monat der Deutsch-Sowjetischen Freundschaft*.
19. “Arbeiterklasse und Kultur,” October 1957. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/09/02/536/25-30.
20. Statistics for 1960. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/09/02/536/347.
21. “Betriebs-Mitteilungen,” December 12, 1953. Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR(1) 8376: 199–201.
22. For more on Soviet culture in the early GDR, see Hartmann and Eggeling, *Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR*.
23. See, e.g., “Die Arbeit der Deutschen Konzert- und Gastspieldirektion Leipzig,” December 13, 1957. SStAL Bezirkstag und Rat des Bezirkes Leipzig, 2206: 1–16.
24. “Abschlußbericht über die Verwaltung der Städtischen Theater Leipzig,” 1951. SStAL Bezirkstag und Rat des Bezirkes Leipzig 2203: 8–13.
25. Skopal, “‘It Is Not Enough That We Have Lost the War – Now We Have To Watch It!’,” 497–521.
26. “Bürositzung der Bezirksleitung SED,” April 4, 1961. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/3/280/103-107.
27. Culture Department report from 1960. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/537/85-95.
28. This was the slogan of the Society's Third Congress, in January 1951. See Behrends, *Die Erfundene Freundschaft*, chapter 4.
29. Franke, *Verstrickung*, 17. See also Berger and Roth, *Ausnahmezustand*.
30. Erich Loest, “Zu von mir begangenen Fehlern nach dem 17.6.53,” October 4, 1953. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/531/140-148.
31. “Protokoll über die Mitgliederversammlung der BPO des Instituts für Literatur,” November 11, 1957. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/531/154-163.
32. Informationsbericht of December 1956. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/535/187.
33. Ibid.
34. “Referat zur Kulturkonferenz,” March 9, 1960. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/537/44-68.
35. Kurella, quoted in Jäger, *Kultur und Politik in der DDR*, 123.

36. "Protokoll über die Beratung mit Kulturfunktionären," January 31, 1963. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/A/2/9/359/3-15.
37. "Argumente aus dem Bereich der künstlerischen Intelligenz," December 7, 1962. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/517/235-240.
38. Ibid.
39. For more on this event, see Martini, *Dokumentarfilm-Festival Leipzig*.
40. Kötzing, "Zeigen oder nicht zeigen?," 307.
41. "Information an Fröhlich," November 14, 1967. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/A/2/9/2/361.
42. Heinz Völkel and Johanna Starke, reports from a study trip to Poland from August 28 to September 20, 1962. SStAL Rat des Bezirkes 4852: 96–105.
43. Ibid.
44. Culture Department report of January 10, 1963. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/2/9/02/517/268.
45. Ibid.
46. Richter, "Wir und die 'Weststücke,'" 17–20.
47. "Bericht über die Studentenbühne der Karl-Marx-Universität," November 1, 1965. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/A/2/9/2/366/90.
48. "Kulturpolitische Grundlinien und Aufgaben," July 31, 1973. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung, IV/C/2/9/2/685/191-219.
49. Ibid.
50. See, e.g., "Entwicklungstendenzen und gegenwärtiger Stand des Küstler- und Ensembleaustausches," July 1973. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung, IV/C/2/9/2/685/221-227.
51. "Kulturpolitische Grundlinien und Aufgaben," July 31, 1973. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung, IV/C/2/9/2/685/191-219.
52. On the Leipzig Days in Cracow, see Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie, Komitet Wojewódzki PZPR 909–911.
53. For more on Kayser and the STL, see Kunakhovich, "The Red Director."
54. *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Leipzig*, Band 16 (1964).
55. Kayser quoted in Stephan and Hertle, *Das Ende der SED*, 422.
56. Kayser's speech of August 1950, in Lohse, "…*Besessen sein von der Idee des Theaters*," 11–14. The "planned construction of socialism"

was announced at the Second Party Conference of the SED in July 1952.

57. Kayser in *Sonntag* 1995, no. 20: 6. Reprinted in Lohse, *"Besessen sein,"* 57.
58. Kayser, "Ein Jahr Kulturarbeit im Deutschen Nationaltheater Weimar," 38–40.
59. Kayser in a letter to Manfred Seidowsky, 1965. Seidowsky, "Die Spielplanpolitik," 119; Kayser, "Arbeit am Sowjetdrama," 29.
60. Kayser, "Ich bin immer noch auf dem Wege…," 28–30.
61. Stadtleitung der SED, Abteilung für Kulturpolitik, January 30, 1958. SStAL SED-Stadtleitung IV/5/01/407/77-8.
62. "Protokoll über die Beratung mit Kulturfunktionären," January 31, 1963. SStAL SED-Bezirksleitung IV/A/2/9/359/3-15.
63. Kayser in a letter to SED District Committee head Paul Fröhlich on June 5, 1965. SStAL, SED-Bezirksleitung IV/A/2/9/359.
64. Pietzsch, "Regisseure antworten," 18–20.
65. Kayser, "Unbefriedigende Nachspielpraxis?," 51–52.
66. Hamm, "Das Leipziger Theater," 35–38.
67. Kayser speaking to the Leipzig City Council, June 7, 1962. StVuR(1) 230: 288.
68. "Gespräch mit Karl Georg Kayser," in Engel and Stephan, *Theater in der Übergangsgesellschaft*, 124–129.
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73. Kayser, "Unbefriedigende Nachspielpraxis?"
74. Kayser, "Erfahrungen der Sowjet-Dramatik," 48-50.
75. Ibid.
76. Kayser, "Gute Leistungsarbeit," 7–8.
77. STL discussion on February 5, 1987, published as "Erben – aber wie?," 34–9.
78. "Gespräch mit Karl Georg Kayser."
79. Ibid.
80. Ursula Ragwitz, quoted in "Gespräch mit Karl Georg Kayser."

81. Kayser, “Unbefriedigende Nachspielpraxis?”
82. See the Culture Department’s website at www.leipzig.de. Accessed on June 10, 2015.

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CHAPTER 7

Soviet Cinematic Internationalism and Socialist Film Making, 1955–1972

Marsha Siefert

The March 1928 conference on the tasks of Soviet cinema, organized by the Agitprop section of the Central Committee, concluded that filmmakers should make ideologically appropriate films that were intelligible to the masses—and that these were the films they desired. The conference imagined this mass audience to extend well beyond Soviet borders. Soviet film export was to be developed "as much as possible" and foreign workers' film organizations were to be employed in the "joint production" of films.[1] Yet the subsequent decades fell short of these goals.[2] After Stalin's death, in line with other political objectives, the film industry and filmmakers themselves re-engaged with a form of socialist internationalism that went beyond party linkages or export models to reinvigorate collaborative forms of cinema work and celluloid storytelling.

This chapter explores Soviet attempts after 1955 to influence, coordinate, and cooperate with socialist filmmakers and to extend their efforts to filmmakers perceived as potentially sympathetic to their goals. Bilateral

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exchange agreements, film weeks, and friendship societies that characterized so much Soviet cultural outreach were essential to cinematic ties. Additionally, as will be explored here, Soviet film bureaucrats and filmmakers initiated several types of collective cinematic endeavors with representatives from countries inside and outside the Bloc. In part, these activities renewed the quest for a successful film aesthetic to portray the ideals of socialism in a way attractive to mass audiences. Institutionally, the goals of these collective projects included creating occasions for artistic discussion across the Bloc, establishing a socialist film elite through education and formal association, cultivating sympathetic filmmakers in non-socialist countries, and setting up a transnational network of financial and technological support for like-minded filmmakers: In short, what could be called a Soviet cinematic internationalism.

For this chapter, the Second World, familiarly encompasses the so-called Eastern European Bloc countries.[3] Filmmakers from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, with well-developed prewar film industries, competed with Soviet studios, especially for hosting or filming with each other and countries further West. Yugoslav film studios were also active co-producers. Cooperative film projects among members of the Bloc without Soviet participation provide another fruitful area in which to see Second World alliances, as do films made with filmmakers from the non-aligned world, such as Egypt or India, but go beyond the scope of this chapter.

Here three forms of Soviet cinematic practice are explored as expressions of socialist internationalism in the film industry after 1955. First, the Moscow Film Festival, re-established in 1959, has been viewed in the Cold War cultural contest in relation to other film festivals such as those in Cannes or Berlin, but for the socialist world it represents a highly visible international forum in which socialist films and filmmakers could be gathered, publicized, and projected to elite viewers and potential film importers. Its carefully selected international juries and committees showcased committed and sympathetic filmmakers and offered an opportunity to reward films that embodied socialist values. The prize deliberations also illuminated relations within the socialist filmmaking community. Second, annual meetings among socialist filmmakers which commenced in 1957 represent a Soviet-sponsored effort to create a forum for discussion and critique of filmmaking among members of the Bloc. Soviet reports on these meetings demonstrate the delicacy of discussing goals and outputs of national film industries within the Bloc and the quicksand of seemingly formulaic discussion of socialist international cinematic art. To concretize the potentials and problems, the final section discusses Soviet feature films co-produced with Bloc members on the subject of the Great Patriotic War. By including Bloc countries into collective co-productions, Soviet filmmakers attempted to reframe the Great Patriotic War as a narrative of socialist cooperation and solidarity. The realization, reception, and political evaluation of these films help to illuminate the goals and shortcomings of a Soviet international cinematic vision.

Soviet Film and Socialist Internationalism

Soviet rhetoric about socialist internationalism in culture, as promulgated in the 1950s and 1960s, called upon utopian ideals of the collective and friendship, but nominally cultural problems and incidents elicited the politics of Bloc relations.[4] As cited in their preambles, cultural agreements between the USSR and Bloc members built upon the bilateral 20-year Treaties of "Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance" governing their international relations, all of which were renewed during the 1960s.[5] The biennial cultural and scientific cooperation agreements affirmed both the shared fundamental interests of building socialism and the conviction that cultural ties "play an important part in the mutual enrichment of national cultures."[6] However, the goal of "mutual" enrichment did not coexist easily with questions of national sovereignty, national traditions, and national achievements, even in cultural matters.[7] Internationalizing the 1930s Soviet cultural formula—"national in form, socialist in content"—in the 1950s was not well received by Bloc members, many of whom had already excelled in national cultural industries and had well-developed national styles. Thus, although post-1956 rhetorical formulations stressed mutual respect rather than the Stalinist era version of the Soviet model, relationships and habits were less adaptable for both the Soviets and the East European countries. Within the Bloc, historical memory and boots on the ground gave the Soviet presence a political and economic asymmetry that conditioned both the manner of the overtures of cooperation and their reception.[8] The "friendship" metaphor could only go so far. Bloc members very often interpreted socialist internationalism to mean Soviet internationalism.

Looking at what has come to be known as the cultural Cold War, the "logic" of Soviet efforts to export influence in the East-West "contest" could be included under the umbrella term of cultural diplomacy.[9]

Within the Second World, though, presumably that “logic” should be shared by members of the Bloc if indeed the goal was to develop a socialist internationalism. To what extent was this cultural diplomacy? Soviet “suggestions” may have been interpreted within a relational strategy of engagement, with Bloc members undertaking joint projects as a way of fulfilling plans or “testifying to the friendship between nations”[10] in the same way that “quota quickies” fulfilled national quotas for film production in the West.[11] Since its coinage in the early 2000s to describe the effectiveness of American popular culture during the Cold War, the concept of “soft power” has been frequently used—and just as frequently critiqued—as a general descriptor of cultural influence.[12] In one reformulation, especially referring to the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation, the term “soft coercion” has been offered to describe cultural influence in transnational relationships where military, economic, or political ties underly the power structures.[13] Thus, the willingness of the members of the Bloc to participate in these cultural exchanges and the way in which they fulfill the expected and encouraged cultural relations cannot be assumed. The amount of discretionary power to agree or refuse, refine, or evade these collective projects characterizes in-depth looks at Second World cultural relationships throughout the Cold War.[14]

Film has an outsized role in this matrix of formal and informal cultural relations within the Second World. Soviet ambitions and activities to promote socialist internationalism through tourism, personal visits and correspondence, student exchanges, music performances, art exhibitions, author tours, and trade shows exhibit the type of people-to-people cultural diplomacy that garnered headlines while for the most part not threatening national identities or national goals.[15] Even in bilateral exchange and/or purchase of films each nation retained its linguistic and storytelling traditions. Collective film meetings and cinema projects offered much more, in both potential and challenge. The ideal of the collective in the socialist imaginary was both a working style and a narrative trope ideally suited to film.[16] Even Thaw cinema, with resemblances to foreign styles like Italian neorealism, did not overwrite the deeper foundation of Soviet cinema, rooted in utopian goals and communal, socialist values.[17]

The collective was manifested materially as well. Film units, most well known in the case of Polish cinema, embodied a collective artistic form of production that was present throughout the Bloc.[18] Institutionally, this period also witnessed the first Soviet plenum of film workers in 1959 and the establishment of Union of Film Workers in 1965, a collective formed long after the other Soviet creative unions of the 1930s. Thus, it is not surprising that the emphasis on institutional formations for collective decision making, as manifest within the Soviet domestic cinema industry, was also replicated in how socialist internationalism was projected in more inclusive cinematic meetings and how that emphasis influenced Soviet expectations.

At the heart of cinema relations were the films themselves. The goal of striving for a new form of cinema that took seriously the hyphen between ideology and art emerged in the debates, the meetings, and the films—not always and not in all films—but the sincerity of the intention should not be discounted. A renewed cinematic socialist vision, recalling the revolutionary cinema of the 1920s and 1930s, was projected with some optimism starting in the mid-1950s. The revolutionary possibilities of the Mexican Revolution (recalling Eisenstein) and the communist role in the Spanish Civil War along with the contemporary revolution in Cuba provided stories and rekindled cooperation. Epitomizing this fervor is the 1954 documentary *Song of the Rivers*, financed by the World Congress of Trade Unions, in which a montage of workers on the Volga, the Nile, the Yangtze, the Ganges, the Amazon, and the Mississippi visually unite the workers of the world. Although produced in 18 versions and shown to almost 250 million people, it was banned in the USA and severely edited in its distribution to Western countries, remaining a singular effort.[19] By the mid-1950s, in the face of a still-dominant Hollywood, the goal remained the feature film that realized, through its collective production, and dramatized, through its narrative, a socialist cinematic vision.

While Soviet bureaucrats—and many socialist filmmakers—took the ideal seriously, going the further step of coproducing a film with a socialist neighbor proved especially challenging. As Romanelli argues for the French and Italian cases, co-produced films are first of all national films; while the intention of co-productions is to maximize funds and potential distribution, co-produced films are originated and governed by national film industries.[20] In comparison, Soviet rhetoric assumed that this national context could be superseded based on shared goals of socialist internationalism and an aesthetic that married ideology and art. But the national as well as the cooperative was embedded in the Soviet cultural agreements with socialist countries. Article 9 of these agreements stated that each national partner should promote the exhibition, distribution, and "popularization" of the others' films, as well as pursue the "joint production of films and cooperation in matters relating to their manufacture." Films had been co-produced between Soviet studios and other socialist countries before 1955, but the signing of cultural exchange agreements between the USSR and Western European countries and with the USA in the late 1950s renewed the Soviet impetus toward film co-productions.[21] Each of these agreements across the ideological divide included a version of Article 9 on film exchanges and co-productions.[22]

Another reason for the intensified Soviet pursuit of cinematic socialist internationalism was that direct export of Soviet films to Bloc countries was not working. A 1963 confidential report complained that between 1959 and 1962 socialist countries accepted less than 50 percent of the Soviet films offered for distribution. Income from the sale of those films to socialist countries had decreased over that period, even with the availability of more popular Soviet Thaw films. The report blamed the low artistic level, drab and dreary content, and petty, accidental subjects of the Soviet films themselves.[23]

Filmmakers—and film bureaucrats—were caught between the necessity of making films within a narrower frame of ideological acceptability and a broader demand for economic viability and mass appeal, dubbed the class versus cash dichotomy in Soviet film output.[24] Tensions within the Soviet film industry multiplied when being enacted within Second World film relations; the thinking about film as art persisted, even while films were judged as political acts, all in the face of audience demand for genre and "entertainment."[25] As Sergei Gerasimov, a prominent director and leader of the Soviet film industry asserted in 1965, "today Soviet film art sees its place at the most advanced frontiers of the vast construction project of socialism."[26] Exactly where those frontiers were located and how film might contribute to that construction project were the subjects of the meetings and occasions when filmmakers met other filmmakers.

Filmmakers Meeting Filmmakers, Socialist Style

Socialist filmmakers met other filmmakers in many venues. As the first of its kind, the Soviet film school—All-Soviet State Institute of Cinematography (Vsesoiuznyi Gosudarstvennyi Institut Kinematografii or VGIK)—became a training ground for film as "socialist art" already in the 1930s.[27] Generations of filmmakers, including directors, scriptwriters, cinematographers, and actors, as well as the supporting professions in production trained there. Even as film schools opened in the postwar socialist countries, notably in Prague and Łódź, VGIK held its attraction, especially for aspiring filmmakers from the Soviet republics. VGIK also attracted filmmakers from the developing world, such as Ousmane Sembene of Senegal and Souleymane Cisse of Mali.[28] Soviet film theorists also could be credited with "meetings of the mind," as Soviet film theory and some interwar Soviet films helped foster a small worldwide community of "progressive" filmmakers and a cinematic socialist imaginary.[29]

A premiere showcase for socialist cinema was the resumption of the biannual Moscow Film Festival in 1959. Its alternate in Karlovy Vary, which was established in 1947, served—at least in rhetoric and retrospect—as an international platform for "progressive cinema," a synergy between neorealism and socialist realism, and symbol of international cooperation across class and national divides.[30] By the time the Moscow festival resumed in 1959, film festivals had established themselves as players in the cultural Cold War and a Europeanizing counterweight to Hollywood market dominance.[31] In the context of Second World cinematic relations, the politics of the Moscow Film Festival prizes and the composition of its film juries cultivated networks of sympathetic filmmakers and verbalized the values of what makes a good film, socialist style.[32] Frequently, the selected jury members included filmmakers involved in concurrent film co-productions or otherwise represented a potentially viable film market in the developing world.[33]

Standard jury composition for feature films, headed by a Soviet director like Sergei Gerasimov or Sergei Yutkevich, included directors, writers, and stars from Eastern European cinema, one each from France, Italy, often Japan, and the USA, along with regular participation from emerging cinemas in Egypt, India, and Brazil. Even with the establishment of the Tashkent Festival of Asian, African, and Latin American Cinema in 1968, the expanded juries at the Moscow Film Festival continued to highlight successful stars and politically engaged filmmakers from the developing world.[34] The Moscow organizers understood the value of international stars as a magnet for press coverage and for legitimizing the proceedings; their 1967 export publication distributed by the Bureau for Popularization of Soviet Film Art was entitled "Stars Meet in Moscow," with appendices including complete lists of juries and substantive prizes, along with photos of the stars.[35]

The pressures of demonstrating the cadre of supportive filmmakers, socialist criteria of prize selection, and the "fairness" of the proceedings were severely tested at the 1963 Moscow Film Festival. This story has been frequently told as emblematic of the cultural Cold War, evidence of Soviet vulnerability to Western pressure.[36] But even contemporary reports in the

West saw the controversy as “not wholly uncontrived,” in this case by the “sympathetic” Italian filmmakers. In the face of Khrushchev’s crackdown on several filmmakers in spring of 1963, Italian filmmakers on the left in support of the admonished Soviet filmmakers, submitted Fellini’s film *8 ½* as their entry to “badger Moscow officialdom about their beleaguered brethren.”[37] The jury—nine members from the USSR and the Bloc and one each from France, India, Japan, the USA, the UAR, and Italy—was deadlocked. As the story goes, after a walk out by the non-communist members, led by the communist member from Italy, they were persuaded to return if the vote went in favor of *8 ½*. Rumor had it that the decision went all the way up to Khrushchev in the intervening hour.[38] The award was widely publicized in the Western press.

Officialdom wrote back. A series of articles on the film was published in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, reasserting that the film was awarded for “remarkable creative directorial work…expressing the inner struggle of an artist in search of truth.” The relatively new head of the Cinematography Committee at the USSR Council of Ministers, Alexei Romanov, asserted at a press conference that, contrary to misleading comments in the foreign press, they rejected any implication that the jury’s verdict marked a retreat in the ideological struggle.”[39] The *Pravda* headline—“For the Further Strengthening of Friendly Contacts”—reinforced the conference’s intended message of socialist internationalism. Thus, one strategy of socialist filmmakers to circumvent Soviet restrictions by presenting their work at international festivals, such as the famous 1969 showing of Tarkovsky’s *Andrei Rublev* in Cannes, can also be seen working inside the socialist collective. The professional ties among socialist filmmakers in this instance were strong enough to challenge higher Soviet authority.

The complexity of workings inside the profession is further illuminated in the Conferences of Cinema Industry Workers of Socialist Countries, which were initiated by the Soviet Minister of Culture Nikolai Mikhailov in September 1956. The 1957 conference in Prague gathered representatives of 11 countries and the 1958 Sinaia meeting 12. From reports on these conferences, it is clear that many socialist filmmakers, especially those who represented long-lived filmmaking traditions and successful domestic and export productions, took umbrage at what they perceived as Soviet preaching and disengenous engagements in collective discussion. Skopal argues that the conferences were seen pragmatically as a “stage upon which rebellious satellite countries could be ‘consensually’ criticised by the whole socialist camp,” through rather predictable invocations of socialist realism and a critique of "schematism." By 1960, he concludes, the "original reasons for the conferences were vanishing due to processes of 'consolidation' within the Bloc (primarily in Poland and Hungary) and the stronger emphasis on competitiveness in the contest with Western cinema for both festival and regular audiences." Skopal sees the coercive attempts giving way to a "more flexible and pragmatic" mode of cooperation, "established on an ad-hoc basis utilizing personal contacts."[40]

But the Soviet Central Committee also recognized that criticizing specific East European films was counterproductive. Sergei Gerasimov, a Soviet filmmaker who throughout his long career played a key role in negotiations with filmmakers from other countries, including the West, headed the 1960 meeting of socialist filmmakers in Sofia. There he gave a keynote address entitled "The Ideological and Artistic Level of the Modern Socialist Film," which he had first presented successfully to the Organizational Committee of the Presidium of the USSR Filmmakers' Union. When he delivered that same report at the meeting of socialist filmmakers, however, his critique of the "hackwork" and uncritical adoption of Western philosophical and ethical principles in films from Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia was not appreciated, even by the Soviet Central Committee. Although the Central Committee agreed that Gerasimov, and other Soviet delegates, had the right to enter into polemics, they remonstrated that "the speaker who represents Soviet film art should not assume the role of an appraiser of specific phenomena in the national cinemas of other socialist countries." Instead, the speaker should have concentrated "on general theoretical issues of the development of socialist film art and on the experience of Soviet cinema." The goal of developing a "socialist film art" was still ideologically on the agenda at this moment in the Thaw.[41]

The meetings of socialist filmmakers continued over the years, with not dissimilar critiques and dissatisfactions. For example, a 1967 directive from Cinema Minister Romanov to the Soviet delegation for the European conference of socialist filmmakers in Berlin criticized some Soviet filmmakers who succumbed to "various bourgeois trends" rather than developing "a socialist realist art." After viewing the films from "socialist national cinemas" at the European conference, he commented confidentially that "not one outstanding film that would be closely related to the socialist development of these countries was mentioned." And he reaffirmed that co-productions between socialist countries must "proceed from the common ideological and artistic interests *concerning the socialist system as a whole*" [emphasis added].[42]

As evidenced by these examples, the goal of creating a socialist cinema that combined the ideological and artistic remained not only a constant within Soviet circles but incorporated the socialist world of film and filmmakers. Also, as the comments imply, a significant category for creating the imagined community of socialist filmmakers were film co-productions in which the Soviet Union was a major partner. While the socialist goals of these co-productions were not in doubt, the right formula was difficult to achieve, especially in the face of hoped for distribution within and beyond the Bloc. The international expectations for co-productions—high production values, well-known stars, enhanced publicity, and efforts at export—all cost money, but were deemed necessary in the global marketplace among Europeans both East and West.[43] The high point of Soviet co-productions was the period leading up to and immediately after the formation of the All-Union Corporation of Joint Productions and Production Services for Foreign Film Organizations, or Sovinfilm in December of 1968.[44] The following section explores what is arguably the most intensive socialist co-production project: Filming stories of the Great Patriotic War.

The Second World's Second World War, on Film

Just as telling the story of the Great October, Socialist Revolution became a cultural objective for the Bolsheviks, so too were the efforts to dramatize the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War "accretive and multiple" in the years thereafter.[45] Cinema provided the perfect form and vehicle for telling the war story.[46] While the reestablishment of Victory Day in 1965 has been identified as a first act in the Brezhnev regime's invigoration of the war cult,[47] the cinematic portrayal of stories and battles of the Second World War began long before that date. War films were among the first co-productions with socialist and sympathetic film partners. Negotiating a common story about the Soviet role in winning the war provided national origin narratives for socialist countries within the Bloc[48] while strategically projecting Soviet power to former allies in the cultural Cold War.[49]

Early narratives put forward for co-producing war stories derived from the more lyrical aesthetic of Soviet domestically popular and artistic successes like *The Cranes are Flying* (1957), *Fate of a Man* (1959), and *The Ballad of a Soldier* (1959), which crossed socialist and even Cold War boundaries.[50] One such narrative portrayed the moments after the Soviet victory, with Red Army soldiers helping the newly liberated populations.

In *May Stars* (1959), idealized and sentimentalized Czech and Russian encounters after the "liberation" included Soviet soldiers with a village goose and young lovers meeting by a Soviet tank.[51] The 1960 Soviet-East German co-production, *Five Days, Five Nights* (Lev Arnshtam and Heinz Thiel), based on real events, featured an exiled German Communist who returns to Dresden with the Red Army and over the next five days aids Soviet soldiers in recovering an art collection of old masters, as local residents gradually come to assist the soldiers.[52] Although this film sold over two million tickets in East Germany, the plotline did not reappear in future co-productions; perhaps the benign image of the Red Army soldier strained credulity from viewers and reviewers when crossing Bloc borders.

Films portraying wartime relationships across national, ethnic, or enemy lines were also made as co-productions. An early example, Gerasimov's *Men and Beasts* (1962), co-produced with the GDR, was perhaps too sympathetic to the German soldiers helping the Russian nurse; it quietly disappeared from Soviet screens.[53] Two Soviet co-productions with Poland attempted to dramatize a friendly wartime version of the historically fraught Russian–Polish relationship. In *Zosya* (1967), a young Russian officer, resting with his unit on a Polish farm, is attracted to a young Polish girl before leaving to fight; in *The Legend* (1970), a Polish girl cares for two teenage war orphans, a Pole and a Russian.[54] These more intimate war stories, also still available in Soviet domestic war films in the late 1960s through 1970s,[55] were exceptional, however, in the output of co-productions.

Stories with soldiers and comrades in the midst of war dramatized more credible incidents of socialist cooperation on a collective scale. Sharing writing responsibilities between scriptwriters from both countries became a preferred form of creating that narrative. For example, in the 1966 Soviet–Romanian co-production of *The Tunnel* (*Tunelul*, Francisc Munteanu), the Romanian director co-wrote the screenplay with a Soviet writer. The film was shot in Romania, with studio shots completed in the USSR, also with Soviet actors. Its advertising motto as a film "about friendship and unity of ideals born in the unity of struggle" neatly summarizes the collective goal.[56] Similarly, the 1965 film co-produced with Yugoslavia, *Checked—No Mines* (Zdravko Velimirovic and Iurii Lysenko), found common cause with partisan films, already a mythic genre. Interestingly, the film was co-produced with the Dovzhenko Studio in Kiev and was originally entitled "Victory Day," showing how "brothers-in-arms" saved Belgrade from destruction by German mines.[57]

One of the earliest co-produced war films with a “sympathetic” partner outside the Bloc was the 1964 co-production with Italy, *They Were Going East* (released in Italy as *Italiani brava gente/Italians are Good People*; in the West as *Attack and Retreat*), based on the experiences of Italian soldiers sent to fight on the Russian front in 1941–1943.[58] Its director, Giuseppi De Santis, a communist party member and famed neorealist filmmaker,[59] had already been teaching at the Czechoslovak film school, FAMU, in the 1950s[60] and his work was appreciated throughout the Second World. According to Pisu, De Santis wanted to create a non-Western transnational alternative narrative of the war, with Soviet material support, while the Soviet film industry hoped to use the film to expand into the Western market, given the importance of Italian cinema in the early 1960s.[61] Hollywood stars George Kennedy and Peter Falk completed the co-production package. Portraying the suffering of Italian soldiers created problems for De Santis in Italy and he had to send an open letter to the Italian defense minister. As he told a Soviet interviewer, he wanted to pay tribute to the Italian soldiers who had been abandoned by the Germans without supplies and boots, and to show that Italian soldiers behaved humanely.[62] The narrative, as with many of the war story co-productions, distinguished the good soldiers and good people from the mistakes of their leaders.

These Thaw era co-productions, most of which were initiated before the reestablishment of Victory Day in 1965, illustrate the themes of anti-fascism and a common humanity in Bloc-building narratives of wartime relations. The variety of narratives also demonstrates how filmmakers coped with cultural vicissitudes of the late Khrushchev years and the uncertainty of the early Brezhnev years.[63] Alexei Romanov, the cinema chief between 1963 and 1973, cast his lot with co-productions as he proposed and established Sovinfilm, the co-production unit at the ministry. He argued for their necessity not only to compete in the world market but also because Western countries were already cooperating with the other socialist countries for joint films; he also suggests co-productions as support for like-minded filmmakers in France and Italy.[64] This inter-Bloc competition, in which the USSR had yet to fully benefit, may have been one of the reasons Sovinfilm was eventually realized.

The signal of change in ambition, considered the cinematic expression of the war cult, was the five-film series *Liberation* (*Osvobozhdenie*, 1968–1971), released for the 25th anniversary of Victory Day.[65] The Soviet establishment had been angered by American films like *The Longest*

Day (1962), which implied that battles on the Western front won the war.[66] And of course *Liberation* was first and foremost the story of the war from the Soviet point of view. But as a large-scale co-production, bringing in other countries in the socialist Bloc, *Liberation* also represented the goals of a collective socialist narrative produced by a socialist collective. Such a film could dramatize a "common" victory through stories of transborder significance that also showcased the Soviet contribution to winning the war against fascism. In a recent review of the Great Patriotic War in Soviet collective memory, *Liberation* was characterized as a medium for the "militarization of mass consciousness" and "the fanning of patriotic sentiment at the expense of flagging socialist ideals."[67] This last observation could also be reversed: By involving other countries, this co-production called upon patriotic sentiment to bolster these "flagging socialist ideals" across the Bloc in the spirit of socialist internationalism.

Liberation represents the Soviet effort to involve other countries in the socialist sphere to tell the war story from a collective point of view, not just as "sites of memory" or filming, but as actors in the narrative. Thus, for example, film studios from Poland and the GDR were "invited" and participated in the collective enterprise. The Yugoslav studio Avala also participated in the first installment, while the Italian production company of Dino De Laurentiis stayed the course of five films. And the film's director, Yuri Ozerov, had already directed a World War II drama in the second—and last—co-production with Albania, *The Storm* (1959). Seeing *Liberation* as a socialist co-production allows for a reconsideration of the critical period of transition in efforts to use co-produced war films to achieve a Second World cinema between 1965 and 1972.

Creating a "socialist" version of the Soviet liberation had advantages for other Bloc nations. For example, the participation of the East German film studio, DEFA, in the production spoke to the complicated task of projecting anti-fascism while recouping the humanity of the German people. According to Karl, Ozerov successfully distinguished between the political and military leadership of the Third Reich and the German people. The German soldiers are brave and the Soviet encounters with the civilian population almost "conciliatory."[68] The Soviet Union was also largely responsible for financing the production. Descriptions of *Liberation*'s reception abroad (sent to 60 countries) illustrate the high hopes for the film. A report to the CPSU Central Committee on the French premiere deemed the heroism of the Soviet Army on film "an important ideological action," especially since Paris was concurrently showing the Hollywood film *Patton*, where Soviet Army members were portrayed as a "wild, drunken barbarian horde." The Paris premiere was attended by members of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, the leadership of the France-USSR Society, and others who would have been considered part of the collective audience of the socialist world.[69]

Cold War and later appraisal of *Liberation* in the West condemned it through adjectives such as "entirely sterile,"[70] "bloated,"[71] or "loud and long." Certainly, the reintroduction of Stalin along with other world leaders into the metanarrative recalled the excesses of *The Fall of Berlin* (1949) and signified the Brezhnev priorities.[72] A few noted positive aspects, however. Ozerov's best battle scenes, as compared to those of his teacher, Igor Savchenko, emerged "as a series of mini-episodes, each of which centres on the fate of an individual human being."[73] As Soviet films have been placed within a global history of war films of the 1950s and 1960s, the blockbuster monumentalism looks less idiosyncratic and more in keeping with war films striving for epic status.

Contextualizing *Liberation* in terms of Second World cinema begins with its relation to the internationally successful domestic production, the four-part epic *War and Peace* (released 1965–1967). As Youngblood notes, Russia's victory in 1812 as portrayed in *War and Peace* was likely hoped to be a stand-in for the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War.[74] So it was not a far stretch to see *Liberation* as a Soviet attempt to capitalize on that success, albeit lacking the literary antecedent that gave *War and Peace* an international advantage.

Size mattered. Multi-part films had been a tradition in Soviet cinema, usually with an ideologically significant narrative. The four-part, 403-minute *War and Peace* grew in significance when Part One proved successful in export and in winning a US Academy Award, creating anticipation and international orders for the subsequent parts. Economically, monumental films also made sense. Domestically, once the cast and crew were on board, several episodes could be made at lower cost while satisfying domestic demand for more films. Internationally, Hollywood and other European films competed with television using the latest technology in color and wide-screen effects; *War and Peace* demonstrated how Soviet film could keep pace.[75] A Soviet critic, writing for the export audience in *Soviet Film*, argued that those who saw in *War and Peace* "no more than twenty-eight tons of gunpowder and 10,000 extras...see nothing more than the flat expanse of the screen." *Liberation* received similar critiques at home, with some reviewers complimenting the authentic re-creation of the battles, and others complaining that some of the rank-and-file heroes dropped out of the film as the battles raged on in later episodes. But each review commented on the creative cooperation of filmmakers from the socialist countries, even inflating their numbers, to include the whole of the Eastern Bloc.[76]

Enlarging the comparative perspective, the Soviet co-produced *Liberation* relates directly to another collective, socialist war film, *The Battle of Neretva* (*Bitka na Neretvi* 1969), which was being co-produced at the same time. *The Battle of Neretva* was state sponsored and lavishly financed by Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito, who also served as a consultant. This Yugoslav entry into the epic battle sweepstakes describes a 1943 German offensive against Yugoslav partisans over a bridge on the Neretva River. Its gargantuan budget, battlefield reconstruction and destruction (with Soviet tanks repainted to represent German Panzers), and battalions of Yugoslav People's Army participants resembled Soviet cinematic monumentalism. However, the co-production partners represented a socialist coalition the Soviets were never able to martial. In 1966, Yugoslav small enterprises became legally allowed to cooperate with foreign countries directly, making co-production a real possibility.[77] Thus, United Yugoslavia Producers represented funds supplied by close to 60 self-managed Yugoslav companies, a "workers film" coalition as envisioned by the Soviet film officials in 1928. The other Yugoslav co-producer, Jardan Film, which was responsible for over 120 Yugoslav feature films and 145 international co-productions, was joined by a West German Company (Eichberg-Film), the Italian International Film Company responsible for several co-productions between 1968 and 1973, and Igor Film, the Italian company that co-produced the "revolutionary" docudrama *The Battle of Algiers* (1966) with Algeria, suggesting its political outreach and orientation.[78]

Similarly to *Liberation*, *Neretva* could arguably be seen as an attempt to unify the increasingly independent Yugoslav republics (and republic studios) by creating a shared production and shared narrative of the orgins of Yugoslavia in the partisan battles of the Second World War. As befitted the co-production, the Italian soldier (played by international favorite Franco Nero) was more sensitively portrayed, eventually joining the partisans. Also typical of the commercial goals of co-production, the producers recruited other global stars like Yul Brynner and Orson Welles with financial incentives. Although not officially a Soviet co-production, *Neretva* has a special relation to the Soviet war films: Sergei Bondarchuk played the role of a Slovenian soldier in the film, *Neretva* won a special prize at the Moscow Film Festival of 1969, and *Neretva* followed *War and Peace* as a nominee for Best Foreign Film at the US Academy Awards. Its director, Veljko Bulajić, has another connection to the socialist international circle: He trained with famed screen writer Cesare Zavattini in Rome, the screenwriter who co-wrote the final film to be included in this constellation of Soviet cinematic cooperation, the Soviet-Italian film *Sunflower/Il girasoli* (Vittorio De Sica 1970),[79] released in the same year as Bondarchuk's Soviet-Italian co-production *Waterloo*, his "epilogue" to *War and Peace*.[80]

Sunflower should have repaid the risk taken by Sovinfilm, gaining access to the latest techniques and international market while combining art, politics, and economics as imagined in 1928. The film shot in Italy and the USSR starred Sophia Loren, Marcello Mastroianni, and Lyudmila Savelyeva, who had received glowing reviews as Natasha in *War and Peace*.[81] The film was directed by Vittorio De Sica, whom Soviet cinema chief Romanov mentioned by name as one of the Italian "progressive" directors who Soviet co-productions should support.[82] The film was co-written by the experienced Soviet screenwriter Georgi Mdivani,[83] who had visited the USA with Gerasimov in 1958.[84] The Italian co-writer was Cesare Zavattini (along with Tonino Guerra). Zavattini was well known for his previous 24 films with De Sica, and for his progressive politics.

