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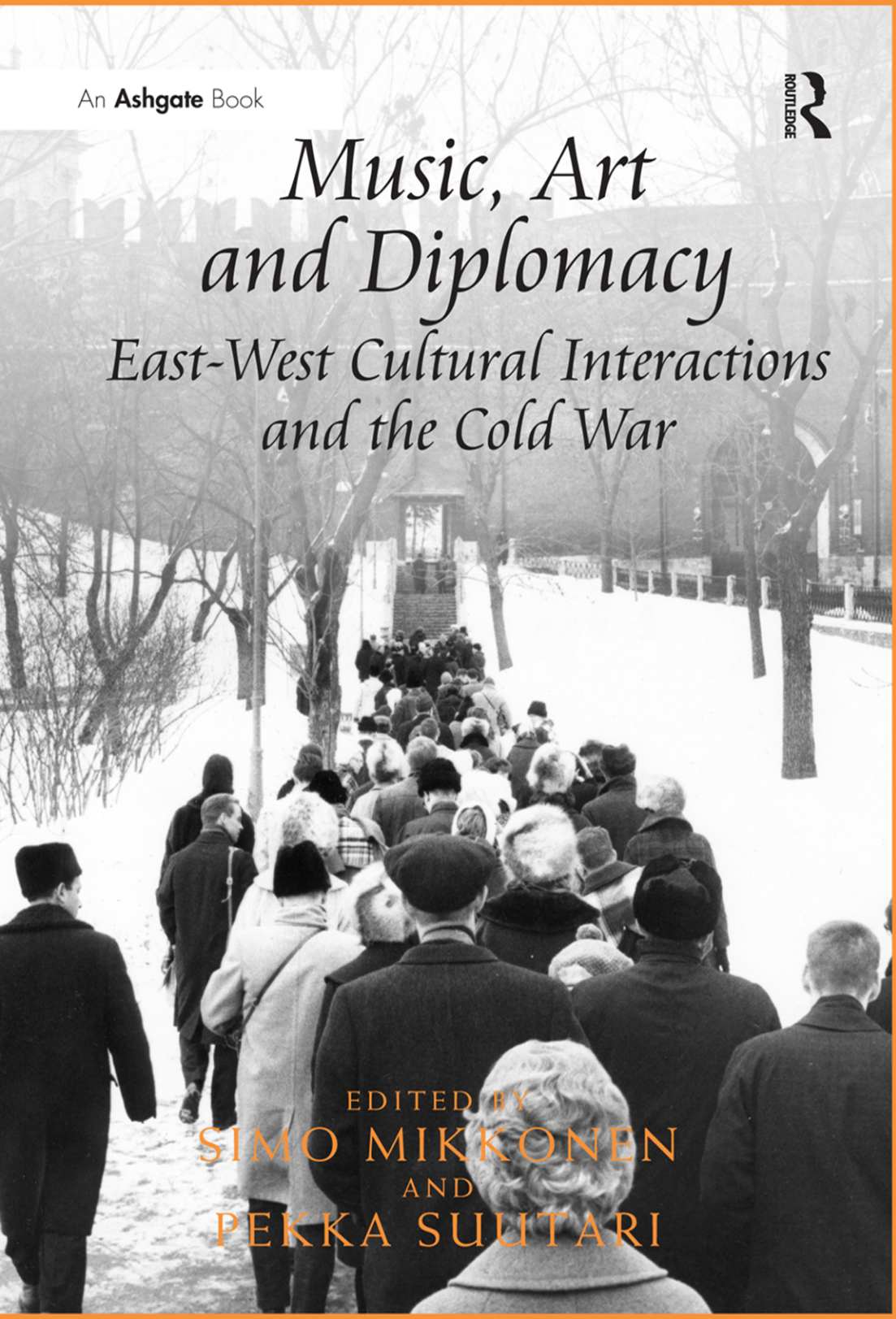
East-West Cultural Interactions and the Cold War



EDITED BY
SIMO MIKKONEN
AND
PEKKA SUUTARI

MUSIC, ART AND DIPLOMACY: EAST-WEST CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND THE COLD WAR

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Music, Art and Diplomacy: East-West Cultural Interactions and the Cold War

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Foreword

Susan E. Reid

Winston Churchill's emotive metaphor of the 'Iron Curtain' directed attention towards divisions, concealment and blocking. Falling across Europe, it seemed to represent the curtain call for cultural flow and interaction. Curtains not only conceal and divide, however; they may also serve to frame, reveal and dramatise, as on the stage or in baroque portraiture, thereby giving new meaning and significance to what they present. Recent accounts have begun to question the imagined materiality of the curtain. Some have proposed, in place of iron, a 'permeable membrane' or net curtain evoking the voyeuristic fascination with the Other. Others have attended to movements through and the parting or raising of that curtain.[1] The present volume, too, based on papers presented at an international conference held in Jyväskylä, Finland, in 2012, focuses on artistic exchanges both across and behind the curtain. Thereby it invites us to consider not only what the Cold War prevented or suppressed but also what it produced. Indeed, the editors propose that the Cold War even exercised beneficial effects on cultural production, which was given new importance by political competition and the demands of cultural diplomacy: 'Cold War era cultural diplomacy enabled novel types of interaction that either had not existed before or were brought to the centre by the Cold War.'[2]

The reorientation towards connections – to which this volume contributes – is more than a superficial shift in scholarly fashion.[3] While a focus on disconnection and prevention undoubtedly produced much worthwhile knowledge, it also

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[1] György Péteri, 'Nylon Curtain: Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe', *Slavonica* vol. 10, no. 2 (2004): 113–23; Michael David-Fox, 'The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane: Origins and Demise of the Stalinist Superiority Complex', in Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer, eds, *Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s–1960s* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014), 14–39; Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[2] Introduction to this volume, pp. 1–13.

[3] Vladislav Zubok, 'Introduction', in Babiracki and Zimmer, *Cold War Crossings*, 1 of 1–13, with reference to Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vols 1–3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

marginalised or foreclosed important questions concerning, for example, the nature and mechanisms of interaction and exchange, the specific agencies involved, or the effects on receivers. Serving as a framing device reorganising the world, what new centralities and marginalities, cores and peripheries did the Iron Curtain produce? What new cultural forms and identities, connections, crossings, communities and collaborations did the Cold War engender? Other recent studies have begun to explore the symbiotic nature of the identities that emerged and the ways that Cold War culture was coproduced in dialogue across the systemic divide.[4] The products of the Cold War include the new cultural relations and forms of collaboration and community within the bloc, discussed here by Susan Costanzo and others.[5] Thus they begin to address the lacuna noted by Austin Jersild: 'scholars of Central and Eastern Europe routinely emphasise the importance of borderlands, frontiers, migration, and other aspects of the transnational history of this region, but less attention has been devoted to the community that explicitly and perpetually proclaimed itself to be dedicated to "internationalism"'.[6]

This volume contributes to this historiographical reorientation in at least four important respects. First, it treats the Cold War in terms of a transnational history and recognises that the bloc was more than the sum of its constitutive national histories, a geopolitical concept or a military alliance.[7] Second, the chapters presented here contribute to the 'cultural' turn in research on the Cold War. Given the specific character of this confrontation – its 'coldness' – resulting from the displacement from the military sphere to cultural and economic ones in the shadow

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[4] György Péteri, (ed.), *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010); Susan E. Reid, 'The Soviet Pavilion at Brussels '58: Convergence, Conversion, Critical Assimilation, or Transculturation?', *Cold War International History Project* Working Paper No. 62 (2010). While another recent volume emphasises division in its title, its contributing authors critically reassess Cold War binaries (Mihelj) and include accounts of cultural diplomacy and coproduction of Cold War culture (Siefert): Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal, eds, *Divided Dreamworlds: The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012). See also Annette Vowinckel, Marcus M. Payk and Thomas Lindenberger, eds, *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives in Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn, 2012).

[5] See also Jérôme Bazin, Pascal Dubourg Glatigny and Piotr Piotrowski, eds, *Art Beyond Borders: Artistic Exchanges in Communist Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015).

[6] Austin Jersild, 'The Soviet State as Imperial Scavenger: "Catch Up and Surpass" in the Transnational Socialist Bloc, 1950–1960', *Journal of American Historical Review* vol. 116, no. 1 (2011): 109–10 of 109–32.

[7] Ibid. A recent essay argues that the transnational history of the Second World has been largely overlooked: 'it also came about through formal and informal interactions, coercive and voluntary transfers and circulations enabled by communist parties and centralised economies'. Elidor Mëhilli, 'Socialist Encounters' in Babiracki and Zimmer, *Cold War Crossings*, 109 of 107–33.

of the atom, it is perhaps surprising that culture wars have not been more central to mainstream studies all along.[8] There were, of course, important early studies such as Frederick Barghoorn's *The Soviet Cultural Offensive* of 1960.[9] Already in the 1970s, exposures of the ways that Abstract Expressionism had been implicated in the CIA's ideological warfare in Europe East and West, by being operationalised during the 1950s to promote the US ideology of 'freedomism', played an important part in challenging the myth of modernist art's aesthetic disinterestedness.[10] While a number of recent studies have attended to the role of popular culture, the media and consumer culture in the Cold War,[11] the chapters in this volume focus on the realm of 'high' culture and cultural encounters, specifically those involving the USSR. As the case of Abstract Expressionism illustrates, the prestige of high culture and its apparent transcendence of partisan politics gave it a special place in Western cultural diplomacy. Classical music, theatre, ballet, fine art (although not abstraction) – the media addressed here – also held a central place in the Soviet Union's enlightenment project at home, as well as in its self-projection abroad as the saviour of European civilisation.[12]

Barghoorn's account of the 'Soviet cultural offensive' is of interest because he was both a participant witness and – as US advisor on the Soviet Union – an agent of Cold War cultural diplomacy. Indeed, many of the Western scholars whose work has shaped our understanding of Soviet history were themselves shaped by the formative experience of participating in West–East cultural diplomacy: through student exchanges, involvement as guides at the American National

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[8] David Crowley and Jane Pavitt, eds, *Cold War Modern: Design 1945–1970* (London: V&A, 2008).

[9] Frederick Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

[10] Eva Cockroft, 'Abstract Expressionism: Weapon of the Cold War'; Max Kozloff, 'American Painting during the Cold War' and other essays anthologised in Francis Frascina, (ed.), *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2000; first published 1985). See also Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 2000); Marilyn S. Kushner, 'Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959: Domestic Politics and Cultural Diplomacy', *Journal of Cold War Studies vol.* 4, no. 1 (2002): 6–26.

[11] E.g. on fashion, Eha Komissarov and Berit Teeäär, eds, *Fashion and the Cold War* (*Mood ja Kuulm Soda*) (Tallinn: KUMU, 2012); on tourism, Anne Gorsuch, *All This is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[12] On the continued commitment to high culture and enlightenment in the age of mass media see Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011). On architecture and fine art see Catherine Cooke, 'Modernity and Realism', and Susan E. Reid, 'Toward a New (Socialist) Realism', in Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid, eds, *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006), 172–94; 217–39.

Exhibition in Moscow in 1959 or through exchanges of scholars and participation in international conferences.[13] Further research is needed on the part that such encounters played both in their personal and intellectual biographies and in the historiography of the Cold War.

While state bureaucracies and quasi-autonomous cultural organisations took an important role in initiating, funding and facilitating Cold War exchanges, the third main way in which the chapters here participate in recent historiographical shifts is that the volume zooms in on the micro-agency and experience of the individuals who participated in the cultural initiatives, whether as professionals or as amateurs – or, we might add, as audiences. Both 'camps' in the Cold War recognised the importance of getting intellectuals, artists, cultural practitioners and other specialists on board. As Frances Stonor Saunders showed in her book *Who Paid the Piper?*, United States Information Agency (USIA) front organisations cultivated individuals who enjoyed respect for their personal cultural achievements.[14] The Soviet-sponsored Congresses of Intellectuals for Peace – of which the first was held in Wrocław at the start of the Cold War in 1948 – brought together prominent left-leaning cultural figures from the West, such as Pablo Picasso, with their counterparts from the East.[15] Notable among the latter was Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg, an important peace champion and informal cultural diplomat for the Soviet Union who had lived in Paris as a young man in the 1910s and established strong contacts with the avant-garde while there, including Picasso.[16] Ehrenburg continued to act as a cultural ambassador during the Stalin period. Under Khrushchev he not only authored the novel that gave the period its name, *The Thaw* (1954), but also took an active role in promoting acceptance of modern Western art in the Soviet Union, publicly expressing the hope that 'the spirit of genuine cultural co-operation and honest competition' would countervail the climate of Cold War.[17] Ehrenburg played a key role in the organisation of a major Picasso retrospective, which opened in autumn 1956, first

[13] Richmond, *Cultural Exchange*, 47–64; on the US guides at ANEM see Susan E. Reid, 'Who Will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol. 9, no. 4 (2008): 855–904. Architectural historian Catherine Cooke recalls the impact of the Soviet pavilion on her when she visited the Brussels World Fair in 1958: Cooke, 'Modernity and Realism'.

[14] Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?*

[15] Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, 'Modernism between Peace and Freedom: Picasso and Others at the Congress of Intellectuals in Wroclaw, 1948', in Crowley and Pavitt, *Cold War Modern*, 33–42.

[16] Joshua Rubenstein, 'Ilya Ehrenburg: Between East and West', *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 4, no. 1 (2002): 44–65; Ilya Ehrenburg, *People and Life: Memoirs of 1891–1917*, translated by Anna Bostock and Yvonne Kapp (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1961) 205–7.

[17] Ilya Ehrenburg, 'Mysli pod novyi god', *Ogonek*, no. 1 (1 January 1959): 9–10.

in Moscow and then in Leningrad.[18] Although the Soviet bureaucracy in charge of cultural exchange, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS), handled organisational matters, the exhibition would not have happened without Ehrenburg's commitment. Picasso also participated actively in determining how his oeuvre would be seen in the USSR, selecting works from his personal collection to be included in the retrospective.[19]

As in the case of the American Abstract Expressionist artists above, the ways in which individuals saw their role in cultural exchange and encounters – and the benefits they expected to derive – did not necessarily coincide with what state-sponsoring agencies envisaged.[20] A major contribution of this volume is that it explores the complexities of the relationships between the individual culture-bearers and the state whose policies they wittingly or unwittingly executed. For artists and other professionals, cultural exchange represented an opportunity for professional advancement: both to gain international recognition and to access the information they needed to be at the top of their profession. For Soviet fashion designers, for example, the chance to travel, to meet their Western counterparts at home, or to study Western collections and practices, provided vital opportunities to learn and to match themselves against international standards.[21] Similarly, for architects and the professionals in the newly emerging field of Soviet industrial design, international exchanges and congresses of organisations such as the International Union of Architects (IUA), the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) or the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) not only enabled individual professional advancement, but also promoted the development of the profession.[22]

Further research would be illuminating, for example, on the personal links formed under the auspices of these international, trans-curtain bodies, and on

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[18] Igor Golomshtok and Andrei Siniavskii, *Pikasso* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1960); Reid, 'Toward a New (Socialist) Realism', 221–4; Eleonory Gilburd, 'Picasso in Thaw Culture', *Cahiers du Monde russe* vol. 47, no. 1–2 (2006): 61–108.

[19] Gilburd, 'Picasso', 73–4.

[20] Picasso may have engaged with the exhibition as an opportunity to receive the blessing of the 'mother of communist parties'. Gertje R. Utley, *Picasso: The Communist Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 150–52.

[21] Larissa Zakharova, 'Dior in Moscow: A Taste for Luxury in Soviet Fashion under Khrushchev', in David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds, *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 95–120.

[22] On Soviet architects and the IUA see Cooke, 'Modernity and Realism'; Alexandra Köhring, 'The Congress of the International Architects' Union in Moscow (1958)', in Bazin et al., *Art Beyond Borders in Communist Europe*. On Soviet design and the ICSID see Dmitry Azrikan, 'VNIITE, Dinosaur of Totalitarianism or Plato's Academy of Design?' *Design Issues* vol. 15, no. 3 (1999), 63–5 of 45–77. The USSR joined the ICSID in 1965. Yuri Soloviev, *Moia zhizn' v dizaine* (Moscow: Soyuz dizainerov Rossii, 2004), 137; Tom Cubbin, personal communication, 27 February 2012.

the role of individual patrons and art collectors, among whom Norton Dodge is perhaps the best known.[23] The attention to the role and experience of individuals has implications for research sources, requiring the use not only of official planning documents and reports filed in state archives, and of published press reviews, but also of biography, autobiography, memoirs, letters and diaries in personal collections, and memories elicited through oral history.

In addition to considering individual agents of cultural exchange, an understanding of Cold War transnational cultural interactions within and between the blocs requires consideration of the effects on reception and audiences, both as individuals and as collective 'publics'. The focus of this volume on 'high' culture is premised on the recognition that cultural diplomacy courted different target audiences, addressing them in differentiated ways. In this period, the growing middle classes took on new importance as the audience the Soviet Union sought to persuade. As the editors note, the Soviet Union no longer sought primarily to influence foreign communists with the aim of spreading communism, but to use achievements in culture to enhance the Soviet Union's image among the Western chattering classes.[24] Teachers, academics, critics, journalists and other professional opinion makers were wooed not least because they occupied influential positions in society and could be used to 'cascade' the message further.[25]

How the foreign public was imagined had effects on the way the Cold War adversaries presented themselves. And this, in turn, exercised effects not only on the receivers but also on the senders of the message. For example, at Expo '58 in Brussels, Soviet planners came to understand that the task of representing the Soviet Union to the West European viewer, in direct competition with the USA, required them to engage with Western modes of mass entertainment and tourism. Such experiences recast the exhibition designers' conception of their own practice and Soviet self-presentation abroad.[26] Self-representations, shaped by the internalised image of the Other, could also exercise effects on domestic cultural practices. The international success of the Czechoslovak pavilion at the same Brussels World Fair in 1958, celebrated back home in Czechoslovakia, engendered an enthusiastic embrace of an organic modernist style of design that came to be

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[23] Norton T. Dodge, 'Notes on Collection', in *Nonconformist Art: The Soviet Experience, 1956-86* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 12: John McFee, *The Ransom of Russian Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1994).

[24] Conclusion to this volume, p.155.

[25] The Soviet organisers at Brussels '58, for example, deliberated over *which* viewers they should prioritise – middle-class professionals and specialists or ordinary lay viewers and the working class. Reid, 'The Soviet Pavilion at Brussels'; State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), f. 9470, op. 1, d. 22, ll. 34–45 [l. 39]; GARF, f. 9470, op. 1, d. 21, l. 128, ll. 166–8, 207–8.

[26] Reid, 'The Soviet Pavilion at Brussels'.

known as the Brussels Style. Referencing an ideal urbane modern lifestyle, it had extended impacts on everyday life, visual culture and design.[27]

This should remind us that it was not only people who crossed borders but also artefacts, technologies and practices. Along with the remembered experiences of performances and exhibitions that formed part of Cold War cultural diplomacy, and the new friendships and communities that resulted from human encounters, these had lasting consequences for cultural production on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain' and beyond.

[27] Daniela Kramerova, *The Brussels Dream: The Czechoslovak Presence at Expo 58 in Brussels and the Lifestyle of the Early 1960s* (Prague: Arbor Vitae societas, 2008).

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Preface and Acknowledgements

The Soviet Union was a cultural superpower. The arts were valued in the Soviet Union and plenty of attention was directed towards arts in general. Art production was taught not only to future professionals, but also to the general public, creating a vast arsenal of art lovers keeping art production alive. It is, of course, debatable what role the Soviet state and the Communist Party played in this process. Official approaches to the arts had several negative features, manifesting in severe limitations of artistic freedom and preference for conservative art taste. Few can deny, however, that for almost 75 years the Soviet art world enthralled and fascinated people around the world. The Soviet Union used different forms of art extensively as part of its foreign policy. Exhibitions on Soviet fine arts and photography were circulated around the world; the best music and dance groups as well as individual artists were sent on extensive tours abroad. Even during the reign of Stalin, when travelling was limited, several artists were sent on foreign tours. The Second World War in particular saw extensive use of Soviet artistic force in areas occupied by the Soviet army. Later, after Stalin's death in 1953, the use of arts in Soviet foreign policy notably extended, becoming global in scale.

Personally, I have been interested in the relationship of art and power in the Soviet Union for a long time. I started to work on materials related to Soviet cultural diplomacy while I was a visiting scholar at Stanford in 2008. I am indebted to Amir Weiner, who welcomed me to Stanford's intellectual community, introduced me to collections at the Hoover Institution Archives, and invited me to give papers both at the 'kruzhok' of the history department and at Hoover Institution events. This initial spark later led me to do extensive archival work in Moscow and other places in order to understand the cultural diplomacy of the Soviet Union.

The initial idea for this book was first born in 2011, when I started arrangements for an international conference – 'East–West Cultural Exchanges and the Cold War' – organized at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, during four exceptionally beautiful days in June 2012. Despite the somewhat remote location of the conference, we received a great turnout of topical papers from 26 countries. In all, together with conference co-organisers Pia Koivunen (University of Tampere) and Pekka Suutari (University of Eastern Finland), we selected 84 participants through a rigorous review process. With possible future volumes in mind, the conference had pre-circulated research papers. Special thanks in regard to arranging and helping with organising the conference belongs to Riikka-Mari Muhonen, who led a team of graduate students of history. After a successful conference, we were encouraged by the turnout of very promising papers and started to go through possible combinations of papers. Eventually, we ended up producing two separate volumes, one discussing connections between Western and Eastern Europe outside

the superpower setting. The other one is the volume at hand. Furthermore, Stanciu Cezar had edited a special volume for the *Valahian Journal of Historical Studies* from the research papers from the conference in 2013.

The process leading to this volume has not been without problems, as certainly no edited volume has even been. Yet I am grateful to all the contributors for submitting everything on time, paying attention to comments and conforming to all the requirements set by the editors. It has been pleasure to work with such a selection of innovative and arduous researchers, willing to share their expertise and ideas with others. Instead of editing a collection of loosely compatible individual chapters, I have felt that we have shared a vision and a purpose. Our aim has been to better understand the objectives, outcomes and impact of Soviet artistic interaction with the West. Whether the perspective of an individual chapter has been on individuals or structures, they have played together, aiming at the bigger picture of Soviet cultural diplomacy and the role of different organisations and individuals in it.

In the process of editing and compiling this volume, I received important contributions from several people who deserve my deepest gratitude. My co-editor Pekka Suutari has naturally had a key role throughout the process. Kirsi-Maria Hytönen from the University of Jyväskylä had a very important role in helping to process the manuscript into its final stages. Without her tireless effort and committed contribution, the process would have been much slower than it eventually was. Lea Kervinen, from the University of Eastern Finland, also played an important role by going through the final stages of editing and processing the manuscript.

On behalf of our several contributors, I also wish to extend my gratitude to those numerous archivists and librarians whose tireless work makes our work possible in the first place. Without libraries and archives, we would have little to do our research with. It is not possible to name all the archives and libraries that have been used for compiling this volume, but they range from Russia to the United States and to several European archives and libraries.

SIMO MIKKONEN
Berkeley, California
On a warm and sunny day in March 2015

Chapter 1
Introduction to the Logic of East–West Artistic Interactions

Simo Mikkonen and Pekka Suutari

The Cold War, as the dominant narrative of the post-WWII world order, emphasises limitations on travel, restrictions on the flow of ideas and bans on the movement of many goods between two major blocs that were dominated by mutually hostile superpowers. As a concept, 'the Cold War' embodies the confrontation of two rival ideologies and economic and political models, hostilities between nations and competition in fields ranging from the military to technology. It is implicitly connected to conflict and struggle.[1] Even if the current approach to the Cold War has become more complex, the persistence of the word 'war', together with numerous related concepts such as the Iron Curtain, emphasises the division and disruption that made any form of interaction and cooperation between the blocs seem like an anomaly. 'The Cold War' is also used in a broader, temporal sense to refer to an era that extended from the end of the WWII all the way up to 1989. While the Cold War era would seem to extend our focus beyond the concept of war, it nevertheless inherently embodies the notion of war rather than peace. Even if both superpowers spoke about peace and cooperation throughout the Cold War era, presenting themselves as heralds of peace and models of progress and prosperity, their actions towards each other were definitely characterised more by hostility and competition.

If we turn our attention to other countries – or, even more revealingly, to people and organisations – conflict and competition suddenly look much less important. The Cold War was not something ordinary people considered to be part of their everyday lives.[2] To be sure, for many people, Cold War limitations became a

[1] Odd Arne Westad, 'The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century', in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1–19.

[2] In the United States, in particular, the late 1940s and early 1950s saw a strong wave of anti-communism that had an impact on most areas of American society. See e.g. Stephen Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Douglas Field, *American Cold War Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005). However, even if anti-communism remained an influential force, the influence of the Cold War was not a determining factor in people's lives. For a good overview of the impact of the Cold War on different areas of society and culture, see Tony Shaw, 'The

normal state of affairs, with some countries simply being mostly beyond reach due to the political situation. But few people paid genuine attention to this. Still, the Cold War affected people's lives indirectly in many ways, for instance by limiting travel to some countries and preferring others. There was, however, one area in which the personal and professional lives of people frequently encountered Cold War politics, that of cultural diplomacy. Through cultural exchanges and different forms of cultural interaction across the Iron Curtain, numerous people who had not previously been involved in foreign politics came to participate in activities of cultural diplomacy, although they did not necessarily always share the views and aims of their respective governments. Cold War era cultural diplomacy enabled novel types of interaction that either had not existed before or that were brought to the centre by the Cold War. In some ways, the Cold War seemed even to have been beneficial to cultural production, with political competition fuelling it and pushing it to new heights. For politicians this might have been about competing with the adversary, but for artists it was more about increased appreciation for their field of art.

If we wish to understand cultural diplomacy during the Cold War era, the conceptual content of the term is of the essence in discussing the Cold War. In the field of history, choices of perspective dictate whether we see conflict and limitations or attempts to create détente and cooperation, and whether the Cold War was a defining element or mainly just a trivial issue in the lives of people.[3] Geographical, temporal and structural choices tend to dictate the kind of answers we get. When the aim is to understand the role of culture in international relations during the Cold War era, attention needs to be paid not only to foreign policy and states as actors, but also to the agents who participated in these activities, together with their motivations for doing so and the implications of these activities. States often understood the purpose of these activities very differently from those who were involved in them. *Music, Art and Diplomacy* deals with East–West cultural interactions and cultural diplomacy, particularly with regard to the arts but not simply from the point of view of state diplomacy. By concentrating on the relationship between the arts, artists and state actors, our aim is to gain a better insight into this particular area of cultural diplomacy and related processes during the Cold War era. Our focus is on activities that cross the systemic borderline between the two blocs, with the main focus being either on the Soviet Union or

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Politics of Cold War Culture', *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 3, no.3 (2001), 59–76. It is also noteworthy that there is no literature that directly addresses the impact of the Cold War on Soviet society and culture.

[3] For a useful historiography of the development of Cold War studies, see Richard Saull, *Rethinking Theory and History in the Cold War: The State, Military Power and Social Revolution* (London: Frank Cass, 2011), 1–5. Also, for a collection in which leading historians of the Cold War consider the development of Cold War studies, see Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

on activities involving it. The emphasis is on the early part of the Cold War, when the post-WWII situation was still taking shape – from the late 1940s to the 1960s.

Even though Cold War studies have tended to emphasise politics, military matters and inter-state diplomacy, the last two decades have seen a growing body of works falling into the category of 'the cultural Cold War', a concept that is as elusive as 'the Cold War' itself. It can be seen as a term to describe the activities used by governments in their foreign policy to further their own aims. These activities were either directed at the supposed enemy or, sometimes, intended to appeal to countries and populations in their own blocs. The studies dealing with these activities have presented culture as an area of conflict and competition between the two blocs.[4]

This body of literature introduces some important insights that *Music, Art and Diplomacy* aims at further elucidating and substantiating. The first broad point we wish to make is that cultural diplomacy was an even more complex area than traditional diplomacy. The relationship between states and the persons who participated in cultural diplomacy activities was often rather complicated. Sometimes the results of these activities were even contrary to those intended by the administration that was supposed to be in control of cultural diplomacy. While such cases have been previously dealt with in the growing literature on the arts and the Cold War,[5] *Music, Art and Diplomacy* pays more attention to this

[4] For a good overview of the relationship between culture and the Cold War, see Jessica Gienow-Hecht, 'Culture and the Cold War in Europe', in Leffler and Westad (eds) *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1, 398–419. The majority of studies about the cultural Cold War have emphasised the US point of view: see e.g. Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997); Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 2000); Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War:. Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Laura Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). David Caute was among the first scholars to offer a balanced approach, considering both Soviet and US activities in the context of the cultural Cold War in his *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[5] On the stage arts, see e.g. Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998); Bruce MacConachie, *American Theater in the Culture of the Cold War: Producing and Contesting Containment* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 2003). On film, see e.g. Tony Shaw, *Hollywood's Cold War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007); James Schwoch, *Global TV: New Media and the Cold War, 1946–69* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009). On music, see e.g. Mark Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). For the fine arts, see e.g. Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract*

phenomenon by offering several case studies of the relationship between the state and individuals.

Our second point is related to the first, but it goes even further by examining the role of individuals in cultural diplomacy activities. In many cases, the choices made by individuals involved in cultural exchanges were not limited to merely accepting or rejecting the state's objectives. Rather, individuals without an immediate role in the government were in many cases able to directly influence and even change the outcome of the activities.[6] The third point is related to images and imagination. While traditional diplomacy is often based on realistic calculations and rationality, cultural diplomacy in the Cold War era was about appealing to emotions and creating images, and in many cases indeed it was driven by images and assumptions that were based more on emotions and prejudices than on realism. Therefore we address the subject of images and imagination as an important part of the trade and practice of cultural diplomacy during the early Cold War era.

Cold War studies have tended to emphasise the viewpoint of the United States, the country that supposedly won the Cold War.[7] While the Cold War illustrates several key features of the era – the threat of nuclear war, fierce competition and tension between the two blocs as well as both real and imagined differences between them – it became a closed subject after 1989. Subsequently, Cold War studies in general have seen a move towards a multi-faceted approach to the Cold War as a phenomenon. The perspective of the United States government, which used to dominate Cold War studies, has been complemented not only with the Soviet point of view but also with that of the Third World and countries within the

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Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Michael L. Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit: American Art and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Patricia Hills, '"Truth, Freedom, Perfection": Alfred Barr's *What Is Modern Painting?* as Cold War Rhetoric', in Greg Barnhisel and Catherine Turner (eds), *Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda and the Cold War* (Cambridge: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010). On design and architecture, see e.g. David Crowley and Jane Pavitt (eds), *Cold War Modern: Design 1945–1970* (London: V&A, 2008); Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). There are also a number of studies that do not address the Cold War per se but, nevertheless, can be very valuable to anyone interested in the arts during the Cold War: e.g. Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid (eds), *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006).