In spite of these impressive credentials, in March 1970 the Soviet screenwriter Mdivani was forced to defend his role and the Italian cooperation to the CPSU Central Committee. In a memo he reminded them that the Soviet embassy in Italy had recommended *Sunflower* for aid and named it in the new 1967 Soviet-Italian film agreement; the screenplay had been read and studied "by all interested parties, both in our country and in Italy." Carlo Ponti, the co-producer, brought the unfinished film to Moscow and twice "showed it to our filmmakers, artists and the members of the Soviet Peace Committee." Not only had the film seemingly been vetted by all parties, but Ponti's gesture to premiere the film in Moscow on International Women's Day was to celebrate equally the fates of the two women on Soviet soil.

In response to criticism of the content of the film, Mdivani argued that the film "juxtaposes the Soviet way of life with the way of life in Italy with its strikes, prostitution, and so on," and in fact made money: "Mosfilm received $500,000 U.S. dollars for its services on *Sunflower*, while spending only 200,000 Soviet rubles." "It is an antiwar film, about the humanism of the Soviet people," concluded Mdivani and "everyone who saw the film liked it very much."[85]

But the issue did not rest there; in August, the KGB made its own position known to the CPSU Central Committee. The KGB had collected a variety of opinions "informally" from Soviet filmmakers, claiming that "the Italians have managed, under the ruse of cooperation with Mosfilm, to achieve their own propaganda goals." The Soviet people are shown with "an absence of elementary culture." More problematic, the film implied that the USSR had huge cemeteries of Italian soldiers and prevented the return of Italian POWs to their homeland.[86] The KGB accused Soviet filmmakers of preferring co-productions for the foreign trips and expensive presents. Even with the large profit realized by Mosfilm, the KGB accused the "Italian side" of receiving significant material advantage in other co-productions, something that De Laurentiis in fact admitted about *Waterloo* in his memoirs.[87]

The Cultural Division of the CPSU Central Committee attempted to respond to the KGB criticism by giving the facts and figures for 1966–1970 co-productions: 35 feature, documentary, and popular science films co-produced; 24 with socialist countries, 3 with developing countries, and 8 with capitalist countries. The only successes they listed, however, were jointly produced films with other socialist countries. And in conclusion they admitted that "serious mistakes were made in some works created with foreign countries."[88]

This admission, however, was not enough for Yuri Andropov, Chairman of the State Security Service (KGB), who followed up this exchange with a critique on ideological grounds.[89] The advisability of such co-productions is in doubt, he argued, "wherein the [hard] currency gain becomes the main goal, while the issues of ideological struggle are pushed to the sidelines."[90] But perhaps the most damning evidence was an "unofficial statement…received through [KGB] agent channels" from O. Teneishvili, the Chairman of Sovinfilm, the relatively new Soviet body tasked with making co-productions. After viewing Vittorio De Sica's film *Sunflower*, he filed a complaint with the Cinematography Committee stating that the film was both harmful and libelous, and its release in the USSR would be "a gross political mistake." Again he cited the economics: "Apparently, the economic profit (we spent 175,000 rubles and received 475,000 dollars) has made some people close their eyes to the clearly offensive things. The *Sunflower* story has shown that we must not make political compromises working with foreign filmmakers, must not follow their lead. We must not invest in a film that shows our people, our achievements, our reality in a crooked mirror."[91]

Such views from the Soviet higher authorities had a chilling effect in the subsequent patterns of co-productions for the next decade and a half, with most being made only with socialist countries in the Bloc. World War II dramas remained a staple of socialist film co-productions over the next five or six years and never entirely left the co-production roster. Ozerov remained in favor, and with Bondarchuk, visited the USA in 1971.[92] Ozerov even produced a second four-part war epic, *Soldiers of Freedom*, in 1976–1978, gathering even more socialist countries by adding Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia to the original co-production collective. Those few Soviet co-productions made with countries outside the socialist world (for example, Japan, India, or Finland) took refuge in melodrama, children's films, comedy, or historical subjects.[93] Italy was welcomed back as a co-producer for only a very few films late in the Soviet era, most notably Sergei Bondarchuk's last major two-part epic on the Russian Revolution, *Red Bells* (1981–1982).[94] Thus, as Youngblood concludes, some directors were able to recall the themes and artistic sensibilities of the Thaw in war-themed films, as long as they observed certain restraints.[95] The same must be said for the subjects and partners for Soviet film co-productions. However, Sovinfilm remained active and intact for the rest of the Soviet era.

CONCLUSION: SOVIET FILM AND SOVIET CINEMATIC INTERNATIONALISM

Assessing these efforts of the Soviet film industry and its filmmakers to collaborate within the socialist Bloc depends upon the assessor and the moment. Soviet film bureaucrats—and later the KGB—did not hesitate to condemn co-produced films that turned out, in their opinion, to undermine the goals of socialist internationalism. Yet, as evidenced by the chastisement of a director and film figure as eminent as Sergei Gerasimov for his critique of his fellow socialist filmmakers, the efforts to seek a way forward in cinematic cooperation remained a Soviet goal even into the late 1960s and beyond. And the co-production of films within the socialist Bloc continued for the subsequent decades. Production files and stenographic records of film unit conferences make it clear that the imperative of realizing co-productions may have bred internationalist compromises but was part of the overall goal of achieving a Soviet ideological film art. The lens of socialist internationalism and co-produced film focuses on concretized examples of socialist internationalism ideals, efforts, and limitations.

The filmmakers represented the top Soviet directors, from Gerasimov, who has been highlighted here, to others including Kalatozov, Yutkevich, and Ozerov. Bondarchuk takes an outsized role as filmmaker, actor, and director due to the powerful influence of *War and Peace* upon subsequent Soviet prestige pictures. The camaraderie among filmmakers across national borders, even within the Bloc, is suggested by the way in which the Italian filmmakers were able to influence the socialist participants in the 1963 Moscow Film Festival, and in their effectiveness in sponsoring co-productions on a grand scale.[96] It is also suggested in the way in which trusted scriptwriters were expected to write a story that met ideological-artistic demands and expectations. Zavattinni was awarded the International Peace Prize and a special film prize at the 13th Moscow Film Festival in 1981, while Mdivani quietly disappeared from scriptwriting credits.[97] Bringing in examples from the Italian film industry suggests ways in which cooperation with "capitalist" filmmakers—producers like Ponti and De Laurentiis and directors like De Sica and De Santis—allows the Soviet film industry and others in the Bloc to be viewed as part of European film writ large.

These "war stories" also illuminate the complexity of navigating internal Soviet film bureaucracy vis-à-vis the higher authorities. Alexei Romanov's decade as film chief, from his trial by fire at the 1963 Moscow Film Festival to his successful realization of Sovinfilm in 1968, suggests the important intermediary role of political appointees to posts where productivity and economic viability are held accountable. Intended to allow for flexibility in responding to international demands, Sovinfilm also inserted another film chief, and as suggested in the internal memos, one vulnerable to the asserted interests of the Central Committee and KGB.

Looking at war films as a representative genre allows for several observations. War films presented an ideal genre for seeking a narrative to embody socialist internationalism in a storytelling form available to mass production and mass circulation. It may be that as a genre it was more successful when the films were not also burdened with the task of countering Western narratives in a direct East-West confrontation. The Cold War dialogic nature of Soviet war film—*Liberation* responding to *The Longest Day*—is known, but the story of Europe's collective effort in *A Bridge Too Far*, also conceived in the mid-1960s, suggests that the Europeans too tried to re-fight the war through such collective representations of the allied effort, again with disappointing results.[98] This lens offers a long shot of the European industry in the face of American war storytelling.

The war was also carried on through documentary co-productions, even with the United States. The co-produced USA–USSR documentary film "The Unknown War" (1978) fits into this story too.

Overall, Bloc-building through blockbusters, while no longer representing the socialist internationalism of earlier years, continues in the great power narratives that compete on today's screens. The problems and achievements of the intra-Bloc meetings, exchanges, and projects undertaken by the USSR during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s are well worth remembering in contemporary efforts at pan-European cultural projects and cinematic co-productions. With all its controversies and uneven results, the Soviet film industry—and its Second World partners—offers one example of a serious attempt to create a viable and quality transnational cinema on war and in peace.

Notes

1. "Party Cinema Conference Resolution: The Results of Cinema Construction in the USSR and the Tasks of Soviet Cinema," in B.S. Ol'khovyi, ed., *Puti kino. Vsesoiuznoe partiinoe soveshchanie po kinematografii* (Moscow, 1929), 429–444, translated and reprinted as document 83 in Taylor and Christie, eds., *The Film Factory*, 215. On the significance of this conference, see Miller, *Soviet Cinema*, 16–19; Kenez, "The Cultural Revolution in Cinema," 414–433.
2. Documentary film and photography was one area in which the goals were more successfully realized. Malitsky, *Post-revolution Nonfiction Film*; see also Ribalta, ed., *The Worker Photography Movement*.
3. For a discussion of the term "Eastern Europe" with regard to the Cold War and to European audiovisual space, see Siefert, "East European Cold War Culture(s)?," in Lindenberger, Payk and Vowinckel, eds., *Cold War Cultures*, 23–54.
4. Applebaum, "The Friendship Project," 484–507, esp. 486.
5. Selvage, "The Truth about Friendship Treaties," in Stone, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, 320–34.
6. Agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on Cultural and Scientific Co-operation. Signed at Moscow, on 23 April 1966. http://www.forost.ungarisches-institut.de/pdf/19660423-1.pdf, accessed 28 February 2016.

7. Schwarzmantel, "Nationalism and Socialist Internationalism," in Breuilly, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, 646–55.
8. For an excellent analysis extending also to Asia, see Szalontai, "Political and Economic Relations between Communist States," in Smith, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, 305–21.
9. Gould-Davies, "The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy," 193–214. A more critical phrase was used at the time. See Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive*.
10. Mazierska, "International Co-productions as Productions of Heterotopias," in Imre, ed., *A Companion to Eastern European Cinemas*, 483–503, quote 484.
11. See Siefert, "Twentieth-Century Culture, "Americanization," and European Audiovisual Space," in Jarausch and Lindenberger, eds., *Conflicted Memories*, 164–193.
12. See, for example, Ellwood, "A '*Reference Culture*' That Divides," 35–52.
13. Sherr, *Hard Diplomacy and Soft Coercion*.
14. For a nuanced archival look at one such relationship, see Babiracki, *Soviet Soft Power in Poland*.
15. See, e.g., Applebaum, "The Friendship Project"; Gilburd, "The Revival of Soviet Internationalism in the Mid to Late 1950s," in Kozlov and Gilburd, eds., *The Thaw,* 362–401.
16. "Introduction," in Silberman and Wrage, eds., *DEFA at the Crossroads of East German and International Film Culture*.
17. Bulgakowa, "Cine-weathers," in Kozlov and Gilburd, eds., *The Thaw*, 436–481, esp. 447, 451, 451.
18. Szczepanik, "The State-Socialist Mode of Production and the Political History of Production Culture," in Szczepanik and Vonderau, eds., *Behind the Screen*, 113–134.
19. Musser, "Utopian Visions in Cold War Documentary," 109–153.
20. Romanelli, "French and Italian Co-Productions and the Limits of Transnational Cinema," 25–50.
21. Richard Taylor cites an appendix to a catalog of Soviet film imports through 1954, discovered by Birgit Beumers in the summer of 2015, that lists 26 co-productions between the Soviet studios and the studios of the "people's democracies." Without access to the list one can only speculate which films are being referred to beyond

the well-known *Skanderberg* (USSR/Albania 1953) and *Heroes of Shipka* (USSR/Bulgaria 1954). Taylor, "A 'Window on the West'?," 115–122.

22. For a discussion of the USA–USSR agreement on film, see Siefert, "*Meeting at a Far Meridian*," in Babiracki and Zimmer, eds., *Cold War Crossings*, 166-209; and Kozovoi, "A Foot in the Door," 1-19; see Gilburd, "The Revival," 364–369 for USSR cultural agreements with other countries.
23. Confidential Memorandum to the CPSU Central Committee, "On the State of Commercial Distribution of Soviet Films Abroad," (8 June 1963). RGANI, F. 5, op. 55, d. 51, ll. 39-49. Reprinted in Fomin, *Kinematograf ottepeli*, 379–386. The lessening of restrictions on importing films from outside the Bloc also negatively impacted Soviet sales.
24. Taylor, "A Window," 10.
25. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*.
26. Gerasimov, "The Banner of our Art," 3; translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* 17, no. 48 (1965), 7–8.
27. Petrie, "A New Art for a New Society," in Hagener, ed, *The Emergence of Film Culture*, 268–282.
28. Woll, "The Russian Connection," in Pfaff, ed., *Focus on African Films*, 223–240; Genova, *Cinema and Development in West Africa*.
29. Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 86; Salazkina, "Moscow-Rome-Havana," 97–116; Salazkina and Ryabchikova, "Sergei Eisenstein and the Soviet Models for the Study of Cinema, 1920s–1940s."
30. Pitassio, "'For the Peace, For a New Man, For a Better World!,'" in Imre, ed., *A Companion to Eastern European Cinemas*, 276–277; Bláhová,"National, Socialist, Global," in Karl and Skopal, eds., *Cinema in Service of the State*, 245–274.
31. Razlogova, "The Politics of Translation at Soviet Film Festivals during the Cold War," 66–87; see also the papers presented at the 2014 Leipzig conference, "Cultural Transfer and Political Conflicts. Film Festivals during the Cold War," http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-5533, accessed 2 February 2016.
32. On festivals as "nodes" and "network" builders, see Hagener, "Institutes of Film Culture," in Hagener, ed., *The Emergence of Film Culture*, 283–395; on imagined communities see Iordanova and Cheung, eds., *Film Festivals and Imagined Communities*.

33. For example, the Russian émigré composer Dmitri Tiomkin was a member of the Moscow Film Festival jury in 1967, while he was working on the US co-production of the Soviet film *Tchaikovsky*. Siefert, “Russische Leben, Sowjetische Filme,” in Karl, ed., *Leinwand zwischen Tauwetter und Frost Der osteuropäische Spiel- und Dokumentarfilm im Kalten Krieg*, 133–170.
34. Attendees at the Tashkent Festival explicitly commented on how the festival facilitated relations between socialist filmmakers. Rajagopalan, *Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas*, 84–85; see also Ma, “A Genealogy of Film Festivals in the People’s Republic of China,” 40–58.
35. See also Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 107–110.
36. See, e.g., Caute, *Dancer Defects*, 235–239.
37. Johnson and Labedz, eds., *Khrushchev and the Arts*, 62–64.
38. Asked to see the film in a private showing a few days later, Khrushchev walked out.
39. Literator, “The Moscow Festival and Foreign Maligners,” *Literaturnaia gazeta* (27 July 1963), 1; “For the Further Strengthening of Friendly Contacts,” Press Conference Devoted to the Third Moscow International Film Festival, *Pravda* (30 July 1963), 6; Current Digest of the Soviet Press 15, no. 30 (21 August 1963), 22–23.
40. Skopal, “Barandov’s Co-Productions,” in Karl and Pavel Skopal, eds., *Cinema in Service of the State*, 89–106; citation 98. Skopal uses the correspondence in RGALI, F. 2329, Ministry of Culture, op. 12, ed. khr. 421.
41. “Instruction by the CPSU Central Committee regarding Sergei Gerasimov’s report at the conference of filmmakers from socialist countries in Sofia,” (8 October 1960), signed by Chairman, CPSU CC Department of Culture D. Polikarpov and Section Chairman V. Baskakov. Reprinted in Fomin, ed., *Kinematograf ottepeli: Dokumenty i svidetel’stva*, 375. The section chairman added a PS to the memo: “Gerasimov was given an instructional talk at the Department.”
42. “Directives for the Soviet delegation at the conference of socialist filmmakers of Europe” (Berlin, 22–27 April 1968). Signed by A. Romanov, Cinematography Minister. Confidential. RGANI f. 5, op. 60, d. 66, ll. 159–161. Reprinted in Fomin, *Kinematograf ottepeli*, 399–400.

43. Co-productions among other socialist countries are also frequent. For example, DEFA co-produced 53 films during its lifetime, of which 39 were with other socialist countries; by the mid-1970s, the Czechs and Poles had lost interest in co-producing with DEFA, and the Bulgarian and Soviet filmmakers became their more frequent partners. Six of the 53 co-productions were with Asia and Latin America; the 53 completed films represent about one-third of the proposed co-production projects in the period. Ivanova, "DEFA and East European Cinemas," 6, 25, 57.
44. On co-productions, see Siefert, "Co-Producing Cold War Culture," in Romijn, Scott-Smith and Segal, eds., *Divided Dreamworlds?*, 73–94.
45. http://fccorn.blogs.wm.edu/; accessed 19 August 2015.
46. The primary source for this formulation is Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, see especially chapter 6.
47. Markwick, "The Great Patriotic War in Soviet and Post-Soviet Collective Memory," in Stone, ed., *Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, 701–702.
48. For one view, see Báthory, "Weaving the Narrative Strings of the Communist Regimes–Building Society with Bricks of Stories," 7–16.
49. For more on the role of narrative in international relations, see Roselle, Miskimmon, and O'Loughlin, "Strategic Narrative," 70–84.
50. Karl, "Screening the Occupier as Liberator," in Karl and Skopal, eds., *Cinema in Service of the State*, 341–380.
51. Kapterev, "Post-Stalinist Cinema and the Russian Intelligentsia," 337–339, 373–375.
52. The film does not mention that the USSR did not repatriate much of the recovered art. On the mythologizing of the film through publicity surrounding Shostakovich's musical score, see Riley, *Dmitri Shostakovich*, 87–89.
53. For another of Gerasimov's activities in promoting this co-production, see his interview "Jede populäre Kunst ist eine realistische Kunst: Ein Gespräch zwischen Sergei Gerassimow und Lutz Köhlert," *Deutsche Filmkunst*, no. 1 (1962), 6–8, 11. Thanks to Pablo Fontana for sharing this interview.
54. Kalinowska, "Poland-Russia," in Mazierska and Goddard, eds., *Polish Cinema in a Transnational Context*, 134–152. She notes

that World War II provided common elements in most of the nine Soviet-Polish co-produced films; otherwise, Russians were infrequently cast.

55. Youngblood, *Russian War Films*, 146–49.
56. Jäckel, “France and Romanian Cinema 1896–1999,” 409–425.
57. Tarasov, “Yugoslavia—U.S.S.R.,” 8–9.
58. A first notable Soviet coproduction with sympathetic filmmakers in the West was made with France, dramatizing the story of Normandy-Niemen, the French squadron of flyers that fought on the Soviet front. Premiered in Paris on the occasion of Khrushchev’s 1960 visit, the *Normandie-Nieman* co-production represented the cream of Soviet writers, with the war journalist Konstantin Simonov joining sympathetic Russian emigres in Paris to develop the script. But the war was not revisited in subsequent Soviet-French co-productions in the next 20 years; instead they chose cultural biographies, such as the life of choreographer Marius Petipa or Lika, Chekhov’s love.
59. The interconnections and reinterpretations of Italian neorealism in the history of Soviet-Italian film relations is a much larger story. For the early decades through the 1950s, see Salazkina, “Soviet-Italian Cinematic Exchanges,” in Sklar and Giovacchini, eds., *Global Neorealism*, 37–51.
60. Pitassio, 277.
61. Pisu, “Cinematographic Détente across the Iron Curtain,” Paper presented at the NECS conference, Prague, June 2013.
62. Dolinskii and Chertok, “Dzhuzeppe De Santis,” 14–15.
63. Youngblood, *Russian War Films,* 142–43.
64. RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.139.
65. The first installment was completed in late 1968, but due to requested re-editing by the USSR defense department, the Soviet premiere of the first two parts took place only in July 1969 during the Moscow Film Festival.
66. Kucherenko, “Their Overdue Landing,” *D-Day in History and Memory,* 221.
67. Markwick, “The Great Patriotic War in Soviet and Post-Soviet Collective Memory,” in Stone, ed., *Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, 692–716.
68. DEFA also contributes to the actor who plays Hitler. Karl, “Die Schlacht um Berlin,” in Zeitgeschichte-online, Thema: Die

Russische Erinnerung an den "Großen Vaterländischen Krieg," May 2005, http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/_rainbow/documents/pdf/russerinn/karl_befr.pdf.

69. "Memorandum of the Deputy Chairman of the Cinematography Committee V.E. Baskakov to the CPSU Central Committee on the Anti-Soviet film *The Confession* (25 May 1970); RGANI, F. 5, op. 62, d. 91, ll. 77–79; reprinted in Fomin, *Kinematograf ottepeli*, 425–427. A 1971 memo adds that the film was shown in the capitals of the socialist Bloc, although the New York International Film Festival rejected it.
70. Liehm and Liehm, *The Most Important Art*, 313.
71. Menashe, *Moscow Believes in Tears*, 94.
72. Youngblood, *Russian War Films*, 158–159.
73. Margolit, "A Conglomeration of Aggressive Personalities," 367–68.
74. Youngblood, *Bondarchuck's War and Peace*, 129.
75. Prokhorov, "Size Matters," http://www.kinokultura.com/2006/12-prokhorov.shtml, accessed 10 February 2016.
76. "The Film Epic 'Liberation'," *Pravda* (30 April 1970), 3; CDSP 22, no. 17 (26 May 1970): 22–23 and Katinov, "Cinema," 37–38.
77. Stoil, *Balkan Cinema,* 49, cited in Batanĉev, "A Cinematic Battle," 50.
78. Liehm and Liehm, 129.
79. Another Soviet-Italian co-production, *The Red Tent*, also premiered in August 1970, this time with English-speaking stars Sean Connery and Peter Finch, along with Italian actress Claudia Cardinale and Soviet actor Sergei Mikhalkov. The story is based on a 1928 incident when a Soviet icebreaker rescued an Italian explorer, Nobile, who was stranded trying to cross the North Pole in a dirigible, after Western efforts failed. Nobile stayed on in the USSR until the mid-1930s and joined the Italian Communist Party, and still alive in his 90s consulted on the film. The film is of interest in that its director, Mikhail Kalatozov, had been the successful director of the wartime love story *The Cranes are Flying* (1959), one of the trio of thaw war films heralding a new aesthetic. Relevant to the utopian cinematic goals discussed here is the 1964 co-production *I am Cuba* (1969), co-written with Yevtushenko and Cuban director, Enrique Pineda Barnet, on the Cuban Revolution supported financially by the Soviet government.

80. Youngblood, *War and Peace*, chapter 6.
81. Carlo Ponti had also attempted to cooperate with the Czechoslovak film industry in the 1960s. Pitassio, 271.
82. RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.139
83. Mdivani also co-wrote the script for the ill-fated co-produced Hungarian "revolutionary drama," *The Red and the White* (*Csillagosok, katonák* 1967). An internal memo to Mosfilm executives prior to shooting stated: "Miklós Jancsó is a typical representative of auteur filmmaking. This movement is much more extreme in Hungary than in our country. Any kind of screenplay we work out together, he will deviate from when it comes to shooting. Even at this point we regret to disappoint those comrades who expect a huge celebratory film for the anniversary. This will not happen." Quoted in Brooke, "High Plains Visionary," http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/obituaries/high-plains-visionary-miklos-jancso-1921-2014 The film was cut and then shelved in the USSR, but widely distributed in the West.
84. Sergei Gerasimov and playwright Georgrii Mdivani tour Disneyland in fire engine, 1958. Image at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerasimov%26_Mdivani.jpg.
85. G.D. Mdivani to the CPSU Central Committee on the Italian-Soviet feature film *Sunflower* (20 March 1970), RGANI f. 5. Op. 62, d. 91, ll. 40–48. Tomilina, et al. eds., *Apparat TsK KPSS i kultura, 1965–1972*, 779–781.
86. One of the extreme right organizations in Italy—MOCI— sent a letter to the Soviet ambassador stating that with "any further imprisonment of Italian POWs by the Soviet Union the organization will retaliate by killing 20 Soviet diplomats in various European countries." Fifth Directorate of the KGB (Filipp Bobkov) to the CPSU Central Committee on the Italian-Soviet feature film *Sunflower* (26 August 1970), Confidential. RGANI f. 5. Op. 62, d. 91, ll. 103–106. Tomilina, et al. ed.) *Apparat TsK KPSS i kultura, 1965–1972*, 823–825. The same Italian group responded negatively to the De Santis film in 1964.
87. "There was no way I could lose money on the production, because I had passed on the gross costs to the Russians, who had taken their own territory in return." Kezich and Levantesi, *Dino*, 185.
88. Report of the Cultural Division of the CPSU Central Committee to the CPSU CC (20 September 1970). Confidential. Signed by

Chairman V. Shauro; response to Andropov memorandum. RGANI, f. 5, op. 62, d. 91, ll. 130–131; reprinted in Tomilina, et al., eds., *Apparat TsK KPSS i kultura.*, 842–843.

89. Before taking charge of the KGB in 1967, Andropov had served for a decade as the first head of the CPSU Department for Liaison with Communist and Workers Parties in Socialist Countries, not unimportant in the context of the attitude toward co-productions.
90. "Memorandum of the KGB at the USSR Council of Ministers to the CPSU Central Committee on The Disadvantages of Co-Produced Films (16 October 1970), "Top Secret." Signed by State Security Committee Chairman Andropov. RGANI f. 5, op. 62, d. 91, ll. 125–129; Tomilina, et al. ed., *Apparat TsK KPSS i kultura*, 839–841.
91. Cited in "Memorandum of the KGB at the USSR Council of Ministers to the CPSU Central Committee on The Disadvantages of Co-Produced Films (16 October 1970), "Top Secret." Signed by State Security Committee Chairman Andropov.
92. Zhuk, "Hollywood's Insidious Charms," 593–617. Ozerov is also chosen as one of the eight directors of *Visions of 8* (1973), a USA-produced documentary on the Olympics. Diffrient, "An Olympic Omnibus," 19–28.
93. Roth-Ey characterizes this era, in which Goskino was headed by Filip Ermash, as one emphasizing entertainment and genre films on a business model, while still producing the art films with ideological correctness envisioned. *Moscow Prime Time*, 62–64.
94. Italian co-producers too had their own troubles. The so-called Corona Law, passed in 1965, was aimed at international productions, stating that the film must be made in Italian, with the director, the majority of screenwriters, two-thirds of the principle actors, etc. would have to be Italian. Thus, *Waterloo* was not eligible to be classified as an Italian film, creating some financial issues, and De Laurentiis went into crisis. Kezich and Levantesi, *Dino*, 186–188.
95. Youngblood, *Russian War Films*, 163.
96. For a contemporary assessment of Soviet-Italian co-productions, see Trofimenkov, "Liubov' v temnoi komnate." http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/665683, accessed 6 April 2016.
97. Zavattini, "I am Still Hopeful!," 4–5.
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PART IV

Internationalism and the Iron Curtain

CHAPTER 8

Motocross Mayhem: Racing as Transnational Phenomenon in Socialist Czechoslovakia

Mark Keck-Szajbel

The twentieth century was about racing. With the invention of automated transport—the car, the motorcycle, the plane—fast cars became a symbol of the future for artists and tinkerers. Racing took on a new scale particularly in the latter half of the twentieth century and particularly in the United States. There, the size of tracks and events grew larger, and cities vied to build bigger and better venues to host the hundreds of thousands of paying tourists.[1]

Historically, rallies were events of immense investment and an emblem for dictators and democrats alike. By the 1930s at the latest, Western Europe was also hosting regular racing events (most notably in Monaco, Le Mans, and Nuremberg).[2] As early as the 1920s in the Soviet Union, as Lewis Siegelbaum has shown, automobile rallies were used not only to draw in and dazzle spectators with examples of the state's technological prowess but also to inform them about what "automobility" meant for the Soviet citizen.[3] The desire to design and race automotive vehicles cast a wide net. Post-World War II East Central Europe was by no means an exception to this rule. Polish motorcycle speedway started official league racing by the late 1940s, and Czechoslovak off-road motorcycle racing was considered top notch since the interwar years. Norwegians, Danes,

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and Brits competed in Gottwaldov and Brno by the early 1950s.[4] At the same time, Hungarians were clamoring to see if Csepel motorcycles could compete with western counterparts like their soccer team had been doing in the World Cup.[5]

Scholarship has largely focused on three elements of mass spectator sports in dictatorships.[6] The first, and most obvious aspect of sporting events, is its propagandistic value. Olympic events, mass calisthenics, marches, or parades gave legitimacy to the government in power. The power of numbers—both in terms of athletes and spectators—showed how popular the local regime was: many governments made national holidays of large sporting events since it was crucial to have large turnouts; they coerced worker brigades to volunteer or at least take a day off to view events; and they offered otherwise hard-to-find goods like citrus fruit or quality meat on days when a large event was to take place.[7] Crucially, foreign spectators also revealed to the home population that the regime was accepted abroad. As with the smorgasbord of Nazi-friendly clubs that sprouted across the United States in the lead up to the Berlin Olympics in 1936, the fact that a government could draw the eyes of millions of foreigners helped locals understand the necessity of the dictatorship (or, at least, the futility of resisting it).[8] Conversely, any mishaps at such international events were immediately taken up by ideological enemies and oppositional figures as signs of weakness. The second element of mass spectator sports in dictatorships is its didactic element. Mass events not only gave legitimacy to the regime, they served to teach populations about normative behaviors and rules.[9] Just as rallies were teaching "automobility" to Soviet citizens about fast cars and the future of (motorized) socialism, carrying oversized portraits of Stalin or his East European counterparts at sports rallies taught people about the hierarchy of power. Mass sports, in other words, brought together the cult of the body with the cult of personality. The third focus of scholarship—especially in late state socialism—has been on the depoliticizing effect of sporting events. Such events were quintessential to "normalized" society: they represented a concerted effort by the regime to separate the public sphere from the private. The argument goes that if you stay apolitical and lead a quiet life, the government will offer the material conditions for you to live life "normally."[10] Everyone should have the right to a TV, an apartment, and the chance to see international sporting events, so long as they returned to work on Monday morning and did their job without grumbling. These events offered a safety valve for the people to let off steam. All the while, they became less likely to revolt on the street.

Building on the existing scholarship, but unlike many of these works, I zoom in on the motocross competitions as sites of international interactions. Three key forms of cross-border contacts coexisted and sometimes clashed during these events. The first was the international sports culture: the machines, the men who rode them, and the fans who converged around the race tracks to cheer them on. The second involved the fans themselves: thousands of East and West Bloc spectators interacted at the race track. The third concerned the work and often cooperation of the various security police agencies from the socialist states. I will show how these forms of internationalism evolved from the early 1950s to the late 1980s. While motocross competitions have gone virtually unstudied in historiography, I argue that they reveal how the socialist state changed their attitudes toward socialist internationalism. Whereas the state attempted to control interactions between spectators in the 1950s and 1960s—often employing violence and other, more subtle forms of crowd control—authorities changed tactics starting in the 1970s. Authorities henceforth worked less to prevent interaction between socialist and non-socialist citizens, and instead focused increasingly on collecting information and cooperating at an international level to prevent disobedience and riots. Not only do motocross competitions reveal a change in attitudes, they also show the limits of the repressive state. In the face of rapidly growing international audiences, socialist states moved from crowd control to crowd management.

Czechoslovak Racing Culture

That motorcycle racing was allowed in post-World War II Czechoslovak society is an oddity in itself. Taken within the context of global political stratification and domestic turmoil, motorcycle rallies were not an obvious choice of entertainment in a Stalinist regime. Czechoslovakia was the only country after World War II to actually vote for a majority communist government, although the need to have a democratically elected regime would change after the coup d'état in 1948. Like its neighbors, Czechoslovakia's communist leaders were combined into a united communist party, and purged would-be enemies who doubted Soviet authority or alternative paths to socialism in Central Europe. The most notable "enemy" in Czechoslovakia was Rudolf Slánský, a devout, hardline communist since before the war. The West carefully watched during the Slánský Trials: called a Titoist, he was charged with treason for his supposed plot with imperial capitalists to sabotage socialism in Czechoslovakia and was sentenced to death in late 1952.[11]

Six months later, mass demonstration broke out in the small Czech town of Plzeň. A university town with a long tradition, the town was also host to the Škoda factories, the most well-known automotive brand from Czechoslovakia. Like in many other countries after World War II, the government imposed a devaluing of savings and wages after the communist takeover. Along with devaluation, worker quotas were increased and food subsidies were decreased. Workers from the Škoda plant started the first riot against state socialism in East Central Europe. Two weeks before similar strikes in Berlin, the strikes spread to a handful of industrial towns across Czechoslovakia. Unlike Berlin, the Plzeň Uprising did not result in Russian tanks or casualties (although many were later imprisoned). The riot and the show trial were sensations for Western governments, who ate up all news which revealed the illegitimacy of the new Czechoslovak (or any other East Bloc) regime during the next "trial" of motorcycles.[12]

Visitors from the West were eager to find a damaging story at the International Six-Day Trial race just a few months after the demonstrations in Plzeň and Ostrava. In the framework of Cold War politics, such local events were fraught with East–West tensions. As with youth festivals, ice hockey games, or other large international events, the Six-Day Trial was a springboard for journalists and state informants to reveal the climate of a particular society. Reporters from the West noted how enthusiastically motorcycle drivers were being received by locals in Gottwaldov. On a 450 km race in a town named after the first Prime Minister of communist Czechoslovakia, wrote one reporter for Radio Free Europe, "it is quite clear… that enthusiasm was motivated by political considerations, at least among the older people."[13] Interviewing one of the racers, he highlighted that "in the youth it was just enthusiasm for the sport." Still, it was clear even to drivers that the race was organized magnificently, "as only a dictatorship can organize such an event." But despite the conspicuous absence of police, government officials, and external controls "one could never lose that certain feeling of being in a police state."[14] Four hundred women, it was rumored, were so "pretty that they must have been handpicked" to spy on western racers. The rumors were not outrageous: a small army of female Red Cross workers were placed every 500 m to ensure the safety of the race in a concerted effort to prevent a repeat of 1949, when seven people were killed after a racer crashed and ploughed through a group of spectators.[15] But reporters from the West asserted that it was not about crowd safety, rather an "ingenious idea" to replace police officers with Red Cross workers to secure the crowd from politically damaging ideas.[16] The odd atmosphere of the race was confirmed later by other spectators who went on short trips through Czechoslovakia during the six day tournament. These tourists were frequently stopped and encouraged to return to the race (though not compelled). One traveler noted how, when he got a flat on the road, a car full of civilians almost instantly showed up and helped him replace the tire. The would-be ordinary civilians were very friendly, but one insisted that he ride back with the driver to the race track.[17]

Such draconian measures were buttressed by official regulations. Entry visas for West Germans were only issued on the condition that the official motorcycle club of the country vouched that the individual would actually go to the race. Additionally, the government's fixed exchange rate of 0.58 German marks to one Czechoslovak korun made most prices in Czechoslovakia about five times more expensive than in the West.[18] Although West Germany was just at the start of its "Economic Miracle," and the West German mark was remarkably cheap, it was certainly a tactic of the Czechoslovak government to ensure Westerners did not waste money acting like rich men during the race. Finally, everyone was required to develop their film *before* exiting Czechoslovakia. To assist Westerners, the government installed a film lab in the Hotel Moskva where reporters and racers stayed.[19] The impression one had, in the end, was that the country was, in fact, unrestricted and free. But the hurdles one had to overcome—coincidental or planned—gave the impression of living in a police state. The government at the time wanted to show its peaceful side: it could host an international event immediately after riots and do so without unwanted dissent from the home population. Authorities restrained from more ostensive demonstrations of power, and instead focused on the games; huge demonstrations welcomed the international audience to a new, communist Czechoslovakia. Just as important as the race itself was the machine on which drivers were racing.

In previous articles, I have written about the habitus surrounding cars in People's Poland. There, I showed how automobility entailed not only the focus on sporting events but also on the machines (and the people working on them) as well.[20] Many East Bloc countries were struggling to provide enough cars and motorcycles for a growing population, and devised ways to ensure that the youth would be socialized in a motorized world. Racing was one way to ensure fans of fast machines. Czechoslovakia was historically also one of the largest producers of motorcycles in the East. That was recognized even in the West. In secret information reports, Radio Free Europe noted that there was:

> a long tradition of motorcycle production in Czechoslovakia, especially of two makes, the Jawa and the Cz. For several decades, these two makes of motorcycles have held a well-deserved place among the leading examples of two-wheeled vehicles in the world. They have been known for their quality and reliability.[21]

In East Central Europe, Czechoslovak motorcycles held a monopoly on the consumer market until the early 1970s.[22] By the 1970s, the Czechoslovak government had also decided to focus more direct investment into the motorcycle industry in an attempt to retain market shares in comparison with Japanese and Western brands. International rallies were a way to not only show the world that Czechoslovakia was tolerant and supported international events, but they were also a form of promotion, reserving the Jawa and the Cz prominent places in the world of motocross. That was also reflected in the ranking of East Central European racers and their racing machines in Czechoslovak rallies. Until 1964, East German and especially Czechoslovak drivers dominated the ranks at rallies. Gustav Havel, František Bartoš, and František Šťastný were common names to Czechs and Slovaks since they regularly held the pole position in races at home and abroad.[23]

As East Central European racing machines were surpassed by Western and Japanese models, Czechoslovakia hosted increasing numbers of foreigners at annual races in Brno, Most, and Gottwaldov. That was especially the case during the brief period of liberalization from 1963 to 1968, known as the Prague Spring. Then, controls on foreigners were lifted in comparison to 1953: one still needed an invitation from a hotel or personal friend, but there was no requirement for national motor clubs to vouch for travelers. Winners of races at the Grand Prix in Brno were also increasingly Western foreigners, even in the years of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968/1969. Still, the prestige of home racers was not diminished, as revealed in the International Six-Day Trial.