[6] Giles Scott-Smith, 'Private Diplomacy: Making the Citizen Visible', *New Global Studies* vol. 8, no. 1 (2014), 1–7.

[7] For a good discussion about the question of *victory* in the Cold War, see Raffaele D'Agata and Lawrence Gray (eds), *One More 'Lost Peace'? Rethinking the Cold War after Twenty Years* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2011), vii–ix.

spheres of influence of the superpowers.[8] Furthermore, the traditional emphasis on politics and military affairs is no longer the sole way of perceiving the Cold War, even though it is still dominant in Cold War studies. One factor that explains the diversification of Cold War studies following the end of that era is the access to fresh source materials, especially in the former Soviet Union and former Soviet satellites. Despite the many existing limitations to access, especially in former Soviet archives, scholars have repeatedly been able to tap new materials that yield new perspectives or corroborate previous insights. This applies to the chapters of this volume, which all present previously untapped or even disregarded source materials. Although new approaches have been fewer in number than might have been expected, there are several volumes that have brought fresh viewpoints to the study of the Cold War, for example by examining the role of economics and culture in its development.[9] Perhaps the most profound impact of the end of the Cold War has been on Soviet studies, and this also carries important implications for the Cold War itself.[10]

Any research aiming at examining East–West cultural interaction encounters an important question of perspective. After all, the outcomes and implications of official cultural diplomacy look very different when they are examined using state-generated sources than they do when cultural diplomacy is approached from the viewpoint of the individual involved by using source materials ranging from memoirs and interviews to letters and personal files. So far, the viewpoint of

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[8] The relationship between the Third World and the Cold War has recently been examined from different angles, e.g. in Robert McMahon (ed.), *The Cold War in the Third World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). For an overview of intra-European connections during the Cold War era outside the Soviet Union and the United States, see Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen (eds), *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (New York: Berghahn, 2015).

[9] Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (eds), *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe 1945–1960* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, *Across the Blocs: Cold War Cultural and Social History* (London: Routledge, 2004); Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Brendan Humphries (eds), *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered* (Helsinki: Kikimora, 2010); Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Katalin Miklossy (eds), *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge, 2011); Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal (eds), *Divided Dreamworlds: The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012); Annette Vowinckel, Marcus M. Payk and Thomas Lindenberger (eds), *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives in Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn, 2012).

[10] Several recent works have influenced and changed our perception of the Soviet Union in the international arena after the Second World War through the use of previously unexploited archival materials: see e.g. Anne Gorsuch, *All This Is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Denis Kozlov and Eleonory Gilburd (eds), *The Thaw: Soviet Society and Culture during the 1950s and 1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

governments has been at the centre of Cold War studies, which is one reason for the emphasis on restrictions and conflict. *Music, Art and Diplomacy* seeks to enrich our understanding of cultural diplomacy in the Cold War era by investigating the interplay of the different layers involved, ranging from individuals to state policies. Furthermore, by affording chapters on cultural relations seen from the Eastern as well as the Western bloc, *Music, Art and Diplomacy* aims to supplement the picture that has been largely, albeit not completely, dominated by the viewpoint of the United States. And finally, by placing our emphasis on the first two decades after the Second World War, we attempt to dig deeper than would have been possible if we had selected the whole Cold War era. The mid-1960s are a logical closing point in many respects, and they are considered to have constituted a watershed in both the East and the West. Soviet periodisation sees Khrushchev's ousting and the beginning of Brezhnev's period as General Secretary (1964/65) as a point of change. In the West, Europe was becoming free from the postwar restrictions imposed by the United States, with Germany and France in particular becoming more independent and European unification gaining momentum. Furthermore, with decolonisation and the rise of leftist movements in both Europe and the United States from the mid-1960s on, the balance of international relations changed, and this also had an impact on the focus and objectives of cultural diplomacy.

The Cold War is the dominant tool, albeit not the only one, used for explaining post-WWII contacts between the East and the West (referring to the blocs dominated by the Soviet Union and the US, respectively). The problem, however, is that the intention behind foreign political activities even in the East–West context was not always to challenge the other side. This problem becomes particularly difficult when the focus is outside the United States or the Soviet Union. Moreover, the superpowers, too, changed their policies and regarded each other, as well as other countries, differently as the Cold War evolved. For example, contrary to its rhetoric, the Soviet Union did not consider the West to be a monolithic entity: while the Soviet rhetoric publicly placed all Western market economies in the same basket of hostile countries, this was far from the real Soviet view. For example, France and Italy, both with notable communist parties, were considered special cases. Furthermore, Finland and other democratic countries with market economies that claimed to be neutral were not considered to be all the same by the Soviet policymakers. Particularly after Stalin's death, there were major differences in the Soviet attitude towards the countries of the West. US–Soviet relations also experienced notable changes during the first two decades after WWII. While these geographical and chronological differences are important, there were also several other areas of East–West interaction, some of which saw much more intense activity than others. Music and dance were among the more active fields, and there was a lively exchange of films; but the fine arts, for example, faced many obstacles despite several attempts to engage in exchange.[11]

[11] The fine arts could boast few successful projects up to the late 1950s, while in music numerous projects had already been carried out; see Simo Mikkonen, 'Soviet–American Art

Because the Cold War has often been interpreted as an ideological conflict, East–West interactions have sometimes been dismissed as taking place between ideologically like-minded parties, for example between the Soviet Union and communists and extreme leftists in the West. A closer look at East–West interaction does reveal a lot of ideologically motivated activities, but not necessarily along the ideological borderlines of the superpowers. The complexities involved in East–West interactions during the Cold War call for careful and detailed analysis if we are to understand not only the development of cultural diplomacy during the Cold War era but also the post-Cold War world.

Music, Art and Diplomacy concentrates on investigating East–West interaction through contacts in the artistic world. Of all the areas of East–West interaction, artistic contacts illustrate the temporal and the geographical complexities related to Cold War cultural diplomacy. Political, ideological, commercial, personal and professional motivations are all involved when we examine the logic of East–West interactions in the arts. During the Cold War era, works of art were circulated, tours were made by professional artists, practices and styles were exchanged and trends in the arts were adopted from the other bloc. The so-called Iron Curtain seems only an appropriate term if we limit our attention to evaluating restrictions, such as what art was allowed to circulate, which artists were allowed to travel, and what kind of attempts were made to prevent the adoption and movement of certain practices and trends from the other bloc. Such restrictions existed in both the East and the West, where official Socialist Realist art from the Soviet Union was very rarely exhibited during the Cold War era.

The main focus of this volume is not on Cold War politics as such, but rather on the interplay and impact of superpower politics and the arts on each other. The key concept that we use to describe the relationship between superpower politics and East–West artistic interaction is 'cultural diplomacy'. Cultural diplomacy is typically understood as the means used by states to interact with one another, employing various forms of culture, such as educational and scientific exchanges and the visits of exhibitions, works of arts and sometimes artists themselves. In the Cold War setting, however, there was a very thin line between cultural diplomacy and propaganda.[12] Cultural diplomacy, and here particularly the use of the arts as

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Exchanges during the Thaw: From Bold Openings to Hasty Retreats', in Merike Kurisoo (ed.), *Art and Political Reality* (Tallinn: Art Museum of Estonia, 2013); Simo Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds? The Soviet Musical Intelligentsia in the Struggle against the United States during the Early Cold War', in Pauline Fairclough (ed.), *Twentieth Century Music and Politics* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

[12] Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 224–9; Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Nicholas Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

part of the cultural diplomacy of different countries, is a curious area of foreign political activity.[13] *Music, Art and Diplomacy* explicates the insight that, unlike the traditional approach to diplomacy, cultural diplomacy in particular is not only about state aims but can also take on features of informal and even private motivations that may be linked to state aims but are not always fully compatible with them. On the basis of our studies, we claim that those who were supposed to be the agents of cultural diplomacy sometimes managed to influence the diplomacy and the diplomatic aims themselves.

The relationship between the arts and artists with the governments was never clear-cut. Thus when artists were called to do the foreign political bidding of their governments during the Cold War, the results were at best mixed, no matter which perspective we choose to view them from. Instead of results, then, we have chosen to assess the strange relationship between the arts and artists on one hand and governments on the other in the setting of East–West interactions during the Cold War era. *Music, Art and Diplomacy* argues that in examining Cold War era cultural diplomacy there is a need to put more emphasis on extra-governmental forces. The personal motivations of those engaged in foreign connections sometimes ran contrary to those of the government. In many cases organisations and groups had their own professional aims and sought something other than straightforward foreign political advantages. We argue that the multi-levelled nature of cultural diplomacy and artistic connections in East–West interaction needs to be fully admitted if we are to get a better understanding of the role that the arts played during the Cold War era. Simultaneously, we will obtain a better understanding of the challenges, possibilities and limitations related to cultural diplomacy generally.

Apart from the immediate realm of cultural diplomacy, where the interaction of the arts and politics is most evident, we aim to offer a glimpse of the role that the arts played in the development of international relations during the Cold War. Although the arts and artists have always flirted with politics, the Cold War era was perhaps exceptional because of the scale on which they became involved in international politics. While art has always shunned political borders, wavering between the control of individual and governmental patrons and unrestricted expression, artists, although loath to take part in everyday politics, have often lent their hand to grand causes and narratives, something that the Cold War certainly offered. Hence the need to address several levels of interaction in discussing the relationship between the Cold War and the arts. Some scholars have focused on the phenomenon of conflict, which was most often the concern of politicians and

[13] For general conceptualisations of cultural diplomacy, see e.g. Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher (eds), *Culture and International History* (New York: Berghahn, 2003); Jessica Gienow-Hecht, 'What Are We Searching For? Culture, Diplomacy, Agent, and the State', in Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Mark Donfried (eds), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 3–11; Christina Luke and Morgan Kersel, *US Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Soft Power, Hard Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2–5.

governments, but, if we are honest, of many artists as well. However, on both sides there were others – some politicians and numerous artists – who resisted attempts to harness the arts to serve foreign political purposes and who engaged in cultural diplomacy in the hope of reaching beyond the conflicts. Many artists also strove to ignore the political framework altogether, pursuing instead their own individual and professional objectives. *Music, Art and Diplomacy* aims to give more attention to the Soviet perspective on the cultural Cold War; to the role played by levels below the governmental; to the interplay of the government and the arts, and various organisations and individuals in cultural diplomacy during the Cold War by introducing previously unused research material and novel approaches.

Art Diplomacy and Private–Public Interplay during the Cold War

The eight chapters of *Music, Art and Diplomacy* have been organised into three parts. They all deal with the Soviet Union, either as a target country or as the active party in cultural diplomacy during the Cold War era. Other countries that are of major importance in this volume include the United States, Great Britain, France, Sweden, Finland and Poland. In the first part, we underline the problems and restrictions that existed during the early Cold War, and also the role of images and imagination as key elements influencing cultural diplomacy.

The emphasis on restriction during the first decade after the Cold War had roots that went back to the interwar period. Well before WWII, all cultural links with foreign countries became subject to the control of VOKS, the Soviet organ for foreign cultural relations, established when Stalin had already secured his position at the helm of the Soviet Union. While it is not true that the Soviet Union isolated itself from the world completely,[14] it was not until a few years after the death of Stalin that it made a full-scale return to the world scene. The majority of Soviet artists had lost direct contact with the trends in contemporary Western art for almost quarter of a century, mainly as a result of the fact that Soviet policies condemned Western influences as harmful to Soviet art. Exchanges of artists or even works of art were extremely rare, with only the war years forming an exception. In this respect, the change after Stalin's death constitutes a remarkable watershed in Soviet art exchanges with the West.[15] This change did not take place overnight, but little by little it became possible for Soviet artists to follow trends in Western art through magazines, recordings, radio and in occasional discussions with foreigners when tourism with the West began in 1955.

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[14] Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Russia, 1921–1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Katerina Clark, *Moscow, The Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture, 1931–1941* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[15] An anthology by Denis Kozlov and Eleonory Gilburd discusses this change from fresh perspectives: see *The Thaw*.

Music, Art and Diplomacy presents cases described by Oliver Johnson in the fine arts and Pauline Fairclough and Louise Wiggins in music suggesting that before the mid-1950s the Soviet Union was very loath to engage in reciprocal exchanges that would entail the entry of foreign citizens with dubious ideological backgrounds into the Soviet Union. Johnson's chapter in particular shows that the Soviet approach to ideological differences in the arts was quite different under Stalin than it became by the late 1950s.

The third chapter in this part discusses a later period and points out the persistence of many negative images and perceptions of the other bloc during the Cold War. By examining the cases of film-making, the authors of this chapter, Eva Näripea, Ewa Mazierska and Lars Kristensen, point out that there were national and geopolitical interests as well as deep-rooted ideological and mental differences that complicated cooperation between the blocs. The chapter examines points of contact between Eastern and Western film-making around the Baltic Sea. The three cases provided by the authors draw an intriguing picture of the interaction of different traditions, aspirations and objectives set for film-making during the Cold War era. Two of the cases illustrate from different angles how the Baltic Sea was depicted as a kind of imagined West in the socialist East. The third case presents an example of Swedish–Soviet film collaboration and illustrates the problems related to such projects. Furthermore, by looking at film production rather than distribution, the authors have chosen a perspective that has rarely been applied in studies on the cultural Cold War. A more typical approach has been to examine the reception and distribution of Western films in Eastern Europe. The study of attempts to bypass the Iron Curtain in the process of making art is, however, a much more novel endeavour.

During the first postwar decade, the opportunities for genuine cultural exchanges were firmly repelled by the Soviet government, as Fairclough and Wiggins point out. Britain, which had developed working relations and in some respects even warm ties with its wartime ally, saw its overtures rejected and eventually its cultural diplomats ejected from Moscow in 1947. Other Western countries faced similar problems both with the Soviet Union and generally in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe.[16] Even Finland, which had to turn down the offer of Marshall Aid and was forced to sign a pact of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, was considered ideologically too alien for the USSR. The overtures even of Finnish communists, not to mention other Finns, aiming at those who sought cultural exchange with the Soviet Union were systematically turned down by Soviet officials until the mid-1950s.[17]

In the second part of this volume, we present examples from the fields of music and dance, two art forms that were at the forefront of cultural exchange and purportedly experienced the greatest number of cultural exchange projects

[16] See e.g. Mikkonen and Koivunen, *Beyond the Divide*.

[17] Finnish National Archives, Papers of the Finnish–Soviet Friendship Society: outgoing letters for 1944–52.

between the blocs. Whereas Stalin-era reluctance towards cultural exchanges was primarily about reciprocity, the arts and culture could still be used for foreign political purposes, albeit on a very limited scale. As Meri Herrala's chapter points out, the Soviet Union had already been willing to use its top musicians to advertise the superiority of the Soviet system under Stalin. In some ways, rather than being a volte-face, Soviet cultural policy after Stalin's death was a continuation of previous developments. The new approach to foreign contacts opened up fresh opportunities for exerting cultural influence. Reciprocity was not desirable, but was considered a necessary evil that enabled the Soviet Union to increase its presence in the West. The importance of culture and the arts in the Soviet Union was based on the assumption of the Stalin era that they have the ability to reach masses of people and convey ideological and political messages. The same potential was believed to apply outside the Soviet Union as well. When the death of Stalin started a strong international orientation in Soviet politics, it was only natural that the arts and artists played an important part in this endeavour. Reciprocity made it possible to expand the Soviet cultural presence, and consequently numerous cultural agreements were signed with Western countries. The Soviet authorities strove to keep the opportunities for counterpropaganda by the Western governments to the minimum by using private producers and patrons to handle the exchanges in the West.[18]

Scholl and Koppes describe the direct outcomes of the US–Soviet agreement in 1958, while Herrala focuses on the use of leading individual Soviet musicians as a tool of Soviet foreign policy. All the authors in this part, although they deal with state-level diplomacy, discuss art diplomacy and the consequences of this diplomacy from the individual participants' perspective. Although the United States was initially loath to enter into an agreement on cultural exchange with the Soviet Union, such an agreement was made and was followed on both sides by a number of high-profile visits, involving not only individuals but also choirs, dance companies and orchestras of over 100 members. Some of these visits have been discussed in other works.[19] Clayton Koppes examines the tour of the Cleveland Orchestra to the Soviet Union in 1965. As Koppes notes, the main focus in the cultural Cold War so far on the Western side had been on the consumerist side and on popular genres rather than on Western classical music. Classical music, on the other hand, was an area which the Soviet Union considered that it dominated almost single-handedly, at least by comparison with the United States, the culture of which it considered vulgar at best. The Soviet Union was ready to accept only a few of the top American orchestras into the Soviet Union, regarding the others as

[18] Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds'.

[19] See e.g. Lisa Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009); von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*; Prevots, *Dance for Export*.

of inferior quality.[20] The Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by the legendary George Szell, was considered by many to be one of the best orchestras in the world at the time. Consequently, the tour was a highly publicised cultural event, to which many interesting political links were also attached. But the public aspect and state diplomacy constitute just one side of the picture. Koppes has interviewed several former members of the orchestra who participated in the tour, and uses them to introduce the individual viewpoint on the exchanges.

In his chapter, Tim Scholl discusses another high-profile tour that took place around the same time as that of the Cleveland Orchestra but which has received little attention so far. Oberlin College Choir was not a professional group, but thanks to its high artistic level it was nevertheless included in the exchange scheme. The professional nature of the Cleveland Orchestra is an important factor in considering musicians' experiences of the exchanges. The orchestra consisted of professional musicians who mostly confined themselves to doing what they were trained to do. By contrast, Oberlin College Choir consisted of students for whom the choir was a voluntary activity, and for them all the hard work involved in preparing for the tour took time away from something else. Thus, while the choir was of high artistic quality and had the potential to make an impact in the Soviet Union, it also consisted of people with varying professional and personal aims. Furthermore, an interesting feature that Scholl addresses in his chapter is that during the tour the Oberlin students were given several occasions to meet Soviet students. Since Oberlin College Choir consisted of 80 students with additional staff, the occasions to meet students were no small events. Like Koppes, Scholl has extensively used interviews with former choir members who participated in the tour of the Soviet Union.

The final part of the volume moves on to discuss theatre and dance and their role in Cold War era art diplomacy. Susan Costanzo examines how Soviet theatre professionals and amateurs drew their influences from Eastern Europe, where they were regularly able to familiarise themselves with contemporary Western plays that were not considered acceptable in the Soviet Union. The Soviet authorities restricted the inflow of Western cultural products throughout the Soviet era, although the restrictions became somewhat laxer after Stalin's death. As a result of the Thaw, the foremost art professionals had direct access to Western trends; but for professionals with fewer influential connections, let alone amateurs, theatre festivals in Eastern Europe, and Poland in particular, offered a chance to break away from the relatively insular Soviet art world. In her discussion of the dynamics of the visits and the encounters in Eastern European festivals, Costanzo is also able to point out some important chronological changes. While the flow of influences was strong in the 1960s and the 1970s, the importance of Eastern European festivals for Soviet theatre professionals and amateurs seems to have diminished by 1980.

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[20] Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), f. 2329, op. 35, d. 2, l. 59–67. Otchet o poezdke G. Vladimirova iz Goskontserty, 4 May 1958.

According to Costanzo, this was partly due to political developments, but also to changes in the intellectual climate.

In her chapter about the foremost ballet troupes in the world, Stéphanie Gonçalves examines the tours of the Kirov and Bolshoi ballet companies to Western Europe. The Kirov and the Bolshoi were both considered by the Soviet Union to be major cultural assets that demonstrated Soviet prowess and supremacy in the high arts. Both ballet groups were highly desired visitors by Western ballet audiences. Consequently, the Soviet Union aimed to use them to attain important foreign political objectives. Gonçalves focuses on discussing the extent to which this was possible at all by examining the role of ballet in Soviet cultural diplomacy. From 1954 onwards, the Bolshoi and the Kirov were constantly abroad, often on extensive tours that included several countries in Western Europe, and they visited North America a number of times as well. Quite often these tours were part of official cultural exchange, meaning that the goals of the visits to the West were non-commercial. Unlike the tours of many other artists or exhibits, the tours of the Bolshoi and the Kirov companies quite often entailed reciprocal visits to the Soviet Union.[21]

While the merits of these individual contributions speak for themselves, we are confident that they constitute a whole whose sum is greater than its parts. We believe that the novel approaches and perspectives that these chapters present are in numerous respects ground-breaking and will together make a valuable contribution to the study of cultural relations and particularly art diplomacy between the East and the West during the Cold War.

[21] RGALI, f. 3162, op. 1, d. 303. Zapisi besed s impressariiu kapitalisticheskikh stran Evropy ob organizatsii artisticheskogo obmena za 1966. These documents present discussions European and US producers had with the Soviet concert organisation, Goskontsert.

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PART I
Indirect Contacts, Images and Imagination

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Chapter 2
Mutually Assured Distinction: VOKS and Artistic Exchange in the Early Cold War

Oliver Johnson

In 1949 the American Social Realist artist and illustrator William Gropper visited the Soviet Union for six weeks as part of a VOKS-sponsored cultural exchange.[1] He took part in organised tours, had meetings with Soviet artists and an exhibition of his work was held in Moscow. For a brief period in the 1940s and 1950s Gropper, together with a small group US Social Realists, was among the best-known Western artists inside the USSR. On his return to the US Gropper was blacklisted following an appearance before Senator Joseph McCarthy's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in 1953, but he continued to work and exhibit, struggling with limited success against the increasing dominance of abstract art in post-war American exhibition culture. What role did Gropper play in East–West artistic exchange in the post-war period and why was this relatively little-known US artist a particularly suitable representative of the Western cultural other?[2]

Gropper (1897–1977) was part of a generation of American artists that was influenced by the ideas of communism in the 1930s and was increasingly marginalised within the US art world in the early years of the Cold War. This case study of his interaction with the Soviet Union sheds light on the process by which the aesthetic of Realism was contaminated by the Red scare in the West and the limited extent to which Social Realism was able to integrate with Socialist Realism as sibling attempts to unite art and political ideology. It demonstrates that during the period of cultural lockdown prior to the 1958 signing of the US–USSR cultural exchange agreement, the concept of exchange was applied to the consolidation and distinction of aesthetic norms East and West.[3] A limited form of dialogue

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[1] VOKS – Vsesoiuznoe Obshchestvo Kul'turnoi Sviazi s Zagranitsei (All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries).

[2] Biographical details about Gropper and his career are taken from Joseph Anthony Gahn, *The America of William Gropper: Radical Cartoonist* (PhD diss., Syracuse University, 1966); William Gropper papers, 1916–83, Archives of American Art, Box 1, folder 13; and Louis Lozowick, *William Gropper* (Philadelphia: Art Alliance, 1983).

[3] For more on the so-called Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Exchanges in the Cultural, Technical, and Educational Fields, see Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 15.

was possible in the marginalised and politically engaged medium of graphic art through the development of an international language of formal simplification, distortion and exaggeration. But Gropper's attempt to bridge the gap between art and political ideology in the post-war period represented a kind of cultural half-way house; he was an artist between East and West, informed by the social and artistic ideologies of each, but acceptable to neither.

An Artist between Cultures

Gropper's early career was typical of a generation of left-wing American artists who were influenced by communist ideas in the interwar period.[4] In the late 1920s he gained recognition as an illustrator of satirical cartoons for leftist journals including *New Masses*, *Daily Worker* and *Morning Freiheit*. Gropper made his first visit to the Soviet Union in 1930 as part of a *New Masses* delegation to the First Plenum of the Bureau of International Revolutionary Writers in Kharkov, an event which ended in disarray when Gropper and others left in protest over the mistranslations of their speeches and disillusionment with the proposed restrictive principles of an international proletarian literature that represented an early stage in the development of Socialist Realism.[5] Yet Gropper remained a firm proponent of communism. He devoted much of his satirical illustration to the denigration of the capitalist–imperialist axis and became increasingly involved in the organisation of artists' labour, becoming a leading artist of the John Reed Club and a founding member of the American Arts Congress in 1936.[6] As a fine and applied artist he was employed by the Federal Arts Project funded by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, which provided material support to a generation of struggling artists whose careers were faltering following the Depression-era breakdown of the art market and associated patronage networks. Alongside contemporaries including Ben Shahn, Philip Evergood, Jack Levine and Peter Blume, Gropper produced a number of murals for public buildings and held a series of major exhibitions in the second half of the 1930s, successfully combining a career as a socially engaged artist and illustrator with an active interest in the politics of communism.[7]

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[4] See for example Alejandro Anreus, Diana L. Linden and Jonathan Weinberg (eds), *The Social and the Real: Political Art of the 1930s in the Western Hemisphere* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006) and Andrew Hemingway, *Artists on the Left: American Artists and the Communist Movement, 1926–1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[5] Gahn, *The America of William Gropper*, 129.

[6] The disbanding of the John Reed Club and the founding of the American Arts Congress during the Popular Front period marked a professionalisation of left-wing US art production and a turn away from rhetoric of revolutionary agitation towards advocacy of progressive government legislation. See Anreus et al., *The Social and the Real*, 185–7.

[7] This group of socially engaged artists has been described variously as the 'American Wave' and the 'post-Ashcan School' in reference to their adoption of nationally specific

Such a position became increasingly untenable in the late 1930s as the American Artists' Congress and the Federal Arts Project itself came under increasing pressure from the anti-communist camp, which was spearheaded in 1938 by the so-called Dies Committee – the Select Committee on House Un-American Activities – that agitated for Congressional opposition to federal subsidies for visual arts.[8] This period also saw the breakdown of the pro-Soviet consensus among the American intellectual left following the Moscow show trials of 1936–38; the 1939 signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop non-aggression pact between the USSR and Nazi Germany; and the Soviet invasion of Finland. Gropper was among a group of over 100 American artists and intellectuals to sign a 1938 *New Masses* statement in support of the show trials, but by 1939 the Popular Front was in a state of crisis due to widespread disillusionment with the progressive ideology of Soviet communism.[9]

The outbreak of war saw a suspension of hostilities within the American art establishment as artists of all stripes united behind the anti-fascist cause.[10] But the post-war breakdown of the East–West marriage of convenience saw an increasing shift in American domestic policy towards a comprehensive rejection of left-wing radicalism and the influence of communism. Increasingly frustrated with what he saw as a failure of the American intellectual left in this period, Gropper left the US in 1948 for Poland, where he spent time travelling and documenting the post-war reconstruction of Europe. In October Gropper attended the World Peace Congress in Wroclaw and returned to America in 1949 for the Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace at the Waldorf in New York, where he heard Evgenii Fadeev and Dmitrii Shostakovich, among others, put forward the progressive principles of communist culture as a basis for peaceful coexistence at an event that is considered to represent a final direct attempt at Soviet cultural expansionism in the West.[11] Frustrated by what he saw as the failure of the intellectual left in the US, Gropper took up an invitation extended by the Soviet Arts Committee (Komitet po delam iskusstv, an All-Union level body responsible for administering and directing Soviet arts policy) for a six-week visit to the USSR followed by a further tour of Eastern Europe including an associated series of one-man exhibitions.

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themes and their rejection of the Academy. See Lozowick, *William Gropper*, 47 and Patti Carr Black, *Art in Mississippi, 1720–1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 187–8.

[8] This special instigating committee, which operated from 1938 to 1944, was a forebear of the standing committee and was 'instigated by a coalition of conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats, who hoped to counteract what they saw as Roosevelt's left-wing sympathies'. Helen Langa, *Radical Art: Printmaking and the Left in 1930s New York* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 206.

[9] Ibid., 210–11.

[10] See Cécile Whiting, *Antifascism in American Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 98–131.

[11] Neil Jumonville, *Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 1–48.

As part of this visit, Gropper met with members of the All-Union Academy of the Arts and later with the Moscow Artists' Union to show a selection of works by American graphic artists relating to the struggle for peace and to discuss the 'state of art in the USA'. Chaired by Aleksandr Gerasimov, the discussion provides an insight into the ways in which the two sides perceived one another and helped cement Gropper's reputation as an artist who was committed to a social agenda in his art, albeit one that was far more radical than that of his Soviet counterparts. In his introductory speech, Gropper described the US art establishment as an institution that was 'dictated' by the three major New York art galleries (presumably the Met, MOMA and the Guggenheim).[12] In Gropper's words:

> At the moment they are doing all they can to impede the development of any kind of art of an ideological nature. Any ideology in art is viewed as propaganda. The Guggenheim considers that if a painting is such that its contents can be understood, then it must be propaganda.[13]

Gropper went on to criticise a US tendency towards art collecting as an investment rather than for a love of the art itself, citing the Rockefeller family as a particularly notorious example. He went on to complain that modern art is inaccessible to the mass audience, a situation that is further compounded by lengthy explanations in the galleries, something that realist art renders quite unnecessary. Gerasimov responded with evident pride that Soviet art exhibitions are much loved by the masses, with the All-Union Art Exhibition attracting 1 million or more viewers over its five- to six-month run, evidence enough for the popular appeal of Socialist Realism.

The second part of the meeting was devoted to a short course in socialist art production in response to Gropper's leading question, 'how do Soviet artists earn money?' Shegal related how his forthcoming one-man show was being funded by the Arts Committee to the sum of 45,000 roubles, after which the Orgkom of the Soviet Artists' Union (the All-Union level governing body of the local artists' unions) would have first refusal on the purchase of his works, followed by Vsekokhudozhnik (the All-Russian Comradeship of Artists, a major independent artists' collective) and so on. Gerasimov added that all active artists were granted commissions from which the Arts Fund received 3 per cent of the value, which was used for the provision of artists' materials and the maintenance of a network of rest homes, health care provision and pensions.[14] Dementii Shmarinov went on to outline in some detail the structure of the union organisation, the state order process

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[12] Archive of VOKS, 'Vstrechi sovetskikh khudozhnikov s amerikanskim khudozhnikom Uiliam Gropper', State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), f. 5283, op. 21, d. 107, 120. (Russian archival abbreviations: f. – fond, or collection; op. – opis, or file; d. – delo, or item; ed. khr. – edinitsa khreneniya, or item; l. – list, or page.)

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 134.

and the communal living space in the artists' village (*gorodok khudozhnikov*), providing examples of best practice for Gropper to take home with him.