The Six-Day Trial was held in different countries each year, usually in Western countries. There, the Czechoslovaks dominated the winners' podium. In the first 25 years the race was held after World War II, Czechoslovakia outstandingly won the competition twelve times.

The most notable team in the history of the International Six-Day Trial, Czechoslovakia won five consecutive trophies abroad from 1970 to 1974.[24] The motorcycle team provided Czechs and Slovaks with a glimmer of hope in the otherwise drab era after the Prague Spring. Motorcycle races offered the population an apolitical environment within which one could celebrate teams from both East and West. The fact that East Bloc teams continuously held their weight against Westerners was certainly an added bonus to the regime: how better to show the superiority of socialism than through competitions in which East Bloc racers on East Bloc machines won against capitalist neighbors?

The second and third most-winning teams in the 25 years after the races commenced were East Germany (with six trophies) and West Germany (with four). Clearly, this northern triangle had a firm grip on motorcycle championships, even in the face of international competition. For traveling fans from both sides of the Iron Curtain (and worldwide), races in this small Central European country guaranteed to be a spectacle worth the time it took to get there and the hassle to obtain a visa. For East Bloc citizens, all that would change shortly after the Prague Spring.

International Travel and Czechoslovak Motorcycle Racing

In 1972, the governments of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland moved to open borders. Although citizens were still required to show a valid personal identification card, no passports and no visas were required to travel to neighboring Socialist Bloc countries. The so-called Borders of Friendship had numerous sources of inspiration: the European Community, the Nordic Passport Union, and other travel agreements starting in the 1950s and 1960s. But equally as important for leaders of the three countries was developing the idea of "socialist internationalism" in the age of goulash communism: along with ownership of new refrigerators and TVs, workers should have the right to travel independently to foreign countries. For obvious reasons, the West was off limits. In lieu of Paris or Rome, travelers were to go to Prague or Budapest to satisfy their wanderlust. The results surprised even the powers that be: tens of millions of Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Germans went abroad on vacation, to go shopping, and just to check things out. This was the first time since World War II that such a mass exodus of people went abroad, and the societal and economic effects of the project were truly immense, especially in Czechoslovakia.[25]

Czechoslovakia had a host of events which attracted particularly young visitors throughout the year. Outside of regular sporting events like matches between Prague Sparta and Bavaria Munich, there were also annual events which drew hundreds of thousands. It began with Easter and Pentecost, when the Black Beer Festival invited tourists to Prague.[26] The city of Most regularly held racing tournaments in June or July for automobiles and motorcycles. In August, there was the bicycle “Race of Peace and Friendship” as well as the aforementioned Grand Prix in Brno and the trials in Gottwaldov. In December, Christmas markets in every big city also attracted curious travelers. Throughout this period, East Germans constituted by far the largest group of tourists in the 1970s and the 1980s: an average of four million East Germans went to Czechoslovakia annually; it can be assumed that at least one in every ten GDR citizen went to Czechoslovakia every year. The “Borders of Friendship” was one of the last grand experiments of state socialism in the region; to authorities in all three countries, it was clear how difficult it would be to control such mass tourism.[27] The effect on international motorcycle races was equally immense, especially given the status of Czechoslovak, East, and West German racing teams, all of which were outstanding.

In the 1950s and 1960s, as I have shown, international sporting events were controlled in such a fashion to show the West that the government was capable of hosting rallies. They were also used to show the world how advanced Czechoslovakia was. During and after the 1970s, however, with the West increasingly advancing automobility to newer and newer realms, the focus changed. Now hosting international events was not novel. Instead, races represented how liberal the East had become, and revealed how governments trusted their citizens to congregate in places and with people relatively freely in a “normalized society.”

But the government was everywhere: there was no private sphere at rallies. In fact, now that there were open borders in the East Bloc, governments had to collaborate even more closely to ensure that international events went off well. This obviously altered the element of control: the focus changed from presentation abroad to control within. In a transition from racing events of the past, the combined forces of the Czechoslovak secret police and the East German Stasi replaced the “beautiful” female Red Cross workers of the 1950s with undercover agents and brute police force in the 1970s and 1980s. That force was first shown at races in 1974.

One weekend in August, 15,000 East Germans came to the Grand Prix in Brno and—since there was an inadequate number of camping spots—set up illegally on a soccer field close to the track. Fueled by the copious amount of beer notoriously served in Czechoslovakia, they began to dismantle street signs and even began to camp on streets.[28] The police came at night carrying batons and tear gas. When campers complained or simply asked questions, the Czechoslovak authorities usually responded by spraying tear gas in tents. Intoxicated spectators were forced to leave in their cars late at night, and others were taken to jail. When there was no more room in the local jail, East Germans were sent to the insane asylum for the night.[29] Dozens of citizens wrote complaints to the Central Committee: the treatment they received in Czechoslovakia was hardly indicative of the "friendship" professed by East Central European governments.

After 1974, there was only one other large disturbance. In 1981, at the Myšlivna Curve—where a majority GDR citizens stayed in a camp—"rowdy riots" had occurred, which "with few exceptions [were caused by] youngsters and young adults."[30] According to official reports, it happened on 28 August 1981 at ten in the evening. From a group of about 100 GDR visitors, some threw rocks and bottles at a police officer, who had to be taken to the hospital. The group then grew in size to three to four hundred.[31] They barricaded themselves in the camping area with benches and spare wood.[32] Then they set a kiosk on fire, and pelted firemen as they tried to put it out. One fireman also had to be treated in the hospital. The police attempted to make announcements in German. When that did not work, they used tear gas. The rioters cursed at the police and sang Nazi songs.[33] Four individuals were arrested. In response, it was prohibited to sell beer after 8 p.m. the next night. Four hundred campers again began to burn trash cans and sing fascist songs. This time, two kiosks were destroyed: the rioters wanted their beer. Three further kiosks were damaged.[34] Seventy-five policemen from the city of Brno, 2 policemen with police dogs, 14 criminal police, 120 trainees from the police academy, 18 from the reserves, 18 civil ordinance officers, 8 firemen with 2 fire hoses, 1 ambulance, 3 buses, 1 transport wagon, and 7 detainment wagons were used against a crowd of "citizens with German nationality."[35] Over the two days, 95 East Germans were detained and forced to trial. The Státní bezpečnost (Czechoslovak security police) sent images to Berlin of destroyed restaurants and picnic grounds filled with trash and broken bottles. In 1981, it was all the more problematic, since the East Germans got so drunk after Toni Mang—a famous West

German racer—won the Grand Prix. The GDR citizens were ostentatiously expressing “so-called German-German unity; glorifying and identifying with the world champion… as the ‘German world champion’ and [yelling] ‘Sieg Deutschlands.’”[36]

The Grand Prix 1974 and 1981 were considered failed races by authorities. It was not so much because the police beat East Germans on the street: given the circumstances, that was something that would have happened almost anywhere (East or West). Rather, it was that such a large incident happened at all. Indeed, both regimes were intensely interested in discovering just what their citizens would do under the guise of anonymity abroad. Violent clashes between local police and GDR citizens not only reflected badly abroad, they prevented governments from collecting information. In future years, the Stasi and its Czechoslovak counterpart, the Státní bezpečnost, worked more extensively to prevent such encounters. That was particularly important due to the sheer number of East Germans who flooded such sporting events.

Of the different instruments used to control the influx of GDR tourists, it was the border guard who was in charge of preventing “asocials” and “rowdies” from entering Czechoslovakia during major sporting and tourist events. One formal way of denying entry was already on the personal identification card: the Stasi created lists of people and ID numbers according to their profile. Starting in 1979, anyone who was placed on the “Dokumentation R” was automatically rejected.[37] Other lists also indicated if the traveler had engaged in “provocative” acts in the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, in other socialist countries, at soccer games, etc.[38] But a more powerful instrument in the hands of border guards was the ability to profile. They had the discretion to pull out citizens from trains, or deny entry due to any number of reasons.

The Stasi was also put in charge of tracking GDR citizens during their visits to motorcycle events in Czechoslovakia, and their scope was different than that of the border guards. The Grand Prix in Brno was a one of three major targets of Stasi surveillance annually. A team of hundreds of plain-clothed officers and unofficial informants were to infiltrate hotels and camping spots (like the one at the Myšlivna Curve), and engage with normal GDR and Czechoslovak citizens.[39] Already in 1982, authorities in East Germany listed explicitly what was to be done in order to ensure order at the race and ordered that fan clubs reveal exactly who was or were an informant(s) and where they would be residing. The Czechoslovaks coordinated officials from racing sports, youth clubs and interrogators from Prague and Brno together with the Stasi to ensure everyone knew who was who at the race.[40] The regional police of Brno—admitting that they had not been thoroughly prepared the previous year for the race—agreed to move back "the most well-known camping zones" and to make them less centralized and easier to control.[41] Two years later, in operation "Cross 84," Czechoslovak and German officers divided the race track into three zones of operation, and installed a central office in Brno for reporting. Translators and vehicles were also made available to the four contingents of Stasi officers at all times.[42] In two of the zones of operations—the two zones where most GDR citizens camped—there were special secret police in charge of preventing "enemy-negative and provocative plans."[43] Importantly, they were "not there to come into contact with specific individual people or groups;" they were only to prevent the dissemination of propagandistic material and/or figure out who is behind provocations.[44] Representatives from all regions of East Germany were to be present to ensure that no provocateur fell off the radar after returning home.[45]

Perhaps not surprisingly, there were very few instances where the Stasi (or the Czechoslovak police) had to intervene outside of 1974 and 1981. That was not because of a lack of tourists. The year 1986 was the exception that proved the rule: only 16,000 made it to the race that year, due to the fact that there was bad weather and that the race started on the same day as the first day of school and the university.[46] In 1982, there were over 40,000 GDR citizens at the race track; 14,000 were camping at the Myšlivna Curve.[47] In 1987, it was 100,000.[48] In 1988, it was 70,000. In 1989 (when people were fleeing to the West through Czechoslovakia and Hungary), of the 100,000 spectators, it was estimated that 65 percent were from the GDR.[49]

Surprisingly, there was little governments could do to prevent unassuming tourists from going to races: the numbers of people on the "R" list averaged only 6000 citizens, and the number of denied entries remained minuscule. To give but three examples: in 1987, at one border crossing, only 28 were refused entry into Czechoslovakia. Nine were for "decadent appearance; ten for pass problems; seven for customs infractions; and two for being on the 'R' list of the Ministry of the Interior."[50] In 1988, at one border crossing, of the 19 GDR citizens who were refused entry, five were due to "decadent appearance; four for pass problems; seven for customs infractions; and three for being on the 'R' list of the Ministry of the Interior."[51] In the region of Brand-Erbisdorf—a small mountain region of 10,000 close to the Czechoslovak border—authorities listed

15 individuals from the region who were either not to attend the Brno Grand Prix or were to be "interviewed" before being allowed across the border.[52] All but two were under 30. Three "had a negative view of the GDR"; four had attempted to escape the GDR in the past; four were "decadent"; and three had a previous history either at the border or in Czechoslovakia; with one there was no explanation.[53] All but one were blue collar workers. The one exception worked in the theater. He was also the one who had, in the past, declined a search on the border. Clearly, nearly all spectators were allowed entry if they made it to the border.

In internal documents, one notices how the types of crimes also changed in the eyes of the Stasi. They consistently worked to make their presence unnoticed in Brno and Most, and they rarely found explicitly political problems that had to be solved. In the years after 1981, the East German police only noted two major problems: they were positive that "enemy organizations from the Federal Republic" were being funded to encourage "unlawful assemblies of decadent and asocial youths from the GDR in anti-socialistic or nationalistic character"; and they were certain the West was using the international event to smuggle illegal passports.[54]

In general, however, the Stasi would frequently try to explain away disturbances perpetrated by their citizens and were less interested in finding East German provocateurs. As early as 1982, the Stasi explained that of the hundreds of arrests, "merely two" GDR citizens were sentenced following the Brno race of 1981.[55] One of the people, the Stasi surmised, could not have been a provocateur, since he was too stupid; although he was waving a (West) German flag, "due to his mediocre grades, [and that] he only finished the seventh grade," he simply could not be considered a political activist. Plus, they added, there were others there who originally gave him the flag.[56] In both judicial proceedings, the Stasi "saw no reason why there would be a problem [with the two sentenced in the future], since they had already completed three of the four to six month imprisonment."[57] The same year, at the Restaurant Pivovar in Brno, two GDR citizens—25 and 16—disturbed other restaurant goers. They were "very drunk," and "sang Nazi songs, and greeted each other with the Nazi greetings."[58] But after sobering up they were sent back to the GDR without prosecution.

Czechoslovak and East German authorities agreed in general that there were only minor problems. In 1985, Czechoslovak police forwarded a list of disturbances from the previous year. They stated there were six arrests, almost all of them were young people. The first four had to do with public drunkenness:

- [One 20 year old] drove a motorcycle on 22 August 1984… after drinking. After being brought in to a station, he was aggressive and broke a glass door. Since he was so inebriated he was taken to an alcohol sobriety station in Brno.
- [One 28 and a 22 year old] came together, very drunk, to a kiosk at the camping grounds Myšlivna and started to fight. They were taken to an alcohol sobriety station in Brno.
- [A 35 year old] urinated in public while intoxicated at the camping grounds Myšlivna. While being questioned by the police, he refused to identify himself. He attacked the officer. He was taken to sober up.[59]

The following three had to do less with intoxication (as far as one can tell in the report) and more with violations:

- [A 19 year old] forced a police vehicle to stop by walking in the middle of the street.
- [Another 19 year old.] Traffic violation. He did not stop at a stop sign. Ticket: 100 korun.
- [A 28 year old.] Traffic violation. He did not stop at a stop sign. Ticket: 100 korun.[60]

Finally, there were some 300 routine traffic violations and 99 civil tickets which were not considered egregious enough to single out in official reports.[61] Given the sheer number of visitors to places like Brno and Most, the number of law infractions were almost negligible. And indeed, both authorities realized it was nearly impossible to control the situation given open borders and the sudden influx of tourists. The city of Most provides the best example.

The Motodrom in Most was completed in 1982. The track— a modest track built with modern technologies situated on a mountainside—could accommodate 100,000 spectators. Most was a mere 100 km from Dresden and Karl-Marx Stadt, hence races were popular for citizens of the GDR.[62] Like in Brno, races in Most were particularly well received "due to the presence of international [teams with] the most modern racing technologies from non-socialist countries."[63] The problem in Most—a relatively small town of 60,000 in northeastern Czechoslovakia—was that it could barely muster up enough sleeping spaces for spectators. "Visitors from the GDR usually come on Friday/Saturday and fill up the camping zones—whose capacity of between 10,000 and 15,000 is hardly enough."[64] The

Stasi noted how people were camping “in every thinkable spot…. Even between apartment complexes or garage parks.”[65] Importantly, however, by 1986, the police “tolerated” the lawlessness, as long as there was “no direct conflict with public safety,” even if the “the city looked like an army camp.”[66]

The general understanding of what was political also changed over the course of the 1980s. Of the most important information collected by undercover agents surveilling crowds was their real or perceived connection with individuals from the West. Finding contacts was not a difficult task: hotels—as usual in the era of mass East Bloc tourism—were predominantly occupied by Westerners (who needed a hotel reservation in order to obtain a visa until well into the 1970s). On the race track, East Germans mingled with any number of foreigners from beyond the Iron Curtain. The secret police tracked individuals and noted how Socialist Bloc citizens reacted toward others. In 1981, agents watched as one group of (largely female) campers in Brno sang the “Deutschlandlied” and waved West German flags.[67] At the Myšlivna Curve in 1987, a group of nearly 100 individuals camped together. They were a mixed group of East and West Germans, and were doing things as diverse as exchanging newspapers or just cooking together. Many were former GDR citizens who wanted to meet with friends in Czechoslovakia.[68] They—like most spectators—were certain in the age of normalization that they were just one of the crowd. Consistently, the Czechoslovak and East German secret police noted how people had the “expectation… of anonymity in the foreign country.”[69] At times that would lead to stupid behavior (as with every tourist abroad), but the expectation of anonymity brought citizens of two putative enemy states together in Czechoslovakia. Believing they were freed from the pervasive eye of the state, East Germans took stock of conditions abroad and let themselves go all out.

What is so remarkable is the way authorities reacted after 1981: preventing contact was not as important as finding out what citizens were doing with this “expectation of anonymity.” In 1989, one Stasi member was surprised at how many GDR youngsters were being housed in the same hostel as West German youngsters.[70] The agent noted that “in the discussions and conversations… there was constant reference to reports of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (Ö3) about the numerous illegal border crossings of East Germans under an abuse of the territory of Hungary.”[71] He did not do anything to prevent such discussions, nor did he—dressed as an ordinary citizen—try to stand up for the government of the GDR. Instead, he wrote back to Berlin, informing them about what youngsters were doing in Brno. There were no arrests, and there was no attempt to pressure people to stay away from West Germans.

Frequently, when citizens returned from their trip abroad, they would be taken aside at border checks and interviewed. One inhabitant of Dippoldiswalde is representative of the hundreds of interviews taken after races in Czechoslovakia. At 45 years old, he went to Brno with his son for his first time. They both slept in their car to be able to travel to different parts of the track. "Nobody tried to talk to him" and he "didn't hear of trouble."[72] Referencing West German flags, he creatively stated that he did notice a number of "flags in black-red-gold without the GDR emblem," although he was uncertain who were waving the flags. At the final ceremony, "the West German hymn was played. He was surprised that police officers saluted" while it played.[73] He also reported that announcements were made in "very good German." He assumed the announcer came from the West, and said that announcements were always made to "*liebe deutsche Freunde* [dear German guests]."[74] In other words, the Czechoslovak organizers did not distinguish between East and West Germans, and if anything, were catering to Western sensibilities.

Of course people would declare that they had not done anything devious while abroad. Certain they had not been followed, they thought they were only reporting to border guards. When citizens reported how "shocked" they were about the number of West German flags, or by the brutish behavior of the police, or by the presence of Westerners across the race track, the Stasi knew exactly what had happened. These were the same Stasi agents that regularly went to races in Czechoslovakia. By the 1980s, authorities were more concerned not only with controlling the scene but also figuring out what their people were doing while abroad or while in contact with foreign visitors. Unfortunately for racing fans, such events were not an escape from the state, rather, they were a new field of action to see how far "socialist internationalism"—or friendship with the enemy—had progressed in the 1970s and 1980s.

CONCLUSION

Motocross in Czechoslovakia has gone undiscovered by historians of the region, despite its central importance to East Central European sports fans after World War II. Even today, racing events in the Czech Republic attract large audiences (even though Czech teams have largely vanished from the winners' podium). Motorcycle events evolved during the Cold War from being symbols of one socialist state to being ones of socialist internationalism. Whereas in the 1950s, Six-Day Trials revealed the strength of Czechoslovak technological progress, teams, and the state apparatus, by the 1980s, Grand Prix showed the ability and willingness to open the door to thousands of foreigners (most of whom came from socialist neighbor states). Parallel to this evolution was a change in policing and crowd control. Working closely with the East German Stasi, authorities in Czechoslovakia developed new technologies and tactics to manage ever-growing numbers of spectators. They stopped focusing on repressing political deviancy and instead instituted ways to prevent drunken riots. While there were lists of "undesirables" who were denied entry into Czechoslovakia, the numbers were a fraction of the hundreds of thousands who were allowed in, even as it became increasingly clear that contact with Westerners was almost assured. Where did this change in tactic come from? Were the Stasi and its Czechoslovak counterpart responding to cues from its own leadership or international circumstances?

Certainly, both the political leadership and international realities informed policing policies. Especially after 1972, when countries of the East Bloc drastically alleviated travel regulations to other socialist citizens, authorities came to the conclusion that they could not fully control the tens of millions of travelers going abroad. With the policy of détente and Ostpolitik in the 1970s, the number of Westerners traveling to places like Czechoslovakia was also growing exponentially. Indeed, while incomparable to current travel numbers, the influx of foreigners—many of whom brought much-needed Western currency—was radical and marked the beginning of a new era of tourism. As for the Stasi and East German authorities, there was the additional recognition that at such large sporting events which attracted primarily twenty-somethings, the Czechoslovak police were willing and able to use force to prevent riots and unruly crowds (as revealed by the complaints sent to the East German Central Committee). Finally, while unwilling to accept open demonstrations of political nature, both Czechoslovak and East German authorities saw that the biggest problems at motocross races were not political: people were just getting drunk; they were destroying football fields and they were camping "wild" in the tens of thousands.

In many ways, the changes in East Central Europe were a reflection of similar policies in other countries. Sporting events were still political on many levels, but governments in both East and West were struggling to manage the sheer number of spectators. In that way, motorcycle events evolved not only from being symbols of one socialist state to being ones of socialist internationalism.

Notes

1. Menzer, *The Wildest Ride*; and Beekman, *NASCAR Nation*.
2. For example, see Blom, *The Vertigo Years*; Packer, *Mobility without Mayhem*; and Thoms, Holden, Claydon, *The Motor Car and Popular*.
3. Siegelbaum, "Soviet Car Rallies of the 1920s and 1930s and the Road to Socialism."
4. Radio Free Europe, Situation Report: Czechoslovakia (Henceforth RFE/SR/CZ) (31), 4 August 1976.
5. Hungarian Open Society Archives (henceforth HU OSA) 300-1-2-46586.
6. Keys, *Globalizing Sport*, 115–180.
7. Johnson, "The 'Friedensfahrt;'" and Kyndrová, Dana. 2011. *Rituály normalizace*. Praha: Kant.
8. For example, see Hilton, *Hitler's Olympics*; Krüger and Murray, *The Nazi Olympics*.
9. Edelman, *Serious Fun*.
10. Johnson, "The 'Friedensfahrt'"; Bren, *The Greengrocer and his TV*.
11. Blumenthal, "*Fourteen Convicted, Three Million Condemned*."
12. For example, see McDermott, "Popular Resistance in Communist Czechoslovakia."
13. HU OSA 300-1-2-1953-09784.
14. Ibid.
15. "7 Die at Czech Auto Race," *New York Times*, 26 September 1949, p. 21
16. HU OSA 300-1-2-1953-09784.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. See also HU OSA 300-1-2-1955-8013.
19. HU OSA 300-1-2-1953-09784.
20. Keck-Szajbel, "Hitchhikers' Paradise."
21. RFE/SR/CZ/31/4 August 1976.
22. Ibid.
23. See: http://www.prazdroj.cz/en/media/archive/press-releases/1272-frantisek-stastny-is-remembered-with-an-original-helmet Accessed 1 June 2015.

24. “Czechs Get Motorcycle Honors,” *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 24 September 1973, D8.
25. Keck-Szajbel, “The Borders of Friendship.”
26. Die Behörde des Bundesbeauftragten (henceforth BStU), MfS BV Dresden Abt. VI Nr. 3661, p. 1.
27. Keck-Szajbel, “The Borders of Friendship,” 30.
28. Bundesarchiv Berlin (henceforth BArchB), DY/30/12634, pp. 29–30.
29. For example, see Keck-Szajbel, “A Cultural Shift in the 1970s.”
30. BStU, MfS ZAIG Nr. 3154, p. 3.
31. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 73.
32. BStU, MfS ZAIG Nr. 3154, p. 4.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 72.
36. Ibid., p. 93.
37. Süss, *Politisch missbraucht?*, 538–539.
38. Ibid.
39. BStU, BVfS BdL 2839.
40. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 12.
41. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 13.
42. MfS-ZO BStU Chemnitz XX-2533, pp. 5–17.
    BStU Chemnitz XX-2533, p. 44.
43. BStU, MfS-ZOS, Nr. 2466, p. 16.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. BStU, MfS HA-VI Nr. 1571, p. 7.
47. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr.16581, p. 143.
48. MfS-ZOS 2468, p. 65.
49. MfS-HA VI Nr. 1572, p. 8.
50. Ibid., p. 97.
51. Ibid., p. 69.
52. BStU Chemnitz BE-26, pp. 15–17.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. BStU, MfS-ZOS, Nr. 2466, p. 16.
    Ibid.
    Ibid.

BStU, MfS HA-VI Nr. 1571, p. 7.
BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 16581, p. 143.
BStU, MfS-ZOS 2468, p. 65.
BStU, MfS-HA VI Nr. 1572, p. 8.
Ibid., p. 97.
Ibid., p. 69.
BStU Chemnitz BE-26, p. 15–17.

Ibid. In another incident, in operation “Extreme 82” border guards at Raizenhain reported about the number of people they either sent back or denied entry. All were heading toward the Grand Prix. Within the group: one pair was denied, since one had an “R” in their pass; they wanted to travel for sixteen days and hitchhike to the popular mountain top; one had “little luggage” and a “decadent appearance”; one man had wanted to travel for five days, but only had a wool blanket; and one wanted to travel to Brno for eight days, but had no travel insurance for his car, and the amount of luggage did not conform to the length of the stay. BStU Chemnitz XX-2533, p. 44.

BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 24.

56. Ibid., p. 26.
57. Ibid., p. 28.
58. BStU Chemnitz XX-2533, p. 161.
59. BStU, MfS/AS 6/87, pp. 94–95.
60. BStU, MfS/AS 6/87, pp. 94–95.
61. BStU, MfS/AS 6/87, pp. 94–95.
62. BStU, MfS-ZOS 1231, p. 3.
63. Ibid., p. 4
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid., p. 4.
67. BStU Chemnitz XX-2533, p. 161.
68. BStU MfS/AS 6/87, pp. 95–108.
69. BStU, MfS-HA IX Nr. 18559, p. 93.
70. BStU, MfS-HA VI Nr. 1572, p. 11.
71. Ibid., p. 42.
72. BStU MfS BV Dresden KD Dipoldiswalde Nr. 17440, pp. 85–86.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.

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CHAPTER 9

Friends, "Potential Friends," and Enemies: Reimagining Soviet Relations to the First, Second, and Third Worlds at the Moscow 1957 Youth Festival

Pia Koivunen

The latter half of the 1950s witnessed a tremendous shift in the relationship between the USSR and the outside world. In contrast to the last Stalinist years of hostility and suspicion toward foreigners, the new leaders believed in the possibility of interaction. The new leadership, led by Nikita Khrushchev, put much effort in trying to convince the world that the USSR had transformed and should be taken seriously in the systemic battle for the future world. According to Khrushchev, the socialist system would finally outlive the capitalist one, but before that the two systems would coexist in peace.[1]

One of the central aspects of this new policy was the revival of internationalism, which resulted in growing interaction with other countries. Foreign tourism, cultural and technological exhibitions, as well as international events provided chances for physical contact with the outside world;

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new publications focusing on foreign countries, such as *Za rubezhom*, showed official acceptance of interest in foreign cultures and languages; and the signing of bilateral cultural agreements formed institutional structures for cultural exchange.[2] For Soviet society and people, these years of increased contact with the outside world were a formative period, which continued to influence the society for a long time.[3] The shift in the attitudes toward the outside world in the Soviet political establishment became evident also as a discursive change. Ted Hopf has described the new public way of speaking as a "discourse of difference," which allowed both leaders and people more ways to express their identities and address their inadequacies.[4] Moreover, as Eleonory Gilburd has argued, peaceful coexistence required "a new language for talking about capitalism."[5] The capitalist world was no longer solely a territory of the enemy but a system that would coexist along with the socialist world until its defeat. Likewise, it would no longer be appropriate to call the representatives of the capitalist system "enemies." Therefore, a new way to talk about capitalism demanded a rethinking of the concept of "friendship."

"Friendship" had long roots in the socialist movement and in Russian revolutionary thinking, where it was used in describing future international relations as opposed to seeing politics as "market exchange." In the Soviet Union, friendship found a special place in political discourse. In the 1930s, the metaphor of "friendship of peoples" was used in order to strengthen the unity among the nations of the USSR and to foster the creation of Soviet national identity.[6] Friendship was a key term also in international relations and in cultural diplomacy. According to Evgeny Roshchin, the USSR employed friendship as a "rhetorical diplomatic instrument," for example, in bilateral treaties signed between the USSR and other nation states. In the 1920s and 1930s, Soviet-friendship societies functioned as the key institutions of Soviet cultural diplomacy, by establishing contacts with Western fellow travelers and seeking to find support for the Soviet societal project.[7] After World War II, the Soviet "friendship policy" was applied to the task of creating unity in the new Socialist Bloc.[8] Another fundamental change in the post-war use of friendship, as Patryk Babiracki has argued, was its function as a moral recognition. While friendship had earlier referred to relations between peoples in a metaphorical sense, in the postwar Soviet public discourse a friend denoted someone who shared Soviet values, political doctrines, and goals for the future.[9]

Friendship was one of the key concepts in the discourse of the World Youth Festival, a Soviet designed international celebration, established soon after World War II. As a cultural mass event of the post-war communist movement which strove for a worldwide audience and recognition, the World Youth Festival followed the tactics of other Soviet international organizations, such as the World Peace Council (founded in 1949).[10] In trying to achieve a globally recognized status, the World Youth Festival avoided direct references to communism or the USSR and instead marketed the event with such key terms as “internationalism,” “progress,” “peace,” and “mutual understanding,” as well as slogans, such as “for peace and friendship.”[11] Although direct references to socialism or the USSR were not used, these key words soon became markers that connected these international organizations, surreptitiously sponsored by the Soviet Union, to the USSR and the Second World.

The core idea of the World Youth Festival was repeated in textual and visual representations that formed a specific discourse. This “peace and friendship discourse” depicted the World Youth Festival as a universal cultural forum, uniting young people all across the world. During the late Stalinist period from the end of World War II until 1953, the peace and friendship discourse focused mainly on drawing the line between “peace fighters” (the USSR and its allies) and “the imperialist warmongers” (the USA and its supporters). Paradoxically, the rhetoric more often underlined an active fight against the enemy than the actual ways of supporting peace.[12] During the Thaw, as Ted Hopf has argued, the Stalinist model of labeling all differently thinking groups as enemies (“who is not with us, is against us”) was replaced by a new, more flexible strategy, according to which, “who is not with us is potentially with us.”[13] In other words, once clear and strict boundaries between friends and enemies became blurry, and instead of the old binary model a new category emerged: “a potential friend.”

This essay analyzes the changes in the use of friendship with regard to an event where the number of “potential friends” was the highest in the post-war USSR: the sixth World Youth Festival in Moscow in the summer of 1957.[14] Reflecting Khrushchev’s policy of peaceful coexistence, the Moscow World Youth Festival became one of the most well-known events of the cultural Thaw. With over 30,000 foreign guests and more than two weeks of vivid interaction, this multinational spectacle was an apt example of the new internationalism: from advancing cultural exchange and the formation of transnational networks to sharing cultural influences and even encouraging sexual liberalization in the USSR.[15] The Youth Festival epitomized the thaw not only because it managed to capture the spirit of the new international USSR but also and especially because youth, symbolizing the future, were the best models of the revitalized Soviet Union. Moreover, those who were young at the turn of the 1950s/1960s were the ones who were most profoundly effected by the thaw and the Moscow festival.

During the Moscow festival, the USSR opened its borders to thousands of foreign people—something that would have been unthinkable only a few years earlier. Welcoming to the festival anybody irrespective of political, religious, or ethnic background forced the Soviet leadership, party and Komsomol officials as well as ordinary citizens to rethink their relationship to the world outside Soviet borders.[16] Who would be their "friends" in the new era? Could some of those who had formerly been considered as enemies—now "the potential friends"—become "true friends?" Most importantly, how could one recognize a friend?

Drawing on Soviet officials' reportage on foreigners during and after the festival, Soviet newspapers and magazines, as well as oral histories and memoirs, this essay examines how the relationships to the First, Second, and Third Worlds were characterized. Comparing the discussion on friendship by authorities, media, and ordinary people shows us that the opening up of the USSR to the outside world was an ambiguous and contradictory process. Widening the interaction especially with the First and Third Worlds brought to the authorities' attention masses of new potential friends who could become supporters of the new Soviet Union, and in the best case gradually become a part of the Second World. Allowing more flexible definitions for friendship, however, was troublesome. As the crushing of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 showed, the Soviet leadership was not ready to let different versions of socialism coexist. Therefore, despite the more open and tolerant image of the USSR, its leaders' schematic conception of socialism more often than not contradicted the different ways of understanding socialism expressed by foreign festival visitors.

The World Youth Festival from Stalinism to Khrushchev's Thaw

The World Youth Festival, held for the first time in Prague in 1947, started as a universal project with the idea of providing all young people an international forum to discuss global and local societal problems together. In this situation, where the world was gradually being divided into two hostile camps, the youth festival could no longer convince the world about its universal status and it became known as a Soviet product.[17] Instead of a global event, the World Youth Festival became a popular and well-known celebration within the Second World, where it occupied an important place in public culture. For example, for an East German delegate to the twelfth World Youth Festival held in Moscow in 1985, the youth festivals ranked third in importance after the Olympic Games and other championship sports events.[18]

The World Youth Festival, with its official organizing bodies, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the International Union of Students (IUS), covered such a wide network of youth organizations of the socialist countries that it practically represented the Second World in miniature—a microcosm of the Second World. In the context of the World Youth Festival, however, the Second World constituted a cultural, social, and ideological community that expanded the geographical boundaries of the socialist orbit. Even though the communist and democratic youth leagues of the European socialist countries formed the backbone of this activity that in Soviet context was called the democratic youth movement (*demokraticheskoe molodezhnoe dvizhenie*) the Western and Northern European leftist groups played an active role, especially by attending the youth festivals. The first six World Youth Festivals, held in Prague (1947), Budapest (1949), Berlin (1951), Bucharest (1953), Warsaw (1955), and Moscow (1957), were particularly European. In Budapest more than 90 percent of the participants came from Eastern and Western Europe, in Berlin the share was 92 percent, in Warsaw 83 percent (Eastern 32.2 percent and Western Europe 50.7 percent), and in Moscow 76 percent (Eastern 33.2 percent and Western Europe 42.8 percent).[19]

The World Youth Festival was a handy instrument for creating such an international community. It not only gathered young people together every second year but kept them busy in the meantime as well. The activities included, for example, fundraising campaigns, disseminating information about the forthcoming festival, selling festival items such as pins and postcards, introducing the festival afterwards for potential new recruits, and organizing post-festival gatherings. Moreover, between World Youth Festivals, democratic and communist youth organizations arranged smaller local, national, and international celebrations, camps, and meetings. The World Youth Festival was nonetheless the most well-known and popular event, and in fact, many Western Europeans participated in several World Youth Festivals.[20]

For the Soviet Union, the Moscow festival was a very different thing than the previous festivals had been. Despite the fact that the Soviet Komsomol had controlled the organization of the earlier festivals held in the capitals of the newly established people's democracies, especially the one organized in Berlin in 1951, these festivals had had secondary importance for Soviet society and Soviet youth. Of course, Soviet media contained numerous reports about the festivals in fraternal socialist countries, but still only a handful of young Soviet people, from 500 to 1000 delegates, had been allowed to attend the youth gatherings "out there." The Moscow festival was completely different. The official USSR delegation, 3719 members, was much larger than the usual Soviet youth festival delegations and the organizers reserved 34–40,000 places per day for ordinary Soviet young people, the best of whom could win a trip to the festival within their local Komsomol and labor union organizations. Furthermore, as the whole city became practically a scene for a huge fete, everyone who wished could participate in the festivities without getting any tickets to concerts or being named as an official delegate.[21]

For the Soviet political establishment, the Moscow festival served as a moment to promote the renewed image of the Soviet Union and to find new supporters and friends for the USSR among the First and Third world participants. The World Youth Festivals organized during Stalin's time had focused on fostering the coherence of the new Socialist Bloc, the Second World, while the idea of recruiting youth from the First and Third worlds had been left aside. During the preparations for the Warsaw gathering (and again before the Moscow festival), it was especially stressed that the event should find more participants from the capitalist world and developing countries.[22]

Practically any young person was invited to Moscow. This new kind of openness underlined the fact that the event had not been as all-embracing as it had promoted itself earlier and that the way friends and friendship were viewed had altered. Moreover, welcoming the former enemies to the capital of the USSR signaled the repudiation of the Stalinist dictatorship.[23] After the Soviet delegation (3719), the most sizeable groups came from countries with relatively active communist parties in Europe: Finland (2103), France (2099), and Italy (1854). Besides the host, the largest Second World groups traveled from China (1566), GDR (1274), Hungary (1240), and Poland (1192). The largest contingents from the Third World came from Egypt (725) and India (356).[24] It was characteristic that Third World participants sent small delegations (1–10 members); many of the representatives were studying or working in Europe at the time of the festival, and many delegations included emigrants from the USSR. Moreover, a number of countries and regions that had not gained

Table 9.1 Participants from the First, Second, and Third worlds in Moscow 1957

World/Continent	*Countries*	*% of countries*	*Participants*	*% of all particip.*
First World	**26**	**19.8**	**14,717**	***43.3***
Europe	22	16.8	14,534	42.8
North America	2	1.5	150	0.4
Australia and New Zealand	2	1.5	33	0.1
Second World	**11**	**8.4**	**13,300**	**39.1**
Eastern Europe	9	6.9	11,274	33.2
Asia[a]	2	1.5	2,026	6.0
Third World	**94**	**71.8**	**5,184**	**15.2**
Latin America	25	19.1	1,014	3
Africa	40	30.5	1,489	4.4
Oceania[b]	2	1.5	2	0.006
Asia	27	20.6	2,679	7.9
Hono[1]red guests	–	–	**491**	**1.4**
Total	131	100	33,996	100

Source: *Le VIe Festival Mondial de la Jeunesse et des Etudiants*, Moscou, 1957 (Percentages counted by the author)

[a] China and North Korea

[b] Papua and Samoa

independence (some of them still have not become independent, like the French overseas department Réunion) were included.[25]

Preparing Soviet Youth for the Encounter with Friends, “Potential Friends,” and Enemies

For the Komsomol—the main Soviet host of the youth festival—the extraordinary meeting between Soviet people and masses of foreigners brought forth new challenges. Before this unparalleled rally, Soviet youth were educated to meet people from different countries, cultures, and political systems. These preparations included, for example, instructions on how to behave with the guests, what to say about their socialist motherland, and what Soviet people should know about the visitors and their cultures and home countries. Soviet youth, and especially Komsomol cadres, were also prepared to respond to possible political provocations and questions on sensitive issues, such as the Hungarian uprising in 1956, the personality cult, and the ideological struggle between the capitalist West and the socialist East.[26]

In the time of peaceful coexistence, open hostility was not an option anymore, so in comparison with the Stalinist period, Soviet citizens were prepared to meet the so-called enemies in a friendly manner. During the preparatory period, it was constantly repeated that those who held opposite views on ideological, political, or cultural issues should not be attacked aggressively, but by way of critical arguments. A Komsomol official formulated this idea in a preparatory meeting roughly a month prior to the beginning of the festival in the following way: "The main goal [for the festival] is that all guests should leave the country as friends."[27] There are two ways to interpret this quotation. First, it can mean that those who were going to mingle with foreigners should treat them all as friends despite their possibly nonconformist views. In effect, in order to support Khrushchev's policy, Soviet people needed to demonstrate in practice that coexisting with the capitalist system was possible. Another option was to try to encourage a change in the opinion of the guests so that they would gradually begin to support the Soviet way of viewing the world and its future, and thereby fit the category of a "true friend."

While the instructions given in Komsomol meetings were not meant for the whole cohort of Soviet young people, *Komsomols'kaia pravda* and other youth newspapers and magazines could spread the word to a larger audience. "Towards the Festival" (*Navstrechu festivalia*), an article published in *Komsomol'skaia pravda* in January 1957 started a campaign intended to familiarize Soviet citizens with the "world" before the festivities in Moscow in July–August. In addition, hundreds of other articles with the same title introduced Soviet readers to the history and ideas of the World Youth Festival, told them how groups and individuals in different parts of the world prepared for this big event, and reminded Soviet readers of the role that Soviet youth was going to play at the gathering.[28]

This campaign in the press was lengthy and massive in volume. The first articles came out in *Komsomolskaia pravda* in January 1957 and the tempo accelerated toward the beginning of the festival, so that by July every issue devoted a page or more to the event. During the spring and summer of 1957, major youth newspapers and magazines, such as *Molodaia gvardiia*, *Molodoi kommunist*, *Smena*, *Moskovskii komsomolets*, as well as *Ogonek*, *Novyi mir*, *Sovetskii sport*, *Krokodil*, and a number of others contributed to the peace celebration. International publicity was primarily channeled through a special publication named *Festival*, as well as with special issues of the WFDY's *World Youth* and the IUS's *World Student News*.[29]

An all-embracing meta-theme in all festival-related articles and illustrations was the idea of bringing people closer to each other by means of peaceful interaction.[30] An apt example is a piece written by Sergei Obraztsov, a founder of the Soviet puppet theater, in *World Student News*:

> These rallies are important […] especially amongst young people. Let them only dance the polka together; it is enough. They do not need to discuss politics. Let them only see each other's eyes so as to understand that we are all the same.[31]

Obraztsov was not an ordinary Soviet citizen, but a cultural mediator, who had a great deal of experience in cultural exchange through his travels in the UK and in the USA.[32] By emphasizing the cultural aspects of the festival, Obraztsov described international friendship in a way that certainly pleased the Komsomol leadership. Proclaiming that "we are all the same," Obraztsov conveyed the message that his country was more inclusive and tolerant than before and helped promote Khrushchev's foreign policy. There is also another important aspect in his statement. Celebrating together without any political debates was the way Soviet officials wished to see the function of the World Youth Festivals. This does not mean that the event would not have had a political meaning to the Komsomol; quite the contrary. The political function did not, however, mean that individuals would have talked about political issues. Rather the image of the festival was that of a multinational, joyful round game; the First, Second, and Third Worlds holding hands and dancing in peace, was for the Soviet leadership its most important political statement about the future world. In other words, the future would be built in cooperation, but the USSR would lead.

The youth festival reportage in newspapers and magazines was an excellent forum to shape the understanding of the outside world. With their stories and illustrations from different corners of the world, magazines like *Ogonek*, *Smena*, and *Krokodil* created an illustrated miniature encyclopedia of the world and showed how potential festival guests looked, what they thought about the Soviet Union, and what they had been doing to help make the festival a real celebration of world youth.[33] Stories on preparations for the festival—collecting money for the trip, rehearsing cultural performances, training at sports, or telling others about the festival—gave the impression that the whole world was looking forward to Moscow.

"Hardly any other international event at the moment touches the hearts and minds of thousands of young people in my country like the VI festival," said Werner Lamberts, a secretary of the Freie Deutsche Jugend (Free German Youth).[34]

In accordance with Khrushchev's doctrine of coexisting with the capitalist system in a peaceful manner, the media examined the category of friendship with a number of little stories on Soviet citizens and their interactions with foreigners. *Ogonek*, for example, told about Ivan Rudskoi, a peasant from Kazakhstan, and people he met at a conference of peasant youth in Vienna in 1954 and at the fifth World Youth Festival in Warsaw in 1955. Rudskoi had met Carmen from Spain, swapped a pen for a fez with Aleksandr from Albania, and had a chat with a Guinean man named Pango. Rudskoi had also experienced what he called "a difficult friendship." In Vienna, during an opera performance, he entered into conversation with an Austrian named Franz Hager, who knew Russian. It appeared that Hager learned Russian in the Soviet Union, but also that he served in Hitler's army and fought near Rudskoi's home. "He had also been in our village. Perhaps it was on his orders that the village was burned down," Rudskoi speculated. While Carmen, Aleksandr, Pango, and the other people Rudskoi met were friends beyond doubt, he was not sure about Hager, who was "as if a friend, as if our own, but had (once) been such an enemy!" (*Vrode drug, vrode svoi, a takim vragom byl*).[35] The article on Ivan Rudskoi offered a model for encounters with foreigners and indicated which kinds of topics were appropriate to discuss. It also provided soul-searching on the limits of friendship. Could a person who was once an enemy later turn into a friend or did the stigma of an enemy remain despite the circumstances?

Numerous other contributors similarly published articles on encounters between Soviet youth and foreigners during the festival, and pondered the nature and limitations of friendship. According to *Ogonek*, "no one during these days will be surprised if two people completely unknown to each other shake hands on the street, embrace and separate as friends."[36] Another example was embedded in a conversation between festival youth and locals, published by *Molodaia gvardiia*. In the conversation a Soviet girl spoke with a Norwegian youngster at a concert featuring Argentinean guitar players, African drummers, a German jazz band, and a Soviet choir. The Norwegian asked whether the Soviet girl liked jazz, but understood from her face that it was not her favorite genre. The narrator then concluded: "is it at all necessary that our views on jazz should chime together? No, it is not necessary. And so we agree on this."[37]

Perhaps one of the most intriguing and puzzling references to the process of reimagining international friendship during the Moscow festival was a photograph published in *Komsomol'skaia pravda*.[38] At first glance this picture looks to be an innocent shot of a young man, who is singing to a girl. Reading the caption, however, makes one rethink the actual message of the photo. “He is American, she is Russian, but in singing it does not matter” (*On amerikanets, ona russkaia, no pesne eto ne pomekha*). The picture raises more questions than answers. What does not matter? The fact that they are of different nationalities, or that *he* is American and *she* Russian? And if their national backgrounds do not disturb their singing together, in which situation would an international couple like this not be appropriate? And if in this case their national backgrounds are of no consequence to their sharing of a song, in what situation would it be inappropriate? Even though we do not know the ultimate reasoning behind the idea of publishing the picture, doing so illustrates the change that had taken place since the death of Stalin, but also hints to the prohibitions and boundaries that still governed relationships and exchange between the First and Second Worlds.

All these examples demonstrate that not only coexisting but also making friends with former enemies was now considered possible. In general, it seemed that socialism had become more tolerant: representing a certain nationality or disagreeing in music or fashion taste did not automatically mean that friendship was out of the question. Tolerance did not, however, expand to questions of ideology or politics, as we shall see later. Furthermore, becoming more tolerant did not mean giving up the naming of enemies. For example, in May, *Molodoi kommunist* devoted space to describing how the “enemies of the festival” tried to harm young people’s festival plans in capitalist countries. “They [The US and other countries opposed to the festival] fear a youth festival like fire; they fear its attractive slogans—peace and friendship. The imperialist masters are afraid that having traveled to Moscow, world youth can see our country with their own eyes and will start to believe how false and dirty imperialist propaganda is.”[39]

Performances of Friendship

Before, during, and after the World Youth Festival, Soviet media overflowed with happy smiling faces representing the whole spectrum of the people on the globe, all warmly welcomed to Moscow. Monitoring reports produced by the Komsomol, party and state officials provide a more meticulous and realistic view beyond the hospitality. As the preparatory sources mentioned, all guests had to be treated like friends, but this did not necessarily mean that all were regarded as such.

For Soviet authorities a key element in defining and assessing friendship was its performance.[40] The World Youth Festivals were specific forms of cultural exchange designed by the festival organizers. The idea of the event was formulated around the concepts of peace and friendship, which together formed a specific celebration discourse and gave the festival its shape and recognizable image.[41] Attendants had a special role in this performance. They were expected to take part in friendship meetings, demonstrations, mass events, and other official occasions of each World Youth Festival. Moreover, the attendants were supposed to actively engage in making the spectacle, not only to watch the event or to support its ideas, but also to *perform* peace and friendship.[42]

Rituals and performance were characteristic of Soviet public culture, as Jeffrey Brooks and Alexei Yurchak have argued. Being part of certain rituals, or stating certain phrases, meant more than the contents of those rituals.[43] In a similar way, Komsomol officials in intra-delegation meetings expected foreign delegates to demonstrate their friendship toward their Soviet hosts by raising toasts, giving speeches in the correct tone, or offering gifts. In Stalin's time, the performance of peace and friendship had included celebration of the Soviet leader, while during the Thaw it was centered on the celebration of youth. Even so, the Soviet expectation of what an ideal encounter should consist of still had much in common with the earlier ritualistic culture. When reading documents and reports produced by Soviet authorities in various party and state bodies, their picture of an ideal meeting with foreigners emerges. It was supposed to be warm in spirit, and friendly relations were expected to be expressed (like toasts to mutual understanding). For example, Komsomol chief Aleksandr Shelepin complained that the US delegation had behaved in a cold manner and appeared very reserved and distant. He noted that they "did not propose any toasts." The difficulty, however, was that foreign participants, especially if they came from outside of communist organizations, were not always familiar with these cultural practices.[44]

There were also cases where the cultural practices were deliberately disturbed. One of the most active groups of "rebels" was the Polish delegation, the members of which were reported to have harmed the festivities in a number of ways. Perhaps the worst mistake by the Poles was not to support the Soviet interpretation of the Hungarian revolt. In October-November 1956, Soviet armed forces violently suppressed a spontaneous rising in Hungary, which opposed the Soviet-imposed rule in the country. In the Soviet interpretation, the Hungarian uprising was a counter-revolution run by fascists.[45] While the Soviet authorities managed to ensure that the Hungarian delegation would perform according to the plan and support the Soviet view of the conflict, numerous documents indicated that Polish delegates failed to stand in line with the other socialist countries. For example, one document lamented that the Poles considered the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries as "heroes."[46] This was not the only thing Polish delegates were reported to have done wrong. In one case, reported by a Komsomol official, some Polish delegates had "wilfully" replaced the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin with the Polish coat of arms with a white eagle in a room where a friendship meeting was about to take place.[47] The Poles were not the only rebellious festival guests, but they were the only socialist delegates who reportedly dared to oppose the Soviet rule this way. The rebellious behavior of Polish delegates was hardly organized anti-Soviet activity, but rather, it demonstrated that Poles were utilizing the more liberal climate within the Second World. Such an international event was not a completely new thing for them, as Poles had already experienced a retreat from Stalinist cultural orthodoxy two years earlier when the fifth World Youth Festival took place in Warsaw.[48] For Soviet authorities these kind of rebels among the Second World countries were especially difficult because they questioned the unity of the socialist world.

Besides certain rituals or ways of behaving during official meetings, authorities' reports included comments on immoral behavior that seriously questioned the "status of a friend" of the USSR. Wrong political and ideological views were on top of the list, as well as various types of inappropriate behavior described as hooliganism and loose sexual behavior. It is noteworthy that illegal trading—also tackled in numerous reports—was not regarded as particularly bad, even if the foreigners who engaged in these activities at the festival were members of communist youth organizations. It is also important to note that foreigners were granted much more latitude than Soviet citizens. While a few festival guests were arrested for drunkenness or other forms of hooliganism, Soviet people faced arrests for illegal trading, loose behavior, incorrect contacts, and communication with foreign guests, and a few of them ended up in the prison camps. Furthermore, the evidence shows that the most serious offenses from the authorities' perspective were those that might impact negatively upon the image of the USSR. Thus, photographing the wrong places, voicing oppositional views on the country, as well as creating an impression of disenchantment among Soviet youth all resulted in social control measures that were conducted either by the authorities or by fellow citizens.

Making Friends at the Grassroots: What Did It Feel Like Meeting Foreigners?

Interviews and memoirs of Soviet youths offer yet another perspective to the changing relationship between the USSR and the outside world. The view from the grassroots gives us a chance to see how individuals thought about the opening up to the world and the new internationalism. For Soviet citizens, the Moscow youth gathering was of special value since the official attitude toward foreigners, foreign cultures, and cross-cultural encounters had been negatively charged during the past few years. While the Soviet officials' reports focused mostly on analyzing who were and who were not regarded as friends, Soviet participants and observers emphasized more the emotional side of making friends and encountering new people.

A distinctive feature of Soviet festival narratives was the exceptionality of the encounters with foreigners. The late Stalinist years, when mingling with foreigners had been officially proclaimed as suspicious and positive views of foreign culture were seen as "cow-towing before the capitalists," were still fresh in the mind of Soviet citizens. In saxophonist Alexei Kozlov's (1935–) words, it was useless to explain to younger generations the significance of the word "foreigner" in those days.

> Constant agitation and propaganda, used to inculcate hatred and mistrust toward anything foreign, led to the point that the word "foreigner" itself aroused a combination of fear and exaltation in any Soviet citizen, just like "spies" did.[49]

During late Stalinism, the majority of foreign visitors to the USSR were diplomats, political delegates, and sometimes also spies. The people in capitalist countries were, more often than not, portrayed in literature and the Soviet media either as poor beggars and victims of oppressive capitalism, or extravagant capitalists in their dress coats, with cigars in their mouths. Against this background, seeing real young people from other countries was extraordinary. "When we suddenly saw on the streets of

Moscow hundreds, if not thousands of foreigners with whom one could openly chat, we were gripped by something close to euphoria," Kozlov wrote in his memoirs.[50]

Besides euphoria, these exceptional encounters with foreigners inspired a sense of re-engagement with the rest of the world. In contrast to the Stalinist isolationism and xenophobia, contact with "the world" at the youth festival was depicted as a physical and spiritual return. Vitalii Skuratovskii, a member of a circle of young intellectuals, described the festival as an encounter between the "free West" and Soviet Eurasia that was still liberating itself from the Stalinist path.[51] For the 25-year-old poet Yevgeni Yevtushenko, the festival represented a moment when one could feel "as a part of humanity which was stolen from us, it was a great beginning of liberalization in Russia." However, he continued, "we didn't feel lost or completely culturally isolated, because we were continuing to read some great Western books, French, American, English books. [...] but we wanted... a physical connection with the rest of the world."[52]

These exceptional encounters also caused contradictory feelings. Lily Golden, a 27-year-old African-American-Russian historian, described her emotions as she danced with a Guinean delegate and realized that "the Africans would all leave and I would never again have such an experience." She continued, "obviously I would never travel abroad and, equally obviously, Africans do not come to Russia. The normalcy of Soviet life was such that contact with outsiders was unthinkable."[53] Furthermore, the unfamiliarity of communication with foreigners, even with friends from within the Second World, confused people. In her memoir, Golden describes a meeting between Soviet and Chinese students that one of her hostel-mates organized. Golden's description not only illustrates the verbal gap between them but also the difficulties in arranging these kinds of occasions oneself.

> One day she [the girl from the hostel] invited a group of Chinese students to a tea party in the hostel. The guests sat in our visitors' room, facing a row of Soviet students, watching everything with great interest. There was no communication whatsoever. They spoke no Russian and we spoke no Chinese. They sat, politely and quietly, for an hour or more, then left. Maybe the idea had been good, but we were still unused to participating in events that had not been directly sanctioned by the Communist Party or the KGB. I imagine the same was true for the Chinese Students.[54]

Even if some Soviet people were open toward the guests, their attempts to create understanding between nations might be downplayed by others. In an interview, Olga Kuchkina, a student of journalism who worked for *Komsomol'skaia pravda* during the festivities, said that she received feedback from her boss that she wrote too positively about the foreign guests. Kuchkina's article entitled "Nashi dveri i serdtsa otkryty" was returned to her with a new title "Nashi dveri i serdtsa otkryty, no ne dlia vsekh" (Our doors and hearts are open, but not for all).[55] Journalist Yuri Draichik writes in his memoirs that before the festival, militiamen were ordered to protect Soviet girls from male festival guests, especially from "black people." When an officer asked why it was particularly "black people" and not, for example, Finns, the militia leaders answered that he just thought about the future of these girls.

> They make a cohort of chocolate children with our girls, and it is not only a shame for our Soviet moral system, but also for the girl. She will hardly ever find any normal fellow to marry her with a chocolate baby (*s shokoladnym rebenkom*).[56]

This comment reflects the unfamiliarity of Soviet society with ethnic diversity. Although the Soviet Union was a country with thousands of different ethnic groups, this variety only covered a part of the global spectrum. In the 1950s, there were so few African immigrants to the USSR that a biracial child would have directly symbolized a girl's promiscuity and would thus mark her for her apparent sexual looseness.[57] The above quotation, and the other examples, point to the way that some Soviet people thought about otherness in the late 1950s. In the festival discourse, all nations and all the people, irrespective of ethnicity, were to be embraced (Fig. 9.1). This was, however, only for the festival. When the celebration was over, everyday life returned and, as the above comment indicated, standing out in this environment could be difficult.

Authorities' Evaluation of Friends

How did the efforts to keep the old friends and make new ones finally succeed? A fascinating source for analyzing Soviet festival organizers' and authorities' assessment on the Moscow festival is a final report compiled and signed by the leadership of the organization: Aleksandr Shelepin (Komsomol leader), Sergei Romanovskii (KMO leader), and Nikolai Bobrovnikov

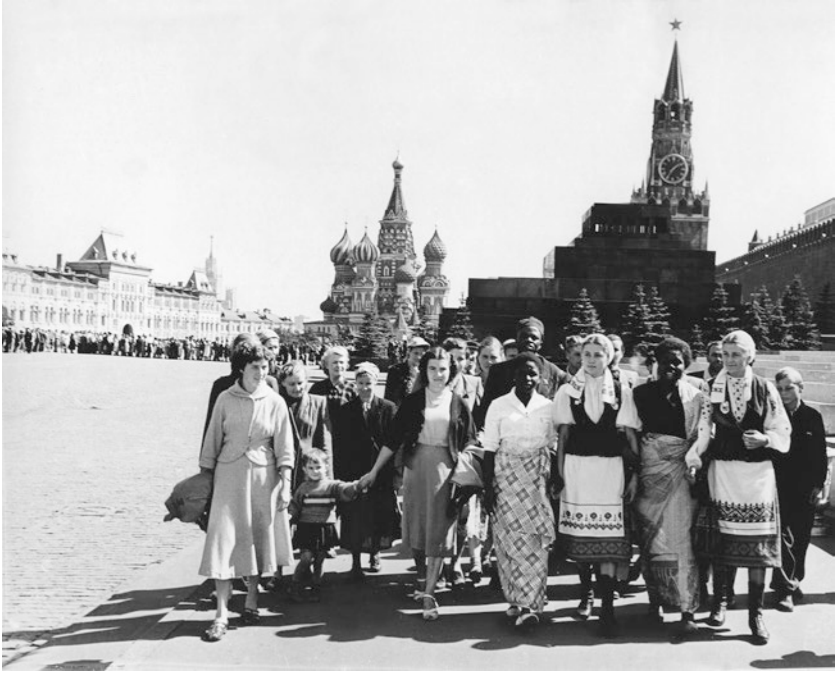

Fig. 9.1 A group of African festival delegates and local youth returning from the Lenin-Stalin mausoleum. According to the authorities' reports, the mausoleum was among the most visited tourist sites during the Moscow festival in 1957. *Source*: People's Archive, Helsinki, Finland. Photographer B. Trepetova

(leader of Mossovet). This final report was a thorough and critical assessment of how the Moscow festival had succeeded. It was handed to the CPSU Central Committee at the end of August 1957. This final report was based on a number of monitoring reports produced by various Party, Komsomol, and state bodies during and after the festival.[58] The monitoring reports provided a multifunctional source for widening knowledge on the thinking of young people and youth organizations in the First, Second, and Third Worlds. Considering the amount of space that was devoted to the different categories of youth, the attendants of the first world formed the most important target group. While the young people and youth organizations of the socialist countries received surprisingly little attention, there was a growing interest in the participants from the Third World.

In their assessment on the youth of the First World, the authorities used a trilevel categorization. The first category encompassed “genuine and sincere friends of the Soviet Union,” who came from the ranks of the communist and democratic organizations. The second group included those who had formed their views of Soviet life under the influence of “reactionary propaganda” but who “whole-heartedly sought to see what was going on in the USSR and to clarify what socialism was in practice.” The third group included a small group of foreign participants with hostile attitudes toward the USSR. This group had attempted to influence other delegates, had caused small provocations, and disseminated anti-Soviet propaganda among Muscovites. It was remarked that some governments, especially that of the USA, had put much effort into including people of this category into the festival delegations.[59]

The second category, the “converted western youths,” who usually did not belong to communist or democratic organizations, formed the most significant group for the Soviet cultural diplomacy. They represented the group of potential friends who, according to the officials’ view, had learned “the truth” about the country at the festival despite their earlier anti-Soviet views. The stories about young westerners whose preconceptions were largely influenced by bourgeois propaganda, were centered upon the transformative force of the Moscow festival. Their “conversion narratives” described how the festival had changed their perceptions on the country and its people. They praised the socialist system that had given developed social care for its citizens, were interested in the revolutionary past, and enthusiastically watched the building of the future. Foreign guests were particularly fascinated by the lack of unemployment as well as free education and healthcare.[60] It was, however, important not to be too flattering or uncritical toward the USSR. Most valuable were those commentaries that recognized the importance of the festival in transforming views but which did not praise the country or socialism too much. This was similar to the way in which Western fellow travelers had been seen by the Soviets already in the 1920s and 1930s.[61] These friends of the USSR were far more valuable when they did not belong to communist parties or organizations, which would have created the image that all those who supported the Soviet Union were communists.

The third category, anti-Soviet and hostile youth and youth groups, in other words, the least potential friends, was a group whose presence the Soviet authorities had anticipated. Giving these enemies free entrance to the country had been a sacrifice the authorities had been willing to make in order to promote their political goals. According to the final report, anti-Soviet people were identified in the US, UK, French, Italian, West German, and in some Scandinavian delegations. These people were apparently in close contact with their respective embassies and attempted to find facts for anti-Soviet propaganda.[62]

The Second World was much less discussed in the final report, which only mentioned the Polish and Hungarian delegations and focused mostly on the uprising of 1956 and its repercussions. It seems that the friendship between the USSR and its socialist brothers was the norm, and was discussed only when problems emerged. It is also possible that discussing and evaluating the inner relations of the Second World were not tasks of the Komsomol leadership but the higher echelons of the CPSU.

Unlike the Hungarian delegation, which had defended the "truthful" picture of the 1956 happenings, the Polish delegation was described as "revisionist and nationalistic."[63] The Polish delegation had shown interest in the Yugoslav model of socialism and displayed "unhealthy tendencies" in art. In the student meetings the Poles were openly critical about the problems in their social services and the limitations of socialist realism, and supported views on Western modernist art and various ideological issues that dissented from official views, positioning the Polish delegation against the other people's democracies and the USSR.[64]

While the First and Second World youth and youth organizations were more or less familiar to the Soviet authorities, the Third World formed a new and increasingly important target group. Due to the earlier passive approach to the Third World during the Stalin era, Soviet authorities knew very little about these countries and their people. A revival of interest had taken place, as in so many other spheres of life, after 1953 when the new leadership had started to establish diplomatic, economic, political, and cultural relations with the countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa.[65] The new policy was based on new thinking about the developing world, and about leaders who, during the Stalin years, had been regarded as "imperialist lackeys," such as Egypt's president Nasser and India's premier Nehru, who were now seen as potential allies.[66] Still, the Third World was a much less well-known entity than both the West and the socialist countries and thus, the Moscow festival was above all in this respect a learning process for the Soviet authorities.

According to reports, Third World delegations were enthusiastic about Soviet socialism, the educational system, equality between men and women, freedom of religion, and the healthcare services.[67] Although the Soviet Union seemed to impress young Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans, they themselves did not fully live up to the expectations of their hosts. The reports complained that many Latin American and Arab delegations contained more businessmen than cultural people and that instead of performing peace and friendship, they devoted most of their time to establishing commercial contacts with Soviet enterprises, or simply having fun.[68] It also came as a surprise to the Soviet authorities that the nation states listed in the table of participants did not automatically please Third World delegates. For example, among the Arab delegates there were discussions on establishing a Pan-Arab state, and talks among Central and Western Africans who refused to represent the states made by colonial powers and rather wished to be grouped on a regional basis or simply as Black African delegates. The most important point for the Soviet authorities, however, was that according to their evaluation, the festival had managed to strengthen anti-imperialist and anti-American sentiment as well as sympathies for the USSR among Third World visitors.[69]

The main impact of the Moscow youth festival was in establishing Soviet relations with the Third World countries. By accepting the colonized and newly independent states, the festival organizers offered them strong public support. According to Maxim Matusevich, the visible presence of African delegations at the Moscow festival revived African studies in the Soviet Union, as a result of which a research institute for African studies was created and a "Friendship University" was established for African, Asian, and Latin American students in Moscow in 1960 (in 1961 it was named after Congolese independence fighter and first post-independence leader, Patrice Lumumba (1925–1961)).[70] Later Soviet support for the Third World widened as African capitals were twice chosen as the venues for the World Youth Festivals (Algeria in 1965 and Ghana in 1966). Both of these prospective venues, nonetheless, failed to materialize because coup d'états in both countries overthrew the pro-Soviet governments of Ben Bella and Kwame Nkrumah.[71]

The monitoring reports on foreigners helped Soviet authorities map the world youth. The reports happily recognized the rise of the group of potential friends, but they could not fail to point out an unexpected development: the world youth was far more heterogeneous than they had expected. While the authorities had prepared to face anti-Soviet views from certain Western visitors, they had not been ready to encounter so numerous disagreeing voices from within the international communist community, or the Second World. Soviet Union still inspired enthusiasm among young foreigners, however, even many of the most loyal ones seemed to be uncertain about their unconditional support for the "Soviet cause." Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the Twentieth Party Congress as well as the Hungarian events the same year had fractured the international communist movement, and the same had happened in the democratic/communist youth movement. The leadership of the festival organization could rejoice at the enormous interest that young people in the ranks of the WFDY and IUS showed in the Moscow festival, taking it as evidence of the strength of the democratic youth movement, but at the same time they had to admit that the discipline and ideological loyalty of the late Stalin period was gone. Being a friend of the USSR did not fit into one formula anymore.

Conclusion

When the Moscow World Youth Festival ended in mid-August 1957, Komsomol and party leaders were rubbing their hands with pleasure. Organizing an international event with such a huge number of foreigners had been risky, but it had been worthwhile. The massive turnout from all around the world to the Moscow festival, large coverage in media in a number of countries, and most importantly, positive feedback from foreign festival guests made the Soviet political establishment hail the youth gathering as "a great victory" for the USSR and its social system (Fig. 9.2). Soon after the successful launch of the first artificial satellite Sputnik, the signing of a cultural agreement with the arch-enemy the USA, the National Exhibition in New York, and finally Khrushchev's visit to America as the first Soviet leader signaled that the USSR was on the rise and supported general optimism in Soviet leadership. It seemed that the Second World might indeed grow with a number of new friends in the near future. In this (over)-optimistic atmosphere, the Komsomol head Aleksandr Shelepin, together with Khrushchev, decided to take a risky step and suggest the next World Youth Festival be held on capitalist soil, in Vienna in 1959.[72]

It took a much longer time to be able to witness the more permanent influence of the youth festival upon the Second World and vis-à-vis the First and the Third Worlds. The foundation for late 1950s optimism was well-established, but as attentive observers could not fail to notice, all was not as well as it seemed. The Moscow festival monitoring

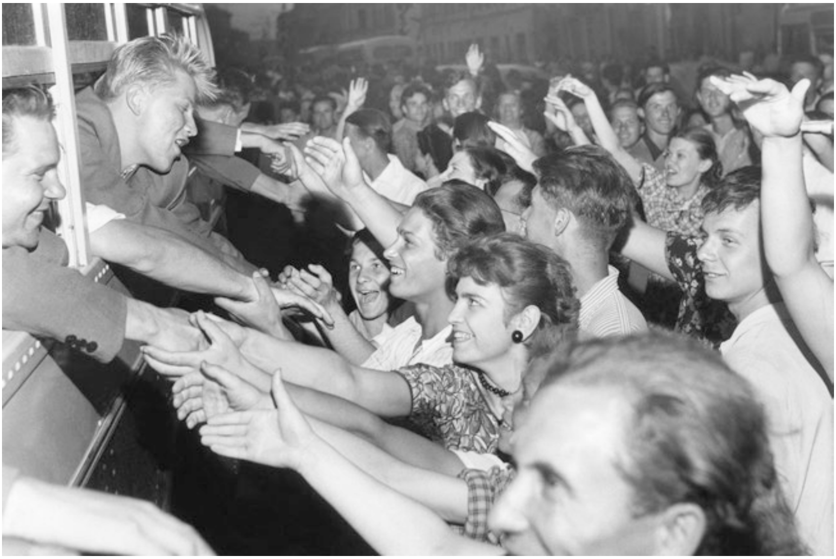

Fig. 9.2 Farewell ceremonies at a Moscow railway station following the 1957 youth festival. *Source*: People's Archive, Helsinki, Finland. Photographer unknown

reports revealed some alarming facts about the Second World. While the Moscow festival managed to appeal to a number of new potential friends and change some of their views on the country, many of the "old friends" in the ranks of foreign communist and socialist youth organizations, even in fraternal socialist countries, seemed to have turned their backs to the Soviet way of building communism. While the USSR and the Second World had become more tolerant toward the others, the Moscow festival also showed that the Second World had become more diverse itself.

The inability to tolerate this diversity as well as excessive optimism about the possibilities of the socialist system to expand sealed the destiny of the World Youth Festival, which never became the globally recognized event its founders had hoped for. As the next two World Youth Festivals in Vienna in 1959 and in Helsinki in 1962 illustrated, Shelepin's risky plan did not pay off. Both festivals saw vast national and international opposition and even anti-festival and anti-Soviet aggression during the course of the events. Even less successful were the two attempts to export the festival to Africa. After trying to expand Soviet influence in the First and Third Worlds, the Soviet authorities faced a moment similar to the earlier effort to spread the world revolution outside Russia in the 1920s: they had to concentrate first on disseminating the message of peace and friendship within the Second World.

Notes

1. Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 348, 427.
2. On the cultural and social aspects of the thaw see for example Kozlov and Gilburd, eds., *The Thaw*; Ilic and Smith, eds., *Soviet State and Society under Nikita Khrushchev*; Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*; and Aksiutin, *Khrushchevskaia*.
3. Kozlov and Gilburd, "Introduction," in *The Thaw*, 4.
4. Hopf, *Reconstructing the Cold War*, 146–147.
5. Gilburd, "Books and Borders," 236–237.
6. See, e.g., Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values*, 163; and Hutter, *Politics as Friendship*, 2.
7. Roshchin, "Friendship of the Enemies," 71–91. On Soviet friendship societies see for example David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*; and Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance*.
8. Applebaum, "A Test of Friendship," 216.
9. Babiracki, "Enemy to Friend," 142.
10. On the World Peace Council see for example Wernicke, "The Communist-led World Peace Council and the Western Peace Movements," 265–311.
11. Similar remarks in Behrends, "Agitation, Organization, Mobilization," 183.
12. *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, July 28, 1949, 4, Gi de Buasson, 'VFDM nakanune festivalia i kongressa v Budapeshte'; *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, August 5, 1951, 3, N. Mikhailov, 'Slet molodykh storonnikov mira'; *Izvestiia*, August 20, 1949, 1, 'Na Mezhdunarodnom festival molodezhi i studentov'; *Pravda*, July 25, 1953, 3, 'Molodezh' v bor'be za mir i luchshee budushchee'.
13. Hopf, *Reconstructing*, 199, 223.
14. For a more detailed analysis of the World Youth Festival as a Soviet cultural diplomacy instrument and the Moscow gathering in particular, see author's PhD dissertation: Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship."

15. Gilburd, "The Revival of Soviet Internationalism in the Mid to Late 1950s"; Roth-Ey, "'Loose Girls' on the Loose?," 75–95.
16. Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship," 168–173.
17. Kotek, *Students and the Cold War*; on the criticism of the World Youth Festival in US and British newspapers see for example Drew Middleton, "Million red youth parade for 'peace' in Eastern Berlin," *The New York Times*, August 13, 1951; "The Berlin Youth Festival," and "Why We Believe in This," *The Manchester Guardian*, August 20, 1951.
18. Interview with a German man, January 1, 2008; Rossow, "…alles nett, schön und gefühlsbetont, mit viel Absicht," and "Rote Ohre, roter Mohn"; on the Warsaw festival, see Krzywicki, *Poststalinowski karnawał radości*.
19. Plan for the work of the Secretariat for the Festival, 2, Box 1949-, Reijo Viitanen's collection, People's Archive, Helsinki (hereafter KansA); RGASPI, f. 17, op. 137, d. 546, ll. 102–104. Otchet ob uchastii delegatsii sovetskoi molodezhi vo Vsemirnom festivale molodezhi i studentov v zashchitu mire v Berline, I; RGASPI, fond 3-M, op. 15, d. 8, ll. 19–22.
20. Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship," 97–98.
21. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 11, ll. 96–97. Stenogramma zasedanii komissii po organizatsii i provedeniiu shestogo Vsemirnogo festivalia molodezhi i studentov, 01.21.1957; *Sixth World Youth Festival*, (Moscow: WFDY, 1958), 187–189.
22. RGANI, f. 5, op. 28, d. 363, ll. 74–79, 101–108. Podgotovki k V Vsemirnomu festivaliu molodezhi i studentov.
23. Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship," 170–171.
24. *Sixth World Youth Festival*, 1958, 187–189.
25. Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship," 200–206.
26. TsAOPIM, f. 635, op. 13, d. 546, l. 10. Stenogramma sobraniia aktiva MGK 'ob itogakh raboty VII plenuma TsK VLKSM'.
27. TsAOPIM, f. 4, op. 104, d. 7, ll. 108, 126. Stenogramma, 20.6.1957.
28. On plans for publicizing the festival see for example RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 84, l. 106. L. Sav'ialova.
29. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 52, ll. 173–174. Predlozhenie po gazete "Festival," tov. Vdovin; RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 270–279. Russian, English, Spanish, German and French versions of *The Festival*.