However, Shegal's final question hinted at the reality of Gropper's own influence within the US art establishment: 'What is your relationship with the House Un-American Activities Committee?' Gropper wryly acknowledged that the USSR visa in his passport would draw the committee's attention to him and might 'turn me into a foreign agent' in their eyes. This observation turned out to be close to the truth: from 1949 onwards Gropper was under observation after being flagged as potentially subversive by anti-communist Congressman George Dondero, and in 1953 he was called before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, where he pleaded the Fifth Amendment before Chairman Senator Joe McCarthy. Ostensibly Gropper was targeted for questioning on account of a 1945 illustrated map of American folk law, which was stocked by American information services overseas. Although the work is devoid of subversive content in itself, the fact that a leftist artist was being funded by the government for the overseas distribution of his work was enough, when taken in the context of his communist connections, to mark him out as a threat. Gropper was blacklisted by the committee and faced the standard ordeal of public naming and shaming in the national press followed by a sustained period of harassment and marginalisation within the art establishment.[15]

The Two Cultures Theory

Yet Gropper's marginalisation was not only the result of his blacklisting. Realism in all its manifestations was increasingly challenged as a mode of visual representation by the dominance of 'pure art', to use Clement Greenberg's elitist terminology.[16] The socially applied figurative realism of Gropper and his fellow New Deal artists was deemed too stylistically conservative for the American art establishment, as critics and curators embraced abstraction as the prevailing aesthetic current of post-war modernity. This alignment of Western democratic values with liberal artistic freedom of expression may not have coincided with McCarthyist notions of a robust national culture, but it contributed to an increasing politicisation of the categories of realism and abstraction. In 1953 a group of 47 American Realist artists of all persuasions united in defence of their method through the publication of a journal entitled *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions*. In the words of their opening statement:

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[15] Lozowick, *William Gropper*, 53–5.

[16] As Clement Greenberg argued, 'purism is the terminus of a salutary reaction against the mistakes of painting and sculpture in the past several centuries'. 'Towards a Newer Laocoön', *Partisan Review* vol. 7, no. 4 (1940), 296.

> The work of the members of this group is highly diverse in style and conception. Their kinship is a respect and love for the human qualities in painting … Today, mere textural novelty is being presented by a dominant group of museum officials, dealers, and publicity men as the unique manifestation of the artistic intuition. This arbitrary exploitation of a single phase of painting encourages contempt for the taste and intelligence of the public … We will work to restore to art its freedom and dignity as a living language.[17]

Although the journal was established on a non-political basis, including as it did non-aligned artists such as Edward Hopper and Milton Avery, it was dominated by Social Realists whose approach had been shaped by the influence of the left in the 1930s.

Their appropriation of the term 'human' in this context echoes the language of the Soviet cultural theorist Vladimir Kemenov, who described the humane principles of Socialist Realism in his 'Features of Two Cultures' of 1947, an article that was published for overseas distribution in the VOKS bulletin in English, French, German and Russian. The significance of Kemenov's article lay in its attempt to develop a comprehensive historical and theoretical basis for the cultural incompatibility of East and West that was suitable for both domestic and international consumption. This represented the first significant intellectual attempt to reconcile Soviet arts policy with the emerging international tensions of the early Cold War. In this treatise on the ideological barrenness of Western art, Kemenov identified a clear distinction between the 'anti-humanism' and 'depersonalization' of the 'reactionary bourgeois art of the imperialist era' and the egalitarian principles of the 'highest, most progressive' culture of the Soviet Union:

> As opposed to decadent bourgeois art with its anti-humanism, Soviet artists present the art of socialist humanism, an art imbued with supreme love for man, a pride in the emancipated individual of the socialist land, with sympathy for that part of humanity living under the capitalist system, a system which cripples and degrades men.[18]

Kemenov focused on the mass, accessible nature of Soviet culture and its adherence to a great historical legacy of national realist art to argue that Socialist Realism represented a progressive form of artistic expression that was founded upon

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[17] Editorial, *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinion*, no. 1 (1953).

[18] Excerpts from Kemenov's article can be found in Charles Harrison and Paul Woods (eds), *Art in Theory 1900–1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 647–9. The original article was first published in Vladimir Kemenov, 'Aspects of Two Cultures', *VOKS Bulletin*, no. 52 (1947): 20–36 and later in *Iskusstvo*, no. 4 (1947): 38–46 as 'Cherty dvukh kul'tur [Features of Two Cultures]', where it was illustrated by several examples of what Kemenov describes as the 'militant anti-humanism' of bourgeois art, including Henry Moore's *Family Group* (1940s) and Pablo Picasso's *Seated Woman* (1946).

'ideas of patriotism and equality, the brotherhood of the peoples, humanism, the struggle for individual freedom (not a freedom in isolation, but a social freedom), the emancipation of labour, the freedom of women; that is, high ideas filled with social significance and worth'.[19]

The individualistic pursuit of capital among Western artists had, in contrast, resulted in the suppression of the ideological consciousness of the masses, justified by the pseudo-freedom implied by the slogan 'art for art's sake'. The end product was a degraded and perverted form of artistic expression that contributed to the formation of an ever-widening rift between art and society. This distinction was, according to Kemenov, the result of a long process of Western artistic decline which began with the rise of aestheticism in the mid-nineteenth century and found its apotheosis in the 'monstrous' forms of Cubism and Surrealism in particular. Such experiments in formal distortion were not only ugly, argued Kemenov, but they posed a threat to the very stability and progress of a healthy society. The sculpture of Henry Moore, for example:

> is reactionary because it is designed to destroy the humanity of a person and turn them into a wild beast with primitive, fixed animal instincts, a beast to whom the term 'humanism' is meaningless, who rejects logic, progress, human love and comradely solidarity as suspicious concepts.[20]

Kemenov identified the late nineteenth-century rise of French Impressionism as a point of divergence between the cultures of Russia and the West as artists retreated from social subjects and became preoccupied with purely aesthetic concerns, a shift that was both facilitated by and perpetuated the 'class ideology of the reactionary bourgeois epoch'.[21]

Yet according to the Marxist-Leninist rhetoric of Kemenov's argument, it was not the artist-labourer himself, but the oppressive structures of capitalism that was to blame. A caricature was constructed by Kemenov and other Soviet cultural theorists of the Western artist as an embattled victim, cowed by the dark forces of the market and the bourgeois figure of the collector, and forced to turn his back on genuine art in favour of meaningless experimentation. A *New Masses* cartoon (possibly by Gropper) depicting a heavily distorted Cubo-Futurist viewer contemplating a realist work was used to illustrate a damning *Iskusstvo* digest of fashionable Western 'isms' by the reactionary Soviet art historian L. Reingardt, an article that included several reproductions of works by modern artists such as Yves Tanguy and Peter Blume. The relationship between modern art and its audience was a theme that would run through much of Gropper's work, such as a late 1950s series of paintings that ridiculed the pretentious snobbery of the contemporary art audience, whom he depicted as grotesque figures, their features

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19 Kemenov, 'Cherty dvukh kul'tur', 38.
20 Ibid., 39.
21 Ibid.

contorted and abstracted as if corrupted by the canvases themselves, which are shown in the background, leached of colour by their oversaturated viewers. A later and better known version of this theme was provided by Norman Rockwell's *The Connoisseur* (1962), which poses a realistically drawn, besuited art enthusiast before a Pollock-esque canvas, creating a compelling visual representation of the tension between:

> abstract expressionism and Rockwellian realism, chaos and order, colour and colourlessness, spontaneity and meticulous self-control, artwork and businessman (and, in a larger sense, art and business), masculine and feminine (or at least masculine and less masculine), Pollock and Rockwell, avant-garde and kitsch.[22]

If we are left in any doubt about the sincerity of Rockwell's claim that 'If I were young now, I might paint that way myself', then the subsequent revelation that 'when he got tired of waving a dripping brush, he invited a man painting the walls of his studio to help' confirms that *The Connoisseur* was indeed intended as a critique of abstraction and its denial of artistic agency and meaning.[23]

In the eyes of the American Realists, Abstract Expressionism represented an elitist and exclusive exercise in style over substance. Gropper not only illustrated this point through his art; he also embodied it through his own marginalised status within the post-war American art establishment. As the only US artist to travel to the USSR in the late 1940s, Gropper – the establishment outsider – played an important role in the definition and vilification of a Western aesthetic 'Other' against which the progressive art of Socialist Realism could be juxtaposed.

Art and Illustration

Although the Two Cultures theory initiated a period of decline for Soviet attempts to influence the aesthetic policies of the West, a limited cultural exchange continued within the art establishment through an engagement with a small group of Social Realist artists including Gropper. That Gropper himself adhered to a far looser definition of realism than his Soviet counterparts was acceptable within the context of graphic rather than fine art. As a cartoonist and illustrator, rather than a painter, Gropper was especially suitable as a cultural figure who was able to straddle both camps. He followed a leftist tradition of art theory that privileged political ideology and dissemination over scale and execution. As Schapiro had written on newspaper illustration in *New Masses* in 1933, 'the good revolutionary picture is not necessarily a cartoon, but it should have the pointedness of a cartoon,

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[22] Richard Halpern, *Norman Rockwell: The Underside of Innocence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 149.

[23] 'The Cover', *Saturday Evening Post*, no. 3 (1962), cited in Leonard Diepeveen, *The Difficulties of Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 41.

and, like a cartoon, it should reach great masses of workers at little expense'.[24] Inside the Soviet Union the field of graphic art had been marginalised by the 1920s expansion of political ideology into the field of fine art, a process which had remained largely unrealised in the collector-driven art market of the West. As a result, illustration and satire in the Soviet Union retained certain features of the graphic tradition of the avant-garde throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s in a way that had not been possible in easel painting, where accusations of formalism were rife. The Kukryniksy (an acclaimed trio of artist-illustrators), Boris Efimov and Boris Prorokov, among others, were able to incorporate features of formal experimentation into their works at a time when easel painters were being persecuted for the very same practices.

Prorokov in particular was an exponent of a hybrid artistic method that encapsulated elements of painterly technique and illustration, and whose works share an aesthetic with that of the American Social Realists of the 1930s. His *This is America* series of 1948 based on the Mayakovsky poems of the same name won him a Stalin Prize for graphic art in 1950, and his *Sink Truman's Tanks* was one of the most acclaimed images at the 1950 All-Union Exhibition and was widely reproduced in the Soviet press.[25] The art journal *Iskusstvo* lauded the work for its depiction of a 'powerful human tidal wave that can't be stopped' and argued that Prorokov's illustration was 'elevated to a work of authentic pathos, a heroic call-to-arms'.[26] It is reminiscent of an earlier phase of Soviet art that combined figurative realism with aspects of stylistic simplification and exaggeration, including reduction to geometric shapes and the juxtaposition of flat, contrasting tones. Its treatment of the physicality of a mass of generic workers brings to mind the work of artists from the Society of Easel Painters (OSt) such as Yuri Pimenov and Aleksandr Deineka, and it embraces a less rigid language of realism than is evident in similarly acclaimed works of oil painting from the same period.

Likewise, Gropper's works of illustration from the late 1940s are based on a loose concept of figurative drawing that shares the influence of Soviet and Western realisms. In particular in his late 1940s series *American Folk Heroes*, Gropper's powerful Stakhanovite-esque figures appear wrenched between the demands of realist figurative representation and expressive distortion, as if they are threatening to break free from the constraints of their line drawings. His 1949 depiction of the legendary Pittsburgh steelworker *Joe Magarac* shows a giant of a man, towering over his fellow workers and the schematic industrial landscape in the background as he wrestles with a rod of molten metal, his shirt unable to contain the rippling muscles of his bared chest and his face contorted in a grimace

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[24] Meyer Schapiro, 'The Social Viewpoint in Art', *New Masses*, vol. 8, no. 7 (February 1933), taken from Patricia Hills, '1936: Meyer Schapiro, *Art Front*, and the Popular Front', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1994): 16.

[25] See for example, 'Khudozhniki v bor'be za mir', *Ogonek*, 4 June 1950, 35 and 'Sovetskie khudozhniki v bor'be za mir', *Iskusstvo*, no. 4 (1950): 3.

[26] 'Sovetskie khudozhniki v bor'be za mir', 13.

of effort and exultation. The image is reminiscent of Superman, another popular American hero and man of steel, but one who was less closely associated with the international labour movement.[27] The adoption of folk heroes as a theme was a popular and widespread strategy of wartime and post-war American painting that allied anti-fascist sentiment with patriotic subject matter.[28] In Gropper's case, his folk heroes were heroes of labour, symbolising the potency of the working masses and their contribution to the founding of a democratic nation. His *Heroes* series can be interpreted as a kind of hybrid Social–Socialist Realism that was born out of the artist's engagement with Soviet culture and the intellectual left in Europe and America.

In this period of limited artistic exchange, it was in the narrative and ideology-driven field of graphic art that a dialogue was allowed to take place between artists East and West, while the field of easel painting remained sacrosanct and protected by outspoken critics and cultural theorists on both sides of the Cold War divide. As the American Social Realist artist Philip Evergood observed, the categories of Realism and satire were united by modernism under the banner of 'bad taste' through their preoccupation with 'social betterment'.[29] Meanwhile Socialist Realism adhered to a traditional academic hierarchy of genre that saw satire and illustration relegated to a marginalised form of graphic art. The extremely limited VOKS programme of artistic exchange was narrowed down to a small group of American artist-illustrators with links to leftist publications in the post-war years in an attempt to foster a form of social criticism that could exist as a common aesthetic as well as an ideological framework. As the Soviet art historian I. Tsyrlin wrote in a somewhat confused *Iskusstvo* article criticising the reactionary American art world:

> The majority of peace-loving American artists are illustrators, and that is no coincidence, since illustration, as the most accessible form of art, always stands closer to the immediate task of political struggle. Fred Ellis, Gropper, Kinkade – these are the representatives of the art of the American people.[30]

The universal and easily reproducible artistic language of satire was a valuable medium of East–West exchange, and several compilations of illustrations were published for international consumption during the late 1940s.[31] A contemporary

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[27] Joe Magarac was in fact the star of his own comic book in 1951 as part of a two-book series, *Joe the Genie of Steel*, produced by the United States Steel Corporation and illustrated by Jack Sparling.

[28] Whiting, *Antifascism in American Art*, 145–6.

[29] Hemingway, *Artists on the Left*, 228.

[30] I. Tsyrlin, 'SshA: Oplot reaktsii v isskustve kapitalisticheskogo mira', *Iskusstvo*, no. 1 (1952), 89.

[31] *Soviet Humour: Stories and Cartoons from Crocodile* (London: VOKS, 1949) and *Out of the Crocodile's Mouth: Russian Cartoons about the United States from Crocodile*

review of two of these volumes noted 'as drawings, their message apart, these could have come from any Western country'.[32] The resemblance was no coincidence: as a politically aligned and socially engaged mass art form, the medium had developed as part of a shared international tradition.

Later in his career, Gropper abandoned his attempt to create an affirmative vision of American democratic values in favour of an increasingly bleak and distorted approach to figurative representation that he applied to domestic social criticism. His *Caprichos* series of lithographs from the mid-1950s was devoted to his experience at the Subcommittee on Investigations and is a bleak and heavily distorted set of works that combine the same physical bodies of his folk heroes with the nightmare imagery of Picasso and Dali.[33] In *Awakening* a scorched figure clutches at his face in horror as nebulous dark clouds obscure the sun, while in *Blacklist* a group of mangled bodies is swept away in a tangle of broad abstracted brush strokes. This is a representation of a cultural apocalypse and one of the most important artistic representations of the McCarthy-era American cultural landscape. Gropper's political radicalism, like that of many of his contemporaries in this period, was renewed from within rather than without.

Conclusion

For a generation of artists like Gropper, who had been exposed to the intellectual ideas of Marxism and communism during the great crisis of capitalism in the 1920s, the Soviet Union represented a 'magic country of the mind', as the writer and *New Masses* editor Joseph Freeman put it.[34] Informed by a shared East–West interpretation of art as a politically engaged medium that had developed in the late 1920s and 1930s as a response to widespread intellectual enthusiasm for the ideas of socialism, Gropper and other post-war American Social Realists shared Soviet disdain for the social dislocation of abstract art. Yet they were simultaneously divorced from Socialist Realism by their adoption of a broad definition of Realism incorporating elements of European modernism including Expressionism, Primitivism and especially Cubism. Only in the mass, reproducible media of

(Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1949).

[32] This extremely patronising review begins: 'The simple Russian likes his bit of fun and his peasant art has a tradition of drollery, so it is not surprising that the Russian Bolsheviks have found satirical pictures useful in the "socialisation of emotions".' David Low, 'Krokodil Cartoonists: Soviet Humour', *Soviet Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1950): 163–70.

[33] See 'The People are My Landscape: Social Commentary in the Work of William Gropper', online exhibition, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library: http://library.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/g/Gropper/case2.htm (accessed 1 February 2013).

[34] Andrew Hemingway, 'Meyer Schapiro and Marxism in the 1930s', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1994): 13–29.

illustration and satire were dialogue and exchange possible in the development of an artistic language of socialist protest that shared a number of features. But the domestic cultural influence of the American Social Realists was severely curtailed by their political orientation, which saw their attempt at presenting a united front against the 'non-progressive' and 'irrational' new artistic movements, both through their own work and through the journal *Reality*, doomed to failure.[35] In the late 1940s and early 1950s this failure was precisely the point. Gropper's 1949 visit to Moscow was a largely symbolic act that cast the artist as a representative of the persecuted intellectual left in the US and contributed to the consolidation of a global cultural divide.

[35] Hemingway, *Artists on the Left*, 217.

Chapter 3
Friendship of the Musicians: Anglo-Soviet Musical Exchanges 1938–1948

Pauline Fairclough and Louise Wiggins

Our choice of decade has at its core the relatively fruitful period of the wartime alliance between the USSR and Great Britain. But those four years were flanked by the heavy descent of what Churchill came to term the 'Iron Curtain' dividing Stalin's Russia from the West, which had already begun in the immediate pre-war years and resumed afterwards. Perhaps no other country's leader could have used that term with as much conviction as Churchill, for the Soviet Union appeared to have turned its back on its former ally in every conceivable respect: British Council staff stationed in Moscow were ejected in 1947, their plans for post-war cultural cooperation in ruins, while promises of educational and cultural exchanges were reneged upon or met with silence. After the Americans dropped the atomic bomb, the groundwork for the Cold War and for the ensuing arms race was well and truly laid. Stalin had little strategic reason to maintain cooperation with Britain, which, with its dwindling empire, arguably had nothing to offer the Soviet Union except precisely the kind of cultural exchanges that threatened to undermine it. That might sound extreme, but in fact propaganda infiltration was the British government's primary objective in cultivating cultural ties with Russia from the moment they first got involved with cultural relations in 1941.[1] Just as Soviet cultural propaganda aimed to foster interest in and sympathy for communism, carefully editing out the negative aspects and proudly highlighting the positives, British propaganda was equally deliberate in strategy, if rather less extreme in

[1] Archival abbreviations as follows: Histon – Alan Bush Archive, Histon; NA – The National Archives at Kew; FO – Foreign Office files; KV – Security Service files; BL – The British Library; BBC WAC – British Broadcasting Corporation Written Archive Centre, Caversham; RGASPI – Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (*Rossiskiy gosudarstvennïy arkhiv sotsialno politicheskoy istorii*); GARF – State Archive of the Russian Federation (*Gosudarstvennïy arkhiv rossiskoy federatsii*); RGALI – Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (*Rossiskiy gosudarstvennïy arkhiv literaturï i isskustva*). Russian archival abbreviations: f. – fond, or collection; op. – opis, or file; d. – delo, or item; ed. khr. – edinitsa khraneniya, or item; l. – list, or page. For a discussion of British strategic planning with regard to cultural exchange, see Pauline Fairclough, 'From Détente to Cold War: Anglo-Soviet Musical Exchanges in the Late Stalin Period', in *Twentieth-Century Music and Politics: Essays in Memory of Neil Edmunds*, (ed.) Pauline Fairclough (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 37–56.

manifestation. The Soviets had a strong head start on the British in any case, for the network of Soviet friendship societies in Britain before the war had already been doing sterling work in bringing Soviet culture to the attention of the British public. Prior to the allied détente, in fact, these societies were the chief conduit for such links between Britain and the USSR, chief among them the prestigious Bloomsbury-based group, the Society for Cultural Relations (SCR). Founded in 1924 as a vehicle for the propaganda of Soviet culture in Britain, the SCR, as cited by Michael David-Fox, may have owed its origins to Soviet activists working in London, but appeared, to all intents and purposes, to have been a wholly British initiative.[2] Be that as it may, its proven links to the Communist Party in Britain and thus to Moscow meant that the British government regarded it with deep suspicion and hostility.

Notwithstanding its pariah status in British government, the SCR can be credited with facilitating vital musical contacts formed between Britain and Soviet Russia during the most closed years of Stalin's rule. It lost that position of influence during the war, however, when government suspicion of its loyalties was at a height, and when strenuous efforts were made to displace it, with government departments taking over the role of exchange facilitators, chief among them the Northern Department of the Foreign Office and the British Council (not a government department but an organisation that worked in very close cooperation with the Foreign Office). This chapter will focus on two major strands of exchange activity: the role played by Alan Bush, the English communist composer; and the role played by the British government and 'establishment' organisations such as the BBC and major arts institutions.

Alan Bush in Moscow, 1938–1939

Alan Bush (1900–1995) is best known as a composer and pianist, and for his controversial political views which undoubtedly affected both his music and its

[2] See Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921–1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82. The Society for Cultural Relations between the British Commonwealth and the USSR was set up in 1924. Its founders were eminent British and Soviet artists and intellectuals, including E.M. Forster, John Maynard Keynes, Bertrand Russell, Virginia Woolf, Alexei Tolstoy and Konstantin Yuon. It operated in the 1920s and 1930s to encourage British–Soviet relations on a non-political basis. Following the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, the SCR changed its name to the Society for Co-operation in Russian and Soviet Studies (SCRSS), which remains its current title today. For an insightful and detailed account of its history in the early years, see Emily Lygo, 'Promoting Soviet Culture in Britain: The History of the Society for Cultural Relations between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the USSR, 1924–1945', *Modern Language Review* vol. 108, no. 2 (2013): 571–96.

reception – negatively in Britain, positively in the GDR and USSR.[3] His role as an unofficial cultural ambassador between Britain and the Soviet Union has been little documented, yet Bush made considerable efforts to promote musical exchange between Britain and Soviet Russia from the late 1930s onwards. In practical terms this was achieved through the exchange of musical scores, recordings and articles between the VOKS music chairman Grigory Shneyerson and Bush, and through lectures and reciprocal visits of musical delegations.[4] Bush was a dedicated promoter of Russian music in Britain at a time when few others were, and was simultaneously proactive in sending British music to the USSR. Promoting Soviet culture in Britain won him few supporters in his own country, as Bush would have been only too aware. The government's attitude towards British communists occupied a spectrum between sarcastic dismissal at one end and extreme suspicion at the other, and Bush himself was treated to both extremes and various shades in between, depending on the government's perception of the Soviet threat and Bush's role – even as a minor cog – as part of that threat. In the run-up to war and during the Nazi-Soviet pact Bush was under constant surveillance by the security services: there are eight substantial MI5 files on him in the National Archives.[5] Our research into private exchange seeks to balance and complement that on the official channels. Through the correspondence of Bush and Shneyerson it is possible to gain information regarding their exchange of material and to trace the impact of political relations between Britain and the Soviet Union, which probably affected correspondence between them in just the same way as it had negatively impacted the exchange of official cultural channels. Their correspondence dates from 1938 and spans four decades to 1981. There is a gap in their correspondence between the years 1949 and 1958 which corresponds to – indeed, extends beyond – the gap experienced by official channels, though this does not necessarily mean they lost touch, as will be discussed below.

Bush and Shneyerson first met in 1938 at a reception for foreign cultural workers, held at the All-Union Society of Cultural Relations in Moscow.[6] Soon afterwards, Shneyerson attended a concert of Bush's music organised by the

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[3] See especially Joanna Bullivant, '"A World of Marxist Orthodoxy"? Alan Bush's *Wat Tyler* in Great Britain and the German Democratic Republic', in Fairclough, *Twentieth-Century Music and Politics*, 7–21.

[4] VOKS (Vsesoiuznoe Obshchestvo Kul'turnoi Sviazi s Zagranitsei/All-Union Society for Cultural Contacts with Foreign Countries) was a Soviet-run organisation set up in 1925 to serve as a propaganda vehicle. Outwardly it was responsible for promoting cultural contacts with foreign countries. Inwardly it was often used by Soviet intelligence to establish contact with various intellectuals, scientists and government circles that were generally unaware that they were dealing with Soviet intelligence officers rather than cultural contacts.

[5] NA, KV2/3515.

[6] In an article published in the Russian music journal *Sovetskaya muzïka* in 1970, Shneyerson recounts fondly their first meeting where Bush led a group dance of the 'Lambeth Walk'. It was re-published in Shneyerson's memoirs, *Stati o sovremmenoy zarubezhnoy muzïke: Ocherki, Vospominaniya* (Moscow: Sovetskiy Kompozitor, 1974), 261–71.

Composers' Union branch in Moscow at which Bush accompanied himself on piano, performing a number of his own songs. Shneyerson gives few details of the songs – perhaps he had already forgotten them by the time he set down his reminiscences in 1970; but Konstantin Kuznetsov reviewed the concert in *Sovetskaya muzïka* and reported that Bush, while singing some of his most popular mass songs – Song of the Hunger Marchers (1936), Song to Labour (1926) – had also played the Lento and Scherzo (Nocturne) movements of Vaughan Williams's London Symphony, John Ireland's London Overture and his own Dance Overture.[7]

As a means of exchanging precious items like scores and fragile shellac 78s, using the postal service posed considerable challenges. There was no guarantee of safe delivery unless a VOKS or Soviet Embassy courier was used, and some of the Bush Shneyerson correspondence shows that promised items had not arrived. But two very important items were carried back to England by Bush himself: after his visit in 1938 he brought back with him a sound-film, made by Yevgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonia in 1938, of Dmitry Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony and Alexander Veprik's *Song of Jubilation*. It was screened in March 1939 in London, to an invited audience of music critics; the following April, Bush gave the British premiere of the symphony in the Queen's Hall, London with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert of Soviet music including Nikolai Myaskovsky's Symphony No. 16 and Aram Khachaturian's Piano Concerto.[8] Facing the predictably lukewarm response of critics to this event, and the general lack of pre-war enthusiasm for Shostakovich's music in Britain until the short-lived popularity of the 'Leningrad' Symphony, Bush's advocacy of Shostakovich's music marks him out as pioneering in the context of a highly conservative musical establishment that adopted a *de facto* scepticism and even hostility towards any musical product from the Soviet Union.

Details of the scores and recordings sent by Bush and Shneyerson right up to the 1960s are preserved at the Bush Archive in Histon, in their correspondence. It shows that Shneyerson sent Bush the following works over several decades: Shostakovich's Two Pieces for String Quartet; Myaskovsky's Violin Concerto; a collection of anti-fascist songs, wartime songs compiled by Shneyerson and Vano Muradeli's song 'Lenin in Shushenkskoe'; Khachaturian's *Ode to Stalin*; two works by Ferenc Szabó; a cello work by Igor Boelza; and Georgy Sviridov's 'Burns Song' and 'Poems in Memory of Sergey Esenin'. In return, Bush sent Shneyerson a considerable amount of his own music (though very little by other composers), including his 'Nottingham' Symphony, numerous songs and marches; Alan Rawsthorne's 'Pastoral' Symphony and Concerto for String Orchestra; John

[7] See *Sovetskaya muzïka* 12 (1938), 76–8. This choice of repertoire seems to have influenced the first of the four 'English music' concerts held in Moscow during the war; see below for details.

[8] For the reception of both events and discussion of Shostakovich's reception history in Britain generally, see Pauline Fairclough, 'The Old Shostakovich: Reception in the British Press', *Music and Letters* vol. 88, no. 2 (2007): 266–96.

Ireland's London Overture and 'These Things Shall Be'; and Benjamin Britten's 'Ballad for Heroes'. Shneyerson thus amassed what was surely the finest Alan Bush collection outside of the composer's own home; yet hardly any of this music was ever performed in the Soviet Union, despite Shneyerson's propagandising efforts on his friend's behalf.

According to the travel diary kept by his wife, Nancy Bush, Alan Bush made 13 trips to the Soviet Union between the years 1938 and 1973, the vast majority of them taking place in the post-Stalin period, though these figures are not comprehensive, as will be seen.[9] In a letter to Shneyerson, written in the spring of 1939, Bush compares Russian and British establishment attitudes to composers, with a positively rose-tinted view of conditions in Russia:

> In the midst of all the difficulties and tribulations which music and musicians suffer here I think constantly of the lucky comrades of the USSR, pursuing their art in an atmosphere of security and encouragement, and amid the love and enthusiasm of the peoples of the USSR. That makes me want all the more to come again and be allowed to work among you, if only for one week! Do try and arrange something, and reply soon![10]

It is hard to say whether Bush, as a committed communist and Stalinist, was blind and deaf to the horrors being wrought in the Soviet Union in 1938, at the height of the Stalinist repressions. He was unable at that time to read Russian (he never became fluent in the language), so could not have understood the hysterical calls for death to the 'enemies of the people' that fronted the daily newspapers: 1938 was the year of the final 'show trial' at which Nikolai Bukharin was found guilty of treason and later executed; and while it is possible that Bush knew nothing of the mass arrests sweeping the country, the show trials were covered in the Western press and he would certainly have known, probably in some detail, what was going on. There was a large number of influential British communists who believed in trials as necessary to further the progress of Soviet communism, a viewpoint expressed perhaps most extremely by the English barrister and Labour MP D.N. Pritt, whose biased coverage of the show trials is preserved in publications from the mid- to late 1930s.[11] With regard to scandals in the Soviet music world – namely, the

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[9] The travel diary is preserved at the Histon Archive.

[10] Letter from Bush to Shneyerson, dated 1 March 1939, Histon.

[11] Dennis Nowell Pritt (1887–1972) was a barrister and Labour MP for North Hammersmith (1935–50). He was a known Soviet sympathiser and fronted several pro-Russian groups, including the SCR and the Reichstag Fire Inquiry Commission. The Soviet defector Walter Krivitsky named Pritt as 'one of the chief recruiting agents for Soviet underground organisations in the UK' and noted that he actually worked on the show trials with Andrei Vīshinsky: 'His mission was to write up the trial in such a way that it would be accepted by Western European countries.' See Nigel West, *MASK. MI5's Penetration of the Communist Party of Great Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 311. Pritt

public excoriation of Shostakovich in January and February 1936 – Bush evidently believed that *Pravda*'s criticisms of Shostakovich were fair-minded and helpful, and passed this view on to British audiences in his lectures and programme notes for the work. It seems, therefore, as though his party-line support for every twist and turn of Soviet cultural policy was unshakeable.[12] When in Moscow, he probably saw only what he had come to see: comradely delegations, receptions and gatherings of prominent artists who listened to him perform.

Some evidence of Bush's arguably naïve reading of the Soviet cultural scene can be found in a letter to Shneyerson in March 1939 regarding the question of Soviet composers' entry into the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM). It is clear from his letter that Bush remained confident that both Soviet composers and the authorities' stance were generally positive, that they wanted to be international and it was only Western prejudice that stood in their way:

> Has anything been decided about the entry of the Soviet Composers into the International Society for Contemporary Music? This matter, so important to all progressive musicians in the capitalist countries, can yet be successfully achieved at the Delegate Meeting which will be held during the forthcoming Festival to be held in Warsaw in April.[13]

Shneyerson's uncertain reply came shortly after:

> As to our Soviet composers joining the I.S.C.M. we regret to be able as yet to say anything definite. We quite agree with you as regards the importance of a speedy solution of the question, but at the moment the matter is quite at a standstill, although we do not at all consider it a hopeless case. We keep it well in mind, and, at present, in connection with your letter, the question has been raised anew.[14]

Bush was apparently unaware that the situation had changed a great deal for Soviet cultural organisations since the freedoms enjoyed in the 1920s when Soviet musicians visited music festivals abroad and then reported back in the Soviet press.

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was expelled from the Labour Party in 1940 over his unwavering support for the USSR's invasion of Finland, and afterwards was re-elected as an independent Labour member. Pritt came to Bush's aid in 1945 by putting forward the case of Bush's forthcoming army post to India in the House of Commons. For Pritt's shameless defence of the trials of Zinoviev and Kamenev, see Dennis Nowell Pritt, *The Zinoviev Trial* (London: Gollancz, 1936). See also Shannon Jones, '60 Years since the Dewey Commission' (March 1997): http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1997/05/dewe-m19.html (accessed 19 May 2013).

[12] For details of Bush's summary of these events, see Fairclough, 'The Old Shostakovich', 271.

[13] Letter from Bush to Shneyerson, dated 1 March 1939, Histon.

[14] Letter from Shneyerson to Bush, dated 16 March 1939, Histon.

By now those days were long gone – a fact of which Shneyerson would have been acutely aware, but of which Bush, evidently, was not. In a rather poignant part of his letter, Shneyerson asks Bush to provide information and details on his recent trip to the United States, probably because Shneyerson knew his own chances of visiting were at best remote, or more likely non-existent. Bush visited the United States in November 1938, where he met the composers Aaron Copland, Charles Lomax, Marc Blitzstein and Nicolas Slonimsky and various political refugees, including Hanns Eisler. While in New York, Bush gave a radio broadcast about the Soviet Union, speaking from his recently obtained first-hand experience. He sent a copy of the broadcast to Shneyerson, and in the accompanying letter Bush expressed his belief that this report was unprecedented and a valuable insight for American listeners.[15] There can be little doubt that news of this favourable publicity would have been well received in Moscow, where any positive news regarding Soviet cultural status in the West was welcome. The émigré Soviet musician Juri Jelagin has described how the showcasing of performers and Soviet music in international festivals in the mid–late 1930s was used as a counterbalance to the negative publicity that the Soviet Union received in the wake of the internationally reported show trials.[16] Bush was a loyal friend of the Soviet Union who visited at just the right time to be able to introduce British and American audiences to important Soviet composers, though he was admittedly a very minor cog indeed in the complex and unpredictable machine of the Soviets' approach to international relations in the darkest years of the Stalinist repressions.

Wartime Exchange: Bush and Shneyerson

Following the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany in September 1939, both men were called up to perform duties in their respective armed forces, though after a brief stint in the Red Army, Shneyerson was sent back to take up his previous positions at VOKS and the Composers' Union. From documents held at the Histon Archive, it seems that letters between the two were few and far between in these years. The Security Service was intercepting Bush's letters around this time, and there is a copy of a letter sent by Bush to Shneyerson dated 1 January 1941 held at the National Archives in which Bush offered his own analysis of his new Symphony in C – a work that, according to a Security Service official reviewing the letter, 'has the appearance of being strongly communistic and revolutionary'.[17] But the Security Service's attitude to Bush softened after surveillance failed to show any particularly suspicious activities, and in a letter

[15] Letter from Bush to Shneyerson, dated 1 March 1939, Histon. We have been unable to locate a copy of the transcript of the broadcast, if indeed one has survived.

[16] Juri Jelagin, *Taming of the Arts*, trans. Nicholas Wreden (New York: Dutton, 1951), 209–10.

[17] Taken from an intercepted letter sent from Bush to Shneyerson. NA KV 2/3515.

dated 1 December 1943 Shneyerson thanked Bush for a previous letter which was hand delivered by a 'Mr. Reavy' (the senior British Council official in Moscow, George Reavey).[18] Reavey's involvement shows that their private correspondence was being facilitated by the British Council – an important detail, because it shows a degree of official tolerance, despite the ongoing Security Service investigation into Bush (the British Council reported closely to the Foreign Office). Sadly, the score of Bush's Symphony in C was sunk in the Arctic Convoy ship that transported it, and thereafter lay at the bottom of the Barents Sea. Shneyerson's response was sympathetic:

> This sad news was the cause of deepest regret to all of your friends and particularly to me. I had awaited this work of yours with such interest, especially in view of the fact that you had written to me about it last year. This time the Germans succeeded in dealing a blow at Soviet-British musical rapprochement. I only hope that you sent us a copy and not the autograph manuscript. If this is so, then sooner or later your symphony will ring out in Moscow, to rejoice us and to spite all our enemies.[19]

Further on in the letter Shneyerson describes a concert of English music that had been recently held in Kuybïshev, the evacuation city of the Moscow Philharmonia. The programme included works by Charles Villiers Stanford, Edward Elgar, Frederick Delius, Ralph Vaughan-Williams and John Ireland. Shneyerson expressed his deep regret that no works by British composers of the younger generation were included. This he attributed to the poor availability of orchestral scores. On another occasion, a gathering at the Union of Soviet Composers in Moscow listened to gramophone recordings of English works, including Elgar's Violin Concerto, the Sonata for Two Pianos by Arnold Bax and Vaughan Williams's 'Fantasy on a Theme of Tallis'. Shneyerson wrote: 'Here again the audience expressed their regrets that the programme failed to give an adequate conception of the new English school. We hope that in the near future these gaps will be filled.'[20] On 25 May 1943 an orchestral concert of English music was held in Moscow. Shneyerson sent a report of the occasion to Bush:

> The 'Dance Overture' [Bush's composition] sounded quite invigorating and spirited, offering a contrast, as it were, for the rather academic music of the remainder of the programme. Edward Elgar's 'Variations' were splendidly received as were also the lovely folk-songs which, at our request, Shostakovich

[18] Sadly no copy of the letter to which Shneyerson refers is available.

[19] Letter from Shneyerson to Bush, dated 1 December 1943, Histon.

[20] Letter from Shneyerson to Bush, dated 1 December 1943, Histon. Their later correspondence shows that Shneyerson eventually received another score of this work in 1943.

> arranged for orchestra. He was so charmed by these songs that he told me of his intentions to do another series of such arrangements of English folk-songs.[21]

By way of reciprocal activity, an exhibition of Soviet music was held in London in 1943 in which Bush was heavily involved, having selected all the photographs and written the accompanying captions, composed the entire literary explanation, conducted two tours of the exhibition and given a public lecture on the music of Myaskovsky, Sergei Prokofiev and Shostakovich. Bush also informed Shneyerson of a radio programme he was making for the BBC entitled *Soviet Music in Peace and War*, to be broadcast on 19 September of that year. Up to that point, only one package of records had arrived from Moscow since the outbreak of war. Bush pleads for more to be sent so that he might broadcast those too in subsequent programmes. Shneyerson replied:

> How I should like to be able to send you as many phonograph records as possible to help you in your lectures but – and there are two 'buts' – first, these records are very hard to obtain as almost all the records that are produced now go to the front, and second, even when they are obtainable, we cannot send them due to the postal conditions, a circumstance which I am sure you understand.[22]

Shneyerson's 1974 memoir recalls another event that is not mentioned in the correspondence, which suggests that Bush did manage to visit the Soviet Union during the war years. Towards the end of the war, Moscow Radio broadcast several programmes of Bush's music with the choir of the Radio Committee, with Bush himself taking part in one that included arrangements of English folk songs with some of Bush's own mass songs: 'The Great Red Army', 'Call to Labour', 'March of the Hungry'.[23] In this memoir, Shneyerson makes the further observation that, after their first meeting in 1938, he and Bush met frequently over the next decade, with Bush attending sessions of the Moscow Composers' Union: in Shneyerson's own words, he was 'a frequent visitor to our country as a guest to almost all the Composers' Union meetings, where he brought to us as performer and conductor his own works and wrote articles for the Soviet press'.[24]

Records kept by the composer's wife, Nancy Bush, record only two pre-war visits, in 1938 and 1939, and none at all thereafter until well after Stalin's death. However, Bush's Security Service file shows that he did visit the Soviet Union at least once more in 1947 (a brief visit tied in with a trip to Czechoslovakia and Poland), and then again in October 1953. The MI5 files also contain a copy of

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[21] Letter from Shneyerson to Bush, dated 21 June 1943, Histon. The other items on the programme included John Ireland's 'London' overture and Vaughan Williams's 'Wasps' overture.

[22] Letter from Shneyerson to Bush, dated 27 September 1943, Histon.

[23] Shneyerson, *Stati o sovremmenoy zarubezhnoy muzïke*, 265.

[24] Ibid., 261.

Bush's reply to Tikhon Khrennikov, Secretary of the Composers' Union, thanking him for his invitation to attend the 1956 Congress and advising him of his arrival date of 6 May. Therefore, despite the apparent hiatus in the Bush–Shneyerson correspondence, Bush evidently continued to travel to and from the Soviet Union and to maintain his friendly relations with Shneyerson. His visits to the Soviet Union may well have been more frequent than his Security Service files show; but until further evidence of more visits comes to light, we can be certain only of these, Shneyerson's testimony notwithstanding.[25]

Cultural Exchange during and after the War: The British Council and Foreign Office

As soon as the Soviet Union and Great Britain were fighting on the same side, the British propaganda machine swung into action. Substantial work on performances of Russian and Soviet music in Britain has already been carried out, and it is not our intention to replicate those findings here. Instead, we focus on the mechanisms by which British invitations were issued and how they were received by Soviet officials, insofar as can be established from archival documents. During the war, the Ministry of Information (MoI) was recreated (from its former role during the 1914–18 war) in order to control British propaganda abroad. It managed a vast field of news reportage, public relations and cultural exchanges in Moscow. Where required, it worked with the British Council, which had a limited presence there (typically just one official based in the British Embassy) but which was expected to develop a more substantial base in Moscow after the war to continue the Ministry's work. Both worked in close collaboration with the Foreign Office to bring as much British culture as possible into Russia. During wartime, their strategies were enormously effective. British films were screened – George Formby was an especially big hit; the British paper *Britansky Soiuznik* was published weekly (it was so popular that copies were sold on the black market); and records and scores were sent to the Composers' Union in Moscow. The problem of hire and copyright restrictions on contemporary British scores was solved by a new music hire agreement offered in July 1942, which enabled scores to be loaned to the Soviet Union until the end of the war without incurring any copyright or hire fee,[26] and Soviet orchestral records show that English orchestral music was played and broadcast in public concerts.[27] The sheer volume of recordings and scores sent

[25] For detailed (though not comprehensive) information on concerts and broadcasts, as well as Bush's articles on Soviet music and efforts to publicise it during the war, see Constance Dee, 'Music and Propaganda: Soviet Music and the BBC during the Second World War' (PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 2007), especially pp. 103–7.

[26] NA, FO370/674, FO370/675.

[27] In October 1942, Vaughan Williams's *London Symphony*, Delius's *Village Romeo and Juliet*, Ireland's *Symphonic Rhapsody* and Elgar's *Military March* were played in

over during the war testifies to the dedication with which the MoI applied itself to laying musical foundations for the more serious propaganda work that would, they believed, come later.

In the immediate post-war years, the British government was planning to build up British Council work in the Soviet Union, with a strong focus on English-language teaching and cultural work. Incredibly, as early as 1940 the official John Lehrmann had put forward the idea of opening a cultural centre in the Soviet Union for the dissemination of British cultural propaganda – a suggestion that seems peculiarly misplaced considering that the Nazi–Soviet pact was still in place at that time. Unsurprisingly, the British Ambassador in Moscow (Sir Stafford Cripps) poured immediate cold water on the idea, but recommended instead focusing on music 'in view of impossibility of more direct forms of propaganda'.[28] In the months after the end of the war, the senior Foreign Office official, Thomas Brimelow, noted that political propaganda had lain at the heart of all plans for cultural exchanges in wartime: resigned to the fact that more direct propaganda was probably impossible on Soviet territory, he drafted a plan to sow seeds for subsequent political enlightenment by urging the British Council to prioritise English-language instruction and suggesting that the time had come for the British Council to open a permanent base in Moscow:

> Under cover of F.O. despatch No.134 of the 5th of May 1942 we transmitted to Kuybïshev a copy of a British Council memorandum on the work the Council might be expected to undertake if ever it were allowed to set up in the USSR. The memorandum made it clear that the teaching of English is its basic function.[29]

Later in his report, Brimelow notes that during the war, the Ministry of Information held the firm belief that they needed to control all such cultural exchange in lieu of more direct forms of political activity:

> The M. of I. no longer maintained their former view that since political propaganda in the USSR was impossible [they] must retain control over cultural activities in order to have a foundation for such political propaganda work as might grow out of these activities.[30]

While, in a way it is reassuring to read that the MoI had relaxed its strict propaganda aims after 1945, Brimelow's comment lays their entire wartime cultural strategy bare. Their desire to propagandise British culture led, early in the war, to a highly unusual and dangerous plan to bring the Bolshoi Ballet over to London in 1942. The trip was to have been funded by the British Council, and made on a

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Kuybïshev. See NA, FO370/675.

[28] NA, FO924/478.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

supply ship in waters patrolled by German U-boats. In short, the suggestion was utterly impractical and the tour never took place; but it went high up the chain of command – as far as both ambassadors (Sir Stafford Cripps and Ivan Maisky), the head of the Foreign Office's Northern Department (Christopher Warner), the Foreign Secretary (Anthony Eden) and the Cabinet itself (and so presumably had Winston Churchill's blessing as well).[31] This curious non-event demonstrates the eagerness with which the MoI seized the chance to make its mark in Anglo-Soviet relations, but it also reveals the propaganda motives behind the invitation. In fact, Foreign Office opinion seems to have been that the benefit would, in reality, be minimal. A memo from the Foreign Office to the British Council argues that the most Britain could expect to gain from funding such an ambitious enterprise was to 'spread indirectly' knowledge of British culture to Soviet citizens 'brought out of their ring-fence to see this country, which would certainly be to the good, provided they were shown the right things in the right way'.[32] Foreign Office documents do not show the slightest interest in fostering sincerely cordial relations with Britain's new ally; the purpose was blatantly propaganda, yet even this was oddly conceived, since the party to make the biggest and most impressive impact would surely have been the Bolshoi. The British government seem rather to have considered that Britain would have been the major beneficiary, since the artists who came would see what life was 'really like' in London and presumably would return home disenchanted with their communist lifestyles. As the cost of the trip to the British taxpayer was estimated at £10,000, and placed the lives of the entire ballet company in jeopardy, it seems a rather high price to have paid for the benefit of 'showing the right things in the right way'.

The history of British attempts to bring over the Bolshoi Ballet (always simply called the 'Russian Ballet' or the 'State Russian Ballet' in Foreign Office files) ran throughout the war and into the early Cold War period. Ultimately, no such trip was ever successfully made until after Stalin's death; but multi-archival research has shown that, in principle, the Soviets were not hostile to the proposal, provided it came from a recognised source (a major institution or government department) and appeared sufficiently prestigious. A second invitation in 1944 – this time from the Royal Opera House – was, in fact, the only British exchange proposal both during and immediately after the war to meet with any favour by Mikhail Khrapchenko, the head of the Committee on Arts Affairs.[33] Although the proposed trip planned for 1945 (a seven-week tour of Britain) was eventually given up as a lost cause (principally due to logistical difficulties involved with the sheer numbers of personnel required), Khrapchenko's files show that he sent the invitation right

[31] For a detailed discussion of this proposal, and follow-up plans to bring the Bolshoi to Britain, see Fairclough, 'From Détente to Cold War'.

[32] NA, FO370/674.

[33] It should be noted that the director of the newly formed Royal Opera House was John Maynard Keynes – a founding member of the SCR and as such likely to have been known to the Soviets, though Khrapchenko's file shows no recognition of the connection.

up the chain of command with a cautious 'considers it valuable' tag attached to it, and the final 'no' really does seem to have been caused not by hostile bureaucrats or Central Committee members but by the Bolshoi's own insistence on taking such a large number of people (256, not counting the orchestra, who would not come because of prior commitments).[34]

Files held in RGALI and RGASPI in Moscow show that Khrapchenko's immediate priority was prestige. Britain was the Soviet Union's ally; there is no evidence during the war that it was being treated any differently from America for any political reasons, but invitations from both nations were received quite differently, and the most obvious reason for this is Khrapchenko's perception of British organisations as less prestigious than their American counterparts. In 1944 Khrapchenko records his view that it was 'extremely desirable' for eminent American musicians to tour the USSR, including one Russian émigré: Arturo Toscanini, Sergei Koussevitsky, Leopold Stokovsky, Otto Klemperer, the pianist Vladimir Horowitz, the violinist Jascha Heifetz, Yehudi Menuhin and the singer Lilly Pons.[35] Even a visit by the émigré composer Alexander Grechaninov was a welcome proposition to Khrapchenko, who supported Grechaninov's request (made in a personal letter to Reinhold Glière) to visit his homeland in 1944, the composer's 80th year.[36] There were several more American proposals that Khrapchenko responded to favourably; though it should be noted that all of these involved sending American artists to the USSR. The British preferred to invite Soviet artists to Britain – a distinction that perhaps reveals a fundamental difference in attitude to the concept of 'cultural exchange' on the British side. Among the proposals that Khrapchenko turned down immediately were a request from the Welsh Eisteddfod in 1946 to send a group of Soviet 'art workers'; an invitation from Rudolph Bing (director of the first Edinburgh Festival in 1947) to send over the Moscow Art Theatre for the 1947 festival; and a post-war tour of the Soviet Union by the London Old Vic theatre. All were swiftly judged 'not valuable' to the Soviet Union, and Khrapchenko even went so far as to note dismissively that the Old Vic actors (including a certain Laurence Olivier) were not well enough known to be worth inviting.[37]

If the British wished to strengthen the British Council and its work in Moscow post-war, VOKS, for its part, also wished to forge closer links between Britain and the Soviet Union. In July 1945 its president, Vladimir Kemenov, wrote to Molotov requesting that Dmitry Kabalevsky be sent to London as a VOKS representative:

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[34] A full account of this whole episode is given in Fairclough, 'From Détente to Cold War'. Keynes's invitation became accidentally merged with a private invitation from Hyde Productions, which the Foreign Office did not support but which nonetheless found its way to Khrapchenko's desk, where it served to relaunch Keynes's earlier proposal.

[35] RGALI, f. 962, op. 10, ed. khr. 64. 1944, 23.

[36] Ibid., 69.

[37] See RGALI, f. 962, op. 10, ed. khr. 86, pp. 152–8, 160, 174.

> The work of VOKS in England urgently demands a special free representative of VOKS in London … who can focus on one of the most conspicuous activities of Soviet culture, and establish first hand contact with scientific and artistic circles in England … I think it would be valuable to send to England as VOKS representative Professor of the Moscow Conservatoire Dmitry Kabalevsky. Kabalevsky has been a member of the Communist Party since 1940. His music is often played in England and his name carries some authority there.[38]

Although he was permitted to visit, Kabalevsky was deemed too busy with his other responsibilities for a long stay (and he could in any case speak only haltingly in English at that time). But VOKS had more serious concerns about the Soviet government's post-war commitment to fostering cultural exchanges with its former allies. In what with hindsight appears a total misreading of the way Stalin's post-war international policies were heading, Alexander Karaganov, representing the VOKS presidium, wrote to Molotov in September 1945 with a more serious complaint:

> In 1944 and 1945 VOKS and the Committee for Arts Affairs sent abroad several workers in Soviet culture, scholars, writers, architects, artists, painters. The presentation of these workers of Soviet culture in Finland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Poland and Austria caused a great social resonance and effectively aided the propaganda of Soviet culture in those lands. However up to now we have not sent any group to the USA or England. Hence there has been organisation of presentations of Soviet artists and cultural workers in a series of European countries, including those allied to Germany during the war, while we at once negatively replied to invitations from lands which were *our* main allies in the war with Germany. Up to now new, numerous invitations to Soviet cultural workers have been received. For example, the National Council of American–Soviet Friendship invited a delegation from VOKS, including scholars, composers, painters, artists and writers. The composers Prokofiev and Shostakovich have received personal invitations from Sergei Koussevitsky. The National Council invites the Red Army Ensemble of Song and Dance, the Ensemble of Folk Dance and a group of ballet artists to tour the USA. Many similar invitations have come from England. The rejection of all these invitations at the same time as our groups of artists are going to neighbouring European lands may give an undesirable impression and mood in the USA and England. And, apart from that, we urgently stress that we should utilise trips by Soviet cultural workers for activities of cultural connections with these countries. In connection with this summary, I consider the following valuable: 1) To send to the USA a) the ballet troupe of the Bolshoi Theatre to give performances of Swan Lake and Raymonda, b) that a delegation from VOKS of comrades Shostakovich, Shokolov, Kukrïniksov, Kupryanov, Krïlov,

[38] RGASPI, f. 17, op. 125, ed. khr. 371, p. 127.

> Sokolov, the academics Parina, Tsitsina, Alabyana, and rector of Moscow State University Galkina. The delegation's director would be the President of VOKS, comrade V.S. Kemenov. 2) To send to England an artistic brigade, the structure of the brigade to be determined with the Committee for Arts Affairs and a group of cultural workers including the composer Kabalevsky, the writer K. Simonov, the sculptor V. Mukhina, the film director S. Gerasimov and the academic Vavilov.[39]

Karaganov's proposal was followed up by a wealth of information charting the activities of VOKS and the SCR in Britain, all of which was circulated at the highest levels of the Central Committee. All these requests were in vain: Karaganov and Kemenov misread the way in which Soviet foreign policy was moving, though they were hardly alone in that even among high-ranking Soviet bureaucrats. In 1948 Kemenov and Khrapchenko both lost their jobs and, in the shake-up of VOKS that year, Shneyerson was deemed to have been guilty of financial incompetence, and strongly criticised for sending the 'wrong sort' of music abroad.[40] What his critics meant by this is not made clear in the documents, but by 1948 Shostakovich's Eighth and Ninth Symphonies had both been performed abroad – both works that were placed on the blacklist after the Zhdanov Decree was published in February 1948. With his own name under a cloud (though thankfully escaping any more severe punishment), Shneyerson was clearly in no position to resume his friendship with Bush, still less to continue sending him scores and recordings.

British Music in Moscow: Wartime and After

In 1942 the British Ambassador (Sir Stafford Cripps) wrote to William Walton to raise the issue of availability of English music in the USSR: although the British Council had already sent a large quantity over the previous year, further scores and recordings were sent regularly via diplomatic bags to Moscow. The senior British Council official in Moscow, George Reavey, also reported a conversation with the Secretary of the Moscow Composers' Union, in which he (possibly Khachaturian or Kabalevsky) expressed the wish to obtain a lot more material.[41] The response to this particular request almost went disastrously wrong, when a package of 13 orchestral scores[42] arrived in Moscow after the Moscow

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[39] Ibid., 131.

[40] RGASPI, f. 82 (Molotov), op. 2, d.1013, pp. 48–50.

[41] NA, FO370/675. The 'secretary' is not identified; Vissarion Shebalin was the Moscow Composers' Union president until the autumn of 1942 (when he took over the directorship of the Moscow Conservatoire), so this representative may have been Kabalevsky or Khachaturian, both of whom were Moscow-based senior composers.

[42] The scores were: 'Theme of Reconstruction' from Bliss's *Things to Come*; Purcell, 'Trumpet Voluntary'; Vaughan Williams, *Greensleeves*; Delius, 'Walk to the Paradise Garden' and 'Serenade' from *Hassan*; Ireland, 'Mai Dun' and *Forgotten Rite*; Peter

Philharmonia had been evacuated to Kuybïshev, leaving no one to play the music. Following mocking reports in the British press that the parcels would be returned to England, the Foreign Office instructed that they instead be presented to the Moscow Conservatoire Library or to VOKS. David Oistrakh was known to have been keen to perform the Elgar Violin Concerto and the Walton Viola Concerto: he eventually played the Walton Concerto in the winter season of 1946–47, with scores and parts sent via the diplomatic post from London.[43] However, his request for the score of the Elgar Concerto in 1944 must have caused embarrassment to the British Council. Owing to copyright restrictions, the British Council was allowed to send only miniature scores and a violin and piano reduction. Their apologetic telegram states that 'the publishers will only release the full score and parts for definite performance … When the date of performance is known we will then send full material.'[44] This sounds like angling for a fee; but in 1944 the agreement with publishers for no-strings-attached score hire should still have been in force.

When the director of the Soviet Public Relations Division of the Ministry of Information, Harry Smollett, visited Moscow in May 1944, he and George Reavey met with Kabalevsky, Shneyerson and the VOKS official, Lidia Kislova.[45] They requested more scores and recordings of English music, and Smollett duly obliged with a selection based on their conversation: recordings of English Renaissance composers (John Dunstable, Thomas Arne, William Byrd, Henry Purcell); folk songs (English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh); modern music, light music (operetta); Arthur Bliss's Piano Concerto and several sets of Percy Scholes's 'History of Music' gramophone records and booklets; jazz (especially anything by Jack Hylton); and war and popular songs. All these requests came directly from the Russians; Smollett and Reavey recommended in addition Arne's *The Beggar's Opera*, some Gilbert and Sullivan, the score of Vaughan Williams's Violin Concerto and some Gracie Fields records. They also promised to present VOKS with a set of the Purcell Society Complete Edition (which they duly did). When Smollett interviewed Puzin, chair of the All-Union Radio Committee, he was told that an 'unlimited' amount of English music could be broadcast, of all kinds but excepting

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Warlock, *Capriol Suite*; Stanford (?) *Irish Rhapsody*; Gilbert and Sullivan, *Iolanthe*; and Alexander Mackenzie (?) *Britannia Overture*. FO 6166.

[43] NA, FO924/279.

[44] NA, FO924/41.

[45] Harry Peter Smollett's real name was Hans Peter Smolka. He was a Soviet agent, allegedly recruited by Kim Philby in the late 1930s. He was made head of the Soviet section of the MoI in 1941, but Boris Volodarsky notes that Moscow was unaware of his 'recruitment' by Philby until as late as 1943, making his propaganda efforts in London curiously unsupported. The head of the NKVD section in the Soviet Embassy in London (Anatoli Gorsky) expressly forbade any use of Smollett (codename ABO) as an agent. See Boris Volodarsky, *Stalin's Agent. The Life and Death of Alexander Orlov*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 114.

jazz, which was 'frowned upon'.[46] The possibility of future collaboration with the BBC was discussed at this meeting, though in the end nothing came of it.

In his capacity as head of the Music Section at the Radio Committee, Kabalevsky was in an influential position. The Press Department of the British Embassy in Moscow informed the Foreign Office that English music was broadcast fairly often on Soviet radio, with Elgar's Violin Concerto, William Walton's Façade Suite and Bliss's Piano Concerto especial favourites.[47] Whatever music was sent to VOKS made its way to the Radio Committee, presumably via Kabalevsky; and when the Soviet popular music composer Isaak Dunayevsky received a parcel of folk songs and sea shanties, these too apparently attracted widespread interest. A further Press Department report that year mentions a Moscow Conservatoire concert (February 1944) at which Purcell's Trumpet Voluntary and Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for Strings were performed (it should be recalled that the Purcell was included in that 1942 parcel that the Foreign Office requested should be passed to VOKS or to the Moscow Conservatoire library).[48] The same month, the Radio Committee celebrated Henry Wood's 75th birthday by broadcasting his performances of 'Greensleeves' and Bach's Sixth Concerto.[49] It seems that musicians shared this wartime musical fruit freely with one another and seized the chance to improve their meagre stock of English music scores and recordings. It was as well they did so, for that friendly diplomatic channel would not remain open for much longer.

Finally, there is the question of how much British music was played in the Soviet Union – if only in Moscow and Leningrad – during the war. Perusal of the Leningrad and Moscow Philharmonia orchestral schedules shows that British music was scarcely ever performed before wartime exchanges began taking place. Outside isolated events such as already described (foreign visitors invited to play their own music) and concerts given during the orchestras' evacuation (see note 27 above) there seem to be only two major orchestral concerts in the Moscow Philharmonia series. There were in total four concerts of 'English music' presented in Moscow during the war years, starting with the first on 25 May 1943 reported in Shneyerson's letter to Bush above. The second, almost exactly a year later, featured Elgar's 'Cockaigne' overture, three more folk songs arranged by Shostakovich, Vaughan Williams's *Suite on English Folk Songs* and Christian Darnton's overture 'Stalingrad'. In March 1945 the Science Workers' Orchestra gave a complete performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (intended as a celebration of 250 years since Purcell's death, and possibly using music from the Purcell Complete Edition sent over in 1942); and that May marked the last of these friendly exchange concerts, with Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance' March No. 3, Vaughan Williams's 'The Wasps' overture, a third set of folk songs arranged by Shostakovich and Bliss's 'Checkmate' suite. All these special concerts are matched

46 NA, FO371/43328.
47 Ibid.
48 NA, FO371/43327.
49 Ibid.

by similar events celebrating American music. But it should be noted that after the war's official end, all such concerts were immediately dropped and none of the works performed in them became accepted items in Soviet orchestral repertoire.

The End of Détente and the Start of the Cold War

As detailed above, Vladimir Kemenov and Alexander Karaganov had petitioned the Central Committee for greater resources to propagandise Soviet culture in Britain and America, and during the post-war investigations and institutional purges, Kemenov (like Khrapchenko) lost his position. Even before that happened, however, he was acting as a spokesman for the new Soviet line on foreign cultural policy. In a long and aggressive speech at the Polytechnical Museum, Moscow on 9 July 1947, Kemenov delivered the first public blow to Anglo-Soviet cultural relations, denouncing Western art as 'anti-humanistic' and symptomatic of the decline of the capitalist world.[50] Its closing paragraph summed up the retrenchment of those years:

> A valuation of Russian and Soviet art will help to see all the contradictions of bourgeois art. It was the leading art in the war, and will remain so in the post-war period. It was born in different conditions from the art of America and Western Europe. Soviet culture – national in form, socialist in content – is destined to serve the people. It does serve them, and from them it derives its strength, and therefore it will remain eternally healthy and bright, and it has no need to turn for its themes to schizophrenics, it has no need to bow down before decaying bourgeois culture; on the contrary, the eyes of progressive people throughout the world are turned towards Soviet art, since Soviet art expresses the ideas of new democratic morality.[51]

Later that year, D.N. Pritt, then Executive Chairman of the SCR, wrote to the post-war Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, informing him of their plans to expand their work and asking for a message of goodwill from the Prime Minister. Pritt's reasons for sending such a strange request are unclear, but his letter may have been testing the official waters to see how the SCR stood with the British government. Foreign Office memos refer to Kemenov's speech as a good reason to turn down Pritt's request; but Bevin's reply is worth quoting at length:

> It is quite true, as you say in your letter, that I am anxious to see a real and lasting friendship established between this country and the USSR. I also believe that this end would be served by complete freedom of cultural contacts. When I saw

[50] For the Foreign Office's responses to this speech, and a full transcript, see NA FO371/66413.