30. See for example *Molodoi kommunist*, 8/1957, 65–78, "'Molodezh' mira – protiv ugrozy atomnoi voiny," V. Vdovin; *Molodoi kommunist*, 10/1957, 114–118, 'Sovetskoi strane prinadlezhit budushchee,' N. Nikolaev.
31. *World Student News*, 5/1957, 10. Ricardo Ramirez, "Moscow Festival."
32. For Obraztsov's travels abroad see Gilburd, "Books and Borders," 227–247.
33. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 84, ll. 99, 102, 106. L. Sav'ialova.
34. *Smena*, 12/1957, 18. Werner Lamberts, 'Froindshaft! Druzhba!'.
35. *Ogonek*, 31/1957, 6–7, Mariia Belkina, "'Ivan Rudskoi, zhitel' tseliny."
36. *Ogonek*, 32/1957, 2, 'Sobralas' na festival'nyi praznik molodezhnaia sem'ia'.
37. *Molodaia gvardiia*, 5/1957, 172, Galina Mann & Liliana Rozanova, 'My vdvadtsaterom idem po Moskve' (Zametki nezhurnalistov).
38. *Komsomolskaia pravda*, 08.04.1957, 6.
39. *Molodoi kommunist*, 5/1957, 103–108 (quote on page 104). 'Gotov li ty k festivaliu?'.
40. For performance as a concept see for example Schechner, *Performance Studies.*
41. For celebration discourse, see Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous Comrades*, 7–9.
42. Koivunen, "Performing Peace and Friendship," 17–18, passim.
43. Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*, xvi, 78, 241–244; and Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, 21–22, 58–59, 93.
44. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 121–122. A. Shelepin v TsK KPSS, 08.09.1957.
45. For an analysis of the Soviet leadership's thinking on the crisis in Hungary, see Kramer, "The Soviet Union and the 1956 Crises in Hungary and Poland," 163–214.
46. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 196, l. 43. Informatsiia o rabote Chekhoslovatskoi delegatsii na VI Vsemirnom festivale molodezhi i studentov, 5 i 6 avgusta 1957; see also Tromly, "Soviet Patriotism and its Discontents among Higher Education Students in Khrushchev-era Russia and Ukraine," 310.
47. TsAOPIM, f. 4, op. 104, d. 31, l. 94. Sekretariu MGK KPSS, tov. Marchenko I. T., V. Zaluzhnyi, Informatsiia 14, 4.8.1957.

48. For the Warsaw festival see, Krzywicki, *Poststalinowski karnawał radości*; for Polish youth see for example Junes, *Student Politics in Communist Poland*.
49. Kozlov, "*Kozel na sakse*"—*i tak vs iu zhizn'*," 102.
50. Interview with Yevgeni Yevtushenko, January 17, 1999. Accessed 19 August 2008 [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/interviews/episode-14/yevtushenko1.html]; Kozlov, *Kozel na sakse*," 103.
51. Skuratovskii, "'Kokteil' Maiakovki,"' 109–110.
52. Interview with Yevgeni Yevtushenko, January 17, 1999.
53. Golden, *My Long Journey Home*, 62–63.
54. Ibid., 59.
55. Kuchkina, *Kosoi dozhd' ili peredislokatsiia pigalitsy*, a draft of an unpublished memoir, given to the author in 2009.
56. Draichik, *Golubaia krov*,' 260–261.
57. Roth-Ey, "Loose girls," 86.
58. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 155–193. N. Bobrovnikov, A. Shelepin, S. Romanovskii, v TsK KPSS, 30.8.1957.
59. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 159–161.
60. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 160–166.
61. Stern, *Western Intellectuals and the Soviet Union*, 121–122, 128–129, 204–205; David-Fox, *Showcasing*, 46.
62. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 160–161.
63. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 169–171.
64. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 169–171; RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 129–132. N. Mikhailov v TsK KPSS, August 13, 1957; TsAOPIM, f. 4, op. 104, d. 31, l. 79. Informatsiia 13, 08.03.1957. Similar views on the Poles were presented in *Courtship of Young Minds*, 24–25.
65. For Soviet political and economic views on the Third World countries, see for example Kanet, "Soviet Attitudes Toward Developing Nations Since Stalin," 32, 26–50.
66. Hopf, *Reconstructing*, 199, 235–242.
67. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, l. 165; GARF, f. 8581, op. 2, d. 457, l. 1–3; GARF, f. R-9518, op. 1, d. 8, ll. 237–238; Zapis' besedy s delegatom frantsuzkogo Kameruna na VI Vsemirnom festivale molodezhi i studentov Abessalo Nukulu. V. Iaroslavskii, 08.12.1957; RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 193, ll. 28–39. Voprosy dlia resheniia na plenume SPK (no date).

68. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 83, l. 5; RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 205, ll. 29–36. Otchet o rabote s delegatsiei Peru na VI VFMS. I. Vlasova.
69. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 233, ll. 161–162.
70. Matusevich, "Probing the Limits of Internationalism," 19–21.
71. "Algerian Youth Unit Scores Shifting of World Festival," *The New York Times*, June 7, 1965; Karl Reyman, "The World Youth Festival: Homeless Again?" 141-7-267, Open Society Archive, Budapest, Hungary; for Soviet Union and Africa see Klinghoffer, "The Soviet Union and Africa," 51–77.
72. Interview with N. S. Diko, 2008, Moscow.

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PART V

Between the Second and the Third Worlds

CHAPTER 10

Peace and Progress: Building Indo-Soviet Friendship

Jeremiah Wishon

"We Stand for Peace!"

The first World Festival of Youth and Students took place in Prague in 1947, just after Stalin opted to prioritize "peace" within Soviet propaganda efforts aimed at foreign publics. Of the thirteen World Festivals of Youth and Students (WFYS) held between 1947 and 1989, the sixth WFYS, hosted by Moscow from July 28 to August 11, 1957, proved to be the most successful in terms of both number of guests and the effectiveness of Soviet foreign outreach. As venues for pro-peace leftists—both communist activists and democratic socialists only moderately sympathetic to the USSR—the festivals served a multifaceted purpose for Soviet policymakers, activists, and institutions. Above all, the festivals served as a vehicle for binding together the concepts of "Soviet" with "peace" and "friendship," a move with obvious propaganda value to Soviet policymakers.[1] At the same time, however, I argue that the festivals had more subtle effects on the development of Soviet relations with nonaligned and "developing" nations. In the case of South Asian visitors to the festivals (specifically from India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Ceylon), the guests often

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emerged with a conception of the Soviet people as “standard-bearers” of a kind of progress for human civilization that was inclusive of local customs and bore an inclination toward proper interpersonal conduct. For those inspired by such a conception of the Soviet people, the festivals also created networks of contact and support. Foreign guests met Soviet citizens in preparation for the festivals, spoke with others at the festivals, and then returned to their native countries with new contacts. Those who were not present could also take advantage of Soviet resources made available for propagation of the Soviet “peace” message. At face value, it may sound like the World Festivals of Youth and Students were thus successes of the Soviet propaganda apparatuses, but such a conclusion is misleading, as Soviet activists and propagandists had to respond to challenges raised by participants and critics of their public galas. For South Asian visitors in Soviet festivals, moreover, participation was not a passive adoption of Soviet viewpoints and values. Indeed, much of the festivity actually happened in circuits only peripherally related to the festival itself, plus those involved could utilize their new contact networks for personal goals not necessarily shared by—or even sympathetic to—their Soviet partners.

The World Festivals of Youth and Students at a Glance

At a basic level, the festivals themselves were massive public spectacles allowing Soviet patrons to project a positive image of themselves (as peaceful, friendly, anti-imperialist, and progressive).[2] Participating Soviet youth endeavored to claim championship over an international peace movement and depict the emerging Cold War as an effort of American (or broadly speaking, Western “imperialist”) aggression.[3] Central to organizing the logistics of the festivals were groups such as the World Federation of Democratic Youth, national and regional student organizations in countries outside of the USSR, societies for friendship with the Soviet Union, and Soviet organizations such as the Komsomol and the Anti-Fascist Committee of Soviet Youth (AKSM)—in short, Soviet institutions, fronts, and also sympathetic but independent Indian organizations. As the festivals were intended to depict the USSR not only as a peaceful nation but also as a brotherhood of peoples, the non-Russian Union Republics such as the Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Armenian SSRs were critical to organizing, propagandizing, and peopling the festival events. All of these republics provided both delegates and personnel for performance art, sports competitions, and other features of the festivals.[4]

The 1957 World Festival of Youth and Students is particularly interesting because it was a very public, highly visible depiction of Soviet Cold War efforts to project soft power into places like India—a de facto guest of honor at the Festival. The Khrushchev period as a whole was a kind of transitional period in Indo-Soviet relations, bridging meaningful but underdeveloped cultural and diplomatic efforts in the postwar Stalin era and the substantial economic partnership of the USSR and India in the 1970s. The 1957 Festival in Moscow fit within a sequence of important events and processes such as the 1952 Indo-Soviet cultural agreement, Nehru's visit to the USSR and Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit to India in 1955, Soviet development at the steel plant in Bhilai in 1955, the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War, and the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. In itself, the Festival was not a turning point in Soviet–Third World or even Indo-Soviet relations, but its status as such a massive international celebration afforded it an important role in defining and disseminating a presentation of the Soviet people. Moreover, since preparation for the Festival involved international organizations, interest in and reactions to the Festival by South Asian participants is more porous and better documented than was the case for many alternative points of Indo-Soviet contact.[5]

On a conceptual level, Soviet planners envisioned the WFYS as a *series* of festivities occurring—sometimes sequentially and sometimes simultaneously—throughout both the USSR and India. The invitation letter for the International Preparatory Committee announced the aim of representing fifty-nine countries and attracting thirty thousand visitors "to exchange experiences and views on the problems of young people and get to know each other."[6] Ultimately, guests from 126 nations attended the events. Even before summer 1957, cities inside and outside of the USSR had preparatory celebrations in honor of the Festival. According to the magazine *Festival*, the Kalinin district of Moscow engaged in "grand merry-making" in Izmailovo Park as early as autumn 1956, including 120,000 young people and "over three thousand singers, musicians, dancers and gymnasts."[7] Likewise, the World Festival of Youth and Students had supplementary festivals throughout India and the USSR. P.K. Tiwari of Jabbalpur, India, reported that when visiting Delhi, he witnessed—presumably visiting Soviet—young people rehearsing Indian folk dances and expressing a "delightful" attitude toward the festival and toward India.[8] According to *Festival*, Bihar hosted twenty-five local youth festivals before the fifth WFYS, while West Bengal hosted one hundred.[9] Sukumar Gupta of the Bengal Festival Committee claimed that fifty thousand people participated in Calcutta for the fifth WFYS, while the current Festival would see ten thousand during the opening ceremony alone.[10] The magazine also reported that, of fourteen planned state festivals in India, six had already taken place as of May 1957, encompassing fifty-five thousand participants.[11] Other nations, of course, displayed similar supplemental festivities but not in the quantity or volume displayed by the Indian public.

As the de facto guest of honor at the Festival, India enjoyed certain privileges during the events, likely hinging on the Soviet government's interest in the nation's participation in international summits and conferences. The Festival's opening was to be broadcast in English, German, French, and Arabic, plus in four languages of the subcontinent, including Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and English (separate radio waves). Ongoing Radio Journal coverage continued in additional languages, but only India enjoyed coverage in multiple languages.[12] Mr. Govind Sahai, head of the Bharat Yuvak Samaj organization, chaired the inaugural meeting of the International Preparatory Committee in Moscow on August 14, 1956. India also was represented by six other delegates, granting it the largest representation on the IPC. By contrast, the USSR and France had six delegates each, while every other country had five or fewer representatives.[13] The prestige of India among the student movement itself likewise awarded India warrant for large numbers of delegates at the festival. As Chairman of the Soviet Preparatory Committee explained, "given the place and role of India among the countries of Asia and the important contribution made by the youth and students of India in the international youth and student movement, the Standing Commission of the International Preparatory Committee of the festival came to a consensus that the youth of India would be represented at the festival by a delegation consisting of six hundred people."[14]

The Soviet preparatory committee itself explained the important place of India in the festivities as a result of its prestige in Asia and within the world student movement. K.P.S. Menon, Indian Ambassador to the USSR, noted that "the Soviet government continued to regard India, despite the fact that she lacks military might and a rigid ideology, as a potential factor for peace."[15] The Festival was, after all, soon after the Bandung Conference. Previously, India had not enjoyed such a privileged position in Soviet-sponsored peace conferences and South Asian participants in these festivities often received poor treatment. K.V. Ramaswamy, the Attaché and Vice Consul to the Legation of India in Vienna, reported that in the meetings of the World Peace Council in Vienna from November

1–6, 1951, "the Indian and Pakistani delegations did not make any great impression" and that "the members of the delegation were treated as second rate except for Mr. Mehzer Ali (editor of *Pakistan Times*) and his wife…Thus the contribution of the Indian and Pakistan delegations to the proceedings was insignificant."[16] Elsewhere, he noted that "the Peace Council Leaders are dissatisfied with the progress of peace propaganda in India. The Indian delegates were often snubbed, I understand from Mr. Yagnik, as armchair people with no effective organizing capacity."[17]

Menon's commentary toward the 1950 Peace Conference in Warsaw was quite dismissive regarding any potential for concern on the grounds of domestic security. He wrote: "What surprises me is what kind of figures our own delegates will have cut at the Peace Conference in Warsaw. Our delegation consisted of a deaf, septuagenarian poet in Malayalam, a septuagenarian doctor and a literary dilettante."[18] R. Axel Khan, Private Secretary to the Head Indian Military Mission, commented that "newspapers often carried four pages of closely printed Peace Council news to the exclusion of everything else. But it is very doubtful whether more than a small percentage of readers ever bother to digest the tens of thousands of words with which they are bombarded in one form or another continuously." He conceded, however, that "as a forum for politics the Peace Council may have been more successful."[19] Regarding the 1957 Festival, he summarized the arrangements and noted: "The mere mention of these delegations will show the range and variety of the contacts which are being established between India and the Soviet Union."[20]

In 1957, Soviet planners were eager not to see poor treatment of visitors and Festival participants repeated from the example in Warsaw. According to a summary offered in the *Bombay Chronicle*, Soviet youth received coaching in appropriate behavior in preparation for the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students, warning them not to offend religious—particularly Muslim—guests. The article stated that among the festival guests would be "quite a few people professing a religion" but that Soviet youth should not offend the visitors. According to the broadcast, "it is obvious that any offence to the feelings of believers would be completely incompatible with the friendly atmosphere which will reign at the festival."[21] Likewise, the Soviet youth received warnings that peculiarities in the behavior of guests from former colonies were a result of colonizers who "did all they could to suppress the cultural dignity of these peoples."[22] Coaching for behavior was not unique, however, to encounters with Third World delegations. Indeed, concern over depiction of proper behavior by the Soviet citizenry was a constant concern of Soviet policymakers. As David Hoffmann notes, "official Soviet culture propagated behavioral norms and values not only for the general population but for the Communist Party elite as well."[23] At the sixth WFYS, Kapil Varma, a representative of the Bharat Yuvak Samaj Indian youth organization, Bharat Sevak Samaj national development agency, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (English-language) newspaper, offered some grounds for belief that these efforts were not in vain, expressing his impression that "Soviet youth has a special sympathy for the Indians."[24]

Expectations: Who Participated and Why?

With the prominent position of India at the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students and the large number of delegates invited to the event, thousands or perhaps even tens of thousands of Indians appealed for the opportunity to visit the USSR. Contrary to what had been the case in many of the earlier incarnations of the Festival, very few of the applicants for participation in 1957 were openly members of CPI organs or trade unions. Rimesh Sinha, an editor for a CPI weekly newspaper in Lucknow, wrote to the IPC requesting materials to assist in his drafting of an extra edition of his newspaper regarding the festival's activities.[25] Similarly, the Union of Mining Workers of Madras requested information on the sixth WFYS for his propaganda among workers.[26] Among those who did profess a clear agenda, though, very few applicants expressed overt political goals. Many more applicants instead vocalized desires to pursue goals that were personal, humanitarian, or recreational. The Injured Student (*Studencheskaia Bol'n*) Society of Kolkata, indicated their express interest in attending the festival as a means of raising funds for their organization.[27] The Association of Amateur Athletes of Andhra expressed desire to send its honorary secretary, an "old, experienced trainer" interested in staying several months in the USSR "to learn the techniques and methods of training athletes."[28] A much greater proportion of the applicants, by contrast, expressed interest merely in increasing their knowledge about the Soviet people. Most Indians who wrote into the International Preparatory Committee simply requested copies of the festival's newspaper, *Festival*, or more information about the event in their inability to attend.[29]

Interestingly, two topics of greatest interest for the participants were to establish contacts with Soviet pen pals or to engage in stamp collecting. A young Indonesian man named Abdul Ghalib of Solo, India, for instance, requested stamps, including American varieties.[30] Dev Sharma of New Delhi expressed the same interest in stamps.[31] Likewise, Subodh Dalal of the National League of Penpals hoped to send twenty-five youth to the festival, promising dancers, musicians, singers, and stamp collectors among their ranks. The philatelists, he suggested, could bring collections for an exhibition of stamps.[32] *Festival* also published letters of South Asians seeking pen pals.[33] This general pattern was often repeated in correspondence by Indian citizens and institutions to other Soviet state organs such as the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies (SSOD) and the Anti-Fascist Committee of Soviet Youth.

Rather than focusing on goals external to the festivities, many students expressed interest in cultural events and performance art at the Festival galas. P.A.N. Jer of Bangalore, for example, reported that four cooks, fifteen "performers of oriental dance on horseback," seven *nadaswaram* musicians, fifteen dancers, and six vocal soloists wished to take part in the festival.[34] Krishna Khan of the League of Democratic Youth of West Bengal expressed interest in "sports and cultural institutions" of the USSR.[35] G. Sevak Singh of Amritsar, a painter and decorator, hoped to take part in an art exhibition at the festival.[36] Ultimately, the records of attendance poorly capture demographic information regarding the South Asians who populated the youth delegations at the sixth Festival, but every issue of *Festival* recounted several artistic performances by Indian guests. In other words, cultural and artistic patronage was a plank in Soviet efforts in the cultural Cold War with the West, but it was also a sphere in which Indian citizens were eager to initiate contact with their Soviet counterparts.

Impact: Building Friendship

One of the great ironies of the Cold War in South Asia is that India became one of the Soviet Union's closest nonaligned diplomatic and trade partners, but the Indo-Soviet relationship required subordinating the interests of Indian communists in favor of an alliance with decidedly more pragmatic political figures such as Indira Gandhi.[37] Likewise, the two Indian states where communists came to power, Kerala and West Bengal, were members of the breakaway CPI(M), not even recognized by Moscow as a legitimate communist party.[38] At the same time, the Indo-Soviet alliance forged in 1971 relied upon the Soviet-oriented CPI's cooperation with Indira Gandhi.[39] In other words, the political capital of the Soviet Union in India was insufficient to put fully pro-Soviet Communists in the dominant position within India's socialist movement, but sufficient to create possibilities for diplomatic and economic partnership—despite notable differences in foreign policy goals and economic systems—between the USSR and the government of India. A suitable explanation for this apparent contradiction is that events like the World Festivals of Youth and Students, plus all of the institutions and organizations that fed into the festivals, were able to create avenues for Soviet soft power within South Asia. The sixth WFYS alone cannot explain away the contradiction, but it is emblematic of the manner in which interpersonal networks and contact between Indian citizens and Soviet institutions disseminated the Soviet Cold War messages of peace, friendship, and progress, and were consequently able to shape the sentiments of the Indian public into at least a vague sense of approval for their partners to the north. As Sudha Rajagopalan argues, in the context of Soviet viewership of Indian cinema, the imagining of foreign partners created communities of interest and rhetoric about political friendship which naturally inspired individuals and groups to engage with the other nation.[40]

While the slogans of the Festival were "Peace and Friendship" and an anticolonial message dominated official Soviet rhetoric, the two principal assets that the Soviet hosts acquired from the Festival seem to be: (1) the projection of a narrative of Soviet progress or development to visitors, and (2) the strengthening and expansion of a network of contacts within South Asia. The first of these consequences is not strongly divorced from the Bolshevik understanding of "friendship," as the *druzhba narodov* (or "friendship of peoples") asserted by Soviet ideologues contained a promise of cultural and economic development. Along the model of Soviet nation-building efforts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia, the Soviet message of progress encapsulated a diversity of efforts to push forward humanity into a brighter future.[41] As understood by Soviet activists in the 1950s, this promise extended beyond the borders of the USSR to the oppressed peoples of former colonies.[42] P.K. Ponomarenko, Ambassador of the USSR to India, spoke of Soviet economic assistance to India in such a manner, noting that "Soviet people know but too well from their own experience that only by creating one's own heavy industry, by incessantly raising living standards and the cultural level of the people it is possible to secure independence won in battles. This is the reason why the Soviet Union with such fraternal readiness renders help to India in her economic development."[43] Elsewhere, he reflected upon his diplomatic work using the same terminology of construction, noting that "I believe it was building that I liked best, but in a broad sense of that word."[44] Similarly, Indian scholar Devendra Kaushik astutely described this Bolshevik project as a “cultural revolution” and articulated it as a promise of development to colonized world:

> The cultural revolution implies liquidation of illiteracy among adults, introduction of compulsory education for children, creation of a modern public health system, all-round scientific and technological development, promotion of art, creation of a national intelligentsia, emancipation of women, and building of new life rich in its spiritual content. It is, in brief, not merely the spread of literacy and health services but a process of changing the cultural make-up of the people based on a scientific world-outlook, a process of fostering socialist ideology, the ideology of genuine humanism and internationalism. It does not mean the rejection of all preceding cultures; some of the finer and positive elements of which are critically absorbed by it.[45]

Probash Basu, an announcer for Moscow Radio, offered a comparable picture of the Soviet people in his recollection of his first visit to the Soviet Union in 1957, where he attended the sixth WFYS. After discussing “the idea of universal friendship and fraternity,” Basu discussed the electric lights of Moscow and then transitioned into commentary on Soviet technological achievements. He wrote, “I and my family, together with the Soviet people, rejoiced at the first flights of the world’s largest airliners and especially at the launching of, the first in the history of mankind, artificial Earth satellites which are paving man’s way toward conquering space.”[46] Yet another example of the Soviet projection of a message of shared progress comes from the experiences of Dr. Nazar Singh, an Indian citizen whose first visit to the USSR was during the sixth Festival of World Youth and Students. On August 4, 1957, he visited the “Bolshevik” state farm outside of Moscow, witnessing that “the discoveries of Soviet science are utilized practically in the farm to increase fertility and the output of agricultural produce.” He noted that “I firmly believe that the friendship between our nations will get stronger and we shall be able to derive experience accumulated by the Soviet state farms, experience which they will share with us with pleasure.”[47] Finally, Mr. Pathirana Aria, Secretary of the Sri Lankan delegation at the sixth WFYS, opined that “I believe that it is a very convenient moment for the consolidation and further development of friendship between the two countries. Let’s develop our relations in all areas of economic, cultural and sporting life for the benefit of both countries. I am sure that we will do it. Before us lies a golden future.”[48] Again, “friendship” and “peace” were either explicitly or implicitly paired in these accounts with a narrative of progress of mankind.

Even when not phrased as a project of development by Indian participants of the Festival, these guests repeatedly depicted the Soviet citizenry as representing the potential and perhaps future of mankind. Krishna Chandra Dube, the General Secretary of the Students' Federation of India, offered an overwhelmingly positive recollection of the Soviet people in such a light. He noted that "[In Moscow,] I meet with men and women, girls and boys, children, and in the eyes of all of them I see happiness and trust. Look them in the eye and you believe that peace will be protected. The standard-bearers of peace are the young men and women, middle-aged people, and the elderly… in a word, the entire Soviet people."[49] The conception of progress that Soviet citizens were able to embody for many Indian guests, however, was certainly not exclusively scientific or materialistic. Both the Soviet and Indian partners involved in contact with each other stressed a commonality (often in the form of a shared "soul") between the Russian and Indian people, providing common heroes, sentiments, values, and dreams. The Mayor of Calcutta, Mr. Satischandra Ghosh, explained that the Festival for him represented the potential for respecting human dignity. According to Ghosh, "humanity should have an uninterrupted opportunity to surge forward on progressive lines for the achievement of the nobility of the soul which lies dormant in every human person."[50]

Such a presumed spiritual commonality between Indians and Russians was nothing new, as such claims found expression as early as the 1920s. Rabindranath Tagore, one of the figures almost mythologized by Soviet cultural elites for his role in Indo-Soviet contact, allegedly told Soviet writers that "I want to learn from you and find out how you have solved and are solving problems of culture." He noted, "I am convinced that your idea is very much like my dream."[51] This sentiment was not limited to Tagore or even the Indian side of these contacts, as a Russian peasant had written to the Bengali poet as early as March 30, 1928, to express his kindred soul. The Russian beekeeper, Alexei Pavlovitch Nazarov of the village of Sicheva, wrote: "When I saw your photograph for the first time I had the feeling that you were just one of us." He then called for a unity of Russia and India that "will lead to a spiritual and material renaissance which, in turn, will help human life achieve a higher philosophy of life and its further enrichment."[52] But, despite being neither new nor one-sided in Indo-Soviet encounters, such exaggerated or overly poetic statements about the almost superhuman potential for their friendship to open doors for human flourishing certainly created opportunities for increasing

Soviet cultural and political capital in India. Specifically, the writings of Rabindranath Tagore and the Gandhi–Tolstoy correspondence became a standard in the arsenal of Soviet propaganda organs in the subcontinent.[53]

The second major achievement of the sixth Festival of World Youth and Students for Soviet interests was the expansion of contact networks and opportunities for Indians to become engaged with Soviet citizens or institutions. The head of the Federation of Indian Youth, Shandil Ji, provided some insight into how the festivals fed into a network of information (and certainly propaganda) about the Soviet Union and its official values. He noted that "as a result of the festival, peace and brotherhood among peoples of the world grow significantly stronger. With such thoughts we go to India. We will hold in our own country meetings dedicated to the festival, and in the same way as after the previous festivals, we will bring the idea of the festival—the idea of peace and brotherhood to every village, every field, every town."[54] He then repeated the promise: "Indian youth, returnees, will promote the festival throughout India, and the youth, regardless of their political views, will go under the banner of the festival."[55] The reporter, seemingly encouraged by the promise, sought confirmation: "I want to know that you will tell your friends about the festival when you return home. And how your organization will promote the ideals of the festival—the ideas of peace and friendship in your homeland." As his concluding remarks, Shandil agreed with the prompting reporter, saying: "Back home, we will do a lot to promote the idea of the Festival."[56]

Likewise, the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society (ISCUS) located individuals who visited the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students, then invited them to speak publicly about their experiences. Mr. Brij Mohan, General Secretary of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee (and observer at the WFYS), and Dr. Jagdish Chandra of Ghaziabad (delegate at the WFYS), participated in a public meeting in Ghaziabad's local ISCUS branch location.[57] Some individuals interested in attending the festival instead sought out their local ISCUS branch as well. Sammi Ullah of the Division of International Correspondence of Uttar Pradesh, for instance, requested assistance for the trip to the festival and contacted his local ISCUS branch.[58] Importantly, the WFYS was not a singular event, even for each individual festival. The sixth WFYS, for instance, created something of a feedback loop for participants, where delegates would meet before the Festival, during the Festival, and after the event. Before the Festival, Indian delegates hoped to attend the IPC in Moscow as well as World Council meetings in Sofia, then attend the Festival, and finally return home for whatever activities they planned.[59] Each of these meetings theoretically increased opportunities for exposure of Indian citizenry to pro-Soviet propaganda or expanded upon the way that Indian citizens imagined their northern partners.

Concluding Remarks

Overall, in terms of propagandizing a positive image of the USSR, the Soviet planners of the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students could not have hoped for a much better outcome than they enjoyed.[60] The general successfulness of the proceedings, however, did not impart sustainable advances for distinct political goals of the Soviet state. By their very nature, the points of contact between Indian citizens and other Indian citizens, Indian citizens and Soviet citizens, or Indian citizens and Soviet institutions was something outside of the control of Moscow or Russia's sister republics. Even Indian Vice President Dr. Radhakrishnan, whose "philosophical disquisitions were studiously ignored" by the Soviet press, could not be restrained from some degree of negative commentary regarding the shortcomings he witnessed in the Soviet system during his visit in 1957.[61] Moreover, as the sixth WFYS occurred in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Hungary, some members of the international student movement were less than persuaded by the peace rhetoric echoing from Moscow. According to V. Khropov, a Soviet observer present at the IPC meeting, "the attitude of the members of the All India Student Federation to the Soviet Union remained positive." At the same time, Daljit Sen Adel, president of the AISF, instructed the organization's leadership to send out letters to their branches regarding events in Hungary, suggesting that the matter was an internal affair and the "Student Federation should not be involved in them and condemn the behavior of the Soviet Union."[62] The concern regarding hostility toward the Soviet government over Hungary was not groundless, as the Indian student movement did indeed display some factions altogether opposed to cooperation with the USSR after 1956. The Indian Socialist Youth League, for instance, was "anti-Soviet minded" and refused to participate in either the festival or its preparation.[63]

Likewise, the preparatory and follow-up planning meetings for the WFYS outside of the Soviet Bloc were not subject to much discipline by either Soviet officials or sympathetic communist parties. In a 1967 semi-congratulatory, semi-chastising speech to Soviet youth for the upcoming fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution, noncommunist Indian

Socialist Kishen Pattnayak offered some criticisms of the Soviet system. He noted that “I have come to the conclusion that the Soviet Youth, after completing fifty years of their experiment with Socialism want to have a fresh look at the achievements and also look forward to a happier future. Those who have come from outside try to assess and appreciate these achievements and, at the same time, want to know or suggest what the Soviet Union can do for the rest of the world.”[64] He specified that “a first great obstacle in the way of the growth of fellow-feeling of solidarity among the proletarians of the world is the division of world wealth on color lines.”[65] Due to the great inequality among nations, Kishen argued, “it is high-time that Socialists and communists look upon the world as one society and react to these inequalities within a nation, and find ways to remove the disparities.”[66] He then added, “closely connected with the above problem is the slogan of peace. The Soviet Union has become a great champion of peace in our days. Peace is a great ideal of our time. But to the masses of more than half of the world it sounds empty and one sided.” Elaborating, he said, “nevertheless, the fact remains that the slogan of peace is not understood by the suffering masses of poorer nations. Peace comes to them in the form of food, clothing, housing, and medical care. The Soviet Union in its great anxiety for peace has in recent years supported bourgeois and oppressive governments, such as the Nehru government of India, just because these governments cooperated with the USSR in the latter’s attempts for peace.”[67] He ended just short of calling the USSR “counter-revolutionary” by noting, “I shall therefore issue a very friendly warning to the Soviet youth that they might give rise to a feeling in the unprivileged nations that while the USSR wants to consolidate socialism internally, they want mainly peace externally. I am not giving any advice to the Soviet youth, but I am drawing their attention to some of the uncomfortable realities of the world.”[68] Concerns and criticism of Soviet foreign policy behavior like those articulated by Kishen Pattnayak ultimately failed to reorient or alter interactions between the Soviet Union and its partners in South Asia, but the young Indian’s public criticism highlighted the fact that even in the events surrounding the Youth Festivals—in channels that Soviet activists created for promotion of pro-Soviet discourse—Indian participants in the world peace movement could choose to challenge and offer alternative messages to the official Soviet orthodoxy.

Thus, Soviet lack of control over the Festivals was something of a double-edged sword; never could Soviet policymakers and propagandists produce concrete policy demands on foreign nations through the Festivals or force the Western world to disarm, but the dissemination of power into the person of Indian agents removed the heavy hand of the super power. As Austin Jersild has noted, the term "friendship" for Soviet activists actually encompassed two divergent sets of relationships: one with Soviet Bloc partners, and an alternate set of relations with people and groups outside of the socialist world. In regard to the socialist camp, "friendship" with the USSR demanded political loyalty to Moscow and operated according a logic of what served the needs of the Bloc—according to the Soviet senior partner in the exchange.[69] Outside of the Socialist Bloc, however, Soviet institutions such as the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies primarily worked to create "normal" relations with broad segments of foreign publics and to offer an "accurate" depiction of the USSR to counter Western propaganda.[70] In the case of India, the World Festivals of Youth and Students, as instruments of Soviet foreign outreach, could not hope to produce results as ambitious as this first set of relationships. Instead, the Festivals perhaps surprisingly aided Soviet soft power by disseminating a diluted and depoliticized image of the USSR that led to a weaker general sentiment of goodwill toward the USSR on the part of Indian citizens, but ultimately empowered elements within India to pursue pro-Soviet policies.

Notes

1. Indeed, S. Dutt and U.S. Bajpai of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs discussed the Soviet "Peace Campaign" in these terms, with Dutt dismissive and Bajpai supportive of the idea that "the masses will come to regard the love of peace as a specifically Soviet attribute and would thereby be converted to Soviet ideology." See NAI MEA 1 (91) Eur. II (1950), Soviet Peace Campaign, "Ministry of External Affairs, no. (10)," March 2–3, 1951, 6.
2. For the larger context of the cultural Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States (and the component propaganda), see Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World*; Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?*; Armstrong, "The Cultural Cold War in Korea, 1945–1950," 71–99; Caute, *The Dancer Defects;* Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe*; and Hixson, *Parting the Curtain.*
3. *Pravda*, as quoted K.P.S. Menon, characterized American Cold War foreign policy as "sending warships against ideas." NAI MEA 3 (30) R&I (1961), Annual Reports—USSR (Moscow) for 1960, "Embassy of India, Moscow: Annual Political Report for the Year

1960, No. 12/60 (A)," dated January 5, 1961, 1–24: 12. Likewise, official Soviet propaganda critiqued American economic power—even in the form of aid—as predatory and culturally destructive. See Verbitsky, "What American Aid Means for South-East Asia," *Soviet Land*, no. 20, October 20, 1957.

4. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15 (sixth World Festival of Youth and Students), d. 16 (Orders of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR on Activities of the Ministry in Conjunction with Preparations for the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow, August 31, 1956-August 9, 1957), l. 55, "Appendix to the Order of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR on May 21, 1957, no. 324. The festival featured *estrada*, classical music, folk songs, classical ballet, folk dance, folk instruments, choir music, etc. Films shown were about internationalism or Soviet multiculturalism ("Ukraine," "Weimar," etc.).
5. Karen Petrone argues that Soviet public celebrations in general fulfilled the function of spreading Soviet values. She writes, "Soviet celebrations in the 1930s played a significant role in the dissemination of political ideas." Likewise, they defined identity, as "celebrations articulated a temporal definition of what it meant to be Soviet." Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades*, 6, 11.
6. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 25 (Sample Letter of the International Preparatory Committee Aimed at National Preparatory Committees, Trade Union and Cultural Organizations, with an Invitation to Take Part in the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow, October 1956-June 1957), l. 1, "Draft Letter of IPC to International (Non-Governmental) Cultural Organizations," retrieved from WFDY, October 23, 1956.
7. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 272 (Newspaper "Festival" no. 1–34 in English, September 1956–October 1957), l. 2, "120,000 Participants," *Festival: the Newspaper of the International Preparatory Committee of the Sixth World Youth and Student Festival*, no. 1: September–October 1956.
8. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 88, l. 86.
9. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 272, l. 54, "Over the Wire: Telephone Conversation with Mr. Sukumar Gupta, Secretary, Bengal Festival Committee, Calcutta—April 24, 1957," *Festival*, no. 11, May 1–10, 1957.
10. Ibid., 54.

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27. Ibid., 14.
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30. Ibid., 4.
31. Ibid., 87.
32. Ibid., 102.
33. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 272, l. 19, "Our Mailbag," *Festival*, no. 3: December 1956.
34. Ibid., 56. Note that a *nadaswaram* is a South Indian wind instrument similar in appearance to a pair of drums.
35. Ibid., 71.
36. Ibid., 70.
37. The same is true of Soviet-Iraqi, Soviet-Egyptian, and—to a lesser extent—Soviet–Iranian relations.
38. See Singh, *The Communist and Socialist Movement in India*, 192.

39. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, 65-66.
40. Rajagopalan, *Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas*, 173.
41. See Wishon, "Soviet Globalization," 108. For the underlying Soviet self-conception of the socialist system as a patron of world culture, see Leon Trotsky's 1932 speech in Copenhagen, Denmark titled "In Defense of the Russian Revolution" in Sarah Lovell, ed., *Leon Trotsky Speaks*, 295–326; Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade*; and Volkov, "The Concept of 'Kul'turnost'.'"
42. See "Press Conference of the Indian Women's Delegation in Moscow," *USSR Information Bulletin*, no. 84/105 (August 7, 1953), 5.
43. P.K. Ponomarenko, "National Holiday of the Indian People," *Soviet Land*, vol. 11, no. 2, January 20, 1958. Of course, this projected image of the Soviet partner as a vehicle of modernization had appeal to actors in other Third World nations, such as the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, as well. See Matusevich, *No Easy Row for a Russian Hoe*, 6, 8.
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49. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 264, ll. 122-123: 122, "Speech by the General Secretary of the Student Federation, Krishna Chandra Dube."
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51. "Indo-Soviet Friendship," *Soviet Land*, vol. 11, no. 2, January 20, 1958. The list of individuals praised for embodying the marriage of

the Russian and Indian souls includes Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohandas Gandhi, Afanasii Nikitin, and both Nikolai and Sviatoslav Roerich.

52. A.P. Nazarov, "Letter dated 30.3.28 from A.P. Nazarov, a Russian peasant, to Rabindranath Tagore (Translated Version)," Manuscript section of State Library of Russian Federation, Moscow, SL No 30, ASAN: RAR 30, reprinted in Roy, Gupta, and Vasudevan, *Indo-Russian Relations*, 1–4: 3.
53. *Soviet Land* is rich with this material for its entire run.
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55. Ibid., 132.
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57. "News in Pictures," *Soviet Land*, no. 19, October 5, 1957.
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60. In terms of domestic stability, however, the story is more complicated: foreign guests offered critical comments and Soviet youth—despite being carefully selected for their public participation—were exposed to foreign ideas. See Koivunen, "The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival," 59.
61. NAI MEA 3 (30), R&I (1957), Annual Reports—USSR (Moscow) for 1956, "Embassy of India, Moscow: Annual Political Report for the Year 1956, D. 730—R&I/59, 13/2," 16–17.
62. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 15, d. 60, ll. 44–47: 45, "On the Progress of Preparations in India for the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students (Information Based on Materials from the Soviet Embassy

in India)," V. Khropov to Chairman of the Soviet Preparatory Committee for the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students, S.K. Romanovsky. Note that the AKSM considered the All India Student Federation to be under the influence of the Indian Communist Party, which it certainly is today. See RGASPI, f. M-4, op. 1, d. 666b (Inquiries of the AKSM and the Staff of the Embassy of the USSR Abroad about the Activities of Youth Organizations and the Situation of Youth in Romania, Finland, France, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, India, Iran, Mexico, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco), l. 145, "Reference of Youth Organizations in India," December 9, 1948.

63. Ibid., 45. In terms of relative importance, the Indian Socialist Youth League (or Council) was weaker in numbers and influence to the All India Student Federation.
64. RGASPI, f. M-3, op. 2, d. 250 (Reference Material on India, 1966–1967), ll. 105–108, Kishen Pattnayak of Sawajvadi Yuvajan Sabha, speech in India, July 28, 1967.
65. Ibid., 105. Note that I have cleaned up the hasty transcript to remove the pervasive typos.
66. Ibid., 106.
67. Ibid., 107.
68. Ibid., 108. Obviously given Soviet intervention in Hungary, Indian youth did not universally share Pattnayak's interpretation/articulation of the USSR as a pursuer of peace on the international stage.
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CHAPTER 11

Red China in Central Europe: Creating and Deploying Representations of an Ally in Poland and the GDR

David G. Tompkins

The world's most populous country joined the Second World in spectacular fashion in the fall of 1949. The Cold War had reached its first peak, and with the simultaneous consolidation of the communist regimes in Central Europe individually and as a bloc, the addition of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the Soviet camp seemed to confirm the inexorable deepening and broadening and eventual global success of communism. The leaders of Bloc countries like East Germany and Poland sought to deploy a particular representation of the PRC in service of constructing and mobilizing the new socialist society at home. To that end, throughout the 1950s, rich transnational exchanges took place between Central Europe and China. Poles and East Germans welcomed Chinese delegations to their countries and framed the visits in ideological and didactic terms for their own citizens. The Central Europeans in turn toured the PRC and communicated a politically inflected impression back home. Chinese performing ensembles, as well as cultural products like artworks and films,

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appeared throughout both Poland and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and helped to communicate an ideologically useful representation of the PRC. This contact with China and the Chinese aided in producing a particular image of the PRC that could be utilized in the service of domestic goals. Party officials, artists and intellectuals, and ordinary citizens helped to fashion this image of China, which then circulated widely throughout both popular and official culture.

This real connection to and related conceptualization of the PRC was a useful tool for communists in Central Europe, who crafted the related idea of a community of nations all working together to build a bright socialist future. At the western edge of a vast Eurasian space, East Germans and Poles could imagine that they were part of one powerful and united world bookended by a rising, mighty China on the other. Unlike the Soviet Union, which seemed omnipresent, often oppressively so, and constantly proclaimed itself superior in spite of significant evidence to the contrary, the PRC shimmered in the distance as a kind of mirage onto which Central European communists could project their dreams and aspirations.[1] In evoking China, political and cultural elites could praise and emphasize aspects of the building of socialism at home, but without the complexities and baggage linked to the role of the USSR and its ideological claims. China was, of course, economically underdeveloped, especially after decades of imperial domination and war, but could be portrayed as making rapid strides forward under communist rule and with the help of fellow communist countries. This particular vision of socialist internationalism and solidarity was particularly appealing, as Central Europeans could imagine themselves instructing and helping an ally, rather than as being engaged in a much more complicated and fraught relationship with the Soviet Union.[2]

Over the course of the 1950s, exchanges intensified in the two countries and China grew in importance in popular and official worldviews. The East German and Polish cases are broadly similar in the fundamental presentation of the image of the PRC across the arc of the 1950s. The basic template of this representation took shape around 1950 through efforts in the cultural and political realms. Continued crafting and dissemination picked up in the second half of the 1950s in both countries, although for rather contradictory reasons. In the GDR, many party officials were sympathetic to the Chinese defense of a more hardline version of communism that ran counter to some of Khrushchev's policies. More generally, the PRC assumed a larger importance in the GDR, which emphasized affinities in the two countries' founding dates in October 1949 and their situation as divided nations, and furthermore sought to break through West Germany's attempts to isolate it diplomatically with the Hallstein Doctrine. In Poland, the importance of this image grew gradually over the decade, assuming a particular importance after the PRC was perceived popularly and officially as having supported Poland against continued Soviet domination in the Polish October of 1956.[3] By the end of the decade in both countries, a positive and ideologically useful representation of the PRC had been created and was deployed to advance party goals and consolidate a socialist identity in domestic and international contexts.[4]

This chapter examines the formation of this particular representation in the realm of culture broadly defined. Culture was of course itself highly political in the 1950s, and its manifestations examined here—performing ensembles, travel reportage, art, and film—were all politically inflected, and intentionally so. This "soft power" of culture had a particular kind of influence on worldviews that complemented press reports of developments in China or of high-level political meetings. Following recent scholarly literature that looks at the circulation of ideas and culture across borders within the communist world, this chapter examines the important role of China as an ideological symbol in East German and Polish society in building and maintaining a new socialist society.[5]

Exchanges of People

The 1950s saw an explosion in exchanges, of individuals, small delegations, and massive touring ensembles among the countries of the emerging Second World. Although travel between Central Europe and China involved multi-day, multi-stop air travel or an even longer train trip, delegations large and small moved in both directions. The significant commitment in time and resources just to get to the destination meant that visitors stayed for weeks and months, gathering and making impressions that contributed to a particular image of the PRC. While on these extended trips in the host country, delegation members encountered large numbers of people. This circulation of and interaction with the other was crucial to launching, developing, and sustaining a politically useful representation, and personal contact was particularly powerful in developing this image.

The roughly annual appearance of large Chinese ensembles throughout Poland in the 1950s had a significant impact on Poles' worldviews, while those many hundreds of Polish musicians and dancers who performed throughout the PRC also spread their impressions upon returning home.

In the early years at least, these visits from the PRC could provoke widely divergent responses from the Polish population. One of the first in late 1951 was from the 212-person Chinese Youth Arts Ensemble, and included groups featuring opera, drama, dance, acrobats, and singing, as well as an orchestra, all of which combined to give dozens of concerts to tens of thousands of Poles throughout the country. Audiences reacted in a warm and openhearted manner, and generally joined in the political framing manifested in cheers and slogans in praise of Mao, peace, and Polish–Chinese friendship. There was at least one negative incident, at a mine in Janów, where several workers "whistled and shouted improper comments" to the performers. More broadly, however, the performances received 60 positive press reviews, which also included ideologically useful information about the PRC as well.[6]

The next major Chinese ensemble, the Central Song and Dance Ensemble, came in the fall of 1953 and received a more divided reception, perhaps due at least in part to the uncertainties of the post-Stalinist moment. In Racibórz, the audience reacted positively, with comments like "amazing, unparalleled… the most beautiful day in their lives."[7] But elsewhere, responses ranged from indifference to outright hostility. At the National Rail Carriage Factory (PAFAWAG) in Wrocław, some workers left in the middle of the concert, while in Katowice (then Stalinogród), the audience failed to join in the chanting of slogans.[8] The most negative reactions came in Łódź, where, save for a few friendly interactions, a local youth group and textile workers exhibited little enthusiasm for the visit. Some troublemakers interrupted the concert and also showed up at the ensemble's hotel, where they threw stones at their cars and shouted "yellow peril" ("*żółta zaraza*"), the racist slogan linked to the idea originating in the late nineteenth century that masses from the East would overrun the world.[9] In this very initial moment of the Thaw, it would seem that many in the audiences reacted negatively to a Stalinist instrumentalization of the PRC.

By the middle of the decade, in the context of the broader push for de-Stalinization, antipathy toward the Chinese seemed to have dissipated. At the much more open atmosphere of the 1955 World Festival of Youth and Students in Warsaw, and without the same level of rigidly ideological framing, the Chinese delegation was received with considerable interest. In an event that featured 30,000 participants from over 100 countries and captured the attention of millions throughout Poland, the Chinese delegation stood out as one of the largest; its main concert was mobbed by enthusiastic Poles.[10] After the festival, some of the ensembles toured the country to great acclaim from audiences not dissimilar to those from earlier years. The Youth Song and Dance Ensemble, for example, sold out two concerts in Szczecin, similarly filled venues of 6500 in Bydgoszcz, 12,000 in Gdańsk, and even attracted 120,000 to a park outside Opole.[11] These large touring ensembles from China came to Poland on a roughly annual basis in the following years.[12]

The Poles also sent their own large ensembles, as well as delegations of intellectuals and artists, to visit the PRC. All formed impressions and communicated them to fellow Poles upon their return, either informally in conversation with family members, friends, and colleagues, or more formally through publications of various types. The latter were generally accompanied by a film team that produced documentary films.[13] The first major Polish cultural delegation to China toured for several months in the spring of 1953, and consisted of the Chamber Orchestra of the Warsaw Philharmonic and the acclaimed Mazowsze Song and Dance Company. The Poles gave several dozen performances and reached hundreds of thousands of Chinese live and millions more on the radio.[14] The leader of the delegation was Poland's most prominent composer, Andrzej Panufnik, who, despite the death of his young daughter during the trip and growing doubts about the communist system, in his memoir from the 1980s remembered developing a very positive view of the Chinese. He found them friendly, warm, enthusiastic, and organized, and greatly appreciated the cuisine and culture.[15] Panufnik claims to have sensed anti-Soviet attitudes long before the Sino-Soviet split, but did note their attraction to a "pure and all-embracing socialism" and their "search for their own way to communism."[16]

Smaller Polish ensembles as well as individual soloists made their way throughout China in the succeeding years, and were received warmly. A dozen or so pianists, singers, and violinists appeared in China in the 1950s, and composer Zygmunt Mycielski and musicologist Zofia Lissa toured as well.[17] Lissa published an extended article soon after returning that framed her musical observations in breathless terms: "[There exists] an atmosphere of enthusiasm and creative passion, an atmosphere of overcoming major challenges, an atmosphere in which one feels creative transformation."[18] Her visit also motivated her to publish *Chinese Folk and Mass Songs*, which contained the piano scores of 21 of each in the songbook. With titles such as "Hearts beat like one bell," "We people of the brave avant-garde," and "Shock-worker Czań," Lissa hoped to introduce

Poles to the inhabitants of People's China, "who today are building anew their ancient country with unheard-of enthusiasm."[19] Such smaller delegations often consisted of writers and artists, and their influential contributions are explored in the next section.

The GDR also featured a regular stream of culture-related delegations of various sizes moving in both directions. Here too, of course, ordinary citizens encountered representations of China through attending guest concerts, but also through the views of East Germans who had been in the PRC. As in Poland a few years later, the Chinese delegation made a splash at the Third World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Berlin in 1951. The Chinese delegation enjoyed a warm welcome at the opening ceremonies, apparently receiving "a hurricane of applause [which] demonstrated love, reverence, and esteem for the Chinese people."[20] Also well-received was the opera and ballet *The White-Haired Girl*, one of the classic works of revolutionary China, about the misery and suffering of the peasantry.[21] In the following years, major performing ensembles came at the rate of one or more annually, and attracted audiences of hundreds of thousands.[22] The Chongqing Artist Ensemble, for example, gave 42 performances for over 250,000 people in the summer of 1954.[23] Chinese opera companies seemed particularly successful, with both a 1956 tour by the Beijing opera and a 1959 tour by the Szechuan Opera Ensemble in major cities in East Germany.[24]

Large East German ensembles traveled throughout China regularly in the 1950s as well, and brought back their impressions upon their return. Like the Panufnik-led Mazowsze trip in 1953, late that same year the 230-person State Folk Art Ensemble undertook a ten-week concert tour of China. Other ensembles followed at regular intervals, including the orchestra of the *Volkspolizei* (People's Police) in 1956 and the Erich-Weinert-Ensemble in 1958.[25] The Dresden Philharmonic made two trips to China, in both 1959 and 1961.[26]

Such cultural exchanges were one part of a broad palette of delegations that included political figures, youth representatives, and ordinary workers. Of all these, cultural delegations were arguably the most influential due to their broad impact. Chinese ensembles touring Central Europe attracted huge audiences who came away impressed by Chinese skill and artistry. The concerts could be framed by introductory talks, leaflets, and the chanting of slogans, which all situated the experience in an ideologically appropriate manner. Reviews and reports in the press reiterated and intensified this message. For those many Poles and East Germans who were part of large ensembles touring China, they came home and shared their positive experiences officially through talks and reports and unofficially in conversation with friends and family. The Polish and East German artists and writers who made up smaller delegations had an even greater impact, as their subsequent articles and books circulated widely.

Books and Magazines

These major cultural figures could most effectively translate their experiences for broader consumption and thus influence popular worldviews back home. The artists, writers, and musicians who traveled to China in the 1950s on these hallmark trips created cultural products that then circulated through various media back home. Such travel reports were particularly powerful means of creating a desired image, as they were suffused with the authority of both reportage and first-person immediacy.[27] In the Polish context, leading writers Paweł Jasienica, Wanda Wasilewska, Jerzy Putrament, and Adam Ważyk, artists Aleksander Kobzdej, Tadeusz Kulisiewicz, and Andrzej Strumiłło, Minister of Culture Włodzimierz Sokorski, and many other slightly less prominent cultural figures traveled in China for extended periods and published books, usually excerpted in journals and newspapers as well. A similar roster of East German cultural figures made analogous trips throughout the 1950s as well. Their books shaped and propagated a particular image of the PRC for domestic audiences, a representation that was broadly similar across the 1950s, with some modifications later in the decade. These cultural producers acknowledged lower living standards, but emphasized the stunning progress underway, and encouraged their fellow citizens to emulate both these successes in building socialism as well as the ascribed qualities of politeness, honesty, orderliness, self-discipline, optimism, hunger to learn, a well-developed aesthetic sensibility, willingness and enthusiasm to work hard, and heroism in creating and protecting the Communist Revolution.

The first Polish writer to tour China was Jerzy Putrament, a communist writer and de-facto leader of the literary world during the Stalinist years.[28] He made two extended trips, in 1951 and 1960, and produced two rather different books that frame the 1950s quite aptly. Both were reflective of the high political alignment at either end of the decade, and are representative of the evolving representation of the PRC. The first was filled with largely uncritical enthusiasm and wonder, and evoked the Chinese successes as models for Poland, while the second was much more cautious and even critical. *Notatnik chiński* (*Chinese Notebook*) chronicled a month-long trip taken in October of 1951 as part of an international delegation of writers (including East Germans Anna Seghers and KuBa, referenced below) visiting China on the occasion of the second anniversary of its founding. Putrament's narrative was placed in a clear ideological framework, and his impressions set the template for similar works from the 1950s as he sought to give Polish readers a sense of the country and of his travels. While acknowledging just how underdeveloped China was, Putrament blamed this on the many decades of imperialist depredations, Japanese occupation, and the policies of Chiang Kai-Shek and the civil war. The book featured constant invocations of the heroism of the communists, who overcame all those formidable obstacles on their way to victory. Putrament stressed the major progress made in just two years, with regular descriptions of massive efforts in rebuilding and production increases. He gave a sense of dizzying dynamism, with huge numbers of people engaged in frenetic activity. The Chinese themselves were characterized by "diligence, modesty, an unparalleled revolutionary zeal and patriotism, internal discipline, and an organizational capability suddenly revealed to the world."[29] In general, he was "filled with wonder for this nation, which has been able to do so much under such difficult circumstances."[30] The concurrent fighting in Korea unsurprisingly received significant attention, cast in terms of the Chinese defending socialism for all humanity. For his Polish readers, he evoked a larger didactic message in asserting that "the happiness and hope of the Chinese for a bright future would help the Poles in their own quest for a better world" and, furthermore, that "[we] know that they are with us… and we see now what they are capable of."[31] This representation of China as a heroically striving socialist society set the template for those who followed him in the course of the 1950s.

Putrament's second book, *Chińszczyzna*, is much more nuanced and even critical at times, reflective of the changed atmosphere of both post-thaw Poland and the emerging Sino-Soviet split. He intended the title itself to communicate a double meaning: *chińszczyzna* refers to things related to China, but also means gibberish, and is used in the Polish equivalent of "it's Greek to me." Putrament meant to indicate that China is difficult to understand, and in a significant difference from the first book, he explicitly cautioned against making comparisons between Poland and the PRC.[32] Reflective of a larger coming to terms with the Stalinist years during the thaw, he admitted making mistakes and distorting reality in *Notatnik*, and throughout, *Chińszczyzna* is much more sober. There are of course many positive descriptions—the Chinese are still orderly, disciplined, and hardworking—but the praise was often undercut by reservations. The Party did many great things, but bureaucrats could be problematic.[33] There had been an explosion in the construction of factories and buildings, but the results were monotonous.[34] Putrament was also clearly attempting to make sense of the effects of the Great Leap Forward, begun in 1958. He wrote that the backyard steel furnaces may not seem to make sense, but that they were important and useful in channeling the zeal and enthusiasm of the Chinese.[35] He tried to assess the new people's communes, but mostly offered descriptions, and blamed many of the problems on natural disasters. Putrament noted schoolchildren who were sick and underweight, and too quiet and solemn in the classroom, and that overall there were fewer smiles to be seen.[36] The more critical and reserved tone throughout the book prefigured the radical changes in the image of China to come in the following years.

In general, however, in the decade of the 1950s enthusiasm pertained, and Polish writers sought to communicate a straightforward and heroic image of the PRC. After their trip to China in late 1952 as part of a ten-person delegation, leading communist literary figure Adam Ważyk and major artist Tadeusz Kulisiewicz collaborated on a slim volume of poems and sketches.[37] Ważyk's poems praised the party and Mao, and extolled the people as hardworking, while Kulisiewicz contributed powerful and expressive line drawings of Chinese citizens.[38] The latter also separately published an evocative cycle of drawings from the trip.[39] Fellow artist Andrzej Strumiłło also traveled to China at this time and published a volume of his drawings as well.[40] Their works were also displayed in exhibitions at this time, further magnifying this representation of the PRC.

A much more detailed and consistently political depiction of the PRC came in Culture Minister Włodzimierz Sokorski's *Dziennik podróży* (*Travel Diary*), which captured the experiences of a two-month, ten-person delegation in the fall of 1953. The diary included realistic and heroic sketches from the well-known artist and delegation member Aleksander Kobzdej, associated with socialist realism at the time. In the Minister's trademark tone of the communist bon-vivant, he offered views and commentary "to communicate in an immediate manner our reaction to the great victory of the Chinese Revolution, its real successes and difficulties, and the love of the Chinese people for the affairs of fellow humans."[41] The closing frame of the diary emphasized international solidarity and instilled the lessons they had learned for all Poles: "We returned richer in yet one further great experience from this country of friends and brothers. Brothers in struggle and brothers in victory. We returned stronger with yet further awareness of the strength of the camps of peace and democracy, from the Elba to the Pacific Ocean."[42] In his characteristically didactic grandiosity, Sokorski asserted the compelling relevance of the PRC as a model for and ally of the Poles.

Also in the Sokorski-led delegation was Jadwiga Siekierska, an art historian and cultural administrator, who published no less than two books after the trip. Her first, *Uroki Chin* (*The Charms of China*), aimed to introduce the greatness of Chinese culture to Poles. It offered a detailed overview and analysis of numerous genres of Chinese art, especially theater, presenting a rich and diverse cultural production in both the past and present.[43] She described active engagement in creating a new socialist culture, and the Chinese themselves as artistic and talented, and of course hardworking and heroic.[44] Her second book focused more on the people and their environment, and sought to stress the commonalities and connections between the two countries. Siekierska noted that both countries sacrificed a great deal for their independence, and that both had demonstrated their heroism. She asserted that the two countries were "brought close together by common goals, the sincere friendship of countries building socialism, and capable strength, which can conquer any distance."[45] As was the case with many of these books, portions of her writing had already appeared much earlier in late 1953 and 1954 in dozens of Polish journals and newspapers throughout the country, and thus their influence was magnified considerably.[46] Although Siekierska revised her Stalinist positions in the context of the thaw, her two works on the PRC written shortly after Stalin's death align with the official representation of China as model for and important friend of the Poles.

The high point of official and popular enthusiasm for China came in the months and years after the Polish October of 1956, when China supported the Polish position against Soviet pressure, and two major works appeared in this context. Paweł Jasienica, a left-leaning but often regime-critical journalist and historian, traveled for two months through China at the peak of popular and official interest in late 1956. In the resultant *Country on the Yangtse*, Jasienica continued to evoke the representation so carefully crafted in the preceding years, as he stressed the great potential and positive developments in the PRC. In a typical passage, he noted the difficult legacy left by previous generations, but concluded that the Chinese people would overcome this.[47] More than in other books, however, Jasienica repeatedly evoked a handful of desirable qualities seen piecemeal in the other books: modesty, honesty, willingness to work hard, politeness, discipline, and self-discipline. This emphasis resonated well with efforts to redefine socialism in a broader humanist framework in the context of the Thaw. He also did not shy away from mentioning problems and challenges, for instance, bureaucracy and its privileges.[48] However subtly, Jasienica's representation of the PRC reflects the changed context of post-October Poland, as he explored an object of interest to many Poles in a way that remained broadly consonant with the previous image of China but that also questioned aspects of both that image and the broader reality of socialism back home in Poland.

Much more evocative of the earlier representation was *30 dni w Chinach* (*Thirty Days in China*), published by the writer and communist activist Wanda Wasilewska in 1957 after an extended trip to China in 1955. Although she had chosen the Soviet Union as her homeland during World War II and continued to hold great faith in Stalin and his policies, she both closely followed and sought to influence Polish developments from Kiev.[49] In over 300 densely packed pages, she described a dynamic country that had made substantial progress despite its difficult history before the 1949 revolution. In her recounting, like the rest of the Bloc's drive to industrialize over the past decade, the PRC was engaged in a massive project of building: "scaffolding, scaffolding, scaffolding without end, stacks of bricks, an entire forest of scaffolding, with a hectic movement around buildings that reached for the sky."[50] The Chinese people were consistently portrayed as honest, disciplined, helpful, and kind, with cleanliness being another laudable attribute.

With Putrament's *Chińszczyczna* in 1961, contributions to this genre of book largely ended, giving way to much more critical works, especially during the Cultural Revolution.[51] But in the 1950s, in addition to these many and influential books, Poles also had access to over 50 other works of Chinese literature in translation, with over 100,000 copies in circulation.[52] A similar situation pertained in East Germany, which translated dozens of novels and works of non-fiction, some of them in multiple printings of tens of thousands.[53] Mao's collected works, for example, came out in printings of 10,000 or 20,000 in the GDR, and had subsequent printings to satisfy the considerable demand.[54]

And of course the GDR also featured many notable examples of the travel diary and travel reportage, usually mixed with historical and political background, and also penned by those who had experienced China in person on delegations. As in their Polish equivalents, such books and articles praised the progress China had achieved, and encouraged fellow citizens to emulate the supposed Chinese qualities of hard work, humility, discipline, and enthusiasm. These writers were generally leading, party-favored writers who viewed their reporting on the successes of the PRC as a way to stimulate the efforts and confirm the successes of their own society.[55]

Several prominent East German cultural figures went with the large international delegation that included Jerzy Putrament in the fall of 1951. Upon their return to the GDR, celebrated writers Anna Seghers, Kurt Barthel (KuBa), and artist Gustav Seitz gave speeches, published extensively on their experiences, and painted a picture similar to that seen in Putrament's first work.[56] Like his Polish counterparts, Seitz published a volume of drawings inspired by his wonder and enthusiasm for the PRC, to which Anna Seghers contributed an introduction that extolled the new China.[57] In his private diary, Seitz described his enthusiasm in detail and expressed the notion that this rising power would overtake Europe.[58] KuBa's extensive work of reportage from the trip, *Osten erglüht* (*The East Glows*) included many photos, with half produced in color. He offered a clear contrast between the poverty and oppression before 1949 and the progress of the present. His descriptions of the achievements do not fail to mention the large-scale successes in agriculture and industry, but KuBa also provided numerous anecdotes on how the lives of ordinary citizens had changed for the better. Throughout the book, KuBa stressed the hard work, discipline, and heroism of the Chinese, and he linked the two peoples as well: "German youth fights hard. From the example of Chinese partisans, liberation soldiers, and volunteers, German youth forges its courage."[59] The lessons for fellow citizens in building socialism were clear.

Other writers followed in these first footsteps at regular intervals, as did the subsequent written descriptions of their travels. Stephan Hermlin's slim volume came out of his extended trip in fall 1953. Including images taken by the well-known German-Chinese photographer Eva Siao, *Ferne nähe* (*Distant Closeness*) portrayed a China in the throes of positive transformation. Progress was his main theme, as he showed individuals and the entire society engaged in building a better future. In his recounting, the PRC was on "a path of glory and of unprecedented changes" that should serve as an inspiring example to all.[60] Fellow writer Bodo Uhse undertook his own tour the following spring, and subsequently published a travel diary that included sketches by illustrator Werner Klemke. Uhse related his enthusiasm for China's dynamism through his portraits of individual

Chinese citizens and their cities and workplaces.[61] His text was also reprinted as the introduction to a collection of Eva Siao's photographs that captured the people and sights of Beijing in highly sympathetic, moving fashion.[62]

Also at this time, journalist Karl-Heinz Schleinitz produced a more popular, accessible account of his travels in China, taken with the East German State Folk Art ensemble mentioned above. In an extended series of anecdotes drawn from the groups' ten-week tour of China, Schleinitz presented an inspiring vision of the PRC in both words and photos. Filled with breathless descriptions of the progress made since 1949, in this retelling the Chinese have had their energies unleashed due to heroic communist leadership and their own initiative. With an eye to his readers, Schleinitz asserted that the 230 East Germans with him "learned from the example of the history of the Chinese people and of their daily lives what a people who takes their own fate in their hands is capable of."[63] Schleinitz came from a working-class background, and his book clearly aimed at presenting a particular view of the PRC to a popular audience.

Notable in this context is the prominent sub-genre of such books written by communist-leaning foreigners. Fritz Jensen, an Austrian communist and doctor who worked on the communist side during the Chinese Civil War, presented his take on the "liberated" areas of China and the fighting. He cast the Chinese communists' struggle as vitally important for the success of the Soviet Bloc, and encouraged "study of the events in China, which will strengthen an awareness of the superiority of the democratic camp over that of the imperialists."[64] The left-leaning Australian journalist, Wilfred Burchett, had his massive travel reportage and history published in the GDR as the nearly 450-page *China verändert sich* in 1952. It emphasized the long struggle against imperialism and the early successes of the communists.[65] The publisher Brockhaus translated in a handsome edition *The Transformed Dragon* by Artur Lundkvist, a Swedish supporter of communism. His travelogue extolled how much had been accomplished under the new regime and noted "a liberated vitality combined with optimism, enthusiasm, and energy."[66] He was greatly impressed by Chinese "honesty, frugality and non-bureaucratic justice for all."[67] A handful of other works by both Soviet and Western writers in translation also appeared in the 1950s, sometimes in printings of tens of thousands, in order to explain to East Germans the Chinese Revolution in an ideologically approved manner.[68] Though fewer in number, many of these titles appeared in Polish as well.[69]

In addition to regular and prominent references to China in the daily press, both countries published a popular magazine that devoted some or all of its content to the PRC. From 1959 to 1963, the Chinese-Polish Friendship Association published its own illustrated monthly magazine *Chiny*, featuring articles about the history, economy, and culture of the PRC. These denser, non-fiction pieces were leavened with numerous photographs, drawings, fiction, and interesting facts and sayings. Beyond *Chiny*'s respectable circulation of 15,000, the Association also worked with success to spread information about China in the daily press, radio, and television.[70]

In East Germany, the glossy monthly journal *Von Peking bis Tirana* appeared from 1953 to 1955, and aimed to be "a symbol of the indissoluble relationships and the unshakeable friendship" with the PRC and the other people's democracies. The editors were inspired by the notion that those Germans who desired to build a socialist future must take an interest in true, inner sympathy and passionate shared experience with fellow communist countries like China, and furthermore that they should desire to learn from them and thereby improve their own work.[71] The October issues of 1954 and 1955, appearing on the anniversary of the PRC's founding, devoted themselves to China and emphasized its greatness and its friendship with the GDR.[72] In addition to such politically oriented articles, most simply sought to give a sense of Chinese culture and history. Overall, the magazine aimed to "encourage a life-giving stream of vigor and élan for our great societal tasks to wash over us. And ultimately we will create strength and confidence from this feeling of close solidarity in goal and path with these peoples…from sympathy with like-minded and countless, similarly striving people of friendly nations, we will gain self-confidence and certainty in our victory and the success of our societal efforts."[73] This more popular pedagogical and ideological reporting on the PRC continued in the weekly *Freie Welt*, which featured some aspect of life in China in most issues, including many photos accompanied by celebratory prose that lauded this "land of the great future."[74]

Another notable source for information on the PRC was *China im Bild*, the German-language edition of *China Pictorial*, a photo-filled magazine published by the Chinese in multiple languages starting in 1950. The German-language edition began publication in 1958 and was distributed widely in the GDR. As the title implies, the 32- to 44-page magazine was full of black-and-white and color photos, along with short articles, that presented developments in the PRC in glowing terms. Articles focused on achievements in industry and agriculture, and also highlighted advances in culture, women's rights, minority policy, sports, education, and medicine, while seeking to explain the ideological underpinnings of Chinese policies.

In both book and article form, these writers and artists created a powerful and impressive image of the PRC building socialism. This representation was then explicitly compared to the domestic situation in each country, and the texts often directly exhorted Poles and East Germans to emulate various Chinese qualities and actions. In building this image, these authors sought to shape worldviews and mobilize energies in order to promote the building of socialism at home. These descriptions then circulated widely in both countries and helped East Germans and Poles to visualize themselves as part of a larger international community engaged in constructing the transnational project of global communism. In both countries, interest in the PRC increased in the later 1950s, albeit for different reasons. In Poland, China was celebrated for supporting Polish reformers against the Soviet Union in 1956, and its representation in the context of the Thaw became less dogmatic and could be used to reflect on developments in the Polish Thaw. In the GDR, official interest in the PRC increased due to its resistance to de-Stalinization, and thus a broadly Stalinist image persisted through to the Sino-Soviet split.

Exhibitions and Films

In the pre-television world of the mid-twentieth century, the written word carried a particular power. But visual images of the PRC in the form of paintings, posters, and photographs, or in the medium of film, also had great impact. A visit to a museum or a cinema could serve as a significant crystallizing experience, or could reinforce aspects of the image already encountered. Exhibitions, in particular, played a crucial role in the creation of an image of China and in spreading it. In both countries, they served as a focal point for creating and disseminating a certain representation of the PRC.

The first and most sprawling was the *Art Exhibition of the People's Republic of China*, which landed in the GDR and Poland in 1951 after stops in Moscow and Leningrad. Attracting 300,000 visitors to museum space in the heart of Berlin, it was the centerpiece of the wide-ranging "Month of German-Chinese Friendship" in June. The exhibition featured nearly 1000 objects from the past and present, including many in socialist-realist style with appropriately political messages that were carefully staged at both the beginning and the end of the exhibition.[75] Party officials sought to leverage the exhibition for explicitly political ends, believing that it "promotes the deepening of the friendship between the German and the Chinese people, and strengthens the fight for world peace."[76] The Free German Trade Union Federation (FDGB) undertook a massive effort to bring workers from around the country to see the exhibition, and the full apparatus of the propaganda state sought to disseminate a pedagogically useful vision of China.[77] Complementing the main show was an exhibition of posters in Leipzig's Grassimuseum entitled *The New China* as well as numerous smaller exhibitions organized by the FDGB in libraries.[78] As further reinforcement for these exhibitions, a related, magazine-like publication of the same name appeared at this time, featuring articles and photos, as a kind of precursor to the magazines described above. It emphasized the relationship and indeed friendship between the GDR and PRC, and extolled China as a model for East Germany.[79]

Smaller exhibitions followed in quick succession through the 1950s. A traveling exhibition of graphic art made its way around the GDR in the aftermath of the blockbuster exhibitions.[80] Some exhibitions featured folk art, while others stressed explicitly political topics, such as *The New China on the Path to Socialism*.[81] Fall 1957 saw another prominent exhibition in Berlin of contemporary Chinese painting, which presented works that drew on national traditions while depicting contemporary scenes like joining communes or building railroads.[82] The tenth anniversary of the PRC's founding in 1959 provided the occasion for a number of exhibitions, including book exhibitions in major cities.[83]

Poland also featured a significant number of exhibitions related to China, including hosting the aforementioned blockbuster show of Chinese art in Warsaw's National Museum in the fall of 1951.[84] The League of Women helped to organize an exhibition entitled *Woman and Child in the People's Republic of China* in late 1952, which appeared in Warsaw, Poznań, Wrocław, and Katowice, and an exhibition of photos took place the following year as well.[85] Around the time of Chinese National Day on October 1, 1955, the International Press and Book Club organized an exhibition of photos dedicated to the cultural and economic accomplishments of the PRC in eight major Polish cities. That same year, an exhibition of Chinese graphic art was shown in Warsaw's Zachęta Gallery, and a few years later contemporary ink drawing was the subject.[86] Once the Polish–Chinese Friendship Society was formed in the later 1950s, it took an active role in organizing exhibitions.[87] In the tenth anniversary year of 1959, it organized 73 large and 222 small exhibitions throughout the country.[88] And the Society offered a broad palette of exhibitions in 1961, with 22 smaller exhibitions in smaller cities and six major exhibitions in larger cities, including exhibitions on Chinese woodcuts, Chinese landscape paintings, and the works of Andrzej Strumiłło from a recent trip to China.[89]

The screening of Chinese films in both countries was not especially robust, but did appear to have a significant impact. In the context of the "Month of German-Chinese Friendship" in 1951, the films *Die Töchter Chinas* (*China's Daughters*), *Sonne über China* (*Sun over China*), and *Siegreiches China* (*Victorious China*), were screened for hundreds of thousands all over the country.[90] The first was received with great enthusiasm at its premiere in Berlin in June 1951.[91] Other Chinese films appeared intermittently in the GDR, as for instance two in 1956 and a larger number during a film week on the occasion of the PRC's tenth anniversary in 1959.[92]

The East German film company DEFA (Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft) also produced and screened a handful of documentary films on the PRC in the 1950s. In addition to two multinational anthology films that prominently featured China, DEFA produced six documentaries between 1956 and 1961. These films of travel reportage allowed East Germans to experience the people and sights of the PRC, and were ideologically framed to convince viewers of the GDR's political legitimacy as a fellow socialist state overcoming a difficult past and building a bright future. Scholar Qinna Shen notes of these films that "China's revolutionary history was borrowed to rally support and create enthusiasm for socialism in the GDR."[93]

In Poland, a handful of Chinese films were shown throughout the 1950s.[94] In 1955, on the occasion of a visit by a delegation of Chinese filmmakers, a "Week of Chinese Films" took place in 17 cities around Poland.[95] After 1955, contacts between Polish and Chinese filmmakers were increasingly established, and more frequent screenings and festivals were organized.[96] Upon the formation of the Polish–Chinese Friendship Association at the end of the decade, it showed films regularly, with 446 screenings in 1959 alone.[97]

These films and exhibitions were only part of a rich world of visual representations of the PRC. Portraits of Mao appeared at parades and rallies, and occasional posters featured China. The authorities issued special stamps and postcards on various anniversaries and special occasions. Photos appeared in the newspapers, and news clips before feature films.

These regular visual references evoked and reminded Poles and East Germans of an approved version of the PRC and its importance in the Communist Bloc.

Conclusion

By the end of the decade, through a constant process of the transnational exchange of people and cultural products, a positive and politically useful image of the PRC had been created and used as a didactic symbol. With respect to Poland, one scholar asserts that, especially after October 1956, the PRC was well regarded by the Polish public, an opinion shared by a journalist writing at the time.[98] Another claims that in the 1950s "China was hip."[99] In the GDR, China assumed an even more prominent and positive position, with artists "euphoric" and elites more generally holding China in high esteem.[100] Another scholar describes a broad-based political popularity of the PRC.[101] Cultural elites, working with political leaders, had crafted this image and succeeded in disseminating it throughout East German and Polish societies. China was held up simultaneously as an example and confirmation that Poles and East Germans were on the right path, an inexorable one sweeping toward the future. In both countries, this image was fairly consistent throughout the decade, although its reception changed somewhat in the differing political contexts. In the GDR, the PRC was lauded for aspects of its resistance to de-Stalinization, but admired for different reasons for standing up to the USSR in post-October Poland.

In the opinions of artistic and political elites, over the course of the 1950s this representation of the PRC had become a powerful and useful tool for mobilizing society for the fulfillment of domestic goals within the larger political project of international socialist solidarity. And therefore, its disappearance after 1960 and then transformation into that of an enemy in the context of the Sino-Soviet split was all the more wrenching for Poles and East Germans.[102] Cultural cooperation between the countries gradually ceased, ending concert tours, film screenings, and exchanges of delegations. Many of the books so enthusiastically written and distributed were pulled from the shelves, and indeed the parties found themselves combating Chinese propaganda efforts to convince Poles and East Germans of the rightness of the PRC's positions.[103] The loss of this powerful symbol of legitimacy was a blow to political and cultural elites, who had invested greatly in its creation. For ordinary citizens, this complete transformation of the image of China disrupted the belief in a united and successful socialist world that had been encouraged by the parties and at least passively accepted by many Poles and East Germans. An important pillar of the Second World had crumbled, threatening the stability and self-perception of the remaining members.