[51] Ibid.

> Stalin in March [1947] I raised the question of cultural exchanges and told him, in particular, that an exchange of students and student teachers would be a great benefit to mutual understanding. Stalin said that he saw no special obstacles to my suggestion, and since then Sir Maurice Peterson [British Ambassador after Cripps and Archibald Clark Kerr] has done his best to follow up this suggestion and arrange for an exchange on the lines I had indicated. He has had no success. You are no doubt aware that a number of other invitations sent through His Majesty's Ambassador have yielded meagre results.
>
> In view of this disappointing attitude on the part of the Soviet Government, I am reluctant to make any further overtures, or to give the public the impression that goodwill on our side is all that is required to establish a real basis of understanding … I should prefer to postpone any personal message until such time as the attitude of the Soviet Government offers a more encouraging prospect of free two-way cultural exchanges between our countries.[52]

When the British government realised the extent of Stalin's plans for the creation of a powerful Soviet bloc and influence in the Middle East – effectively spreading communism well beyond current Soviet borders – they became alerted to the very real dangers posed by their former ally. In response, the Russia Committee was created in April 1946 for the purpose of assessing Soviet policy and agreeing on appropriate British responses. Led by the Foreign Office Northern Section's Christopher Warner, the Committee recommended a campaign of 'offensive propaganda' against the Soviet Union, in which the BBC's Russian Service, World Service and European Service would play important roles. The Foreign Office department that led this propaganda offensive was the Information Research Department, formed in 1948, whose remit soon extended far beyond Soviet affairs, but which was founded specifically to counter the Soviet political threat.[53] The years of cooperation were well and truly over.

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[52] Ibid.

[53] See W. Scott-Lucas and C.J. Morris, 'A Very British Crusade: The Information Research Department and the Beginning of the Cold War', in *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945–51*, ed. Richard J. Aldrich (London: Routledge, 1992), 85–110.

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Chapter 4
Gazing at the Baltic: Tourist Discourse in the Cinema of the Baltic Sea Countries

Eva Näripea, Ewa Mazierska and Lars Kristensen

The discourse of a rigid confrontation between the East and West of Europe during the existence of the Soviet Union has gradually been replaced with one of interaction and intricate exchanges. This chapter looks at cinema as a site of such cultural conversations. In particular, our aim is to contribute to the ongoing discussion on the inherent kinship of cinematic expression on both sides of the Iron Curtain. For making our case, we will draw on John Urry's notion of the tourist gaze,[1] applying this conceptual framework to case studies that in one way or another function as intersections of Eastern and Western cinespheres. Our first case study – a cycle of fiction and non-fiction films from the late 1960s and early 1970s depicting the Old Town of the Estonian capital city, Tallinn – serves to highlight the deep-seated similarity of visual codes characteristic of tourism marketing to those of Soviet Socialist Realism, as well as the paradoxical fact that the devices of this shared toolbox were used with equal success to promote Soviet 'progressiveness' and local resistance to it. Next, a reading of *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* (*Do widzenia, do jutra*, dir. Janusz Morgenstern, 1960) – set in Gdańsk, a desirable tourism destination on the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea – suggests that the tourist gaze can be activated by inhabitants of the 'East' in an attempt to construe a 'genuine', culturally specific Western identity. Third, an analysis of Swedish-Soviet co-production *The Man from the Other Side* (*Mannen från andra sidan*/*Chelovek s drugoy storony*, dir. Yuri Egorov, 1972) demonstrates on the one hand that such a mode of filmmaking underscores the national interests of the co-producing partners, which facilitate, rather than avoid, the emergence of the tourist gaze. On the other hand, the film also shows how the gaze of an outsider can deliberately produce a non-tourist image of a place as a strategy of rendering it culturally inferior. Finally, by choosing to concentrate on films made in the countries around the Baltic Sea, our additional goal is to reduce the gap between Nordic and Eastern European cinematic traditions, drawing attention to collaborations and convergences, and opening up new avenues for potential comparative studies.

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[1] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage, 1990). Updated version: John Urry and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011).

The Tourist Gaze and (Moving) Images: Capitalist and Communist Virtual Journeys

The concept of the tourist gaze, coined by tourism sociologist John Urry in his seminal study *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*,[2] is not only associated with the curious glance(s) of the tourist, but has rather become a term denoting a certain universal mode of perception at the very core of Western modernity, which, at the same time, varies in different historical, geographical, social and cultural settings and reflects the class, gender, ethnicity and age of the particular gazer. Nevertheless, especially the phenomenological theory has maintained that in modern societies people have in general lost 'a practical engagement with their surroundings, they no longer have a meaningful relationship with their surroundings, but instead see them in an abstract way, quintessentially that of the tourist gaze'.[3] In short, in the latter half of the twentieth century, and particularly towards the end of the century, the tourist gaze evolved into the predominant mode of human–environment relations, becoming an intrinsic 'part of contemporary experience, of postmodernism'[4] as well as the subsequent, increasingly mobile world of 'liquid modernity'.[5] While the tourist gaze has become progressively multiplied and includes various types of engagement with the surroundings, a set of common characteristics can still be identified, especially so in relation to spatial experiences and representations. Among other things, the tourist gaze signifies a commercially motivated, hierarchised and reified view of the landscape that is more or less detached from everyday, ordinary practices. According to Edward Relph, who relies on phenomenological thought, the 'tourist' 'sense of place' is 'inauthentic' and contrived, featuring attitudes to place that stem from uncritical and uninvolved adoption of fashionable mass conceptions, resulting in an experience of place that is 'casual, superficial, and partial'.[6] By contrast, the 'local' or non-tourist sense of place is authentic and genuine, 'a profound association with places as cornerstones of human existence and individual identity'.[7] In cinema, however, as our case studies will demonstrate, the lines of

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[2] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*; Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*.

[3] James G. Carrier, 'Mind, Gaze and Engagement: Understanding the Environment', *Journal of Material Culture* vol. 8, no. 1 (2003): 6; see also Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1986), 80–87; Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1984); Martin Heidegger, 'Building. Dwelling. Thinking', in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, (ed.) Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 1997), 100–109; Martin Heidegger, ' … Poetically Man Dwells … ', in Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*, 109–19; Zygmunt Bauman, *Postmodern Ethics* (London: Routledge, 1993), 241ff.

[4] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 82.

[5] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000); cited in Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 23ff.

[6] Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 82.

[7] Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 63.

division between the two sensibilities are blurred rather than clearly contrasting, resulting oftentimes in incongruous composite images and mixed messages.

While Urry emphasises (Western) postmodernism and beyond as the chief domain of the tourist gaze, its reign extends far beyond this spatiotemporal framework. Importantly, according to Urry and Larsen,[8] the tourism experience is profoundly visual in nature. The advent of photography, which coincided with the appearance of the 'tourist gaze' in the 1840s Western modernity,[9] indeed offered a medium perfectly catering to the needs of the burgeoning mass tourism industry, participating actively in 'developing and extending the tourist gaze'.[10] From its very beginning, cinema, the mobilised descendant of photography, provided both means of virtual travel and inspiration to real-life journeys, and plays an increasingly important part in today's era of 'mediatised' global tourism.[11] In the nineteenth century, white Western photographers – such as Francis Frith, William Henry Jackson, Timothy O'Sullivan and others – who photographed exotic, faraway places in the Near East and remote, uninhabited places in America established a representational regime that tamed the surroundings and enabled 'people to take possession of objects and environments'.[12] This visual sense is characterised by panoramic and sweeping shots that offer fleeting and superficial glimpses of the objects from a great distance in bright sunlight.[13] The most genuine example is, naturally, the bird's-eye view – a look that maps, organises and abstracts the environment and, by doing so, also controls it. This angle was most attractive for the modernists of the 1920s and 1930s, since the aerial perspective enabled them to realise one of their main architectural ambitions – to make the city easily readable;[14] or, to be more precise, it allowed them a perceptual simulation of the achievement of this goal. At the same time, Sergei Tretyakov, a member of LEF, a Russian avant-garde art movement of the 1920s, noted that aerial views created a consumerist 'relationship of possession' between the landscape and the spectator which 'was explicitly non-Soviet', i.e. capitalist, and deprived the spectator of the chance to acquire experiential 'knowledge' of the space.[15] Michel de Certeau also believes that the aerial view is a mode of spatial representation that controls,

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[8] Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 14.

[9] Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 14.

[10] Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 155.

[11] Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 30, 116.

[12] Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 158; see also David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (eds), *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings* (London: Sage, 1997), 116.

[13] Peeter Linnap, 'Pictorial Estonia', *Koht ja paik/Place and Location: Studies in Environmental Aesthetics and Semiotics* 3 (2003): 437.

[14] See, e.g., David Frisby, 'The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's "Second Renaissance"', in *The Hieroglyphics of Space: Reading and Experiencing the Modern Metropolis*, (ed.) Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 2002), 15–30.

[15] Quoted in Emma Widdis, *Visions of a New Land: Soviet Film from the Revolution to the Second World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 122–3.

excludes active participation and suggests alienation,[16] thus 'contributing towards reification of the city'.[17]

These visual devices formed the essential toolbox for tourism marketing, and were widely used for producing and circulating masses of promotional material to consumers throughout the capitalist Western world. Yet even if the Soviet Union took the firm course to a communist economy, which in rhetoric was meant to be complemented with a unique, non-capitalist discourse of visual expression, its imagesphere instead reveals a striking sympathy towards these distinctive elements of the tourist gaze. Observing the changing pictorial discourse in the Soviet cinema of the late 1920s and early 1930s, Emma Widdis has argued that Stalinist cinema, based on the dogmas of Socialist Realism, introduced a new approach to envisioning the world: the decentralised and fragmentary perception of space, characteristic of the avant-garde art and exemplified primarily by Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (*Chelovek s kino-apparatom*, 1929), was replaced with tamed, hierarchical and reified views of landscape, testifying to 'the emergence of what might be called a "tourist gaze"'.[18] Exploration of land typical of the early Soviet spatial discourse was substituted for the conquest (*osvoenie*) of territories; travel as exploration was gradually replaced with travel as leisure, or tourism; and the periphery was transformed 'from a space of experience into a decorative space, implicitly viewed from the centre'.[19]

Hence a 'tourist' sense of place, colonisation of time and space is an intrinsic quality of Socialist Realism, the dominant artistic discourse of the Soviet Union from the mid-1930s onwards. While the dogmatic inflexibility of Socialist Realism decreased under Khrushchev's Thaw, the initial doctrine was never entirely abolished, gaining further strength under Brezhnev and expressing itself especially clearly in those areas of official cultural production which were designated for the world beyond the Iron Curtain. Indeed, the tenets of Socialist Realism shared significant common ground with tourist modes of representation. One of the most striking similarities is perhaps the creation of an illusionist, escapist and selective dreamworld that has little to do with everyday reality and practices, in either social or environmental terms. 'The tourist gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them from everyday experience', writes John Urry.[20] Although the principles of Socialist Realism 'demand of the artist

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[16] See, e.g., Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

[17] Rob Shields, 'Linn, urbaansus, vitaalsus: Vestlus Rob Shieldsiga', *Vikerkaar* 4–5 (2004): 153.

[18] Widdis, *Visions of a New Land*, 138–9.

[19] Widdis, *Visions of a New Land*, 139–40.

[20] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 3; see also David M. Hummon, 'Tourist Worlds: Tourist Advertising, Ritual, and American Culture', *Sociological Quarterly* vol. 29, no. 2 (1988): 179; Ning Wang, *Tourism and Modernity: A Sociological Analysis* (Amsterdam: Pergamon, 2000), 165.

the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development', as was stated in 1934 at the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers,[21] the application of this requirement in artistic practice invariably meant the construction of a falsely positive pseudo-reality saturated with pathos and idealised imagery. This mode of representation chimes with the typical spatial portrayals of Western promotional travel films and brochures advertising tourist destinations all over the world, both in Western countries and in the Third World. According to Ning Wang, the notions informing this 'symbolic transformation of reality' include beautification, romanticisation and idealisation.[22] Wang argues pointedly that tourism brochures tend to render prominent attractive vistas and locations and exclude unpleasant, uninteresting or unsuitable views and places in order to construct an idealised image of the advertised locale. Also, he maintains, if some sights happen to be not physically straightforwardly beautiful enough, the tourism advertising may draw attention to them by means of portraying them as romantic and 'idealised images', thus transforming them into the beautiful.

Patricia Albers and William James, writing about travel photography and exotic ethnic representations, emphasise three principal concepts that characterise the dreamworld of tourist representations: homogenisation ('features of an area and its people are stereotyped according to some dominant cultural model'), decontextualisation ('involves a process whereby ethnic subjects appear in settings that lack some concrete lived-in, historical referent') and mystification.[23] Notably, homogenisation and decontextualisation are also integral to the Stalinist dogma 'national form, socialist content'. In fact, stereotyping was one of the key properties of Socialist Realism, occurring in virtually every conceivable artistic medium: for example, in the form of pseudo-ethnographic depictions of the nations from various Soviet republics; wearing folk costumes (which is notably also an inseparable part of Western tourist images); and being surrounded by archaic artefacts.

Tallinn for Tourists

A cycle of films, made in Soviet Estonia in the 1960s and 1970s, demonstrates how the Soviet system imitated the formal features of Western tourism promotion in its (audio)visual discourse in general and applied them in its own version of communist tourism marketing in particular. Over these two decades, and especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a striking number of narrative films and documentary shorts were made in the two studios of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic

[21] Quoted in Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society from the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (London: Tauris, 2001), 143.

[22] Wang, *Tourism and Modernity*, 165.

[23] Patricia C. Albers and William R. James, 'Travel Photography: A Methodological Approach', *Annals of Tourism Research* vol. 15, no. 1 (1988): 154–5.

(SSR), featuring the medieval Old Town of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. This picturesque environment has always been an attractive source of imagery for visual media, especially in connection with, but also in opposition to, the rise and development of modern tourism practices. At the same time it has also been the place for negotiations between conflicting ideologies and (national) identities, and an important arena for (re)presentations of power, resistance and adaptation. These processes intersected and generated a particularly complex and ambivalent configuration of representations under Soviet power during the 1960s and 1970s when the three Baltic countries formed the liminal zone of the 'Soviet West'. In the 1960s, the Old Town and the broader subject of the medieval heritage suddenly became extraordinarily topical for both academic circles and mass culture, and inspired an array of visual as well as literary texts. This somewhat nostalgic and romantic 'medieval trend' materialised in countless articles of consumer goods, numerous interior designs, and in a whole range of motion pictures, including concert films, documentaries, scenics/travelogues, city symphonies and feature films, with the Old Town as their spatial point of gravity.

From the late 1960s and early 1970s onward, as the hard-currency debt increased steadily, tourism was an indispensable source for obtaining hard currency, and as such essential for the functioning of the Soviet economic system. Alongside Novgorod, Suzdal, Kiev, Lvov, Riga, Vilnius, Minsk, Alma-Ata, Tbilisi, Yerevan and many other cities, Tallinn was included in the chain of attractions that the Soviet central tourism agency, Intourist, marketed to foreign tourists.[24] This practical, tourism-related cause was one of the key factors contributing to the massive popularisation of medieval imagery of the Old Town. At the same time, the Old Town also came to signify a sense of national identity and resistance to Soviet cultural discourse, distinguishing the local culture from the imposed Soviet regime and values, setting this unique historical environment in opposition to the official architectural paradigm of international modernism, which neutralised local idiosyncrasy. Regardless of this, the Soviet system managed to 'colonise' not only Tallinn but also countless other 'borrowed plums' from the history of Russia as well as of all other Soviet republics by craftily weaving the material crust of the seemingly ideologically conflicting heritage into a single international cultural texture. This process, replacing the old meanings and functions with new ones and petrifying an everyday space into a frozen and consumerist collection of objects, was very much structured along the lines of the 'tourist gaze', and is especially evident in the cine-representations of the Old Town.

Comparing the numerous films representing Tallinn's Old Town and Western travel advertisements, the use of a surprisingly similar visual language can be detected. Perhaps the most illustrative in this respect is the construction of an illusionist, escapist and selective ideal reality, isolated from everyday life and practices – in both a social and environmental sense. Disjointed ideal shots were

[24] See, e.g., Derek R. Hall, *Tourism and Economic Development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (London: Belhaven, 1991), 37, 81.

selected from continuous actual life in order to convince the consumers of these images that somewhere exists a reality which is better, more desirable and more beautiful than their everyday world. By creating flawless ideal realities and kaleidoscopic pictorial worlds, i.e. in the course of the 'symbolic transformation of reality',[25] the city space is fragmented into detached views, divorced from the organic whole of the urban texture and devoid of all traces of everyday life and of inevitable deterioration and decay – into pieces often focusing on images of historical monuments that signify officially defined collective identities. The tourist gaze imagines the city through the endless mechanical reproduction of these chosen monuments as simplified, stereotypical and homogenous[26] – imagery that reduces the complex interplay of experiences to 'an easily managed and marketable set of appearances'.[27] In these films, the airbrushed snapshots of old edifices and artworks form a part of the process of decontextualisation as their real history is seldom explained. But perhaps even more telling is the fact that from the 1960s on, every year several film crews from the 'friendly sister republics' came to shoot their historical epics in Tallinn, transforming the Old Town into a backdrop to one or another random historical event that actually took place elsewhere, literally losing the environment's genuine context. These depictional practices correspond with Wang's idea that '[t]ourists usually see only tourist sights and attractions and the social context in which these sights appear is usually ignored', and with his remark that the 'tourist way of seeing is … ahistoricizing seeing … and simplifying seeing'.[28] Moreover, these arguments, as well as Albers and James's notion of decontextualisation, also refer to the lack of the sense of everyday lived-in-ness that can be detected in many 'scenic' shots as, for example, a tendency to exclude people from the frame, and to avoid the grim reality behind the façades.

In Tallinn Old Town's case, the enthusiasm with which the local audiences accepted this socialist realist dreamworld even after having seen through the previous, Stalinist forms of socialist culture may appear somewhat paradoxical. The most apparent reason seems to be the fact that while the previous Stalinist visual culture relied heavily on obviously fake and out-of-context pseudo-ethnographical imagery and on overly optimistic depictions which were in dissonance with actual sombre circumstances, thus offending the local cultural sensibility and creating a distinctly Soviet realm of representations, the new Thaw-era imagery was far more subtle in terms of purely Soviet connotations. Secondly, this discourse dealt with local issues, even giving a chance to (re)connect with the past and traditions that belonged to the era before the cultural continuity was so violently split. Finally, and most importantly, this dreamworld represented a Western cultural paradigm as

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[25] Wang, *Tourism and Modernity*, 165.

[26] Albers and James, 'Travel Photography', 153–4.

[27] John Urry, 'Sensing the City', in *The Tourist City*, Dennis R. Judd and Susan S. Fainstein (eds) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 78.

[28] Wang, *Tourism and Modernity*, 161.

opposed to Eastern (i.e. Russian) orientated traditions. And precisely this aspect of Western-ness proved to be a way of undermining the system from within, through giving a completely different reading to the same texts. While the socialist realist stylistic features were clearly inherent in those films, as explained above, as well as the markers of the progressiveness of the Soviet Union, so too were the cues that allowed a different understanding. Most notably, the images and markers of consumerism represented in those films proved to be contradictory to the Soviet system since the rhetoric of the official 'party line' strongly disapproved of 'Western materialism' and the tendency to commodification. The relative abundance of consumer goods in those films was on the one hand a fake indicator of Soviet 'progressiveness' (since typically they functioned as tourism advertisements for Western audiences); but on the other hand it set the local conditions apart from the economic situation of the Soviet Union at large – consumer items, especially the extremely valued foreign ones, were, indeed, easier to acquire in the Baltic states that were physically closer to the capitalist 'free world'. And this material differentiation was perceived as a cultural one as well.

In sum, the modes of representation characteristic of the visual realm of commercial tourism promotion bears close resemblance to the rules of depiction set by the tenets of Socialist Realism. They share similar attitudes towards the objects portrayed, rendering them often in the negative terms of homogenisation, decontextualisation etc. But even in the confinement of the touristic frameworks, different approaches to the built environment can be practised and thus detected. On the one hand, then, the motifs of Tallinn Old Town were swallowed by Socialist Realism, and the 'medieval trend' reflected the ideological ambitions of Soviet power in (re)constructing the past, heroicising the present and constituting the future; but, on the other hand, enthusiasm about the Old Town also signalled the local ambition of cultural difference. It attracted local people's sincere interest since, contrary to hollow promises of a happy but abstract communist future, it was directly related to familiar and palpable local themes, containing latent national sentiment and working to refresh the local cultural memory.

Tourist Gaze in *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* (*Do Widzenia, Do Jutra*, 1960)

As was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, some cities in the Soviet bloc were singled out to play a special, tourist function. In Poland such a role was assigned to Gdańsk, the largest town on the Polish coast. Paradoxically, the special role of Gdańsk for Poles has something to do with its being not quite Polish. Historically an important Baltic seaport and shipbuilding centre, it was a member of the Hanseatic League (just like Tallinn) and its history constitutes part of German, Polish, Lithuanian and Danish histories. Most importantly, however, Gdańsk enjoyed much independence; it was a 'free city' throughout most of its existence, allowing it to develop a unique, cosmopolitan character. Gdańsk also enjoyed such a status during the interwar period, when, due to Germans

constituting the majority of its population, it became an independent quasi-state under the auspices of the League of Nations. After World War II, it became fully integrated into the Polish state. The remaining Germans were ethnically cleansed, and during the rebuilding of the Old City in the 1950s and the 1960s any traces of German architectural styles were erased and those pertaining to other styles, such as Danish and French, were accentuated. In the dominant discourses after the war Gdańsk was presented internally and externally as a liminal zone, connecting Poland with the West. Such perceptions were accentuated during periods of increased exchanges with the West or at the time when Poland wanted to assert its cultural closeness with the West, such as during the Thaw after the death of Stalin or during the Solidarity period in the early 1980s. However, on each occasion the German-ness of the town was played down, despite the fact that Germans constituted the largest proportion of tourists visiting this city.

Such connotations are activated in the film *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* (*Do widzenia, do jutra*, 1960) by Janusz Morgenstern. The film is listed as one of the main examples of Polish October or Thaw cinema,[29] along with *Innocent Sorcerers* (*Niewinni czarodzieje*, 1960) by Andrzej Wajda.[30] The Thaw led to liberalisation in the sphere of popular culture and everyday life. For Iwona Kurz, its most important consequence was the emergence of the 'private, individual I',[31] which also meant moving away from films focusing on work to those privileging other activities, such as leisure. Cinema, inevitably, reflected this change and contributed to it. The 'October cinema' has individual characters not only in the sense that one person is at the centre of the narrative. Moreover, what differentiates the person from the collective is more important than what connects him or her with the crowd. These characters lead their lives as if 'outside religion and history',[32] which, in Kurz's view, points to their modernity. It can also be viewed as testifying to their Western-ness, as individualism, as opposed to collectivism, is a defining feature of capitalism. *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow*, Morgenstern's debut feature, reflects these trends very well, including through the choice of its narrative structure and visual style, location and characters.

The model on which Morgenstern based his film was most likely Jean-Luc Godard's debut feature *Breathless* (*À bout de souffle*, 1960),[33] but one can also notice

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[29] The Thaw followed the deaths of Stalin and the Polish communist leader, Bolesław Bierut, as well as the workers' protests in Poznań. These led to the choice of the new party leader, the reformist Władysław Gomułka, weakening the Stalinist faction in the party and other institutions of power and bringing the hope of a wider opening to the West.

[30] Iwona Kurz, 'Dziwki, anioły i rycerze a "moment nowoczesny" w polskim kinie po 1956 roku', in *Październik 1956 w literaturze i filmie*, Mariusz Zawodniak and Piotr Zwierzchowski (eds) (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, 2010), 221.

[31] Kurz, 'Dziwki, anioły i rycerze', 221.

[32] Kurz, 'Dziwki, anioły i rycerze', 229.

[33] Elzbieta Ostrowska and Joanna Rydzewska, 'Gendered Discourses of Nation(hood) and the West in Polish Cinema', *Studies in European Cinema* vol. 4, no. 3 (2007), 189.

references to *Bonjour tristesse* (1958) by Otto Preminger. One similarity between Godard's and Morgenstern's works pertains to the films' narratives. Godard's film presents an American woman, Patricia, chased by a French man, Michel, who is in love with her; in the Polish film a French woman, Marguerite, is chased by an equally enchanted Polish man, Jacek. Many episodes of Morgenstern's film also look as if copied from its French counterpart. For example, when Jacek visits an old flame living in the students' lodgings, it looks like Godard's Michel visiting his old girlfriend. Later Jacek leaves the building via a window, in a way recollecting Michel's escape. Even in camera positions and movements Morgenstern often emulates Godard.

This open borrowing from Godard already positions *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* as a touristy film, presenting itself not as a filmed reality but as a representation of this reality through a specific, in this case French, 'lens', not unlike objects in tourist guides which are presented through the medium of photography and using a specific scopic regime, as discussed in the previous section. It could be suggested that Morgenstern invites viewers to see Gdańsk as a Polish incarnation of Paris or even the Polish Paris of the time of the French New Wave, where a certain type of modernism flourished, marked by, among other things, cosmopolitanism.[34] As in *Breathless*, certain locations and objects in *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* are privileged – namely those identified with leisure, such as a café, a tennis court and a nightclub, and a small theatre located in a cellar. In the Polish film their connotations are even more touristic because they play a specific function in the Polish context. For example, a café, which for Parisians is a site of their everyday experience, of the quotidian – a place to have lunch or go after work – is regarded by the Polish more as a site of luxury, visited during holidays or to meet somebody not familiar from everyday practices, as most social life was conducted in private homes.

To an even greater extent than *Breathless*, *Goodbye, Till Tomorrow* foregrounds the historical centre of the city. The opening scene of the plot presents Jacek against the background of the medieval Old City bordering the Moltawa River, including the iconic port crane, called Żuraw (the Crane). In this very early shot we thus see Gdańsk at its most beautiful and iconic. As in the scheme described earlier, nothing obscures its beauty, no signs or litter on the streets or passers-by. Throughout the film the same scheme operates, privileging the most iconic buildings and objects of the city, such as Dwór Artusa (King Arthur's Court), the Neptune Fountain or the Marian Church. Their importance is accentuated by Jacek's pointing them out to Marguerite, describing their history as if he were her, and by extension the film viewers', travel guide. This feature was noted by reviewers who used adjectives such as 'showy' to capture the work of the film's cinematographer, Jan Laskowski.[35] Souvenir stalls of street vendors in the city centre, and the beaches and an open-air café also form part of the 'tourist discourse'. Notably, the beach

[34] Foreign characters are present not only in *Breathless*, but also in many other films of Godard and Rohmer.

[35] Marian Bielicki, 'Wspolczuje Morgensternowi', *Film* 20 (1960), 6.

sequence was in fact shot in neighbouring Sopot, yet there is no indication that the action is diegetically moved to Sopot, which gives the misleading impression that the centre of Gdańsk is on the Baltic coast. The cutting out of the road between the Old City and the Baltic Sea equals cutting out the less attractive parts of the town. There are no images of the new estates with high-rise blocks or of public transport. A large part of the narrative is set in the sites of art, such as the students' puppet theatre and the exhibition of contemporary art set on the coast, near the beach. The modernist sculptures bring to mind modernist art as presented in *Breathless* and many other Godard's films. One can even get an impression that the building by which the sculptures are exhibited looks like a miniature version of the Pompidou Centre.

The French Consul's residence where Marguerite, the Consul's daughter, lives functions as a liminal space within a liminal space of the town, again joining but also separating the East and the West. As Ostrowska and Rydzewska observe, several times Marguerite and Jacek are shown on the two sides of the wrought iron gate which separates the Consul's residence from the rest of the city. Additionally, on many occasions Jacek is framed looking through the bars at the house of his beloved. It is difficult not to read these images as metaphors of the Poles looking from behind the 'Iron Curtain' at Western Europe.[36] Yet, in this film they are looking from a small distance and the gate is sometimes open, suggesting the possibility of a closer encounter. Also, at one point Marguerite and Jacek engage in a pretend wedding, yet in a real church, suggesting, on the one hand, the possibility of Poland's 'marriage' with the West and France especially, but on the other hand pointing to the fragility of this imagined union, or even hinting that it is merely desired or planned, but not consummated.

Marguerite is presented as a tourist in two senses. Firstly, she is French, therefore not native to the city and the country where she finds herself. Secondly, she describes herself as a tourist, who never settles anywhere, for whom travelling is natural and easy. She mentions that, when bored, she boards a car or a train and leaves, and she is surprised that other people do not do the same in similar circumstances. Such mobility was naturally not available to Poles at the time, living behind the 'Iron Gate'. Her touristy outlook is precisely one of the reasons Jacek finds her attractive. As a well-travelled tourist, the Consul's daughter seems constantly a bit bored with and indifferent to what Gdańsk has on offer. Its museums and exhibitions do not appeal to her, because she knows places of this type elsewhere. At the same time, Marguerite is an object of the gaze of the natives, which, like the tourist gaze, is based on a perceived difference between 'us' and 'others'. In her exclusive dresses, emulating or even exceeding the elegance of Patricia's clothes in Godard's film, she confirms the cosmopolitan status of this city. The same applies to her 'accessories', such as her white, foreign car and her well-groomed dog. It is worth noting that Marguerite herself is 'decontextualised' in Albers and James's sense, because she is cut off from her native culture; or one

[36] Ostrowska and Rydzewska, 'Gendered Discourses of Nation(hood)', 190.

can say she belongs to the exclusive no-man's-land populated by diplomats and their families.

However, the same to a large extent applies to Jacek and his circle of friends. They are also, as Marek Hendrykowski observes, cut off from ordinary life.[37] We know that they study, but it is not clear what; on one occasion Jacek works on arranging a display window in a shop, but abandons this activity to follow his beloved. Money is never a problem in this circle; one of Jacek's friends asks him repeatedly to lend him 20 zlotys for a taxi and he always receives the money, as in a ritual in which money does not really matter, only the game of asking for it. Poles, although worse off than Marguerite, reveal some signs of Western affluence too: they drink Martell and the female characters are well dressed.

The tourist sense of being is furthermore evoked by the multilingual soundscape of the film. Apart from Polish, we hear French and English. French is spoken by Marguerite and Jacek and his friends, including a man played by Roman Polanski, for whom it was no doubt an opportunity to show off his knowledge of the language of his country of birth. The characters also switch to English, either to understand each other better or to practise this language. The use of English and French suggests that Gdańsk is a tourist space where foreigners can enjoy themselves; but also, given the fact that the three men are able to use it, that it is a place where the natives stand up to the challenge of flirting with the tourists. Marguerite, in common with Patricia in Godard's film, also speaks the language of the country where she lives, Polish in this case – not perfectly, but well enough to render Polish worthy of her effort. The idea that Poles are equal to the French is also articulated through casting choices. Marguerite is played by the young and exceptionally graceful Teresa Tuszynska; Jacek by Zbigniew Cybulski, regarded as the most charismatic Polish actor of all time and the 'ultimate' Polish romantic, a man sentenced by fate to lose a woman and everything else. Cybulski's Jacek also loses Marguerite; and, again, it can be regarded not as a simple case of a girl dumping a boy, but as a fulfilment of the Polish fate, in which love cannot be achieved.

While the French aspect of the city is foregrounded, the German element is played down. The German language is avoided and when any buildings in the city are discussed, their link to German history is circumvented. While there are numerous direct and indirect references to French and English literature, nobody in the film quotes Goethe or Heine. The modernist art also has French, rather than German, connotations. The discrepancy between the over-emphasised French aspect of Gdańsk and the absent German dimension conveys the fact that France was traditionally perceived as Poland's principal Western ally. It was also the main destination of the Polish Romantic poets when they emigrated,[38] and it signified

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[37] Marek Hendrykowski, *Do widzenia, do jutra* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2012), 42.

[38] Izabela Kalinowska, 'Exile and Polish Cinema: From Mickiewicz and Slowacki to Kieslowski', in *Realms of Exile: Nomadism, Diasporas, and Eastern European Voices*,

Polish hope to be realigned with the West during the communist period.[39] By the time Morgenstern made his film, Germany, by contrast, was still associated chiefly with the Nazi invasion of Poland and, in the context of Gdańsk, the German territories, which were allocated to the Poles as a result of losing the war and the subsequent division of Europe. The film suggests that while French people are welcome in Gdańsk, Germans should not return there even as tourists. In this way the film shows that the Baltic Sea, and Gdańsk specifically, connects Poland with the Western world, but also seals Poland off from its history in which Germany played an important part. In a wider sense, it shows that tourism is shaped by history and vice versa – history is created by performing tourism.

The Tourist Gaze in Co-Production

As was mentioned above, the tourist gaze decontextualises what it sees and, at the same time, homogenises it into one 'look'. In this section we will examine how the gaze changes if the cinematic product is made in co-production between East and West. We argue that the co-production mode of filmmaking seeks to eradicate the tourist gaze by incorporating the gaze of the Other. However, as we will also show, this pre-production intention of the filmmakers often fails due to each partner producing a self-adulatory image in honour of the Other. The focus will be the Swedish-Soviet production *The Man from the Other Side* (*Mannen från andra sidan*/*Chelovek s drugoy storony*, dir. Yuri Egorov, 1972), an epic costume drama which perfectly illustrates how transnational filmmaking can produce a tourist gaze between the co-producing partners.

Egorov's film tells the true story of the new Bolshevik government purchasing steam locomotives manufactured in Trollhättan, Sweden,[40] around 1920, during the Russian Civil War. As expected, the film also includes a cross-cultural fictional love affair between a Soviet Bolshevik revolutionary, Viktor Krymov (Vyacheslav Tikhonov), and a blonde Swedish woman, Britt Stagnelius (Bibi Andersson). Around these characters we find White Tsarist soldiers, émigré saboteurs and fat-cat capitalists who all aim at preventing the transaction going through. Although highlighted as a 'unique' co-production deal between Sweden and the Soviet

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Domnica Radulescu (ed.) (Oxford: Lexington, 2002), 107–24.

[39] Ostrowska and Rydzewska, 'Gendered Discourses of Nation(hood)'.

[40] Situated in the western parts of Sweden, the actual factory was a frontrunner for the car industry, which developed later in the region. Since the 1980s and the decline of the car industry in the region, Trollhättan is famous mostly for film production. Located in the old buildings of the train factory, Film i Väst has over the last decades risen to have the largest gross output of films in Sweden, supporting filmmakers like Lucas Moodysson and Lars von Trier.

Union,[41] the film constitutes a grandiose failure for the Swedish film industry, nearly bankrupting the Swedish partner in the project.[42] The Swedish (but Russian-born) scriptwriter, Volodja Semitjev, was assigned to put together a script with Vasili Soloveyev, the main writer for the big-budget Soviet production of *War and Peace* (*Voina i mir*, dir. Sergei Bondarchuk, 1966). The intention behind this co-production agreement was to create a film that would not only emulate the popularity of *War and Peace* in the Soviet Union, but also that of David Lean's epic film adaptation *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), a huge financial success in the West, grossing more than tenfold on its production cost. While these economic rewards might have been the attraction for the Swedish producers, *Doctor Zhivago* had largely been rejected by Russian audiences as inauthentic and 'noisy'.[43] If David Lean's film had emulated the tourist gaze on the Russian Other, the co-production of *The Man from the Other Side* aimed at avoiding this gaze by casting both Swedish and Russian actors in the main roles.[44] Thus, at the initial stage of a co-production, the aim is to subvert the homogenised gaze, mainly by vetting plot, story and casting through the Other. Furthermore, by being based on historical events, the filmmakers were seeking to anchor the plot in a historic reality and not in a decontextualised no-man's-land. In other words, the co-production deal foretold an epic storytelling that would go beyond the tourist gaze. This endeavour, though, largely failed, except on one account – the depiction of Tallinn.

The plot of the film centres on whether the Soviets can ship 60 tons of gold to Sweden in exchange for the much-needed locomotives, without the Whites seizing the load and spoiling the deal. Viktor Krymov conceives the plan, according to which the best way to transport the precious cargo to Sweden is through Estonia and Tallinn, or Reval, as the capital of newly independent Estonia is called in the film. When the Bolsheviks go through their plan, a map is produced which has the city's name in enlarged Latin and Cyrillic letters, each referring to the co-producing countries respectively, but not to Estonia, as Reval is a name given to the city by invaders, in contrast to Tallinn, which was introduced by the locals upon the establishment of the sovereign nation-state in 1918. In this sense, Tallinn/Reval is a sort of a transit port where no side has the upper hand and everybody can mingle while keeping each other under observation – not unlike the capital of Cuba in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* (1956), where the Cold War has produced a

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[41] Bengt Forslund and Bo Heurling, 'Mannen från andra sidan', in *Svensk filmbiografi 1970–1979*, Lars Åhlander (ed.), vol. 7 (Stockholm: Svenska filminstitutet, 1988), 159.

[42] Svensk Film was the initial Swedish co-producing partner, but the company broke the agreement when the script was delayed. Omega Film, a much smaller company, took over with dire consequences for itself. Gorkii Film was the Soviet partner in the project.

[43] Valeria Zharova, 'Novaya "Anna Karenina": izdevatel'stvo nad klasssiskoi ili blestyaschii eksperiment?', *Sobesednik* 3, 31 January 2013.

[44] Vyacheslav Tikhonov had starred in Bondarchuk's *War and Peace* and Bibi Andersson's international career had taken off in earnest since her appearance in Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966).

stalemate between the superpowers and their respective security agencies. In this sense, Tallinn is a free port hosting a game that no one can win – a spy game where a you-take-mine-and-I-take-yours ideology produces mutual respect, similar to the co-production context where own industry interests have to be looked after while at the same time not jeopardising the joint venture partnership. Tallinn's important place in the narrative is evident in the depiction of the map, clearly identifying the location and its proximity to Stockholm and Petrograd (St Petersburg), which are also marked on the map. Tallinn figures as recognisable, but without Estonians. This we can attribute to the fact that Sweden and Russia have fought colonial wars with each other over this territory, in which the tourist gaze morphs into a colonial gaze that obviates the native. In a sweepingly epic colonial storytelling, the natives are invisible and voiceless, as the Estonians are here.

More evidence of Estonia's interchangeable qualities can be detected in the opening scenes from Tallinn that treat the viewer to dancing and music in a Gypsy restaurant. The nomadic characteristic of Gypsies, for which they were and still are being discriminated against, underlines the in-betweenness of the place, while also betraying a particular Russian imagination of foreignness and tourist attractions.[45] When blonde Britt enters the restaurant, she is out of place and obviously a foreigner. Seeking her lover, Viktor, she has arrived on the Swedish ship which is to bring the gold from Tallinn to Stockholm, but the treacherous White forces have lured her ashore to the restaurant and now hold her hostage. Viktor has to free her from the hands of his childhood friend, Andrei Isvolsky (Valentin Gaft), who has sided with the Whites after the revolution. Andrei gives Viktor the choice between Britt and the gold; and, on the streets of Tallinn's Old Town, Viktor resists the clutches of his nemesis and pleads for Andrei's compassion to let Britt go. The significance of the scene of the Old Town is that we do not get a touristic view. Shot on location in Estonia, it is possible to discern some visible Hanseatic façades, but the image is murky and without the panoramic vistas. Here the Soviet film industry had every opportunity to give a glorious view of a city that the two co-producing nations share in their respective colonial histories, but instead the icons of historical Tallinn are nowhere to be found. Local viewpoints are glossed over in this fluid space without producing a touristic gaze. Due to the production mode of the film comprising Estonia's former and present (at the time of filming) colonising countries, the film neutralises the cinematic space without decontextualising or beautifying it. The in-betweenness of Tallinn is further emphasised when Viktor escapes his captors and runs for the ship, now

[45] Edward Geist has examined Soviet cuisine and notes that already during the 1930s the authorities pursued 'an active policy of incorporating the national cuisines of non/Russian Soviet peoples into the cafeterias'. Edward Geist, 'Cooking Bolshevik: Anastas Mikoian and the Making of the Book about Delicious and Healthy Food', *Russian Review* 71 (2012), 304. However, outside the Soviet *stolovayas*, the most common cuisine was Roma food. Thus there is some Russian logic to featuring Gypsy folkdance in a restaurant environment rather than highlight Estonian cuisine.

containing both the gold and Britt. On his way to the harbour, he climbs back alley walls and crosses industrial neighbourhoods which are as far away from the tourist brochures of Tallinn as one would expect.[46] Thus the city is construed as outside both East and West, clearly less culturally sophisticated than both Stockholm and Petrograd, the two metropolises marked on the map. In the plot, Viktor is too late. When he arrives at the harbour, he sees the ship sail into the distance. As he stands on the end of the pier, he realises that he has lost his love, Britt, maybe forever. But as he walks back – Britt appears. She did not leave on the ship, but chose instead to live with Viktor in the Soviet Union.

Once the narrative shifts to Soviet Russia, the touristic image with panoramically sweeping cinematography reappears. Also, the music changes from Straussian violin and waltz to Russian balalaika and choral singing, distancing Soviet Russia from a particular Germanic notion of Western Europe. This fits a particular Soviet cinematic imagination, where the Baltic predominantly figures as a quasi-Western Europe, used in countless Soviet film productions. Indeed, with the shift to the Soviet Union we are in Viktor's hometown – namely Rostov, the heart of Imperial Russia, 150 miles northeast of Moscow. Rostov pre-dates Moscow and belongs to the golden ring of Orthodox sacred places. Britt and Viktor arrive on a barge from Lake Nero together with babushkas and goods. However, the point of entering the town this way is precisely to present Rostov from the viewpoint that gives a perfect panorama of the Orthodox churches within the Rostov Kremlin. Accordingly, the co-production partnership does not avoid the tourist gaze, but rather allows for it to appear in places where its purpose cannot be questioned. In this case, Rostov functions as an unquestionable tourist advertisement for Swedish and Western audiences, which Tallinn was denied. The co-production partners want in equal measure to sell their own heritage to the other, the Russians to the Swedes and the Swedes to the Russians. Thus, Stockholm appears in the film as Stockholm's Old Town, as capital and authority similar to the depictions of Rostov. Seen from the perspective of the two filmmaking entities trying to emulate the best image of self, it is not surprising that the in-betweenness of Estonians and Tallinn becomes a blend of the two: a quasi-Sweden from the Soviets' point of view and quasi-Russia from the Swedes' viewpoint, and lesser to both in cultural refinement.

Another reason for the depiction of Estonia and Tallinn in such a manner lies in Sweden's dual attitude toward the post-World War II Estonian minority. Many Estonians had fled to Sweden, but their position as refugees of war meant that many who fought alongside Germans were sent back, and many to certain death – a political action later controversially referred to as the Extradition of the Balts.[47] Furthermore, despite the Soviet effort to Russify the newly (re)gained

[46] In fact, a viewer unfamiliar with local surroundings would question if these latter scenes were actually shot in the capital of Estonia.

[47] This meant that the Estonian refugees were hotly debated in Sweden both before and during the preparations of the script, largely due to the international success of Per Olov Enquist's novel *Legionärerne* (1968), which describes how Estonian soldiers who

territories, the Swedish language was spoken in certain Western parts of Estonia due to previous trade links long after the Soviet occupation began. Therefore, in the bilateral relations between Sweden and the Soviet Union, Estonia and Estonians had become a problematic entity. In cinematic terms, they constituted a hybridity that the film production could not embrace. Two decades earlier, Estonian refugees had been the topic of *This Can't Happen Here* (*Sånt händer inte här*, 1950), directed by a young Ingmar Bergman.[48] This film noir presents Estonians in national costume, singing and dancing at a wedding, but living in the slums of Södermalm, Stockholm (traditionally a working-class neighbourhood). In many ways the Estonians here are the exotic Other within the nation and thus come across as stereotyped. The bad guys are also from the Baltic, but these are decadent diplomats who live in hotels and exhort their compatriots to return. They are the personifications of Satan himself, who can be Nazi collaborators or Soviet communists, as long as it serves their own interest. Later Bergman banned any screenings of the film, which he found below his status. However, Swedish Estonians liked the film, as evident from Bergman's first wife, Käbi Laretei, who herself had fled Estonia.[49] It is not unusual that diasporas latch on to a stereotypical depiction of themselves in lack of real images of the homeland.[50] One of Bergman's objections to the film was that he trivialised the plights of these displaced Estonians,[51] but also that the film demonised the communists as a clear Other. *This Can't Happen Here* was meant to be a cinematic product that could enter the US market, and thus had Swedish-American stars in place who were already known through Hollywood films, just as Bibi Andersson in *The Man from the Other Side*. Similar for both films is the failure of the cross-cultural imagination and of marketing a cinematic product for foreign audiences.

The Man from the Other Side was loathed by the Swedish critics and had a very short life on the Swedish screens. It nearly bankrupted Omega Films, which had counted on foreign success to recuperate its investment.[52] On the other side of the

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fought in the German army were forced back to the Soviet Union and many executed upon arrival. The Estonian refugees divided the Swedish political map, with conservative parties aiming at upholding these people's rights and claims in an anti-communist effort, and social democrats and their leftwing allies who were seeking to appease the Soviet Union.

[48] Estonia was moulded into the fictional Liquidatzia, which seems to comprise all three Baltic states, underlining their forced conversion to communism.

[49] Geoffrey Macnab, 'Now I See a Darkness', *Sight and Sound* 12 (2007), 33.

[50] Hamid Naficy, *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[51] Birgitta Steene, *Ingmar Bergman: A Reference Guide* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 188.

[52] Leif Furhammar, *Filmen i Sverige: en historia i tio kapitel och en fortsättning* (Stockholm: Svenska filminstitutet, 2003), 317. Omega Film had to sign away the screening rights in Western Europe to Warner-Columbia, losing a vital market for revenues. The film had runs in both West Germany and Poland, according to Swedish data. Swedish–Soviet co-productions were not seen again until the mid-1980s, when Swedish filmmakers revitalised

Cold War division the film fared much better. According to the Kinopoisk website, which lists audience figures for most Soviet productions, *The Man from the Other Side* was seen by 20 million viewers, which, although a far cry from *War and Peace*, is a decent figure for a film intended to be an authentic *Doctor Zhivago*. In conclusion, it is important to highlight the uneven reception of the film, since it illustrates how each tourist gaze was received. Soviet audiences got a glimpse of the abroad that they so cherished and found confirmation in their 'special' relation with their Swedish neighbours, while Swedish audiences failed to recognise the epic history they share with the Soviet Union. In Sweden, the special connection was controversial, not only due to the gloss-over of the Baltic issue, but also because Swedes were judged to get the least from the 'unique' production. In our opinion, the pre-production aims of avoiding the tourist gaze failed, since we rather find evidence of the opposite – namely that national interests make the demarcation of territorial borders clearer, thus erasing problematically hybrid identities of refugees and migrants.

Conclusion

As is clear from these analyses, the tourist gaze is indeed a phenomenon characteristic of 'modernity' across the economic and ideological division of capitalism and communism. In addition to spatial representations, where its mechanisms are perhaps most evident, these readings also showed that a 'tourist' perception can shape the narratives and characters of films, signalling, for example, their 'modern' unrootedness. Importantly, our study confirmed that the tourist gaze is often applied by 'insiders' of a place, frequently in order to construct a self-flattering image of present conditions for both oneself and another, and equally to conjure up a past that is comforting, heroic or ego-gratifying, or all of the above. In both cases, inappropriate parts and qualities of the lived reality are discarded or suppressed. Yet in liminal zones between East and West, on battlefields of discordant national/ideological interests, such as those represented in our case studies, the tourist gaze can become contested as a strategic instrument of subversion, providing tools of empowerment for the voices suppressed by the dominant forces. Just as well, the apparent lack of a tourist gaze can herald the presence of a colonial gaze that undermines a place, rather than demonstrating sensitivity and 'genuine' concern towards it and its natives. Thus, it is of utmost importance in each particular case to determine the origin of the gaze and the conditions of the gazer.

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contacts with Gorkii Film studios, this time for the adaptation of Astrid Lindgren's famous children's book *Mio, My Son* (*Mio, min Mio*, 1954).

PART II
Highly Publicised and Successful Examples of Exchange of Music and Musicians

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Chapter 5
The Real Ambassadors? The Cleveland Orchestra Tours the Soviet Union, 1965

Clayton Koppes

The Cleveland Orchestra's tour of the Soviet Union in 1965 – five and a half gruelling, exhilarating weeks – is a landmark in Cold War cultural diplomacy. *Time* called it 'one of the biggest successes in the history of the cultural exchange program'.[1] The orchestra appeared not only in the obligatory metropolises of Moscow and Leningrad but also ventured to Kiev, Tbilisi, Sochi and Yerevan. Conducted by the legendary George Szell, the orchestra was regarded by many as the best in the United States, and possibly the world. State Department cultural officials hoped appearances by the world-renowned ensemble would bolster its claims that the arts flourished under American capitalism.[2]

Dwight D. Eisenhower believed that music would help counter the perception of Americans as 'bombastic, jingoistic, and totally devoted to the theories of force and power'. For the orchestra, the tour enhanced its international reputation and conferred the elusive cultural patina that Americans still thought European acclaim bestowed. For the excited musicians, the tour afforded personal exposure to the enigmatic Cold War adversary, provided opportunities to engage fellow musicians, and even enabled some family reunions. For Soviet audiences, the tour offered a chance to compare musical standards across the political fault line and hear important American works that were new to them. The multifaceted and enigmatic roles of these East/West cultural exchanges raise important questions about the purposes Cold War cultural diplomacy served. As Dave and Iola Brubeck rhymed

[1] *Time*, May 28, 1965. The author wishes to express his profound appreciation to conductors Michael Charry and Louis Lane and percussionist Richard Weiner for agreeing to interviews about the tour. Deborah Hefling, Cleveland Orchestra archivist, was indispensable. The author also thanks Virginia Dawson, Marko Dumancic, Jason Petrulis, Katherine Pruess, Jake Purcell, Eve Sandberg, Tim Scholl, Michael Sherry, Ann Sherif and Nicholas Warner for their helpful comments.

[2] On the Cleveland Orchestra, see Donald Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Orchestra Story: Second to None* (Cleveland: Gray, 2000); the tour is discussed 329–30, 342–6. On Szell, see the perceptive biography by Michael Charry, *George Szell: A Life of Music* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011); the tour is discussed 224–33. Charry was on the orchestra's conducting staff from 1961 to 1972. For an adoring portrait of Szell by Joseph Wechsberg, who considered the Cleveland Orchestra to be the world's premier symphony, see *The New Yorker*, November 11, 1965, 59–112.

in their 1962 album *The Real Ambassadors*: 'No commodity is quite so strange / As this thing called cultural exchange.'[3]

Much of the analysis of cultural exchange, this curious commodity, has focused on popular culture and its kissing cousin, consumerism. It has sometimes been asserted that 'jazz and blue jeans' won the Cold War. But as tours by major orchestras remind us, high culture was a vitally important commodity of cultural exchange. Although the importance of classical music for the American elite and middle class has dimmed, in the 1960s classical music (and particularly its symphonic form) still retained great cachet. Jazz and rock and roll during the Cold War have attracted more scholarly attention, but United States officials made a heavier investment in classical music. They believed it would be influential among European elites and the opinion makers they particularly wanted to court. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the majority of State Department funding for musical tours went to classical ensembles, usually more than 70 per cent each year.[4]

At stake was the contested legacy of the European high culture legacy. Both the US and the USSR sought to establish themselves as this tradition's rightful inheritors and progenitors. Both superpowers suffered from a sense of cultural inferiority vis-à-vis Western and Central Europe. Greg Castillo shows that the USSR and the German Democratic Republic tried to position themselves as the rightful successors to European high culture and, indeed, its redeemer from bourgeois corruptions perpetrated by the market and modernism. While tsarist Russia had a robust classical music tradition, its lineage became somewhat suspect because of the ideological demands placed on it after 1917. The United States, which to some Europeans seemed to be a country without a history, was often portrayed as a ruthless capitalist society unleavened by high culture or debauched by the vulgarities of mass culture. Led by its Hungarian-born maestro, the Cleveland Orchestra was playing Europe back to Europeans. American orchestras also made the subtle point that a sophisticated musical public had developed to sustain these enterprises. In contrast to Europe, where classical music rested on state financing, the American model was built almost entirely on private support, through ticket sales to ordinary people and donations from capitalist fortunes. The

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[3] Eisenhower, quoted (1955) in Emily Abrams Ansari, 'Shaping the Policies of Cold War Musical Diplomacy: An Epistemic Community of American Composers', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2012): 41–52; Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 254. For general treatments of the 'cultural Cold War', an all-encompassing term, see Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 1999) and David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. chap. 14; and Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1946–1961* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997).

[4] Ansari, 'Shaping the Policies of Cold War Musical Diplomacy', esp. 43–4.

tour also offers insights into the mechanics and meaning of Cold War cultural exchanges, including the much-mooted issue of cultural imperialism.[5]

The American industrial and financial elite tried to redress the country's cultural shortcomings in the late 1800s and early 1900s, founding or extending museums, orchestras, opera companies and universities. Their models usually adopted a particular vision of European culture. Chicago meatpackers stocked the Art Institute of Chicago with Impressionist paintings. Pittsburgh entrepreneurs Andrew Mellon and Henry Clay Frick spirited major art works from the increasingly penurious hands of European aristocrats (and, in Mellon's case, from Stalin, who was starved of hard currency). William Randolph Hearst ransacked entire castles to create San Simeon, his California Neuschwanstein. Believing classical music had a universal civilising power, the American capitalist elite created symphony orchestras, and steel baron Andrew Carnegie built his iconic Carnegie Hall. While cultural imperialism has often been loosely ascribed to American initiatives during the Cold War, a longer view suggests that cultural imperialism operates in subtle guises across different times and places. Jessica Gienow-Hecht has observed that European countries actively promoted their cultural wares in the United States in the nineteenth and early twentieth century; in turn, many Americans sought those trappings eagerly. What is sometimes labelled cultural imperialism is often mutual embrace.[6]

Cleveland joined the competition for cultural prestige late. Relatively young among the great American orchestras, the Cleveland ensemble was founded in 1918. (Unusual for the time, a woman, the redoubtable heiress Adella Prentiss Hughes, was the principal force behind the orchestra's creation and remained a formidable presence for three decades.) The orchestra inaugurated its exquisite

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[5] Greg Castillo, 'East as True West: Redeeming Bourgeois Culture, from Socialist Realism to *Ostalgie*', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2008): 747–68. On anti-Americanism and dismissive treatments of American culture, see, for instance, Jessica Gienow-Hecht, 'Culture and the Cold War in Europe', in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 398–419, as well as her 'Always Blame the Americans: Anti-Americanism in Europe in the Twentieth Century', *American Historical Review*, vol. 111, no. 4 (2006): 1067–91; Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York: Basic, 1997), esp. 264–71; and Richard J. Golsan, 'From French Anti-Americanism and Americanization to the "American Enemy"?' 53–7, and Alexander Stephan (ed.), 'A Special German Case of Americanization', 82–3, both in *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy and Anti-Americanism after 1945*, Alexander Stephan (New York: Berghahn, 2006). An introduction to the sizeable literature on cultural imperialism is John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991). One of the paradoxes of Cold War cultural politics was that the Soviet Union sought to confirm its legitimacy by invoking nineteenth-century bourgeois high culture.

[6] Jessica Gienow-Hecht, *Sound Diplomacy: Music and Emotions in Transatlantic Relations, 1850–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), esp. 2–3 and epilogue.

art deco home, Severance Hall, in 1931, principally underwritten by John L. Severance, a flute major at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music who made a fortune with Standard Oil. Together with the Cleveland Museum of Art, which opened in 1916, the orchestra solidified the city's reputation as something more than a smoky steel town.

European émigrés were recruited as music directors, as they were in most major American orchestras until the mid-twentieth century. Cleveland's first music director, the Russian-born Nikolai Sokoloff, conducted from 1918 to 1933, when he was succeeded by Artur Rodzinski, who was Polish. When Rodzinski left to head the New York Philharmonic in 1943, the orchestra briefly engaged the Austrian-born Erich Leinsdorf, whose unhappy three-year tenure suffered from prolonged absences for American military service.[7]

Enter George Szell, who served as musical director and conductor from 1946 until his death in 1970. The names Szell and Cleveland would remain linked long after his death. (Christoph von Dohnanyi, the orchestra's distinguished music director from 1984 to 2002, once lamented that when the orchestra gave a great concert, George Szell got a great review.) Szell, born in 1897, had earned an international reputation by 1946. A child prodigy pianist, he learned his conducting craft initially with Richard Strauss. He served as first conductor of the Berlin State Opera from 1924 to 1929 and leading conductor at the German Opera House in Prague from 1929 to 1937. He guest conducted many major orchestras in the 1930s and 1940s: Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London, Glasgow, Detroit, St. Louis and Los Angeles. Travelling from Australia to the United States when war erupted in 1939, he and his second wife, Helene Schultz Teltsch, decided to stay in New York. He served as conductor at the Metropolitan Opera from 1942 to 1946. When Mrs Szell, happily settled on Park Avenue, learned her husband had accepted Cleveland's offer, she cried all day.[8]

Szell was determined to take the very good ensemble he inherited across the vast distance to recognition as a premier orchestra. He stoked hostility by firing 14 musicians in his first season – a strategy impossible when unions gained power in later years. Assisted by a skilful general manager, Carl J. Vosburgh, who quieted murmurings about the conductor's tyrannical measures with musicians and board members,[9] Szell built the orchestra's reputation as second to none. Utterly

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[7] Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Orchestra Story*, passim.

[8] Helene Szell in Charry, *George Szell*, 89. Szell preferred the term 'music*al* director'. He continued guest conducting assignments with the Concertgebouw and New York Philharmonic during his Cleveland tenure. He was courted to succeed Fritz Reiner at the helm of the Chicago Symphony but stayed in Cleveland. From 1970 to 1972, Pierre Boulez, who made his American orchestral conducting debut with the orchestra in 1965, served as musical adviser. Lorin Maazel wielded the baton from 1972 to 1982. Succeeding him were Dohnanyi from 1984 to 2002 and Franz Welser-Most in 2002.

[9] Author's interview with Louis Lane, May 5, 2012, Bratenahl, Ohio. Lane served on the orchestra's conducting staff from 1946 to 1972. He began as an apprentice conductor

devoted to the cause of music and his orchestra, he demanded the utmost from his musicians. Some were pushed beyond limits they found tolerable. But pianist John Browning, who was featured on the 1965 tour, said Szell was 'tougher on himself than anyone else'. Many could not imagine playing on a higher musical plane and turned down more lucrative offers elsewhere to work under his baton.[10]

Provincial American orchestras gained prestige by winning accolades from New York music critics. A beautiful sound might be made outside the Big Apple, but it often did not register until New York critics heard it. In the 1950s and 1960s recognition in Europe's musical capitals still bestowed ultimate status. European consciousness was limited mainly to the orchestras of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. The Cleveland's 1957 tour of Europe catapulted the ensemble onto the world stage. Joined by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (benefiting from the tenure of its imperious music director Fritz Reiner from 1953 to 1963), it became customary from the late 1950s onward to speak of the 'big five' American symphonies – Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York and Philadelphia.

In 1957 Szell's orchestra appeared in several Western European cities, as well as Warsaw, Katowice, Poznan and Krakow. The tour was organised by the American National Theater and Academy, which had a close relationship with the State Department. The formidable impresario Anatole Heller, of the Bureau Artistique International in Paris, oversaw arrangements, as he would in 1965. Cold War politics intervened in an unhappy way. The orchestra was to appear in Prague, but when US officials required members of the Czech Philharmonic to be fingerprinted for American visas, Czech officials retaliated by calling off their ensemble's tour and cancelling the Clevelanders' appearance. The two Warsaw concerts, where the orchestra was rapturously received, were the tour's highlights. The Cold War was always subtly off-stage. An anonymous note was left in a Clevelander's violin case: 'Long live free America! Long live Hungary! God save poor Poland!'[11]

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and became Szell's valued associate conductor for many seasons. Lane conducted several concerts on the 1965 tour. Vosburgh died in 1955 at age 59. William McKelvey Martin and George Smith served briefly as general manager until replaced by A. Beverly Barksdale, who served until 1970.

[10] Browning, quoted in *International Piano Magazine*, March/April 2003. After the tour, Browning spent a summer studying with Szell during the latter's annual vacation in Switzerland. Principal hornist Ross Taylor found Szell 'dictatorial' and left after four years for the San Francisco Symphony; he found the music directors there inadequate. See Linda Gordon, *Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits* (New York: Norton, 2009), 414. On relations between Szell and musicians, see Charry, *George Szell*, 98–100, and Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Orchestra Story*, 249–50.