Notes

1. See David-Fox, "The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane." In Cold War Crossings, eds. Babiracki and Zimmer, 14–39.
2. For the latter, see Jersild, "The Soviet State as Imperial Scavenger," 109–132.
3. Persak, "The Polish-Soviet Confrontation in 1956 and the Attempted Soviet Military Intervention in Poland," 1285–1310; Rowiński, "ChRL a wydarzenia październikowe 1956 r, w Polsce. Czy Chińczycy uchronili nasz kraj przed radziecką interwencją?" 239–289; Werblan, "The Polish October of 1956," 30–33; Zhihua and Danhui, "The Polish Crisis of 1956 and Polish-Chinese Relations Viewed from Beijing," 75–113.
4. For more on popular reactions to this image, as well as more on the ramifications of the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s, see Tompkins, "The East is Red?" 413–422; and Slobodian, "The Maoist Enemy."
5. See Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance*; Slobodník, "Socialist Anti-Orientalism," 299–314; the articles in Gorsuch and Koenker, eds., *The Socialist Sixties*; and the articles in Babiracki and Zimmer, eds., *Cold War Crossings.*
6. "Sprawozdanie z pobytu w Polsce Młodzieżowego Zespołu Artystycznego ChRL w czasie od 19.11.51 do 23.12.51" in: Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), KWKZ, 111.
7. "Sprawozdanie z pobytu w Polsce Zespolu Pieśni i Tańca ChRL od 26.8.-30.9.53" in: AAN, Komitet Współpracy Kulturalnej z Zagranicą (KWKZ) [Committee of International Cultural Cooperation], 111.
8. "Notatka służbowa dot. pobytu w Wrocławiu Chińskiego Zespołu Pieśni i Tańca, 11.9. do 12.9.53," and "Notatka służbowa dot. pobytu w Stalinogrodzie Chińskiego Zespołu Pieśni i Tańca, 14.9. do 17.9.53" in AAN, Komitet Centralny, Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (KC PZPR), 237/XXII/345.

9. “Notatka służbowa dot. pobytu w Łodzi Chińskiego Zespołu Pieśni i Tańca, 8.9. do 10.9.53,” ibid.
10. Andrzej Krzywicki, *Poststalinowski karnawał radości*, 207, 304.
11. Sprawozdanie z Towarzyszenia Młodzieżowemu Zespołowi Pieśni i Tańca Chin in: AAN, KWKZ, 111.
12. See Jacoby, “Zarys historii wymiany kulturalnej pomiędzy Polską a Chinami w latach 1949-2009,” 334-337; and Halimarski, *Poland and the People's Republic of China*, 29–31.
13. Jacoby, “Zarys historii wymiany,” 334.
14. Halimarski, *Poland and the People's Republic of China*, 30; Letter from Warsaw, undated, in: AAN, KWKZ, 112, p. 6.
15. Panufnik, *Composing Myself*, 217–220.
16. Ibid., 219.
17. See reports in: AAN, Komitet Współpracy Kulturalnej z Zagranicą (KWKZ), 110 and 112; Kałuski, *Polacy w Chinach*, 34; Jacoby, p“Zarys historii wymiany,” 336.
18. Lissa, “Wrażenia muzyczne z podróży do Chin ludowych,” 42–59.
19. Lissa, *Pieśni chińskie*.
20. Letter to the Chinese Food Workers' Trade Union, September 12, 1951 in: SAPMO-BArch, DY 42, 643: “Liebe, Verehrung und Achtung.”
21. Meyer, “Die chinesische Oper *Das Mädchen mit den weißen Haaren*,” 15–16.
22. Stuber-Berries, “East German China Policy in the Face of the Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1966,” 34; Krüger, “Das China-Bild in der DDR der 50er Jahre,” 266; Jousse-Keller, “Quarante ans de relations culturelles sino-allemandes socialistes,” 677–78; Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMO-BArch), DY 30, IV 2/9.06/81, Arbeitsplan für das Jahr 1959 zum Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR China über kulturelle Zusammenarbeit, and related documents.
23. Krüger, “Das China-Bild,” 266.
24. Hagen, “Die kulturelle Beziehungen der DDR zu den Ländern des sozialistischen Lagers,” 955; Letter to Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR, Information über die Veranstaltungen der Nationalen Front anlässlich des 10. Jahrestages der VR China, 6.11.1959, in: SAPMO-BArch, DY 6, 4535. The

latter appeared in Poland at this time as well: Halimarski, *Poland and the People's Republic of China,* 31.

25. Stuber-Berries, "East German China Policy in the Face of the Sino-Soviet Conflict," 36, 38.
26. Jousse-Keller, "Relations culturelles," 678.
27. Tiziana D'Amico, "Some Remarks on Propaganda and Slovak Travel Literature," 113. This article also contains insights on the Slovak case.
28. A particular portrait of Putrament at this time is that of Gamma in *The Captive Mind*. (Czesław Miłosz, *Zniewolony umysł,* 135–168.
29. Putrament, *Notatnik chiński*, 223.
30. Ibid., 117.
31. Ibid., 65, 294.
32. Ibid., *Chińszczyzna* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1961), 202.
33. Ibid., 198–99.
34. Ibid., 114.
35. Ibid., 55.
36. Ibid., 91, 200.
37. Ważyk, *Widziałem Krainę Środka*.
38. For more on Ważyk at this time, see Bikont and Szczęsna, *Lawina i kamienie*, especially 152–155. The authors note that Ważyk included the poems on China in an anthology of his best works he complied in the post-Thaw year of 1957, seemingly a sign of his view of their quality and continued relevance.
39. Kulisiewicz, *Rysunki z Chin i ze Szlembarku*.
40. Strumiłło, *Rysunki z Chin Ludowych*.
41. Sokorski, *Dziennik podróży*, 5.
42. Ibid., 243–44.
43. Siekierska, *Uroki Chin*.
44. Ibid., 10, 129.
45. Ibid.; *Ludzie i miasta*, 6.
46. See clippings in AAN, Akta Jadwigi Siekierskiej, 67.
47. Jasienica, *Kraj nad Jangcy*, 90–92.
48. Ibid., 175, 217.
49. Bikont and Szczęsna, *Lawina i kamienie,* 254. See also Shore, *Caviar and Ashes.*
50. Wasilewska, *30 dni w Chinach,* 15.

51. See Głąbiński, *Notatki z Chin*; and Adamczewska, *Cudzoziemiec w Pekinie*.
52. "Zarys historii chińsko-polskiej wymiany kulturalnej i współpracy," Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Poland, accessed July 16, 2015, http://www.chinaembassy.org.pl/pol/wh/Nw/t129187.htm.
53. Müller, "Chinesische Literature in der DDR," 199–210; Krüger, "Das China-Bild," 263; SAPMO-BArch, DY 30, IV 2/9.06/81, 84–90.
54. Krüger, "Das China-Bild," 263; SAPMO-BArch, DY-30, IV 2/9.06/81, 84-90; DY-30, 18186.
55. Gransow and Suffa-Friedel, "'Auf die Reise in ein anderes Land nimmt man sein eigenes mit,'" 81.
56. SAPMO-BArch, DY-30, J IV 2/3/231, Protokoll Nr. 102, September 10, 1951.
57. Seitz, *Studienblätter aus China*.
58. Gädeke, *Chinesische Reise*, 28–124.
59. Barthel, *Osten erglüht*, 106.
60. Hermlin, *Ferne nähe*, 129. Literary scholar Sigfrid Hoefert finds Hermlin's reportage particularly effective, and its contribution to "the image of China particularly enriching." Hoefert, "Zum China-Bild in der DDR-Literatur," 188.
61. Uhse, *Tagebuch aus China*.
62. Siao, *Peking*.
63. Schleinitz, *Reisebilder aus China*, 188.
64. Jensen, *China siegt*, 29–30.
65. Burchett, *China verändert sich*.
66. Lundkvist, *Der verwandelte Drache*, 299.
67. Ibid., 301.
68. Kisch, *China geheim*; Epstein, *Von Sun Yat-sen zu Mao Tse-Tung*; Simonow, *Das kämpfende China*; Smedley, *China Blutet*; Jermaschow, *Morgenröte über Asien*; Nikiforow, Jurjew, and Erenburg, *Die Volksrevolution in China*; Bidstrup, *Chinareise*. This last is particularly striking, as a large-format book with hundreds of detailed and evocative pen drawings by the author.
69. Epstein, *Rewolucja w Chinach trwa*; Simonow, *Walczące Chiny*; Smedley, *Pieśń walki*; Jensen, *Chiny zwyciężają*; Nikiforow, Jurjew, and Erenburg, *Rewolucja ludowa w Chinach*; Kisch, *Chiny bez maski*.

70. Cyrzyk, “ U zarania Towarzystwa Przyjaźni Polsko-Chińskiej,” 243; Halimarski, *Poland and the People’s Republic of China*, 30.
71. *Von Peking bis Tirana* 4 (April 1953): 4.
72. See *Von Peking bis Tirana*, Heft 10 (October 1954) and Heft 10 (October 1955).
73. *Von Peking bis Tirana* 4 (April 1953): 4.
74. “Bei 600 Millionen Freunden,” in *Freie Welt*, Heft 1 (January 4, 1956): 3.
75. The layout was different from that in the USSR and done explicitly to maximize ideological impact. Letter of June 1, 1951 in SAPMO-BArch, DY-30, IV 2/9.06/182, 34; Krüger, “Das China-Bild,” 266.
76. Beschluss des Sekretariats des Bundesvorstandes von 29. Mai 1951 zur Besucherorganisation aus der DDR für die große Kunstausstellung der VR China in den Staatlichen Museen Berlin [Berlin], 1951.
77. See the introductory materials of the exhibition catalogue. *Kunstausstellung der Volksrepublik China*.
78. “Der Monat der deutsch-chinesischen Freundschaft, Büro des Präsidiums des Nationalrates der Nationalen Front,” June 1951; Jousse-Keller, “Relations culturelles,” 675.
79. *Das neue China* (Die Wahrheit dem Volke, Nr. 13, Herausgegeben vom Amt für Information der Regierung der DDR, 1951).
80. See AAN, BArch, DY-27, 6374 and 6375.
81. Krüger, “Das China-Bild,” 266.
82. Hagen, “Die kulturelle Beziehungen der DDR,” 955; Neumann, *Chinesische Malerei der Gegenwart*.
83. Letter to Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR, Information über die Veranstaltungen der Nationalen Front anlässlich des 10. Jahrestages der VR China, 6.11.1959, in: SAPMO-BArch, DY 6, 4535.
84. Notatka z rozomwy z I. Sekretarza ambasada ChRL, May 4, 1951, AAN, KC PZPR, 237/XXII-343, p. 29. See also Jacoby, 336–338; Góralczyk, “Pięćdziesięciolecie Towarzystwa Przyjaźni Polsko-Chińskiej,” 232–237.
85. “Wyjątki z notatki,” September 18, 1952, AAN, KWKZ 112, 2; Halimarski, *Poland and the People’s Republic of China*, 30.
86. Letter, September 25, 1955, AAN, KZPR, 237/XXII-780, 28; Halimarski, *Poland and the People’s Republic of China*, 30; Jacoby,

"Zarys historii wymiany kulturalnej pomiędzy Polską a Chinami w latach 1949–2009," 337.

87. The Polish–Chinese Friendship Society was formed in 1957–1958 and quickly gained 300,000 members and organized many events in Poland. East Germany did not have an equivalent organization, though it did organize working groups in the lead up to the "Month" in 1951, and it again formed "China circles" at the end of the decade. Tomala, "China on the Eve of the Cultural Revolution," 159.
88. *Chiny* Nr. 8 (1960). For a description of some of its 1961 exhibitions, see *Chiny*, January 1962, 49.
89. *Chiny* Nr. 1 (1962), 40.
90. *Es lebe die Volksrepublik China, unser mächtiger Freund! Einige Tatsachen und Argumente für Diskussionen im "Monat der deutsch-chinesischen Freundschaft."* Landesleitung der SED Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Agitation, Heft Nr. 7, (Halle, 1951); Jensen, *Die Brücke*, 46–48.
91. Stüber-Berries, "East German China Policy in the Face of the Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956–1966," 35; "*Die Töchter Chinas*" in *Neues Deutschland* (June 9, 1951): 4.
92. Meißner, *Die DDR und China 1949 bis 1990*, 321.
93. Shen, "A Question of Ideology and Realpolitik," 95–96. See also Slobodian, "'Wir sind Brüder, sagt der Film,'" 45–67.
94. Jacoby, "Zarys historii wymiany kulturalnej pomiędzy Polską a Chinami w latach 1949–2009," 336–338; Halimarski mentions the films *The Storm, A Christmas Tale*, and *Shots at the Border*, in *Poland and the People's Republic of China*, 31.
95. "Zarys historii chińsko-polskiej wymiany kulturalnej i współpracy," Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Poland, accessed July 16, 2015. http://www.chinaembassy.org.pl/pol/wh/Nw/t129187.htm.
96. Jacoby, *Poland and the People's Republic of China*, 337.
97. *Chiny* Nr. 8 (1960).
98. Rowiński, "China in the Crisis of Marxism-Leninism," 56; Głąbiński, *Notatki z Chin,* 94.
99. Mikołaj Melanowicz, "Moja Japonia" in *Tygodnik Powszechny* (2000), accessed July 11, 2011: http://www.tygodnik.com.pl/japonia/melanowicz.html.

100. Meißner, *Die DDR und China*, 298; Felber, “China and the Claim for Democracy,” 125.
101. Tomala, “China on the Eve,” 159, 162.
102. On the Sino-Soviet split, see especially: Shen and Li, *After Leaning to One Side*; Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens*; Lüthi, *Sino-Soviet Split*; Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War*; Westad, *Brothers in Arms*. For an overview of the Sino-Soviet alliance, including relationships with the Central Europeans, see Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance*.
103. Tompkins, “The East is Red?”; Slobodian, “The Maoist Enemy.”

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CHAPTER 12

Sino-Soviet Rivalry in Guinea-Conakry, 1956–1965: The Second World in the Third World

Austin Jersild

New scholarship on the Sino-Soviet alliance and split explores the contrasting visions of the two communist powers on international affairs, with attention to their different approaches to revolution, war, nuclear weapons, the United States, and the newly decolonized states of the Third World. The "two revolutionary projects were fundamentally different," emphasizes Jeremy Friedman, with the Soviets primarily committed to "anti-capitalism" and the promotion of its version of socialism abroad, while the Chinese "saw anti-imperialism as the chief goal of their revolutionary program."[1] The Chinese revolution drew on a long tradition of nativist "self-strengthening" and opposition to foreign intrusion and imperialism, which shaped their overtures abroad after 1949. Chinese propaganda

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after 1960 increasingly portrayed the Soviets as a white, imperialist power inclined to compromise with the West at the expense of the Global South.[2] The Chinese, claimed German Democratic Republic (GDR) officials in 1960, thought of themselves as the head of a "united front of 'colored' peoples" (*Einheitsfront der 'farbigen' Völker*).[3]

In part, this coincided with the suspicions of figures in the newly decolonized states, such as President Sékou Touré of the new republic of Guinea-Conakry in West Africa. This was a problem for the Soviets that was evident in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955, where numerous nations of color assembled for the Afro-Asian Conference that would serve as the foundation for the Nonaligned Movement. "Russia had no defenders at Bandung," noted the American writer and observer, Richard Wright.[4] His reference to the "color curtain" in the title to his chronicle of the event (a play on the "iron curtain") was suggestive of the shifting terrain of the Cold War.[5] In July 1963, Sékou Touré complained to Chinese officials that Soviets speak "openly" from a position of "racial superiority." He criticized all those who "plan to establish inequality and the lack of fraternal relations between the white man and the colored man. The Asian and African people cannot accept this."[6] A month later, with African visitors in China, Chairman Mao himself declared that the "evil system of colonialism and imperialism grew up along with the enslavement of Negroes and trade in Negroes, [and] it will surely come to its end with the thorough emancipation of the black people."[7]

The Limits of Socialist Internationalism in the Third World

Rather than focusing on the racial question, however, this exploration of the Sino-Soviet rivalry in Guinea-Conakry illustrates the significance of the broader dilemmas associated with the Second World and its heritage. The topic at hand for Guineans and Chinese as they became increasingly acquainted was the character of the socialist Bloc and its tensions and limitations. One of those tensions was racial prejudice, but this was only a small portion of the larger story. Debates about the less than efficient practices of intra-Bloc exchange and collaboration spilled over into the Third World as the Cold War unfolded there in the early 1960s. Soviet and Bloc officials carried their attitudes abroad, and sometimes the same officials and institutions were involved in both intra-Bloc exchange and foreign aid programs. Complaints and criticism from both Guineans and

Chinese about Soviet aid and Soviet projects that were less than useful in a foreign context were an outgrowth of Second World debate. Rivalries within the Second World also extended beyond its borders. Alliance partners such as the East Germans and Czechoslovaks were clearly subordinate to the Soviet Union even as they remained determined to develop policy and a stature that served their own interests and what they perceived to be the broader interests of the Bloc.[8]

The socialist world was especially precarious in 1956, in the wake of Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" in February at the Twentieth Party Congress and the rebellions in Poland and Hungary later that year. Almost all the communist parties of the alliance engaged in a spirited debate about problems such as Soviet "great power chauvinism" and "great power hegemony." Numerous officials explicitly addressed the heritage of Russian imperialism. The Chinese played a major role in these internal discussions, and even emerged as an important source of advice and leadership for the other Bloc parties.[9] As Chinese ambassador to the Soviet Union, Liu Xiao, reported to Beijing, "Comrade [Anastas] Mikoyan noted China's very useful [contribution] at the time [of the events] in Poland and Hungary, which exerted a very good influence."[10] Foreign affairs officials in Hungary thanked Chairman Mao in particular for "instruction" on both the Stalin question and "opposition to great power hegemony and the violation of the interests and sentiments of small peoples and countries."[11] Liu Shaoqi routinely gave advice on Soviet "great power chauvinism" to Central European officials in China such as József Száll from Hungary and Ambassador Antonin Gregor from Czechoslovakia.[12]

Internal Bloc discussion about problems such as Russian "chauvinism" and "imperialism" was embarrassing to the Soviets, who associated such things with the Americans and their West European allies. The United Nations proclaimed 1960 the "Year of Africa" and 17 new nations gained independence soon after. The Soviet Union was eager to respond, and its officials emphasized repeatedly within the United Nations the potential role to be played by their country, supposedly distant from the practices of western colonialism.[13] In practice, the Soviets were hopeful but weak, unable to project military force to protect even an ally such as Patrice Lumumba in the Congo.[14] By the end of the decade, the Soviets were increasingly less enthusiastic about the gains to be realized by their expenditures abroad.[15] Such skepticism posed about aid to "national-liberation" movements perhaps anticipated later Soviet frustration about their "subsidy" of the Bloc itself in the decade preceding its collapse.

It was China rather than the Soviet Union that proved to be in a more likely position to bridge the two spheres of "world revolution and decolonization," as Chen Jian writes.[16] Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi between them visited over 30 Third World nations from 1963 to 1965, China gained recognition from 15 African nations, and China offered approximately $296 million in aid to Africa from 1960 to 1965.[17] The Chinese had long claimed a special role for themselves in the promotion of revolution in less developed lands. Mao spoke regularly before the revolution about China's role in the "intermediate zone" of countries once subject to colonialism, and his ideas were picked up by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) propaganda chief Lu Dingyi and Liu Shaoqi.[18] In Moscow in the summer of 1949, Liu Shaoqi described the Soviet Union as the "commander in chief" of international communism, aided by China, "one of its military command posts" in Asia.[19] Anastas Mikoyan as well was impressed by the potential of the Chinese model for revolution in Asia generally.[20] The tension and split with the Soviets inspired the Chinese to make what was once a supportive mission their own, and Africa in the process of decolonization offered a significant opportunity to illustrate this.

The Soviet Union and Guinea-Conakry

In the aftermath of his defiance of Charles de Gaulle's demand for strong central control over French colonies in 1958, President Sékou Touré initially gravitated to the Soviet Union and the Socialist Bloc. The search for useful patrons on the part of newly independent African states was of course a familiar part of the broader Cold War. As Holden Roberto of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) put it in 1967, "we accept help from anyone, regardless of its origin."[21] In the case of Guinea-Conakry, independence came quickly, the transition was abrupt, and the embittered French left with little concern for the future of the country. Some colonial administrators even destroyed their files and parts of the infrastructure of the country.[22] The new country struggled to develop its own cadre of trained managers and specialists, develop its own industries and natural resources, and reorient the economy away from France. The GDR was eager to develop trade and cultural exchange already by November 1958, and along with the Czechoslovaks supplied military support and advisers.[23] From the Soviet Union, Peter I. Gerasimov, sent by Andrei Gromyko to Guinea in December 1958, was officially received by Touré as ambassador in April 1959. A high-level Guinean delegation, including Ismaël Touré, Sékou Touré's half-brother and minister of public works, Saifulaye Diallo, chairman of the National Assembly, and Jean Faragué Tounkara, general secretary of the government, was received by Anastas Mikoyan and Khrushchev in the Soviet Union in August 1959. The two sides arranged a $35 million agreement on Soviet financial, technical, and other forms of aid to Guinea. Touré himself visited the Soviet Union in November 1959, and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed the importance of the new republic by appointing Daniel S. Solod as ambassador in January 1960, an experienced diplomat with a long career in the Middle East. By 1962, there were 448 Soviet specialists and advisers in Guinea, Soviet aid accounted for 42 percent of Guinea's total foreign aid, and Soviet projects included a radio station, a rice farm, a stadium, numerous factories, a technical institute, and other things. The Soviets generally were enthusiastic about the possibilities of West Africa in the Cold War struggle for influence. They awarded the Lenin Prize to Sékou Touré in 1961, to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in 1962, and to Modibo Kéita of Mali in 1963.[24]

The Soviet model for Africa was a product of what its officials viewed as the virtues of the multi-ethnic Soviet Union. The "former borderlands of tsarist Russia," as the makers of an international exhibit in Moscow put it in 1967, had "in the course of one generation finished with backwardness, poverty, disease, and ignorance."[25] VOKS (the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) official G. A. Zhukov, in November 1958, advised his colleagues engaged with Africa and Asia to better "propagandiz[e] the achievements of our Transcaucasus republics" in those regions.[26] European colonialism had left the new African states with challenges supposedly similar to those addressed by the Soviets on their own frontier, which included a successful history of promoting literacy, health care, education, and the emergence of a native cadre of trained experts, as Nikita Khrushchev himself argued before the UN.[27] Black American intellectuals such as Richard Wright even contrasted this history of the Russian frontier with the experience of African Americans in the southern states of the United States.[28] W. E. B. Du Bois and Shirley Graham, his wife and sometimes co-author, attended the first Conference of Asian and African Writers in Tashkent in 1958. In conjunction with his work on *Encyclopedia Africana*, Du Bois lobbied the Soviet Academy of Sciences to devote more resources to the study of Africa, which culminated in the founding of the Soviet Africa Institute in October 1959.[29] Proud of the character of the multi-ethnic

Soviet Union, in August 1959 the Soviets took their Guinean visitors to Azerbaijan, hoping to impress upon them the nature and implications of such progress for their country. During their November 1959 trip, Touré and Saifulaye Diallo and their wives enjoyed a stay at a dacha in Abkhazia.[30]

Supposed accomplishments and relationships dear to the Soviets, however, did not necessarily translate so well on distant continents. Russia's relationship to its frontier was also informed by hierarchical ideas that located the origin of cultural progress in the West, with Russia justifying its "leading role" in the Soviet Union by virtue of its "Western" status. The Soviets drew on a long heritage of similar ideas from the imperial era.[31] Sensitive about their recent experience with the French, the Guineans were quick to notice this aspect of the Soviet experience. Ingrained forms of hierarchy embedded in Soviet culture also made a mockery of Du Bois' enthusiasm for the Soviet Union's supposed "refusal to 'be white,'" a claim that would also be undercut through the next decade by the difficult interethnic experiences of the growing number of African foreign students in Soviet cities.[32]

Signs of trouble emerged even in the high-level diplomatic exchange of August 1959. Besides the trip to Azerbaijan, the Guinean delegation also spent time with officials from the Main Administration on Economic Ties (*Glavnoe upravlenie ekonomicheskikh sviazei*, GUES), the Liaison Office which was central to economic collaboration within the Bloc. Bloc collaboration and all this entailed was the only available model, even for a new ally in distant West Africa. The early agreements signed with Guinea, on technical collaboration and research, the Soviet provision of blueprints, industrial plans, and equipment, and the dispatch of Soviet experts, were modeled on the contracts and agreements that governed intra-Bloc exchange.[33] In the tradition of hierarchical Bloc planning, with goals and plans set in Moscow, GUES official D. D. Degtiar' immediately complained about the absence of specific proposals for economic collaboration from the Guinean delegation. He concluded that Soviet advisers would need to assess the situation there and come up with their own plans.[34] The propensity of Soviet advisers to devise plans for the rest of the Bloc without their input was a sore point in the Second World throughout the 1950s, yet another example of Soviet "great power chauvinism." It was a sensitive matter for the Chinese in the 1950s. The Soviets had learned little from this experience, however, and in West Africa were inclined to dictate rather than listen.

China and Guinea-Conakry

Like the Chinese, Touré was quickly disappointed with the Soviet Union, as early as May 1960 according to historian Sergey Mazov.[35] Ambassador Solod was declared a *persona non grata* and sent home in December 1961. Touré began his brief courtship with President Kennedy, before setting his sights on the People's Republic of China (PRC).[36] Now in conversation with yet another potential patron and alternative power in the Cold War, Touré and the Chinese found much to complain about concerning the Soviet Union. In an exchange with the Chinese ambassador in Conakry, Ke Hua, in August 1963, Touré described his early and natural sympathies for the Soviet Union, but added, "the Soviet Union has changed its original policies."[37] Touré understood how to benefit from the anxieties of the Cold War powers, and he cultivated modes of expression the Chinese could comprehend. Racial solidarity was not the primary topic. Instead, he emphasized their similarity in "experience" and history as a result of their common encounter with European colonialism as well as their more recent and difficult exposure to Soviet aid, advisers, and forms of Socialist Bloc collaboration. "I will not conceal the difficulties we are having in relations with the socialist countries," Touré confided to Ke Hua in April 1963. The country was only newly independent, mired in poverty, struggling with the heritage of colonialism, and yet the Bulgarians, Hungarians, Czechoslovaks, Soviets, and others from the Bloc demanded a "great sum" for their goods, technology, and equipment. The Guinean government could not exercise "jurisdiction" over the visiting Soviet advisers, Touré complained, who were overpaid, privileged, "lazy," and sometimes even possessed a "depraved spirit."[38] The overall relationship, continued Touré, was characterized by inequality. In a subsequent and similar exchange, Ambassador Ke Hua interjected with the voice of experience: "I can tell you, Your Excellency, that the level of inequality [in the Bloc] is also very great."[39] The economic and technical assistance agreements signed in 1960 between the Chinese and both the Guineans and Ghanaians stipulated that Chinese advisers should have a standard of living not exceeding "that of personnel of the same rank" in the West African countries.[40]

It was their common encounter with both European colonialism and the Soviet world that contributed to the making of the emerging alliance between China and Guinea-Conakry. The withdrawal of the Bloc advisers in the summer of 1960 from China, for example, was also abrupt and disruptive to the Chinese economy, although probably not as devastating as the French withdrawal from Guinea-Conakry. In the aftermath of the withdrawal, numerous Chinese officials nursed a feeling of betrayal and misuse at the hands of the Socialist Bloc "revisionists" who had abandoned the cause of international socialism and harmed Chinese production projects in the meantime. This line of reasoning also of course diverted attention away from their own catastrophic economic policies in 1958–1960 (the Great Leap Forward). The Soviets suddenly and maliciously "withdrew three thousand experts," Ke Hua reminded Touré in December 1963. Guineans, the Chinese embassy reported back to Beijing, "view the Soviet treatment of China as similar to their attitude to Guinea."[41]

President Touré presented the story of his small country as part of the larger, global history of great power conflict, in which small powers were sacrificed by colluding great powers. The "revisionism" of Khrushchev meant that the Soviets had retreated from the "line of global revolution." Guineans instead supported the Chinese in the Sino-Soviet split because of their "anti-imperialist position." The nuclear test ban negotiations amounted to collusion among the Americans, British, and Soviets at the expense of the interests of the peoples of Africa and Asia. In March 1963, Ke Hua reminded the Guineans that the Soviets viewed their concerns as merely "domestic" or "internal issues," in contrast to the interests and concerns of Chinese foreign policy, which pertained to "matters of global peace."[42] The Soviets and Americans "plan together to enslave the world."[43] This again was a story that emerged from China's own "bitter experience" with the Soviet Union, who in their view was perpetually willing to compromise the interests of the Chinese revolution, evident in the 1945 Treaty with the Guomindang, in their lukewarm military support for the CCP in 1947–1948, and again in the Sino-Soviet split. The Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, Ke Hua and Touré agreed that December, was a "betrayal" of the "peoples of the world," an "enormous swindle."[44]

Even more seriously, the Soviet visitors and technical specialists were disinterested in the cultivation and promotion of a Guinean technical intelligentsia or cadre of trained specialists. This again was a highly sensitive matter to the Chinese, who concluded by the late 1950s that the Soviets were similarly not contributing to their future independent development. In Chinese discussion, this was called "self-reliance (*zili gengsheng*)," which became a major source of frustration as the Sino-Soviet relationship deteriorated. The cultivation of a new cadre of "red experts," technologically trained and educated but supposedly liberated from the heritage of pre-revolutionary cultures and traditions, was one of the primary purposes of the Bloc and a common justification for the various socialist alliances of "friendship." Soviet advisers throughout the Bloc, and Bloc advisers throughout China, hoped not to replace local cadres, specialists, and administrators, but help the local country cultivate its own technical intelligentsia which would be crucial to the tasks of postwar and postrevolutionary reconstruction. With this goal in mind, Chinese state-builders and proponents of the advising program such as Liu Shaoqi routinely pushed for more advisers, more collaborative connections, and more projects that would help train a new Chinese administrative and technical elite.[45] By the late 1950s, the Chinese were increasingly disappointed, however, and now the Guineans too raised similar issues. For example, their explicit request of the Soviets to train Guineans themselves in aircraft navigation technology was rejected. The abrupt departure of the Soviet advisers left the Guineans unable to maintain and operate the Soviet military equipment left behind.[46] In part the Guineans were telling the Chinese what they wanted to hear, in part the Chinese were reproducing a narrative that was meaningful to them (the Guinean complaints are mediated here through Chinese Embassy reports), and in part the complaints were true. Americans in West Africa, for example, were well aware of these tensions and dilemmas in the socialist world. Diplomat William Atwood recalled: "The trucks were mostly Russian and the buses Hungarian. But they were turned over to Guinean drivers who had no notion of maintenance and in any case could probably not read the service manuals—even if they had been printed in French. When the vehicles ground to a stop for lack of lubrication or spare parts, the Guineans just shoved them into the ditch and complained that they were junk."[47]

And finally, the Soviets violated West African sensibilities concerning the most sensitive of matters, the question of colonial arrogance and disrespect for the countries of Africa and Asia undergoing the process of decolonization and national independence. This too was a matter close to the Chinese, who reinterpreted all of Bloc exchange and collaboration from the perspective of an enduring Russian "great power chauvinism" and search for "hegemony." Chinese criticism of the Bloc advisers covered a variety of issues that touched on the question of colonial arrogance and general chauvinism, from excessive alcohol consumption, misbehavior in Chinese restaurants, an inappropriate interest in Chinese women, imperious attitudes in the workplace, theft, poor performance records, and even psychological problems and serious crimes.[48] After his extended trip to China in 1956, the writer Boris Polevoi warned the International Department of the Central Committee that many advisers were insufficiently sensitive about the "privileged position and good fortune that they find themselves in."[49] From start to finish the two sides squabbled over the financial terms of the exchange, the pay of the advisers, the Chinese subsidy to the Soviet government as compensation to a ministry for the loss of a specialist, vacations, work conditions, and various forms of remuneration.[50] The Chinese resented the fact that the Soviets always seemed to misrepresent their financial contribution to the program, and minimize the significance of the goods and items they provided for export to the Soviet Union and the Bloc. In one episode the issue of the enduring use of the rickshaw by Bloc advisers, a familiar reference to the heritage of European colonialism, came to the attention of the Soviet embassy in Beijing and then eventually to Khrushchev himself. A Soviet official in Beijing, V. Akshinskii, associated the problem with the East Germans and Czechoslovaks, in his view more prone to excessively "European" behavior.[51]

As in China, the problem of the heritage of colonialism was experienced in a very personal way in West Africa. Ismaël Touré complained to Ke Hua in July 1963 that their relationship to the Bloc advisers was "very bad." Soviet officials did not even stand up and properly greet a Guinean delegation during one meeting, he complained.[52] Guinean state secretary for foreign affairs, Alpha Diallo, explained to Ke Hua that the Guineans were especially sensitive to these slights because of their previous experience with the French. And because the Soviet experience amounted to the continuation of "Russian colonial rule," he argued, these slights continued in the new era of national independence.[53] On many occasions Guinean officials, and the Chinese recounting these sentiments, used Russian (*eguo*) rather than Soviet (*sulian*) to describe these problems and episodes, which was also increasingly common after 1956 in Socialist Bloc discussion. In an August 1963 exchange with Ambassador Ke Hua, President Touré again criticized the lack of equality within the Socialist Bloc, and compared the Soviet relationship to the Bloc to that of capitalist countries to their colonies.[54] This was similar to Chinese reasoning about the "revisionism" of the Soviet Union, which left the country in practice similar to the "imperialists" (historically the Europeans but most pointedly directed at the Americans in the 1950s) and hence demanding a similar opposition. This explained how it was possible for a socialist society to become "imperialist." Imperialism and revisionism were "interconnected problems," suggested Ke Hua in another exchange. The discovery of this connection, he added, increased the importance of Chinese experience and the Chinese revolutionary model in Africa and Asia, as well as that of "Mao Zedong Thought."[55] The Soviets as "social imperialists," an enemy even more threatening than the American "imperialists," would become a familiar accusation by the time of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969.

The Chinese rivalry with the East Germans intensified in West Africa. This rivalry began in the late 1950s, evident in the reporting of Chinese ambassador Wang Guoquan and his embassy colleagues in Berlin before the split. In Berlin, the Chinese carefully monitored the efforts of the GDR to cultivate relationships with "young nation-states" in Africa and Southeast Asia. Besides Guinea-Conakry in West Africa, these included other countries such as Cuba, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Indonesia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Mali, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.[56] In part, this was an effort to subvert the so-called Hallstein Doctrine of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), or the country's refusal to engage in diplomatic relations with countries that recognized the GDR.[57] As US State Department officials put it, both the Soviet Union and the GDR sought "international acceptance" of the "Zonal regime as permanent" by "creating both factual and fictitious evidence of the permanence of the East German regime."[58] East German officials carefully monitored whether or not leaders such as Sékou Touré, Kwame Nkrumah, and Modibo Kéita had adopted "our viewpoint" on the two German states. "The position of Guinea is disappointing," they concluded in September 1961.[59] They also went to great lengths to emphasize their usefully revolutionary credentials in Africa, an outgrowth of their constant "struggle against West German imperialism."[60]

From the Chinese perspective, this again was a rivalry over the most appropriate form of aid and support that best corresponded to African needs and "experience," yet another return to the Chinese criticism of Socialist Bloc projects that did not address Chinese conditions. A delegation from the GDR toured Guinea in May 1963, visiting other countries in West Africa and intending to visit Southeast Asia as well. They planned to help Ghana with a television station, a printing press, the training of cadres, and general cultural development; in Mali, they were constructing an oil refinery, processing lumber, and also training cadres; they also went to Algeria. Wang Guoquan was determined to show that the Chinese could do better, and offer help in a way that better addressed the real needs of Africans (textile production, a peanut factory, fisheries, a glass factory, an auto repair factory), and encourage local independence and autonomy (a reduction in hard currency expenditure and the training of new cadres to replace the vacuum left by the French in Algeria). This was all part of a more sensitive sort of aid and developmental model from the sympathetic Chinese, who claimed to have acquired much bitter experience in decades of interaction with both European imperialists and Soviet socialists. Their aid, the Chinese reminded the West Africans, came without strings attached and without any "interference in their internal politics"; above all it guaranteed the "dignity of the Africans."[61] The Chinese understood "oppression," "exploitation," and "hunger," in contrast to Socialist Bloc advisers who only knew the "pain of imperialism…from books."[62] Chinese advisers "every day work ten hours days," Chinese embassy official He Ying explained to Alpha Diallo.[63] And some Africans agreed. Ghanaese officials complained that the concerns of the GDR were applicable to the "German question" in Europe, "but are of little significance for [the resolution of] African problems."[64] Similarly, Ke Hua was pleased to report positive Guinean views from Ismaël Touré and Fodéba Kéi'ta, the minister of internal affairs, on the "bearing (*taidu*)" of Chinese advisers in relation to the local population.[65]

More significant than any racial appeal from the Chinese was a familiar Sino-centric orientation that was in keeping with the history of China within the Socialist Bloc. The Chinese claimed to know the ways of both worlds in the Cold War, and thus represented the best and only alternative for the Guineans. The Chinese cultural affairs attaché in Guinea complained about the insidious efforts of both the "imperialist" and "revisionist" powers to distort and manipulate Guinean culture. American support for hospitals, schools, films, foreign study and exchange, and education was in the tradition of the French and their pernicious colonial efforts, all forms of "ideological infiltration" designed to "destroy relations between us and the Africans." The socialists were no better. Poles, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Czechoslovaks, and others were part of the problem in Guinea along with the Soviets, he continued, and the Chinese claimed special knowledge of their tactics and programs. Both of the superpowers were equally threatening, and the Chinese possessed experience in the ways of both of them. "The above illustrates that the revisionists and the imperialists use similar methods, and in this way strengthen their efforts to infiltrate." The Chinese, however, shared with the Guineans a "similar experience and fate," and hence their culture and recent experience were of great "interest" to Africans.[66]

Conclusions

The internal tensions and problems of the Second World informed and shaped the Sino-Soviet rivalry in Guinea-Conakry in the early 1960s. Some of the familiar developmental hierarchies, practices, and forms of chauvinism within the Bloc were now experienced by West Africans such as the Guineans, and the Chinese were eager to point this out and take advantage. Debates that were significant but toned down during the height of the Sino-Soviet alliance now escalated and received public attention. The identity and character of the Soviet Union, not invited to participate in the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955, remained a sensitive matter. Chinese foreign minister Chen Yi returned to this theme in his efforts to persuade dissenting nonaligned countries to reject Soviet efforts to participate in a second Afro-Asian conference, tentatively planned for Algeria in 1965. "The Soviet Union is not an Asian country," he exclaimed to Indians, Egyptians, Algerians, and others who wondered about the merits of excluding the Soviet Union.[67] In 1958, the Chinese and Soviets engaged in similar debates about the differences between Europe and Asia, the identity of the Soviet Union, and appropriate models of development for socialist societies.