[11] *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland), May 26, 1957, June 14, 1957. (All newspaper references are to clippings in Cleveland Orchestra Archives, Severance Hall, Cleveland, hereafter COA.) See also undated, unsigned draft of report on the 1965 tour, probably by Barksdale, in Touring File, European tour 1965, COA. On the 1957 tour, see Rosenberg,

By the early 1960s Szell was eager to take the orchestra to Europe again. The US and USSR had signed a cultural exchange agreement in January 1958, launching an extensive series of exhibitions and visits by each country's musicians and artists. The Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra soon toured the Soviet Union under State Department auspices. In 1959 Russian audiences lionised the charismatic Leonard Bernstein, conductor of the New York Philharmonic, who charmed them when he spoke from the podium. (A more austere personality, Szell disdained such showmanship.) These American orchestras dazzled Eastern bloc audiences with their technical virtuosity, as the Clevelanders had in Warsaw and would in the USSR in 1965.[12] Playing their roles in the Cold War cultural tit-for-tat, several Soviet stars – violinist David Oistrakh, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and pianist Emil Gilels (with whom Szell and his orchestra made admired recordings of the Beethoven concertos) – appeared in various American cities, including Cleveland. Szell hoped to tour in 1964, but the State Department chose William Steinberg's Pittsburgh Symphony for a tour, which played several venues in the Middle East.

Waiting for the Soviet and European tour in 1965 worked to Szell's advantage, since it featured major musical capitals. Frank Joseph, chairman of the orchestra's board, termed it one of the orchestra's most important events in recent years. Szell was happy to conduct in Leningrad and Moscow, and accepted the southern venues, which Soviet officials wanted, with relatively good grace. This was the longest Soviet tour made by an American orchestra. It was the most extensively covered in the press, receiving almost daily dispatches from three international wire services. The Cleveland Orchestra was the first American symphony to visit Georgia, Armenia or Sochi. Extending its tour to other Eastern bloc cities, the orchestra returned to Warsaw, made its delayed appearance in Prague (the first American orchestra to play in Czechoslovakia since the New York Philharmonic under Arturo Toscanini in 1930), and was the first American orchestra to perform in Bratislava.[13]

Szell exerted a strong hand in determining the tour repertoire, which showed great versatility, with 38 works by 29 composers. Szell's programming was skilfully tailored to Cold War cultural competition. He included many of his specialities – Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Richard Strauss – for credibility in

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The Cleveland Orchestra Story, 291–6, and Charry, *George Szell*, 162–9. Congress dropped the hated fingerprinting requirement later in 1957. See Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, 30.

[12] Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music during the Thaw* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 55. Mark Pekarsky, a percussionist, recalled standing in line for three nights with his father, who had been made an invalid in World War II, but failing to get tickets for the Boston Symphony. 'I was offended and couldn't even listen to it on the radio', he said (see Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 335, note 25). See also Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, 396.

[13] Musical Arts Association board meeting minutes, October 25, 1963, July 15, 1965, COA. (The Musical Arts Association was the legal structure operating the orchestra.)

the classical and romantic repertoire. He paid homage to the Russian tradition with Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (in the Ravel orchestration), Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* (1919 version) and Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony (led by Louis Lane, the orchestra's gifted associate conductor). Szell also showcased American tonal music that partook of the European tradition. *Appalachian Spring* by Aaron Copland, who had studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, was an inevitable choice. Less obvious, but well attuned to Russian audiences, was Samuel Barber's piano concerto, written in 1962 for John Browning. A student of the revered pedagogue Rosina Lhevinne at Juilliard, Browning with his flat-finger technique perpetuated the Russian pianistic school with vast dynamic range and subtle legato. Barber incorporated elements of the Russian pianistic tradition in the concerto, including dazzling cross-hand playing, and Browning performed it 'brilliantly'.[14]

The Copland and Barber compositions made a subtle point. They reflected a maturation of American classical composing, partook of the European classical tradition and were approachable on first hearing. Although American composers were leading exponents of serialism, Szell did not programme their works. He found their works 'quite frankly not complicated but often boring'. Serialist

[14] Charry on Browning, author's phone interview with Charry, May 1, 2012; *Memories of John Browning: The Lhevinne Legacy Continues*, a documentary film by Salome Ramras Arkatov (Arkatov Productions, 2nd edn, 2007). Browning recorded the concerto, which is now something of a rarity, with Szell and the Cleveland in 1964 and with the St. Louis Symphony, conducted by Leonard Slatkin, in 1991. Saying both recordings had their merits, Browning, whose interpretation of the piece had evolved, felt the Slatkin recording was more 'lyrical'. The Browning–Slatkin version won a Grammy. For the complete tour repertoire see Charry, *George Szell*, Appendix E. The playlist included Brahms's Third Symphony, Schumann's Fourth, three Beethoven symphonies, Sibelius's Fifth Symphony, Mozart's Symphony No. 39, Haydn symphonies Nos. 31 and 89, Schubert's Ninth, Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*, Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*; and staples of the French school for concerts in France (Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, Debussy's *La Mer* and Dutilleux's *Cinque Metaboles*) and several overtures. Responding to requests for American music, an all-Gershwin concert was performed in Vienna, conducted by Louis Lane. Grant Johannesen played the Mozart Piano Concerto in C minor, K 491. Leon Fleisher (with whom Szell made several recordings) had originally been slated for the tour and reduced his fee to participate. But when he developed the first signs of the illness that rendered his right hand ineffective, he had to withdraw. Browning, Fleisher, William Kapell, Gary Graffman and Van Cliburn (whose triumph in the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow a few years earlier made him a Cold War celebrity) represented another aspect of American cultural maturation at mid-century. Before the advent of these American prodigies, the international piano scene, including that in the United States, had been dominated by Europeans (many of whom emigrated to the US before World War II). For the debate on the relationship, if any, between Cold War politics and the composition and performance of certain kinds of music, especially serialism, see the exchange between Richard Taruskin, 'Afterword: Nicht blutbefleckt?', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2009): 274–84, and Charles Rosen, 'Music and the Cold War', *New York Review of Books*, April 7, 2011, 40–42.

works would not have been welcomed by the Soviets, in any case, where cultural ideologues still damned formalism.[15]

Szell's programming made a subtle point about race, a vexed issue in superpower propaganda. At a time when classical compositions by African American composers were rare, he included William Grant Still's *In Memoriam: The Colored Soldiers Who Died for Democracy*, composed in 1943, when issues of racial democracy surged to the fore domestically and internationally. Considered the dean of African American composers, Still had studied at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. Szell had programmed the piece in his first season in Cleveland. *The Plain Dealer* said the piece was used on the tour to show the United States was making progress on civil rights 'in a democratic way'. Some musicologists have claimed that, influenced by Cold War politics, American composers and conductors turned from tonal music to serialism because the latter was ostensibly apolitical. But the political import of programming Still's brief threnody was unmistakable.[16]

Szell had broken the orchestral colour line in 1958 by hiring the ensemble's first African American, Donald White, a cellist, making him one of the few black players in a major American orchestra. Some members of the orchestra voted against his hiring, and some members of the public also protested. In White's first season, Szell sometimes put his hand on the cellist's shoulder as a silent – and much appreciated – gesture of support. Whatever his reputation as a martinet, White said, Szell was a liberal in politics. (And why would a martinet necessarily be a conservative?) The orchestra's racial commitment met a severe test in 1961 when the Clevelanders were booked into Birmingham, Alabama. Stagehands barred White from entering the hall until orchestra members identified him. The orchestra's general manager, A. Beverly Barksdale, was informed that a Birmingham ordinance forbade racially mixed groups performing in public. After conferring with Szell, Barksdale insisted that all members of the orchestra play or none would. A call was placed to the mayor of Birmingham, who conceded that White could play, and the concert went on.[17]

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[15] Szell quoted in *The Times* (London), June 29, 1965. The State Department's Music Advisory Panel was dominated in the 1950s and early 60s by Howard Hanson, Virgil Thomson and William Schuman, all of whom shared a distaste for serialism. They were also dubious about anything that was too 'middle brow', including Gershwin. See Ansari, 'Shaping the Policies of Cold War Musical Diplomacy'. On controversies over serialism in the Soviet Union see Schmelz, *Such Freedom,* esp 18–19, 58–9, 176–7; and Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, 384–90, 402–5.

[16] Charry, *George Szell*, 172–3; *The Plain Dealer*, April 21, 1965. On racial issues in Cold War politics, see Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) and Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[17] On White's appointment, author's interview with Lane, May 5, 2012, and Charry, *George Szell*, 173–4.

Diversity advanced slowly in symphony orchestras, particularly in Europe, where many were all-white and all-male. Eight women played in the Cleveland Orchestra string sections, plus harpists Alice Chalifoux and Martha Dalton. Several musicians were European émigrés. David Zauder, a trumpeter, was one of the small number who survived when the Nazis marched prisoners from Auschwitz to the West in the bitter winter of 1944–45; he moved to Detroit to live with an aunt in 1946. Acting cautiously, musicians who had emigrated from Eastern bloc countries did not join the tour until the orchestra reached Helsinki.[18]

Throughout the Soviet Union the Clevelanders drew standing-room-only houses – and more. The halls were often packed beyond Western fire-safety standards. In Tbilisi the audience crowded in two per seat and stood in the aisles and on the stairs; then the doors were locked. At the elegant Philharmonic Hall in Leningrad, Richard Weiner, a percussionist, had to ask audience members who crowded around the rear of the stage to stand back so he had room to play. The Tbilisi concert proved to be especially memorable. A ferocious thunderstorm erupted, peppering the roof with a cannonade of hail the size of pigeon eggs. As the orchestra negotiated the exposed flute passage in Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, the lights flickered and went out, but the orchestra gamely played through the darkness until the lights came up again after about two minutes. The audience burst into applause.[19]

Soviet audiences received the orchestra rapturously. Twenty curtain calls were not unusual. Nearly jostled off his feet by an exuberant crowd in Moscow, Szell kept smiling – 'the very model of the cultural diplomat', said *Time*. He praised the audiences as 'exhilarating'. He commented that they 'have a great wealth of listening experiences' and appreciated works other than the standard fare. Percussionist Weiner recalled: 'You get chills when they start that rhythmic stamping.'[20] The dark-eyed, 32-year-old Browning excited almost as much female admiration as the legendary Franz Liszt, who left his white gloves on the piano after his performance so women could fight for them. Young Russian women rushed the stage, crying 'John, John, oh, John!' Moscow audiences initially seemed warier about the concerts than in cities farther from the capital. Perhaps American visitors had become less exotic in Moscow, the site of many cultural exchanges, or perhaps audiences awaited a signal of official approval. Muscovites began to warm to the orchestra after Anastas Mikoyan, the nominal head of state, signalled official approval by attending the second concert. Leading Soviet musicians, such

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[18] Zauder's background in *The Plain Dealer*, May 2, 1965; author's interview with Charry.

[19] Author's interview with Richard Weiner, Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, June 5, 2012; Charry, *George Szell*, 228.

[20] *Time*, May 28, 1965; Szell quoted in *The Plain Dealer*, undated; author's interview with Weiner.

as David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan, attended concerts in Leningrad, as well as Isaac Stern, a Russian émigré, who was visiting.[21]

US Ambassador Foy Kohler gave a reception at Spaso House, the American embassy in Moscow, which drew a larger crowd than any other such gathering. As the party chattered excitedly in English, Russian, French, German and Yiddish, late into the evening, the Clevelanders offered to go back to their hotels. But Mrs Kohler replied, 'Oh dear, no. This is the best thing that has happened since we came to Moscow and I don't care if they stay until midnight or three in the morning.'[22]

Most reviews were glowing, and tended to be warmer in the USSR, Finland and Poland than in Western Europe. Critics heralded the technique and precision that was the trademark of Szell's orchestra. The Leningrad edition of *Pravda* praised the orchestra's 'inner culture' and homogeneity of sound. 'The orchestra plays with freedom and suppleness, as if in one breath', said the paper. Technique was not flaunted but 'subordinated to the artistic concept which is always profound and reasoned'. In Helsinki the music critic of *Kansan Uutiset* found the Cleveland's 'virtuosity' trumped that of Herbert von Karajan's Berlin Philharmonic, which had performed there recently, but he thought Karajan's interpretations were more compelling. Critics often remarked (as they do today) that the Cleveland was the most 'European' of American orchestras. Outside Germany and Austria, the Central European sound was nurtured nowhere so lovingly as on the shore of Lake Erie. Szell commented: 'I wanted to combine the fine musical qualities of pre-war European orchestras with the reliability, precision and beauty of sound of the best American orchestras.' Andrew Porter, music critic of the *Financial Times* (London) and later of *The New Yorker*, said a Szell concert made a Karajan performance look 'vulgar'. He judged Cleveland to be 'the most cultivated of American cities' and ranked its orchestra as America's best.[23]

But praise is rarely universal in the musical world. Some found Szell's performances deficient in warmth and spontaneity. After a London concert, Barry Tuckwell, the sterling horn player, wrote that, while the ensemble was America's best, 'in an extraordinary way, it was too perfect, too calculated'. The critic for the *Helsingin Sanomat* cleverly noted that 'Szell leaves little room for the Viennese "Schmaltz". I would imagine that he would prefer to read Kafka and Werfel rather

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[21] *Time*, May 28, 1965. On audience responses, see also Barksdale, comments on the tour, 'Offstage with the Cleveland Orchestra', in Tour Summaries, Europe 1965, box 7, RG Conductors, subgroup George Szell, Series Barksdale Miscellaneous Files, 1962–65, COA; and Musical Arts Association board meeting minutes, July 15, 1965, COA. A veteran member of the Politburo, Mikoyan was chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet; he was forced to retire in July 1965.

[22] Barksdale report, Musical Arts Association board meeting minutes, July 15, 1965, COA.

[23] Szell, quoted in *The Times* (London), June 29, 1965; Porter in *Financial Times*, June 22, 1965; *Kansan Uutiset*, May 30, 1965; *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 25, 1965; *Pravda* review in Musical Arts Association scrapbooks, as are all reviews quoted, in box 3, COA.

than Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal. Perhaps a bad mistake.'[24] James Levine, the eminent longtime conductor of the Metropolitan Opera who served a tempestuous apprenticeship with Szell in the late 1960s, believed too much discipline made the sound 'crushed' and 'dry'. While acknowledging Szell's mastery of structure and ability to craft 'fabulous' chamber-style balances, Levine wished for 'greater vocality, greater breadth, and greater physical sensuality, less abstraction'.[25]

Political calculations were never absent from the minds of tour participants. Terrence Catherman, the State Department's escort officer, briefed them on do's and don'ts before departure. Most of his warnings were standard Cold War fare: no anti-Soviet material; no tape recorders; don't photograph railroads, airports, or military installations; all mail will be monitored and phone calls will be hard to make; don't deal on the black market; don't take material on Soviet anti-Semitism (it wouldn't help Jews and it could get you in hot water). 'Girl chasing' was sure to lead to trouble. Reflecting different notions about freedom of speech, they might be asked why the United States did not imprison a neo-Nazi like George Lincoln Rockwell. Tour members were advised to think in advance about answers to sticky political topics, but weren't told to avoid them. Politics got more complicated in early 1965 when Lyndon Johnson started bombing North Vietnam and committed combat troops to the war. In the midst of the tour, he sent troops into the Dominican Republic. Though the Dominican operation added to the musicians' anxiety, they encountered no untoward effects. During the Military Day parade on May 8 in Sochi, they heard invective blaring from loudspeakers. Asked if it was anti-American, their interpreter responded, his eyes twinkling, 'Yes, you are only being called warmongers again.'[26]

The political and the personal intersected. Conservatism in dress was advised. Women should avoid wearing slacks in public, which would mark one as *nekul'turny* (lacking in culture and cosmopolitanism). Women were cautioned to avoid Soviet hair salons, which didn't know the latest styles and used too much lacquer in their sprays. Men could wear sports shirts if they were 'not too flashy'.[27]

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[24] *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 25, 1965.

[25] Tuckwell in *Daily Telegraph* (London), June 27, 1965; Levine, quoted in Rosenberg, *The Cleveland Orchestra Story*, 339–40; see also 243–5. Critics almost uniformly praised Browning, though some uncomprehending London listeners found the Barber showy and empty. Whether or not his concerts lacked 'Schmaltz', Szell claimed Viennese audiences and critics, who were 'perhaps more hard-boiled and conceited than anywhere', were 'absolutely floored' by the orchestra's playing. *The Times* (London), June 29, 1965.

[26] 'Notes on Mr. Terrence Catherman's address to Orchestra personnel, March 18, 1965, Chamber Music Hall' in folder 'Tour Instructions', RG Conductors, Subgroup George Szell, Barksdale Misc. Files; Barksdale, 'Offstage with the Cleveland Orchestra', n.d., June 1965, in folder 'Tour Summaries, Europe 1965', box 7, RG Conductors, subgroup George Szell, Series Barksdale Misc. Files, 1952–65, COA.

[27] 'Suggestions for the Orchestra Ladies for the International Tour, 1965', in Catherman's address to Orchestra personnel.

Soviet sexual prudery was in force. In Tbilisi orchestra members had to draw the shades of their hotel room windows. They assumed this was so they would not observe a military parade. But it turned out that local officials had been scandalised when members of a touring American women's basketball team had sat in their windows with their bare legs dangling. (If only the musicians had the basketball players' legs!) Americans were warned they would be asked about 'moral decline' in the US, why so many artists had 'immoral' lifestyles, and why there were so many homosexuals in the US. Soviet audiences probably did not realise that two of the tour's cornerstones (the Copland and the Barber) were composed by gay men or that the handsome Browning was gay.[28]

The State Department had no qualms about enlisting gays and African Americans, despite their being denied rights, in efforts to score points in the cultural Cold War. Indeed, employing African Americans, such as Louis Armstrong, for tours potentially had a big payoff for the US when racial politics were contested. Gay rights was a closeted Cold War subject, of course. But the prominence of gay men in modernist American culture virtually demanded that they be represented as creators and performers if the State Department wanted to showcase the country's finest cultural achievements – this during an era when thousands of homosexuals were fired from federal employment.[29]

Orchestra members reported relatively few political discussions; their focus and that of the musicians with whom they socialised was on music. Linguistic limitations on both sides short-circuited political discussions. Szell, who knew Czech, worked hard on his Russian and occasionally corrected his Russian interpreter. Some orchestra members spent several months with a Russian-language teacher before they left, but their Russian was still very limited. Sometimes German, French or Yiddish bridged the linguistic gap. They often reflected on the caution Soviet citizens displayed in discussions and their reluctance to visit the musicians' hotel rooms for fear of being harassed.[30]

The Clevelanders inevitably picked up political impressions by observing Russian life. They found that life away from Moscow was freer, and noticed Georgians' sense of themselves as a distinct people. Orchestra members found the 'lack of real freedoms' oppressive. When they crossed the border into Finland,

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[28] Ibid.; *Time*, May 28, 1965.

[29] On gay musicians, especially Barber, see Michael Sherry, *Gay Artists in Midcentury America: An Imagined Conspiracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008). On purges of gay federal employees, see David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). Truman Capote wrote about an American troupe performing *Porgy and Bess* in the USSR in 1955 in *The Muses Are Heard* (New York, 1957). On African Americans and jazz, see von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*.

[30] Author's interviews with Charry and Weiner; Alice Chalifoux oral history, December 9, 1991, p. 39, COA. Czeslaw Milosz noted the contrast between Westerners' openness and the reticence of people in the Eastern bloc in *The Captive Mind* (New York, 1990, original edn, 1951), 54–5.

a spontaneous cheer erupted. 'The oppressiveness of the Soviet Union at that time impacted your psyche', Weiner said. In Helsinki, they bathed in the colour and comforts they missed in the USSR. Helsinki seemed like 'heaven on earth', recalled assistant conductor Michael Charry. In the USSR he paid 60 cents for an orange – 'and it was worth it!' he said – but in Helsinki food was abundant and of high quality. Several orchestra members quickly downed three or four glasses of milk, because they had been told not to drink milk in Russia. John Rautenberg, a flautist, found the Coca-Cola signs in Helsinki strangely comforting. Frank Hruby, music critic for *The Cleveland Press*, compared arriving in Helsinki to 'throwing open a great set of window blinds'.[31]

But while orchestra members could not overlook the lack of freedom, some found the experience complicated their political outlook. Bob Boyd, a trombonist, said these tours 'explode many myths'. He noted that some New Yorkers complained about substandard housing in the USSR, forgetting that 'New York's greater number of boroughs consist of 75% slums'. And they ignored the USSR's monumental losses in World War II. 'Lest I sound like an apologist for Socialism', Boyd said, 'remember my hard rock Republican background!' The military highway from Tbilisi to Yerevan was mostly a dirt road and at times their caravan had to ford streams. The eight-hour trip was 'agonizingly long and uncomfortable', Weiner said. He concluded that, with roads like this, the much-touted Soviet threat was a myth.[32]

The personal dimension was often profoundly moving. Thirty orchestra players attended a Seder at the Israeli ambassador's residence, said to have been the first Seder allowed since 1945. Charry met a cousin in Moscow. At some risk, the cousin called him from work. When they met in Charry's room, the cousin first lifted up the phone to see if it was bugged. Charry missed another visit with him because a sightseeing trip ran late. His cousin left a tear-stained note with Browning, who stayed in Moscow longer. Subsequent efforts to establish contact by mail came to nought. Weiner also tried but failed to maintain Russian contacts through correspondence.[33]

Albert Michelsen, a cellist, was reunited in Moscow with his sister, whom he had not seen in 40 years. They lost touch during World War II, then 'hunted and hunted through the Red Cross', he said, and finally reestablished contact. For two years, from the time the tour was announced until the orchestra arrived in Moscow, 'my sister literally counted the days and the hours until we met', Michelsen said. On the 1957 tour, émigré violinist Stephen Erdely was able to see his father for the

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[31] Author's phone interview with Charry, May 1, 2012; author's interview with Weiner, June 5, 2012; *Cleveland Press*, May 26, 1965; Rautenberg in *Cleveland Press*, June 9, 1965.

[32] Boyd to Klaus George Roy, May 10, 1965, folder 'Tour – European', box 25, RG Programs Dept, subgroup 'Program Editor/Director of Publication Klaus G. Roy', COA; author's interview with Weiner, June 5, 2012.

[33] Author's phone interview with Charry.

first time in 13 years. After six months of negotiation, his father received a visa to travel from Szeged, Hungary, to Warsaw.[34] One of the painful aspects of the Cold War was the severing of personal and familial ties. Opportunities to reestablish these connections, even briefly, must be counted among the successes of Cold War cultural exchanges.

Person-to-person diplomacy had a strong musical accent. Several orchestra members performed jazz after hours with Soviet musicians in sessions that sometimes went on all night. The Clevelanders rotated nights when they played with the exuberant Muscovites so they could get some sleep. Jazz was enjoying a brief renaissance in the early Brezhnev years, after Khrushchev's denunciation of the form in 1963. (Brezhnev too turned against jazz in 1967.) The Clevelanders found Soviet citizens knowledgeable about jazz, because they listened to the Voice of America. If Russians' impressions seemed 'a bit dated', the classical musicians also acknowledged that jazz was not their primary suit. 'Our playing was relatively simplistic compared to the great American jazz players', said Weiner. 'I was OK but I wasn't Buddy Rich.' In Moscow they performed at a jam-packed Komsomol club, which resulted in a feature in *Soviet Life*. The 'overwhelming' response that night remained one of Weiner's fondest memories of the tour nearly 50 years later. Many such occasions were improvised and outside official authorisation. The musicians brought reeds for woodwinds, parts for brass instruments, plastic heads for percussion, and other musical paraphernalia their Soviet counterparts found hard to get. They returned to Cleveland with 5,000 pounds of gifts, mostly musical scores and art books.[35]

Comparing standards of living preoccupied both the Americans and the Russians. When a musician showed a picture of his four-bedroom house in Cleveland Heights, Russians asked which floor his apartment was located on. Weiner found the apartment of a percussionist in the Leningrad Philharmonic, who was a party member, stocked with the latest stereo equipment, cameras and Italian shoes. The Leningrad Phil often toured in the West, affording greater access to consumer goods. Questions about consumer goods often came up, with Soviets demanding to know, for instance, whether it was really true that every American could afford to buy a car.[36]

Personal relations were generally very cordial. Musicians were not inhibited by American officials from personal encounters. Weiner rode the impressive Moscow metro, relying on his elementary Russian to decipher the station stops. Musicians recounted numerous examples of Soviet citizens' warmth; while disparaging American politics, they made clear that they liked Americans personally.

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[34] United Press International story in *Cleveland Press*, April 16, 1965; *The Plain Dealer*, June 1957 (only date given).

[35] On jazz and the Soviet Union, see S. Frederick Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917–1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), chap. 12. Author's interview with Weiner, June 5, 2012.

[36] Author's interview with Weiner, June 5, 2012.

Memories of World War II solidarity remained alive. Weiner encountered Soviet veterans, decorated with army medals, who remembered the wartime alliance and gave him a hug. Szell commented that cultural exchanges were 'the only contact that functions even when political relations are bad' and shows people that 'in a higher sense they all belong together' – a Cold War bromide, no doubt, but no less true for its anodyne quality.[37]

One of the most curious encounters took place when Weiner was implored to visit the home of Americans who had left voluntarily for the USSR in the late 1940s. Their apartment was decorated with old Coke bottles, old records and other American memorabilia. They beseeched him to help them return to the US, which he was not in a position to do.[38]

As their train picked up speed, rolling through the neatly ordered Finnish countryside, the musicians could reflect on a successful transit of the Soviet Union geographically, culturally and perhaps politically. The Clevelanders' tour represented a coda for one phase of cultural exchanges. As the American escalation in Vietnam poisoned relations between the two superpowers in the autumn of 1965, Moscow sharply cut back cultural exchanges, although scientific and educational ties continued and were even expanded. For the orchestra, the Eastern bloc appearances confirmed and enhanced its reputation. For Soviet audiences, the orchestra afforded a demonstration of superlative technique and expanded cultural horizons by introducing new music. For musicians, the visits offered unparalleled opportunities to share performance traditions that had been circumscribed by political divides. For the State Department, the orchestra made the point it aimed for – that culture flourished under American capitalism and was dispersed throughout the country. Comments by European cultural figures such as José Duarte de Figueiredo, director of the Teatro Nacional de S. Carlos in Lisbon, where the Cleveland performed to a 20-minute ovation in 1957, were typical. He said such appearances did more good for the US than 'millions of propaganda pamphlets'. Nothing else 'can come so near to the hearts and minds of us Europeans to show what standards of culture have reached in America'.[39]

Exposure to the highest standards of culture seems, at the very least, to have complicated the political attitudes of Soviet and American citizens. If orchestras such as the Cleveland were avatars of cultural imperialism, the standing-room-only audiences and ecstatic receptions suggest many Soviet listeners were only too eager to be imperialised. When Soviet audiences applauded the Clevelanders, they were, of course, saluting the orchestra's brilliance. Were they also applauding American society, thanking Soviet officials for facilitating these exchanges, expressing a more general appreciation of a shared cultural tradition, or all of these? Danielle Fosler-Lussier argues that music was not simply pushed on other

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37 Szell, quoted in *The Plain Dealer*, June 29, May 18, 1965.

38 Author's interview with Weiner, June 5, 2012.

39 Josè Duarte de Figueiredo to directors of the Cleveland Orchestra, June 7, 1957, Tours – Europe 1957 folder, COA; Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, 31.

countries but also pulled by the desires of people there. The Cleveland Orchestra was pulled to Tbilisi, Yerevan and Sochi; the orchestra would not have sought these remote venues. She argues that this sort of cultural diplomacy represented 'several simultaneous forms of engagement: nurturing the desire for particular styles of American music … building practical working relationships with people of local importance and creating imagined connections across vast distances'.[40]

Exposure to the other side may have helped thaw the Cold War. As trombonist Boyd's observations suggest, those with eyes to see might find their political views complicated by the experience. Appearances by leading American orchestras may have subtly undermined Soviet citizens' faith in their system. A young cellist trained at Moscow's elite music schools recalled hearing 'electrifying' concerts by 'truly great symphony orchestras' year after year from various American cities. We asked ourselves, 'How could the decadent West produce such great orchestras?' Cultural exchanges provided 'additional proof that our media were not telling us the truth'.[41]

If, as is sometimes said, jazz and blue jeans won the Cold War, did classical music and tails also contribute? Jazz musicians have been called the Cold War's 'real ambassadors'.[42] Because of its improvisational quality, jazz (like abstract art) was said to reflect Western cultural and political freedom. The craze for blue jeans symbolised the superiority of capitalist consumer goods. But for the 'strange commodity' of cultural exchange, high culture was no less vital a part of the Cold War contest; and music, bridging linguistic chasms, was especially useful to both sides. The Cleveland Orchestra and similar organisations demonstrated that the

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[40] Danielle Fosler-Lussier, 'Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization, and Imperialism', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2012): 63.

[41] Unnamed cellist quoted in Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 127. Richmond was a State Department official involved in cultural exchanges. Though promoting cultural exchanges, albeit with restrictions, Soviet officials often expressed anxiety about the effects such programmes had. In 1965 First Secretary Pavlov at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Komsomol attributed 'the deep gulf between generations in the Soviet Union' to Western communication and propaganda, though he also complained of 'increased permissiveness' in Soviet literature. Many of the young were now apolitical, disrespectful of their elders and interested only in 'money, girls and vodka'. See D.E. Boster, counsellor for political affairs, Moscow, to Department of State, January 7, 1966, in Central Foreign Policy Files, Culture and Information, CUL 7, Visits USSR, box 348, State Department Records, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, MD. Such fears seem to have focused more on popular culture than high culture and how youth were influenced. Similar anxieties surfaced in both Germanys. See Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[42] Von Eschen concludes *Satchmo Blows Up the World* this way, p. 260. See also Stephen A. Crist, 'Jazz as Democracy? Dave Brubeck and Cold War Politics', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2009), esp. 160–61.

supposedly deficient United States could stake its rightful claim to a revered cultural legacy. Echoing Eisenhower's hopes, George Szell said, no doubt to the immense gratitude of State Department officials, that the tour left 'a very deep impression on the people of all European countries we visited that the U.S. is not merely a materialistic, money- and power-hungry country, but a society in which cultural organizations of the highest type can flourish under favorable conditions'.[43] By reaffirming a shared cultural tradition and using their art to complicate political attitudes held by Soviet citizens and themselves, American classical musicians played critical roles as real Cold War ambassadors.

[43] Szell, quoted in *The Plain Dealer*, June 29, 1965.