The Soviets brought their attitudes and practices from the Second World to distant locations such as West Africa, and so too did the Chinese. In both the Bloc and in West Africa, the Chinese were preoccupied with the virtues of their own special "experience." They once proudly offered it to the socialist world in 1956–1957, only to be rejected by "revisionists" who did not understand what was in their best interests. They now made their pitch to the Third World. The Chinese again were the "saviors," said the Guinean ambassador in Prague in January 1963 to the Chinese ambassador there, this time of the "oppressed peoples of the entire world."[68] The Chinese were again pleased to hear what they apparently needed to hear, this time from West Africans such as the Guineans in 1963 rather than Central Europeans such as East Germans and Czechoslovaks in 1956–1957. The global character of the Cold War competition and the consequences of the Sino-Soviet split pushed China's foreign policy to the far reaches of West Africa. The history of the Second World and its forms of intra-Bloc exchange deserves further attention because of its importance to the nature and limitations of Soviet foreign policy, the evolution of Chinese foreign policy, the fragmentation of the once bipolar Cold War, and the contest for influence and authority throughout the Third World.

NOTES

1. Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 86. See also Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 157–193, 246–272; Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens*, 64–91; Möller, *DDR und Dritte Welt*, 134–141.
2. Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 103–115; Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens*, 82.
3. 1960, "Bemerkungen zur Aussenpolitik der VR China im Jahre 1960," SAPMO DY 30-IV 2/20/122/308. Competition over racial matters, the "Achilles heel" of affluent America, as Charles Johnson, the President of Fisk University put it in 1950, has primarily been explored as part of US–Soviet relations. Muenlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans*, 195. On the efforts of Soviet officials to "use Negro priests" for propaganda purposes, and invite "representatives of the Negro churches to the USSR" as a means of embarrassing the Americans and illustrating the progressive racial politics of the USSR, see March 4, 1959, "Zapis' besedy," N.V. Popova, GARF f. 9576, op. 18, d. 17, l. 67. See also November 19, 1959, G. Zhukov, RGANI f. 5, op. 30, d. 309, l. 156, and Magnúsdóttir, "Mission Impossible?," 50–72. On Soviet foreign policy and the Third World generally, see Hopf, *Reconstructing the Cold War*; Engerman, "The Second World's Third World;" Hilger, "Sowjetunion, Staatssozialismus und Dritte Welt, 1945–1991," in Hilger, ed., *Die Sowjetunion und die Dritte Welt*, 7-17; Friedman, "Reviving the Revolution"; Friedman, "Soviet Policy in the Developing World and the Chinese Challenge in the 1960s; Porter," *The USSR in Third World Conflicts.*
4. Wright, *The Color Curtain*, 157. See also Jansen, *Nonalignment and the Afro-Asian States*; Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 31–50; Lawrence, "The Rise and Fall of Nonalignment," in McMahon, ed., *The Cold War in the Third World*, 139–155; Zhang, *Beijing's Economic Statecraft during the Cold War, 1949–1991*, 122–23.
5. Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain*, 159.
6. July 31, 1963, "Ji dui zhongsu fenqi zonghe baogao," WJBDAG 108-00905-02, 75.
7. Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa, 1958–71*, 121.

8. For suggestive articles on transnational experience and exchange within the Second World, see David-Fox, "The Implications of Transnationalism," 885–904; Idem, "The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane," 14–39; Engerman, "The Second World's Third World"; Gorsuch and Koenker, eds., *The Socialist Sixties.*
9. November 8, 1956, "Zai su guoqing yanhui zhong Heluxiaofu deng jianghua yaodian," WJBDAG 109-01615-05, 27; Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance*, 124–27.
10. November 28, 1956, "Migaoyang tanhua neirong," Liu Xiao, WJBDAG 109-01617-07, 41–3.
11. January 4, 1957, "Guanyu 'Zai lun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng de lishi jingyan' fanying huibao," WJBDAG 109-01154-01, 7–8.
12. December 26, 1956, "Telegram z Pekinu," Gregor, 019.236/56, MZV TO – T 1955-1959, ČLR, krabice 2, obal 10.
13. December 7, 1960, V.A. Zorin, in Brykin, et al., *SSSR i strany Afriki 1946–1962*, vol. 2, 106–120.
14. Iandolo, "Imbalance of Power." On the Congo and exaggerated American fears about Soviet influence, see Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo*, 66. See also January 10, 1961, SNIE 65-61, "Main Elements in the Congo Situation"; January 26, 1961, Memorandum of Conversation; January 28, 1961, "Suggested New United States Policy on the Congo," *FRUS 1961–1963*, vol. 20, 2–8, 27, 42; Muehlenbeck, "Kennedy and Touré," 69–71.
15. Stent, "Soviet Aid to Guinea and Nigeria."
16. Jian, "China's Changing Policies toward the Third World and the End of the Global Cold War." See also Friedman, "Free at Last, Now What," 273; Zhang, *Beijing's Economic Statecraft during the Cold War, 1949–1991*, 97.
17. Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa, 1958–71*, 121–26; Chen, ed., *China and the Three Worlds*, 23; Li Jie, *Mao Zedong yu xin zhongguo de neizheng waijiao*, 37–39, 56–59, 137; Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 163; Shinn and Eisenman, *China and Africa*, 61–285; Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 117.
18. Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 19–21, 74–75.
19. July 4, 1959, "Daibiao zhonggong zhongyang lianxi gong (bu) zhongyang Sidalin de baogao," *Jianguo yilai Liu Shaoqi wengao*, 1:17.

20. Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu Mosike de enen yuanyuan*, 280. See also Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975*, 21.
21. Jackson, "China's Third World Foreign Policy," 392. On Zambia and Zanzibar, see DeRoche, "Non-alignment on the Racial Frontier," 230; and Burgess, "A Socialist Diaspora." On the efforts of the Algerians to court both Soviet and Chinese support, see Pierre Asselin, "The Algerian Revolution and the Communist Bloc," CWIHP e-Dossier No. 62 (2015), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-algerian-revolution-and-the-communist-bloc.
22. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 57–63; Kaba, "From Colonialism to Autocracy."
23. Gray, *Germany's Cold War*, 91–110.
24. Iandolo, "The Rise and Fall of the 'Soviet Model of Development' in West Africa, 1957–64," 691; Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 63–67; Davidson, et al., *SSSR i Afrika 1918–1960*, 203-210; Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 77–79.
25. "Sobranie," 1967, GARF f. 9469, op. 1, d. 2, l. 416. See also Hopf, *Reconstructing the Cold War*, 238–39.
26. November 14, 1958, G. A. Zhukov to CC CPSU, in Namikas and Mazov, eds., "The Congo Crisis, 1960–1961."
27. September 23, 1960, N.S. Khrushchev, in Brykin, et al., *SSSR i strany Afriki 1946–1962*, vol. 2, 11–15; Djagalov and Evans, "Moskau, 1960," in Hilger, ed., *Die Sowjetunion und die Dritte Welt*, 91–2.
28. Singh, *Black is a Country*, 120.
29. Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain*, 302, 198.
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CHAPTER 13

Afterword: Promises and Paradoxes of Socialist Internationalism (Personal and Historical Reflections)

Alfred Rieber

On Christmas Eve 1958, a few American students were quietly singing carols in one of the practice rooms of Moscow State University (Moskovskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet, or MGU). They were joined by an Indonesian student, who, like the Americans, was slightly older than the average Russian in the dormitory. It turned out he had an engineering degree from Cal Tech. When asked why, with that kind of training, he had elected to come to MGU to study the same subject he answered, "My classes in the States assumed the kind of laboratory equipment and technical preparation that we simply do not have back home. Here in Moscow, the general level is something we can more realistically aspire to and soon match." This incident and several other personal impressions from that first year of the cultural exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union came to mind when reading the chapters of this book, which explore in depth some of the

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same themes. The American graduate students in Moscow that year, numbering fourteen males as well as two accompanying spouses, made a great effort to avoid being conspicuous in their dress and behavior. We wore dark clothes, the two women did not apply cosmetics, and we rarely assembled or traveled in a group. Most of us avoided the American embassy. This was in sharp contrast to the Arab students, all five hundred, who were not reticent in displaying the advantages of coming from privileged families. In the spring, when the windows of the dorm were unsealed and open to the warm breezes, the sounds of Western pop and jazz issuing from their boom boxes filled the air. There was resentment too, among the Russians, about their dating behavior, and rumors of a few unpleasant incidents circulated.

By contrast, the Chinese students maintained their reputation for group discipline, modesty, and hard work to the point where the Russians expressed wonder at their asceticism, "more like we must have been in the twenties," said one. The Chinese exercised at regular intervals during the day, even in the stacks of the library, if necessary. When one student saved part of his stipend to buy a watch, he was disciplined by the group, we heard, by having to sell it back and use the money to buy additional food in order to restore the energy level necessary for serious study which he had reduced for "a trinket." It was not until 1960 that the People's Friendship University, named the following year after Patrice Lumumba, was founded originally to house and educate students from the Third World, and soon acquired among Russians students the sobriquet "Apartheid U."

Then there were the Poles and students from the Baltic republics, "the West" as Russians often called them, who enjoyed more relaxed relations with the Americans, so much so that early on in our stay, they were informed that frequent contact was "not recommended." Polish magazines were sought after for their racy front covers which could be seen occasionally adorning the walls of a Russian student's dorm room. The chapters of this collection reminded me of these stories because they illustrate through systematic and extensive research the variety and complexity of the attempts by the Soviet leadership to break out of the autarchic world of late Stalinism and forge new transnational relationships with the Third and First Worlds as well as to consolidate and strengthen closer cultural ties within the Bloc—the Second World—which is the main focus of this book.

The Promise

As the editors suggest in their introduction, the ambitious experiment to create a new form of internationalism offered great promise in the face of equally great problems. The promise was a vision of mutually enriching cultural ties, "visible and invisible," which would eliminate the divisive and destructive conflicts among classes and nations and bind peoples together in a socialist commonwealth. The promise issued from the killing fields of world war, the worst in history. Its most radical features were the elimination of the old elites who allegedly had plunged the world into catastrophe, their replacement by untainted popular elements, and the introduction of comprehensive educational, social, and economic reforms under the banner of a unified ideology celebrating the secular ideal of progress inspired and led by the Soviet Union. The promise was brightest in the Soviet Bloc, called somewhat condescendingly the Second World by the self-named First World, but it was also designed to appeal to the former colonies, the so-called Third World, emerging from decades of imperial rule, and even to win converts in the First World.

The chapters of this book have been devoted to the cultural aspects of that promise—peace and the cultivation of the friendship of peoples through mass exchange of ordinary citizens of all countries, of special delegations, of outstanding individual scholars, scientists, and entertainers, of the transnational transfer of ideas and aesthetic styles in art, architecture, music, films, literature, and other creative endeavors. It should be noted in passing that, along with the promise of a new internationalism embodied in cultural transfer, a set of new international institutions was created, most notably the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and the Warsaw Pact designed to pool and integrate the economic and military resources of the East European countries of the Bloc. Their formation and evolution stand in the shadows of the cultural transfers but must be the subject of a different book.

The Problems

One of the merits of this collection is that it takes the promise seriously. At the same time, the authors of the foregoing chapters pay equal attention to the problems that hampered its fulfillment. Some of these were deep seated, while others emerged in the course of the transnational exchanges; all shared similar fundamental questions.

First, was the new internationalism to be guided by the experience of the Soviet Union, where relations among the nationalities were regulated by the twin formulae of "nationalism in form, socialism in content" and "the Great Friendship?" If so, then which period in the evolution and application of these ideas should be selected for emulation? If not, and the Soviet experience would serve only as the basis for negotiation or reinterpretation to account for changing historical circumstances, then who would mediate the process and in which forum?

The task of answering these questions was magnified by the second set of questions revolving around the problem of cultural distance. In the Bloc, cultural proximity must be measured not only by language and religion but also by the experience of having undergone prolonged coexistence in the same multicultural state. In Europe, non-Soviet members of the Bloc had belonged to different empires—the Habsburg, Ottoman, or German—before they emerged briefly as independent states, bearing legacies that could not be easily dismissed. How was it possible to overcome the pre-existing cultural distance between the countries of the Bloc, which had been further widened by the Second World War and the Holocaust, and on the other hand the cultural distance between the countries of the Bloc and the Soviet Union which was relatively greater than that which had separated the Russian and other nationalities which had been part of the same empire?

The third set of questions arose over the different measurements of cultural distance between individual countries of the Bloc and "the West" expressed, to be sure, more often implicitly than explicitly. Historical narratives, collective memories, and national myths establishing the boundaries of "Western civilization" continued to inform popular perspectives, particularly in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the German Democratic Republic. Such attitudes implying a hierarchy of cultural status within the Bloc were reinforced by the higher levels of economic and technical development in these countries compared to the countries of southeastern Europe and, even in some cases, the Soviet Union.

The Ideology and Practice of Separate Paths

Before proceeding to illustrate how the individual authors have provided insights into the evolving tensions between the promise and the problems, it may help clarify the discussions and debates over the resolution of these three sets of questions by sketching some of the pre-history of the ideology and political implications of the new internationalism.

In the early years of the Bolshevik revolution, Lenin envisioned an association of autonomous and equal Soviet republics, initially those taking shape in the disintegrating tsarist empire during the civil war, joining together within a federated structure that would permit the future adhesion of additional Soviet republics as the revolution spread. Although he was not always consistent on this matter, he expressed concern in his last year that the domestication of the revolution had gone too far, particularly in Stalin's version of the constitution and in the organization of the Comintern. In his last public address to the fourth congress of the Comintern he repeatedly warned that the resolution of the third congress on the organization of the communist parties, the content and methods of their work were "too Russian." By reflecting Russian experience, "it would be completely misunderstood by foreigners and they could not be expected to bow before it like an icon in a corner and pray to it."[1]

Stalin took a more centralizing view in both building the Soviet state and in imagining the revolutionary process abroad. As early as the mid-twenties, he hinted, quite broadly, that revolutions in countries neighboring the Soviet Union would take a different path than that blazed by the Bolsheviks. However, although he appeared to agree with Lenin's formula, in fact, he would insist on his own definition of what constituted the alternative to the Russian revolution. With reference to Poland and Rumania, for example, he spoke of a transitional stage appropriate for mainly agrarian, "semi-feudal countries."[2] During the Spanish Civil war, he introduced the idea of a "parliamentary path" to socialism.[3] And in the waning days of the Second World War, he reminded the Polish and other Communist leaders that their revolution would not have to pass through a civil war and a dictatorship of the proletariat. They would benefit from the experience, achievements, and assistance of the Soviet Union to avoid this stage.[4] Stalin reiterated that the possibility existed of following different roads to socialism, that is until 1948, when he narrowed the access routes. He was already giving indications of a clear hierarchy in the Second World, first by limiting the membership in the newly formed Cominform, excluding the Asian parties and even the Greek and Finnish parties which were larger than most of the East European parties admitted into the organization. Moreover, he insisted that the Soviet Union was building communism while the other parties were still at the stage of building socialism. Would the gap ever be closed?

On the eve of the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Sovetskogo Soiuza, or KPSS) in February, 1956, leaders of the Bloc began to review inter-party relations as a prelude to constructing a new internationalism.[5] Informal discussions in Moscow beginning in February 1956 initially focused on the need to broaden membership in the Cominform and the possibility of renewing contact with socialist parties. Differences of opinion rapidly surfaced, reflecting uncertainty and some confusion and foreshadowing the main lines of debate over the following decades. For example, the Italian Communist, Palmiro Togliatti, who had taken the initiative for the first meeting, initially favored retaining the Cominform while stressing the need to review its work. He later changed his mind and opted for abolition. Anastas Mikoian came out in favor of reconstructing the organization along regional lines and gained support from Molotov, Kaganovich, and Khrushchev. Tito, Mao, and Togliatti opposed the idea.[6] The revelations of the Twentieth Party Congress accelerated the momentum to abolish the Cominform, which occurred in April. The Hungarian Revolution of October 1956 revealed new fissures which opened up at the meeting of the sixty eight Communist parties in November 1957.

In the preconference discussions, the Polish Communists raised numerous objections to the program drafted by the Central Committee of the KPSS, objecting to the centralizing tendency of the wording, while Mao, although endorsing the leading role of the Soviet Union, minimized the errors of Stalin and hinted at major differences over détente and atomic warfare.[7] Togliatti, rapidly moving back toward a position of separate paths and reviving the idea of a popular front, struggled to find the right formula: "We shouldn't be hasty in forming a new international organization. What is necessary is to combine the autonomous development (*samostoiatel'noe razvitie*) of each party with the maximum solidarity and unity of our movement."[8] It was a neat trick if it could be performed! Togliatti offered a method: a frank exchange of information and open contact among parties facing common problems. The Soviet leaders, Suslov and Khrushchev, gave greater emphasis to the cooperation among Communist parties of the socialist camp which would in Suslov's words "stand the test of time."[9] In a final effort to paper over the differences, the Soviet delegation agreed to modify the introduction to the final declaration to read that every country should decide which is the greater threat, revisionism or dogmatism (sectarianism). But the compromise was not enough for the Yugoslavs, who refused to sign. The new draft program of their party in the spring of 1958 touched off a renewed and concerted assault of all the parties against revisionism. But this manifestation of solidarity was short-lived. Differences erupted between the Chinese and Soviet parties over peaceful coexistence and détente, reverberating throughout the Bloc. As Tompkins shows in Chapter 11, the Chinese were already serving as "a mirage" to which the members of the Bloc in Eastern Europe could project their aspirations to the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as an example of the hard line in challenging Khrushchev and to the Poles as a counterweight to Soviet hegemony.

Moreover, in the following decades, the Chinese appeared more and more likely to bridge the distance between the Second and Third Worlds. As Jersild demonstrates in Chapter 12, the Soviet advisers to former colonies like Guinea-Conakry were perceived by the locals as overbearing and overpaid, less interested in promoting world revolution and more in making deals with the imperialists. They found common ground with the Chinese on all these issues. The Chinese played up their bitter experience with colonization and the importance of respecting indigenous cultures in contrast to the Russians.

Further evidence of the disparate relations between the Soviet Union and members of the Second World in maintaining comradely relations with representatives of the Third World appeared most vividly in sub-Saharan Africa. From 1964 to 1988, Cubans, like the Chinese who were also briefly involved, appeared to represent a closer approximation to the ideals and practices of national liberation movements than the Soviet advisers. The Cubans brought with them to Angola their experience in guerilla warfare and exhibited more congenial and comradely behavior in their personal relations with the indigenous population than the Russians, whose aid program was over-bureaucratized and at times half-hearted. Over the two decades of intervention, Cuba supplied approximately 5000 teachers, doctors, construction workers, and technicians as well as fighters, a level of support unmatched by the Soviet Union anywhere in the Third World. Although both Cubans and Russians shared similar aims in stimulating anti-colonial movements to weaken the West, primarily the United States, the Cubans were able at times to conduct a virtually independent policy in the region which did not always serve the interests of Moscow.[10]

In sum, the attempts to fulfill the promise of a new internationalism should be projected like moving images flickering against a background of ideology and historical experience that also changes over time and space. Gradually, the elements of solidarity and unity prized even by Togliatti break down in the face of mounting problems, and the new internationalism becomes an empty formula. We can identify three factors shared by all members of the Bloc that hampered and limited the fulfillment of the promise.

The Three Limiting Factors

The first limiting factor was the obvious imbalance in the prestige and power of the members of the Bloc and the overwhelming hegemony of the Soviet Union in the formative stage of its creation, continuing in somewhat diminished but nevertheless dominant form and even contributing to the disintegration of the Bloc. The brief postwar experiment in separate paths was abruptly terminated in 1948 with Stalin's brusque intervention to block the participation of the Czechs in the Marshall Plan, the Prague coup, the establishment of the Cominform, and the condemnation of Yugoslavia. In a certain sense, it is possible to interpret the succeeding decades as an attempt by the Soviet leadership to correct the acknowledged errors of that period in intra-Bloc relations. That this transnational exchange was largely a one-way street under Stalin is vividly illustrated in Apor's contribution on the cult of Stalin in Hungary (Chapter 3), which blossomed elsewhere in the Bloc. In the brief Stalinist period following the war, the Soviet leader set the patterns and parameters of internationalism that continued to affect the evolution of transnational exchanges after his death.

A second limiting factor in the emergence of a uniform internationalism within the Bloc was a long history of ethnic conflict preceding the creation of a socialist second world, culminating in the Second World War and the Holocaust, and leaving behind bitter memories which surfaced, as we have seen, in youth festivals, particularly with respect to the Poles and the Germans. But it even marred relations between the Hungarian and Czech and the Hungarian and Rumanian parties. The participation of German and Hungarian armed forces in the suppression of the Prague Spring did nothing to improve relations between those countries and Czechoslovakia.

Finally, the solidarity of the Second World was seriously undermined by a range of different viewpoints, often more implied than openly expressed, toward the West. Historical narratives, collective memory, and national myths about the cultural boundaries of Western civilization continued to inform popular attitudes and intellectual mentalities in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. Such attitudes implying superior status within the Bloc were reinforced by the higher level of economic and technical development in these countries as compared to Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania. It was on this uneven ground that the post-Stalinist Soviet leadership undertook to disassemble or at least modify the Soviet monopoly over the flow of transnational exchanges by opening two-way corridors on its own frontiers under the banner of peace and friendship. Let us now see how these limiting factors were manifested in individual case studies.

Creating a Public Socialist Space

Throughout the Bloc, there were attempts to re-configure public space through demolition, discursive assimilation, and monumental construction. The monumental Stalinist architecture represented by the seven neo-classic skyscrapers in Moscow (including the new Moscow State University, the Foreign Ministry, the Hotel Ukraine, and high rise apartment dwellings for the Soviet elite) served as models for their more modest counterparts in most of the Bloc countries. In Budapest, all that was necessary was to change the statuary in Heroes' Square, removing some and erecting one to Stalin and renaming the space Stalinist Square. In Sophia, it was necessary to construct a new space, repairing after the Allied bombing in 1945. After the center of the city was cleared in 1951, construction began on the Largo, an ensemble of three neo-classical buildings in the Stalinist style, which was only completed some years after his death. Not surprisingly, the huge edifice of the Warsaw Palace of Culture, a "gift of the Soviet people" inspired a well-known Polish joke: "The best view of Warsaw is from the steps of the Palace of Culture; it is the only place in the city where you cannot see the Palace of Culture."

The vast public squares were periodically given over to highly organized mass celebrations of important socialist holidays and the commemoration of the victory over Nazism. The model for these was again the Soviet experience. The shared symbols employed emphasizing solidarity—red flags, red star, hammer and sickle, flaming torches, portraits of Communist leaders, and even some of the wording inscribed on the placards and banners—owe their origin to Soviet practice, as did the organization of the marches. The original spontaneous character of the celebrations in the Soviet Union had given way since the thirties to a mixture of military formations and the disciplined ranks of civilians, whether sport teams or labor unions, and this too had been adopted throughout the second Bloc, giving the demonstrations a truly internationalist character. There were a few local themes introduced in each country, particularly in China, but Mao had carefully studied the Red Square processions and invited several Soviet urban designers to plan the enlargement of Tiananmen Square to accommodate the million demonstrators he envisaged.[11]

Public spaces were also permanently altered, often decorated with imposing memorials to the Red Army soldiers and officers who lost their lives in liberating the countries of the Bloc. Almost all the Soviet war memorials (Warsaw, Sofia, Bucharest, Berlin, and Prague) featured a monumental statue of a Red Army man; the exception is Budapest for reasons that may have something to do with the terrible siege of the city and the widespread destruction and suffering of the civilian population. Subsequently, additional memorials were also erected, initially in imitation of Soviet models to local resistance fighters whose exploits were also celebrated and often exaggerated in literary works inspired again by Soviet authors. These memorials continued to be built into the 1970s in Yugoslavia and Italy where they departed in striking ways from the more traditional Soviet structures, becoming more abstract if just as monumental. The comparative history of these memorials has yet to be written, but they all served to remind the inhabitants of the Bloc that their liberation from fascism was the work of the Red Army and not their own military forces.

Creating a Private Socialist Space

In attempting to construct a distinctive internationalist character for the Second World that would also appeal to the Third World, the most obvious external challenge for the Soviet leaders came from the acknowledged material superiority of the First World. As several chapters show, their response was complex and occasionally ingenious, if not convincing. In their attempt to give a robust character to Marx's "specter haunting Europe," the architects of the post-Stalinist vision envisaged a new spatial-temporal dimension, a version of Mikhail Bakhtin's chronotope as invoked in Babiracki's essay (Chapter 4). By recasting the dimension of time, Khrushchev's well-known boast to overtake and surpass the West was at once an admission of relative backwardness—implicitly a legacy of the past—and an assurance that the future belonged to international communism. This was hardly a new formulation, although he followed it up by an optimistic and precise schedule for the achievement of communism. This also required, however, a direct confrontation with the challenge of present time when the process of building socialism still lagged behind the completed edifice of the capitalist world. Several explanatory strategies were employed to compensate, as illustrated in Chapter 2 by Lars Peder Haga. One was to combine a strategy of denial by selecting as a unit of comparison a backward area of Europe and a strategy of substitution by claiming to offset Western material culture by invoking a more humane Soviet society shaped by suffering, war, and revolutionary experience. This view percolated into popular parlance (the discourse of the street), frequently heard by visitors to the Soviet Union in the 1950s: "You have it better, right? But we are more humane." (*U Vas est' luchshe, da? Nu my bolee chelovecheskii.*) Was this "Speaking Bolshevik" with Slavophile overtones? Another approach to explaining away the difference in levels of material culture was to redefine the rules: materialism under socialism was a good, but under capitalism it was an evil.

Over time, a new socialist living space would be constructed to match the good materialism of "socialist consumerism." The vast high-rise complexes that, under Khrushchev, arose first on the outskirts of Moscow and later transformed the old Arbat quarter in the center were designed, at least in theory, to incorporate the ideals of a communist society. They were applauded for their difference from the "soulless" apartment blocks in the Bronx and the banlieues of Paris. Under socialist construction, the argument went, low cost apartment dwelling would be available and intended for the working population, not, as in capitalist societies, a dumping ground for the poor and unemployed. The new socialist ideal of apartment dwelling sought to combine private and public space in a unique way. Private, self-contained family apartments would replace communal living space and shared facilities. Groups of multi-storied buildings would be constructed around a central public courtyard provided with trees, benches, and playgrounds. The ground floor might be furnished with stores selling food, clothing, shoes, and furniture, further emphasizing the communal character of the complex. Reality, however, often fell far short of the ideal: shoddy workmanship, unfinished projects littered with detritus, poor plumbing, external balconies with no access; the list is long. But the idea was widely disseminated throughout the Bloc, particularly in East Germany, Hungary, and Rumania, where the finished product often exhibited a higher level of workmanship.

There were, however, more socially significant differences within the Bloc over the design of the interior spaces of the apartment blocks. During the Thaw, the Soviet planners (re)introduced the application of standardized, scientific, rational principles to the arrangement and decoration of space to create multi-functional zones and introduce transformable furniture. Ironically, these innovations reduced the more individualistic character of interiors prevalent under Stalin, condemned by the revisionist planners as reflecting a pre-modern petty bourgeois consciousness.[12] By contrast, in other socialist countries, particularly Poland, the champions of the aesthetics of modernization, while also endorsing the same principles of modern domestic design, allowed for a proto-consumerist preference by celebrating a variety of what they described as "fashionable" and "colorful" interiors associated with individualist values.[13]

Clearly, the dichotomy of private-public space was not perceived uniformly throughout the Bloc. Soviet observers in Warsaw noted, as documented in Babiracki's chapter, that youth preferred to gather in clubs where the atmosphere smacked of individualism and intimacy, a far cry from the gathering places of the Soviet Komsomol. The pre-war café culture of Hungary also survived and even flourished under Kadar's relaxed rules governing public-private behavior. In the Soviet Union, privacy was pursued in the kitchen rather than the club, as any Western visitor could testify. The only alternative was the long, rambling walk in the city streets where surveillance, whether informal and casual on the part of nosy neighbors or more professional by the police, could be avoided.

Another dimension of the chronotope effect within the Bloc emerged with the debate over whether there was any room for the past in the organization of space. Even more complex was the question raised in Chapter 5 by David Crowley: Which past was a legitimate point of reference? Was it possible or even necessary to go back to the future in recovering the avant-garde and putting it once again at the service of building socialism? The timid revival of the avant-garde in the Soviet Union was taken up with enthusiasm and given a fresh impetus by the leftist intelligentsia in Hungary and Poland. Most of the constructivist monuments designed by the Russian avant-garde in the twenties remained on paper or as scale models in what survived of Sergei Shchukin's collections, which were rarely visited even in the period of the "Thaw." But examples could still be found on the streets and squares of Moscow, in the work of Konstantin Melnikov, among them six worker's clubs, his own private dwelling, and several garages which survived the Stalinist reconstruction of the city. Most ironically, the most venerated site of Bolshevism, Lenin's mausoleum, designed by Vladimir Shchusev (with Melnikov having designed the original sarcophagus) displays a strong Constructivist influence. Even more ironically, Stalin, who championed the neo-classic style in ornamenting Moscow was also interred there (if only briefly) until 1961 when his body was removed and placed in the Kremlin Wall. The survival of modernist art in the Soviet Union, unlike the Nazi destruction of "degenerate art," was assured by the preservation of important paintings in the closed funds of the Hermitage and the Tretiakov Gallery. When I was permitted to examine a number of these paintings by Kandinskii, Malevich, and others, similar works unknown to me were pulled out of wooden stacks by the curator and thrust into my hands! When I asked her why not sell them in the West or at least exhibit them there where they would be appreciated, the curator answered, "These are part of the national heritage and someday the Soviet people will be ready to view them again." In this she was surely correct.

The Cult of the Dead Leader

Perhaps the most bizarre example of early multinational transfer emanating from the Soviet Union was celebration of the cult of the dead leader. In the Second World, the rituals of burial and reburial reflected the changing character of the socialist political order over space and time. The entombment and embalming of Lenin in 1924 provided a prototype for the construction in 1949 of a mausoleum for the Bulgarian Communist leader, Georgi Dimitrov, and the scientific preservation of his body, with one important difference. The designs of Lenin's mausoleum and his sarcophagus were entrusted to Vladimir Shchuev and Konstantin Melnikov, both of whom employed Constructivist motifs. By contrast, Dimitrov's mausoleum was built along the lines of the late neo-classical Stalinist style. When Stalin died a few years later, his embalmed body was placed side by side with Lenin. The removal of his corpse and reburial in 1961 along the cemetery of the Kremlin wall symbolized the ambiguous character of de-Stalinization, removing him posthumously from the role of companion and heir of Lenin without totally discrediting him as a builder of the socialist world. The construction of mausoleums for defunct leaders in the Second World exhibited stylistic variations on those of Lenin and Dimitrov. In 1999 Mongolia, a reverse sequence of the dual burial in the Red Square mausoleum took place. The body of the Communist leader Choibolsan was placed in a Mausoleum, very similar to that of Lenin, together with the remains of Sükhbaatar, the leader of the Mongolian revolution of 1921, which were exhumed and reburied in the same structure on the square named after him. This mausoleum was also demolished and replaced in 2005 by a hall dedicated to Ghenghis Khan. The idea of a mausoleum for Ho Chi Minh may have been inspired by the example of Lenin, but again the architecture resembles that of the Dimitrov structure. Mao Zedong's mausoleum, containing the embalmed body of the Chairman, also built in a modified neo-classical style of more abundant proportions than any other similar communist memorial, is located to the east of Tiananmen Square. The memorial and tomb of Ernesto "Che" Guevara in Santa Clara, Cuba, surmounted by his statue resembles the Soviet war memorials with the heroic Red Army soldier. The extravagant mausoleum of the embalmed body of Kim Il-sung was formerly his residence, converted by his son, Kim Jong-il, in 1994, who was entombed next to him at his death in 2011.

Dead bodies have always served as powerful political symbols. But the persistence of this cultural practice in the Second World suggests a congeries of specialized yet contradictory functions: quasi-religious in an avowed atheistic state, historical continuity in a revolutionary ideology, and individual heroism in a collective society.

The Concept of Friendship and Cultural Diplomacy

As several of the chapters indicate, the idea of friendship in the eyes of the Soviet leaders had a different meaning for the Second and Third Worlds. For members of the Socialist Bloc, it meant loyalty to the Soviet political agenda; to the Third World, it meant a more diffuse sentiment of good will toward the Soviet Union and a counterweight to "imperialist" propaganda that might serve in the future as the basis of a closer political alignment within those countries. If the function of this type of transnational exchange was dualistic, the form was everywhere the same. The organization of mass movements, whether youth congresses, sport competitions, tourism, cultural delegations, exhibitions of dance or painting, and film festivals (visits by individual writers, artists, and musicians being exceptional), or just plain beer festivals aimed at promoting the collectivist spirit. In all of these, the target audience was generally youth. Although unstated, it has to be assumed that youth were more idealistic, enthusiastic, and open to new experiences and impressions. The mass movements also tended to emphasize the importance of emotional responses. As several chapters show, organizers and participants often celebrated the sheer "merry making," the thrills of physical competition, and the aesthetic delight of witnessing colorful display. According to some accounts, the main motivations of those who signed up for these transnational exchanges were simply curiosity and the excitement of visiting new, often distant, and what were to them exotic places, rather than by political goals.

In many ways, co-production of films represented the most ambitious and complex effort to construct a collective transnational cultural enterprise. As Marsha Siefert shows in Chapter 7, the promise here was to unite artistic creativity with ideological conformity in a product that would be economically viable by appealing to a global audience. A familiar set of problems plaguing socialist internationalism reduced the number of successes. The Soviet insistence on a preponderant measure of control, dictating rather than discussing outcomes with directors and screen writers for fear of ideological impurities entering the films, were resented by their erstwhile collaborators. Both the Soviet and East European film studios appear to have had greater success in cooperating with Western artists and directors than their comrades in the Bloc.[14] Such were the ironies of socialist internationalism.

Notes

1. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, third edition (30 volumes) vol. VII, (*1921–1923*), 354.
2. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, 13 vols. (Moscow, 1946–52), vol. XI, 155–56. Stalin omitted Lenin's key modifier "advanced" in identifying the possible country target of revolution.
3. Letter of Stalin, Molotov, and Voroshilov to Largo Caballero cited in extenso in Carr, *The Comintern and the Spanish Civil War*, 86–7.
4. Conversations between Stalin, Boleslaw Bierut, and Edward Osóbka-Morawski, May 24, 1946, and with Osóbka-Morawski and Cyrankiewicz, August 19, 1946, in Noskova, *Vostochnaia Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov*, vol. I, Docs. 151 and 169, 443–63 and 511–12. In general, see Rieber, "Popular Democracy," 103–130.
5. See the full account by Stykalin, "*Rukovodstvo KPSS v poiskakh novykh mekhanizmov vliianiia na mirovoe kommunisticheskoe dvizhenie*," 5–51.

6. Ibid., 17.
7. Ibid., 35–8.
8. Ibid., 49
9. Ibid., 50
10. George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola*.
11. Lane, *The Rites of Ritual in Industrial Societies*; and Hung, "Mao's Parades," 411–31.
12. Buchli, "Khruschchev, Modernism and the Fight against 'Petty-bourgeois' Consciousness in the Soviet Union," 161–76; and Reid, "The Khrushchev Kitchen," 289–316.
13. Crowley, "Warsaw Interiors," especially 195–97.
14. Siefert, "East European Cold War Culture(s)?" 39–42.

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9. Reid, Susan. 2005. "The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution." *Journal of Contemporary History* 40(2): 289–316.
10. Rieber, Alfred J. 2009. "Popular Democracy. An Illusion?" In *Stalinism Revisited: The Establishment of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe*, ed. Vladimir Tismaneanu, 103–130. Budapest: Central European University Press.

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