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Chapter 6
Pianist Sviatoslav Richter: The Soviet Union Launches a 'Cultural Sputnik' to the United States in 1960

Meri Elisabet Herrala[1]

As World War II ended the temporary alliance between the superpowers, a new bipolar world emerged from the rubble, characterised by a clash of cultures and ideologies. While two conflicting ideologies – the Soviet communist and American capitalist systems – struggled openly for supremacy and dominance, two competing cultures were also clashing more quietly on a parallel track. It is the conflict of these cultures which gave rise to an alternative method of fighting the Cold War – a method which used weapons far more nuanced and sophisticated than the blunt, high-profile tools of nuclear intimidation such as the hydrogen bomb, with its all-or-nothing destructive potential. One of these weapons was pianist Sviatoslav Richter who, as a Soviet 'cultural Sputnik', was launched through the Iron Curtain as a means to enhance the positive picture of the Soviet Union in the hearts and minds of foreign audiences.

The so-called Geneva spirit after the Geneva conference in 1955 allowed level-headed officials in both camps who recognised the need to wage the Cold War with alternative means to deploy culture as a 'weapon of soft power' in order to achieve their foreign policy goals by attraction rather than coercion.[2] Bilateral cultural exchange agreements signed at the end of the 1950s considerably increased the usage of Soviet classical musicians as 'weapons', providing the most noticeable means for achieving the goals of the Soviet government to strengthen the cultural and ideological influence of the Soviet Union, advertise its successes, and promote a picture of Soviet superiority in the eyes of its cultural exchange partners and its counterpart, the United States. Because both superpowers realised the importance

[1] I wish to thank Dr Simo Mikkonen for his comments on this chapter, and Arthur Miles Saylor III for his help in editing.

[2] According to Joseph S. Nye, 'Soft power is the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment.' See Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Succeed in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 1986); and 'Public Diplomacy and Soft Power', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 616, no. 94 (2008): 95.

of transnational cultural contacts in the form of cultural exchanges,[3] a thriving competition developed between the superpowers to determine which of them could send the greatest number of musicians and dancers to the other, and thus achieve the greatest effect on public opinion in each other's countries. An agreement on cultural, technical and educational fields (the so-called Lacy–Zarubin Agreement, signed in 1958)[4] increased the number of concert tours of Soviet musicians to the United States. In the cultural Cold War, Soviet elite performers were in some ways more effective as sovereign survival tools than any tanks or missiles, because they could be used to softly 'invade' a country through the back door of diplomacy by influencing foreign policy through friendly and receptive audiences before the artistic 'occupation' was even noticed.

Interest in the cultural dimension of the Cold War has recently been revived by a new generation of researchers. However, the study of the Cold War cultural dimension – the post-World War II struggle for influence between the Soviet Union and the United States; the Soviet cultural infiltration into foreign countries and the resulting cultural exchanges – is still in its infancy, at least when it comes to the Soviet role in these areas. Existing literature dealing with the importance of culture as an instrument of post-war superpower relations has primarily addressed American strategies in the Cold War policies of culture, sidelining Soviet cultural policy objectives and cultural competition strategies.[5]

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[3] Transnational cultural contacts involve the cross-border exchanges of non- and sub-state actors below the level of the official government diplomacy – the movement of groups, goods, technology, ideas, culture or people such as Soviet classical musicians across national borders. See Nye, *Soft Power* and 'Public Diplomacy and Soft Power', 94–5; Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2005), 421–39; Michael David-Fox, 'Transnational History and the East–West Divide', in György Peteri, *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010); Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr, (eds), *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), ix. See also Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Brendan Humphreys (eds), *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered* (Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2010).

[4] US Treaties and other International Agreements (TIAS), 3975, 13–22. The Lacy–Zarubin Agreement was named after the heads of the US and Soviet delegations, William S.B. Lacy and Georgy Z. Zarubin, who had negotiated it. See the list of Soviet bilateral agreements with capitalist countries of Europe and America, 28 November 1961, Russian State Archive of Contemporary History/Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (RGANI), F. 5, op. 30, delo 370, ll. 74–6; Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

[5] See for example Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997); Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War*; Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 1999); J.D. Parks, *Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence: American–Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917–1958* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1983); Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH:

The study of Soviet cultural diplomacy through transnational encounters is usually characterised by its focus on governmentally controlled operations and the top-down control on the part of these organisations.[6] The governmental control is very clearly shown in the Soviet primary source materials, because Soviet organisations influencing Soviet cultural policies were monitored by the organisations under the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee (CPSU) and the Soviet Council of Ministers, while the party level executive organ – the Central Committee Department of Culture – decided on the overall policies of cultural exchanges. Thus the governmental organisation, the Soviet Ministry of Culture – under the Soviet Council of Ministers and its subordinate organisations (the Administration of Foreign Relations, the Collegium for External Cultural Relations, and the Main Leadership of Musical Establishments) – took care of the practical preparation and dispatch of companies abroad and the reception of foreign artists performing in the Soviet Union.[7] Other state organs – the Soviet Concert Tour Office (Gastrolnoe buro) and the Soviet State Concert Agency (Goskontsert) – shared the responsibilities with the Ministry of Culture in controlling the foreign concert tours and organising the international as well as all-union competitions and festivals.[8]

Wesleyan University Press, 1998); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 419. However, during the past few years American historians and musicologists such as Emily Abrams Ansari, Danielle Fosler-Lussier, Jonathan Rosenberg and Clayton Koppes have considerably widened the perspective in American Cold War policies by concentrating on American policies of music, and also in the field of cultural exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. See e.g. Jonathan Rosenberg, 'Fighting the Cold War with Violins and Trumpets: American Symphony Orchestras Abroad in the 1950s', in *Winter Kept Us Warm*, Autio-Sarasmo and Humphreys; Emily Abrams Ansari (eds), 'Shaping the Policies of Cold War Musical Diplomacy: An Epistemic Community of American Composers', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2012): 41–52; and 'Aaron Copland and the Politics of Cultural Diplomacy', *Journal of the Society for American Music*, vol. 5 no. 3 (2011): 335–64.

[6] See more about governmentally controlled operations and their connection to transnationalism in Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2005): 421–39; Nigel Gould-Davies, 'The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2003): 193–214.

[7] The Administration of Foreign Relations (Upravlenie vneshnikh otnoshenii); Collegium for External Cultural Relations (Kollegiia po vneshnim kulturnym sviaziam); Main Leadership of Musical Establishments (Glavnoe upravlenie muzykalnykh uchrezhdenii).

[8] See e.g. the materials of the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art/Rossiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva (RGALI). See also Gould-Davies, 'The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy'; Simo Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds? Soviet Music in the Cold War Struggle against the West', in *Twentieth Century Music and Politics*, Pauline Fairclough (ed.) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

Even though artistic connections were made possible by government-level agreements such as the one between the Soviet government and the United States, these Soviet government-level cultural policy organisations also cooperated with non-governmental Western partners such as concert firms, impresarios and performers.[9] My hypothesis is that these sub-state actors had considerably more leeway behind the scenes of the cultural exchange processes between the superpowers than has been previously shown. While heads of state performed their usual public rituals, impresarios and performers were more privately negotiating and engaging behind the scenes with 'weapons' far more practical and non-destructive. I am interested in whether or not and to what extent music was used as a tool that could remain functional in a more private setting even when diplomatic relations between the superpowers were strained. Therefore, focusing attention on grass-roots-level contacts between the Soviet government and sub-state actors such as concert firms, record companies and American and Soviet musicians during foreign cultural 'encounters' can enhance our understanding of the Cold War by broadening our perspective.[10] Diplomacy occurred at all levels. However, when it comes to the study of multilevel interaction between the different operators at the political, governmental and grass-roots levels there are some challenges involved in researching contacts in the field of Soviet–American cultural encounters.

My current research on Soviet primary materials has shown that, despite the fact that Soviet performers were constantly struggling under the pressures of the Soviet system within a top-down structure of control and command, many of them belonged to the creative and intellectual 'stratum' of the Soviet Union. This means that not only were these performers more privileged in getting travel permits to perform on foreign concert tours, but they also enjoyed considerable financial and material privileges – at least at first. One field in today's research of Soviet elite performers, which still offers much material for further study, is this particular link between music and finances.[11]

Despite the oppressive and dominant aspect of government control, supervision and financial exploitation, Soviet performers were still allowed some freedom, for example in their limited grass-roots contacts with fellow American musicians and

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[9] Keohane and Nye, *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, 425. See literature about the importance of non-state actors within the official music policies of the United States: Harlow Robinson, *The Last Impresario: The Life and Times of Sol Hurok* (New York: Viking, 1995); Ansari, 'Shaping the Policies of Cold War'; Ansari, 'Aaron Copland'. See also Victor Rosenberg, *Soviet–American Relations 1953–1960: Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange during the Eisenhower Presidency* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005), 122–72; Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 224–9.

[10] More research is needed to study the grass-roots actors in cultural diplomacy.

[11] In connection with Soviet performers, there is material available regarding their concert fees from the official agreements with the Soviet government supervising their concert activities, and also some sources pertaining to foreign concert firms and impresarios.

conductors whom they encountered during their foreign concert tours.[12] However, the former Soviet archival sources rarely reveal the scope and level of these grass-roots encounters and interactions between the Soviets and the Americans during these tours. Such contacts are very difficult to track down, because the primary source materials preserved in the former Soviet archives are only in the form of official correspondence between Soviet organisations responsible for cultural exchanges and foreign impresarios and concert firms. This correspondence, because of its 'official' nature, barely reveals anything about grass-roots or personal encounters. Meanwhile, other generous archival resources of the former Soviet archives – for example the archives of the Soviet Ministry of Culture and Goskontsert – will considerably enhance our understanding of Soviet cultural diplomatic relations, and the processes of using the best Soviet performers as tools of Soviet foreign diplomacy. When it comes to studying the archives of American sub-state actors, it is much easier to research choirs and orchestras than American concert firms and impresarios, the records of which are rarely opened and are scattered among various archives.[13]

Sviatoslav Richter Crossing the Iron Curtain

Soviet artists who were sent on foreign concert tours were selected using the criteria of their impact on foreign audiences. Therefore the Soviets attached their highest hopes to their top performers when sending them overseas. The sending of musicians to America was decided on a case-by-case basis. This was because Soviet security authorities were hesitant to allow the best performers out of the country, in particular to the United States, due to the perceived risks of ideological compromise or, even worse, defection. The risk of defection was, of course, multiplied when these cultural luminaries were sent to the capitalist world. The United States in particular was problematic as a destination in the eyes of the Soviet regime, because touring Soviet musicians were vulnerable to every imaginable allurement that the open American democracy, political system and culture could offer. For almost 35 years the doors remained completely closed. Not

[12] Meri Herrala, 'David Oistrakh and Sviatoslav Richter Stepping through the Iron Curtain', in *Ei ihan teorian mukaan*, Kimmo Rentola and Mikko Majander (eds) (Tampere: Finnish Society for Labour History, 2012), 241–60.

[13] For example, the materials of private firms, such as negotiations and contracts, can be very difficult to uncover. Also, American non-governmental organisations were often regulated by the State Department, although the methods and extent of control differed between the superpowers. See some of the latest research from the Soviet side in Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds?'

until 1955, when pianist Emil Gilels and violinist David Oistrakh toured the US, did the back door of cultural diplomacy finally open.[14]

Despite the fact that the Soviet Ministry of Culture had received offers from representatives of the biggest Western concert agents in the United States, England, Italy, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, Sviatoslav Richter was withheld from the West by the Soviet government for a long time. Richter had already performed a vigorous concert schedule, giving approximately 120 concerts per year, touring in Eastern European communist countries and in the People's Republic of China.[15] Because he had became known in the West, thanks to his recordings that had captured the attention of music lovers – even in those parts of the world where he had not yet set foot – the international concert firms joined the mission of obtaining Richter to perform in the West. Richter, already a 45-year-old pianist, was still performing behind the Iron Curtain, not only because of the risk of defection but also for political reasons connected to his German background and his family members living in West Germany.[16]

By 1958 the pressure to send Richter to the West had begun to increase. Some of this pressure was of a financial nature. Due to the increasing awareness on the part of the Soviet leadership of the immense financial values of Western concerts by Soviet performing artists, the Soviet government became more open to Richter's outreach to the West.

On January 1958 the Soviet Minister of Culture, Nikolai Aleksandrovich Mikhailov, recommended to the Central Committee that they should send Richter to Great Britain. The Central Committee Department of Culture, however, turned down Mikhailov's proposal in April, and the secretaries of the Central Committee Department of Ideology, Culture and International Party Relations accepted the decision of the Central Committee of Culture with their signatures.[17]

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[14] RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 565, l. 3 (O kulturnykh sviaziakh s Soedinennymi Shtatami Ameriki). See also RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 127, rolik 5847, ll. 163–70 (O kulturnykh sviaziakh s Soedinennymi Shtatami Ameriki); RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 86, ll. 163–9 (O kulturnykh sviaziakh s Soedinennymi Shtatami Ameriki).

[15] Richter started to travel in Eastern communist countries during the 1950s. See a list of Richter's concerts in Russia and overseas in Bruno Monsaingeon, *Richter: Dialogi, Dnevniki* (Moscow: Klassika-XXI, 2010), 430.

[16] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, l. 159 (N.A. Mikhailov, TsK, 7 dekabria 1959 g.); RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, 159–61 (Zapiska Ministerstva kultury SSSR o neobkhodimosti rassmotreniia voprosa o vyezde pianista S.T.Rikhtera na gastroli za granitsu, 7 dekabria 1959 g.). See more about the background of the procedures for sending Richter to the West in Natalia Donig, '"Der bedeutendste Pianist der Welt lebt hinter dem Eisernen Vorhang": Svjatoslav Richter und die Zwänge sowjetischer Musikpolitik im Kalten Krieg', *Jahrbuch des BKGE*, vol. 20 (2012), 189–214; Herrala, 'David Oistrakh and Sviatoslav Richter'; Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds?' 18; see also Paul Moore, 'Sviatoslav Richter: Sequestered Genius', *High Fidelity Magazine*, October 1958.

[17] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 72, rolik 5836 (N. Mikhailov, TsK KPSS, 14 ianvaria 1958 g., ll. 27–8; ibid. (Zam otdelom kultury D. Polikarpov, zam. sektorom otdela kultury

The issue was, however, left on the table; but in November Mitrofan Kuzmich Belotserkovsky, the director of the Moscow Philharmonic Society, approached Yekaterina Alexeyevna Furtseva at the Central Committee on the matter. Furtseva would become the new Minister of Culture after Mikhailov in 1960.[18] In December 1959 Mikhailov tried to convince the officials at the Central Committee that Richter should be sent to either the United States or Great Britain.[19] Only after this was Belotserkovsky's letter sent to the chief of the State Security Committee (KGB), who noted the matter on 12 December 1959.[20]

The decision to allow Richter's visit to the West was made when the Central Committee Department of Culture confirmed the recommendation of the KGB to send Richter to Finland on 25 February 1960.[21] The process of sending Richter to the West was completed when the resolution of the Central Committee Ideological Commission on 25 March 1960 confirmed the proposal of the Soviet Ministry of Culture to send Richter to Finland for April and May 1960 under the leadership of Belotserkovsky for 10 days.[22] In principle, this decision also foreshadowed the decision to lengthen Richter's 'leash' by sending him further to the West – particularly to America. However, I have not encountered the specific document in the former Soviet archives indicating the decision to send Richter to America.

Richter's allegiance to the Soviet government was tested when the pianist played in Helsinki and Turku in May 1960.[23] Because of its position as a neutral

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B. Iarustovskii, 4 aprelia 1958 g. TsK KPSS), l. 31.

[18] 'Pismo direktora Moskovkoi gosudarstvennoi filarmonii M.K. Belotserkovskogo E.A. Furtsevoi s prosboi dat razreshenie S.T. Rihteru na gastroli v kapitalisticheskikh stranakh, 16 noiabria 1959 g.', in V. Iu. Afianin et al., *Kultura i vlast' ot Stalina do Gorbacheva: Apparat TsK KPSS i kul'tura 1958–1964. Dokumenty* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2005), no. 100, 306–7); RGANI, F. 5, op. 30, delo 315, ll. 180–81; Donig, 'Der bedeutendste Pianist der Welt', Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds?', 16.

[19] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, ll. 159–61 (Zapiska Ministerstva kultury SSSR o neobkhodimosti rassmotreniia voprosa o vyezde pianista S. T. Rihtera na gastroli za granitsu, 7 dekabria 1959 g.). See also in Afianin et al., *Apparat TsK KPSS*, no. 103, 313–14.

[20] 'Pismo direktora Moskovkoi gosudarstvennoi filarmonii M.K. Belotserkovskogo E.A. Furtsevoi s prosboi dat razreshenie S.T. Rihteru na gastroli v kapitalisticheskikh stranakh, 16 noiabria 1959 g'., in Afianin et al., *Apparat TsK KPSS*, no. 100, 306–7.

[21] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, l. 167 (Zapiska Ministerstva kultury SSSR o neobkhodimosti rassmotreniia voprosa o vyezde pianista S. T. Rihtera na gastroli za granitsu, 7 dekabria 1959 g)'. See also Afianin et al.., *Apparat TsK KPSS*, no. 114, 359.

[22] RGANI, F. 11, op. 1, delo 63, l. 77; Leonid Maksimenkov, *Muzyka vmesto sumbura. Kompozitory i muzykanty v strane sovetov 1917–1991. Dokumenty* (Mezhdunarodnyi Fond Demokratiia Rossiia XX Vek, 2013), Dokument No. 396 (D. A. Polikarpov i V. P. Tereshkin – TsK KPSS o poezdke S. T. Rihtera v soprovozhdenii M. K. Belotserkovskogo na gastroli v Finliandiiu, 14 marta 1960 g.), 541–2; RGANI, F. 11, op. 1, delo 495, l. 121.

[23] See archival documents about Richter's concert tour in Finland, RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1658; RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, l. 167 (Zapiska otdela kultury TsK KPSS o razreshenii vyezda S. T. Rikhteru na gastroli v Finliandiiu 25 Fevralia 1960 g.); Afianin et al., *Apparat TsK KPSS*, no. 144, 359; Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds?', 16.

country between the East and the West, Finland was seen as a safe experimental location in which to test the viability of this cultural outreach by evaluating the performers' loyalties to the Soviet regime. The Finnish–Soviet Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance of 1948 facilitated the use of Finland as a gateway to the West for Soviet artists and artistic delegations through which increasing numbers of Soviet performers travelled further into the capitalist West. Of course this also further exposed them to the temptations of democracy. Richter's concerts in Finland showed that artistic excellence produced great visibility for the Soviet Union. This motivated the Soviets to continue negotiations with foreign impresarios on foreign concert tours for their soloists.[24] Richter's Finnish success was a crucial first step in expanding his concert tours beyond the Iron Curtain to the West and establishing his role as a 'Soviet cultural diplomat'.[25]

One reason for America being selected as the destination for Richter's first Western concert tour after Finland was that the Soviet Union had, in January 1958, signed an official agreement on exchanges in the cultural, technical and educational fields with the United States (the so-called Lacy–Zarubin Agreement).[26] A corresponding reason for American interest was that high-profile concert firms in the United States with highly enterprising impresarios – Columbia Artists Management, directed by Frederick Schang and his son, and Hurok Artists Inc. (vrt. Sivu 100, rivi 2), headed by Solomon Izrailovich Gurkov (Sol Hurok) – were competing to secure contracts for the foreign engagements of leading Soviet soloists. During one of his business trips to Moscow in 1958, Hurok succeeded in lobbying the Soviet authorities for getting not only Richter but also other Soviet musicians to perform in the United States.[27]

When Richter was finally sent to the United States, it was in the aftermath of the U-2 incident – a high-profile conflict between the superpowers involving the shooting down of an American spy plane that had been photographing Soviet military bases over Soviet air space on 1 May 1960. I believe that the decision to

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[24] For articles in which Richter's Finnish concerts are remembered as causing immense interest, see Harold Schonberg, 'Legend Out of Russia', *The Griffin,* November 1960; Day Thorpe, 'Richter Box Office Pull is Mystifying Tribute', *Sunday Star* (Washington, DC), 27 November 1960; Stephen S. Rosenfeld, 'Richter is Mystery Genius to West', *Washington Post*, 21 December 1960; Max Frenkel, 'Moiseyev Troupe Due to Return; Richter Will Also Come to U.S. Dancers and Pianist Slated for Visit as Soviet Puts Stress on Exchange', *New York Times*, 7 June 1960, 5.

[25] Read more about Richter's Finnish concerts in Herrala, 'David Oistrakh and Sviatoslav Richter'.

[26] TIAS 3975, 13–22.

[27] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 127 (rolik 5847), 163–70 (O kulturnykh sviaziakh s Soedinennymi Shtatami Ameriki). Source on the agreement of Richter's concert tour: RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1628, l. 5 – contract between Goskontsert (S. V. Shashkin) and Hurok Artist Incorporated (personally with S. Hurok). The decision to send Richter to the West was confirmed in February as well as March 1960; and, even after that, the negotiations for sending Richter to America continued.

send Richter to the United States so soon after the U-2 scandal, which happened just a few days before Richter was sent to Finland, was made because it was extremely important for the Soviet Union to continue showcasing its high-quality musicians and their prestigious performances to shape favourable images of the Soviet Union. This was especially important during the time when diplomatic relations of the superpowers were strained. Obviously, the continuation of this outreach against the backdrop of the U-2 scandal demonstrated the true cultural diplomatic value of Soviet musicians as assets of 'soft-power' diplomacy.

Despite the U-2 incident, the need to continue the discussions on further cultural exchanges was recognised both by the new Soviet Minister of Culture, Yekaterina Furtseva, and the American State Department.[28] Therefore Furtseva received Sol Hurok within 48 hours of Hurok's coming to the Soviet Union, despite the fact that he had offered to postpone his scheduled business trip to Moscow. Both sides agreed that the continuance of discussions on further cultural exchanges after the U-2 incident would be an appropriate course of action.[29] Furtseva's prompt reception of Hurok underscores the high priority placed on such exchanges.

Richter's strategic 'dispatch' to the United States after the U-2 scandal also had another interesting aspect. The scandal itself stressed the importance of choosing America as Richter's destination in the West. It could be argued that the sending of Richter, who had been vigorously sought after for engagements in America by the State Department and also by American concert firms and impresarios, was a tactical manoeuvre by the Soviet Union to show that its strength in the field of culture remained unharmed despite the fact that the invasion of its territory had revealed its secrets to its counterpart.[30] The Iron Curtain hid many things, but Soviet art (and its power) was no secret!

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[28] The fact that the State Department wanted Richter is stated in Max Frenkel, 'Moiseyev Troupe Due to Return'; and 'Friendly Exchanges to Moscow', *National Guardian* (New York), 1 August 1960. Because these articles do not strictly say when the discussions between Hurok and Furtseva occurred it can be assumed that it must have been after the 1 May U-2 incident and before 7 June, when the *New York Times* article was published. During these discussions Richter's visit to America was obviously also discussed.

[29] Frenkel, 'Moiseyev Troupe Due to Return'; 'Friendly Exchanges to Moscow'. More research on this case will be conducted at the archives of American State Department. Even though no documents have yet been found concerning a direct connection between the decision to send Richter to America instead of Great Britain and the U-2 incident, this does not alter the fact that the discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States about the cultural exchanges continued although their relations were at a stalemate. The decision to continue the discussions therefore increases the importance of culture as a form of 'soft power' in the relations between the superpowers.

[30] However, it is not known in which month Richter's sending to America was decided and if his dispatch to the United States was at this point under discussion. It was decided in February and March 1960 that he would be sent to Finland. Presumably, the decision about Richter's trip to America was made after his Finnish concert tour in May 1960.

Richter's dispatch to America can also be interpreted as a countermeasure to the American cultural 'attack' on the Soviet Union in the form of young Texan pianist Van Cliburn in May 1960. Cliburn had won the first International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow in 1958.[31] The Soviets needed to react to the positive images that the visits of American soloists and symphonic orchestras produced in the Soviet mind about the American system. Such visits increased at the end of 1950s.[32]

Richter's American Concert Tour in its Socio-Economic Context

Hurok's firm had stressed the importance of Richter's visit to America as an important contribution to American–Soviet relations. This concept had been previously stressed long before Richter's dispatch to America.[33] Not only the American concert-going public, but also American concert firms and record companies had been waiting for Richter's tour to America, which is why the competition between these companies had been so vigorous.[34] According to the conditions of the contract between Hurok Artists Inc. and the Soviet State Concert Agency Goskontsert, Richter was obligated to give 25 concerts during his eight-week engagement in the United States from October to December 1960.[35] Richter would be paid $4,000 by Hurok's company for each New York concert. In other cities the fee was set at $3,000 plus 25 per cent from the net profit. However, he would be paid only once if he performed the same programme during two different performances with a symphony orchestra. Because of his vast repertory (between 25 and 30 complete recital programmes, plus a slew of concertos) Richter had no problems playing new compositions in each concert.[36] Altogether, Richter

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[31] See Cliburn's Tchaikovsky Competition in Afianin et al., *Apparat TsK KPSS*, no. 18 (Zapiska Ministerstva Kultury SSSR ob itogakh mezhdunarodnogo konkursa pianistov i skripachei im. P. I. Chaikovskogo, 22 aprelia 1958 g.), 50–58.

[32] See for example Jonathan Rosenberg's work on the tours of American symphony orchestras to the Soviet Union, 'Fighting the Cold War with Violins and Trumpets'.

[33] RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1619 (Ralph Parker to Alexander Nikolayevich Kuznetsov, Moscow, 20 July 1960), 94.

[34] See Columbia courting Richter to perform in America during the season of 1957/58 and Columbia Records asking Richter to record in England, RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 24, rolik 5827.

[35] RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1622, l. 8 (Pismo Huroka V. T. Stepanovu 4-go aprelia 1960 g.); RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1628, l. 5 (contract between Goskontsert and Hurok Artists). The issue of sending Richter to the West was confirmed by the Central Committee Department of Culture in February 1960 when it confirmed the KGB decision allowing Richter to travel to the West; see RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 103, l. 159 (N.A. Mikhailov, TsK, 8 dekabria 1959 g.).

[36] RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1628, l. 5 (contract between Goskontsert and Hurok Artists); 'Legendary Virtuoso', *Time*, 16 June 1958, 1.

performed in 16 American and two Canadian cities. However, the concert fees would be considerably smaller in the 1960 contract.

On his first trip to America, Richter was escorted by two officials, or 'gorillas' as they were known among Soviet musicians. These men worked for the KGB, although often they also had other affiliations. One of these 'chauffeurs' (or 'secretaries' as they were listed in the official travel documents) was Mitrofan Belotserkovsky, the director of the Moscow Philharmonic. His status as Richter's official travel companion during his American tour was included in Richter's American contract.[37] Richter was escorted also by one Anatoly,[38] a young man who had just graduated from the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs. Belotserkovsky was supervising him, and giving him instructions on how to follow and keep an eye on Richter during the trip. Richter's entourage had to make sure that he did not defect or engage in other activities forbidden by the Soviet government. The possibility of defection was thought to be even stronger in Richter's case because he was not a party member. Richter's job was 'only to play', as Belotserkovsky kept stressing, and these men certainly tried their best to keep Richter focused on this single task.[39]

But Richter had no intention of defecting. In fact, he had no enthusiasm even for performing in America. It was not that Richter was not happy to serve his country as a cultural diplomat by performing overseas, but rather that he was not particularly happy to travel to America. 'Since he did not fly, and the transportation in America was not very good, he found it very tiring to be constantly on the road because of the great distances that needed to be covered. He would rather travel in Italy, France or anywhere else in Europe', as Richter's cousin, Walter Moskalew, remembers.[40] Richter returned to perform in America only a few times, in 1965 and 1970.

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[37] RGANI, F. 5, op. 36, delo 105, l. 25 (Polikarpov D. i Iarustovsky TsK KPSS 14 maia 1959 g.). Belotserkovsky was nominated as a candidate as a director of Goskontsert in 1959: RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1628, l. 5 (contract between Goskontsert and Hurok Artists). See also RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1619, ll. 65, 79.

[38] Richter's travel companion during his American tour in 1964, Anthony Phillips (translator of Sergey Prokofiev's diaries from Russia to English), vaguely remembers Anatoly from London when working for London-based impresario Lilian Hochhauser. Phillips thinks that Anatoly's family name might have been Ponomaryov. Phillips via Richter's cousin, Walter Moskalew, to the author on 18 May 2013.

[39] Richter's autobiography by Bruno Monsaingeon, *Sviatoslav Richter: Notebooks and Conversations*, trans. Stewart Spencer (London: Faber, 2001), 105; Karl Aage Rasmussen, *Sviatoslav Richter: Pianist* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2013), 157.

[40] Walter Moskalew states these as the reasons Richter did not particularly like to perform in America. Correspondence between the author and Richter's cousin, Walter Moskalew, 15 May, 2013. See also Rasmussen, *Sviatoslav Richter*, 156. American newspapers stressed Richter's hatred of flying on several occasions during his concert tour. See also newspaper articles in RGALI, F. 2750, op. 1, delo 25; Stephen S. Rosenfeld, 'Richter is Mystery Genius to West', *Washington Post*, 21 December 1960; Josef Mossman, 'Richter Proves to Detroit He's World's Top Pianist', *Detroit News*, no date.

Before the overseas concert tours, the Soviet performers were summoned to the Central Committee, where they had to sign several papers, among which was an agreement in which they had to promise that when they were walking on the streets in foreign countries they would not speak to anyone. It was also especially important that true Soviet citizens maintain not only their ideological purity but also their moral and physical one – after all, they were in a capitalist country. After returning to the Soviet Union, every Soviet performer and their escorts were also under an obligation to write a comprehensive report about their activities during the trip. Other Soviet citizens who were privileged enough to be allowed to travel were not under pressure to write such reports, but they were certainly interviewed by KGB agents upon their return to their home country.[41]

Unfortunately, I have not encountered any reports on Richter's American concert tours from the former Soviet archives. In practice, Richter never allowed his 'secretaries' to dictate what he could or could not do. Therefore there were practically no limits to his people-to-people contacts. However, Richter did not care much about them, preferring instead to spend most of his free time with his American relatives.[42] This is why the sources about Richter's people-to-people contacts are rather limited. They are restricted to his fleeting contacts with the audience during his concerts in the form of: applause and answering them with encores; brief encounters on the podium when receiving flowers from his fans; short interviews backstage; and answers translated by the official translator.[43] Richter was also asked to play to entertain guests during the receptions organised in his honour – for example at the Soviet embassy in Washington DC in connection with his Washington recitals.[44] These evenings were important avenues for Soviet–American cooperation, for the backing of important people-to-people contacts stressed by the United States president, Dwight D. Eisenhower.[45] During the cocktail evening at the Soviet embassy in Washington, the Soviet diplomats, rather than Richter, got the chance to mingle with their foreign colleagues – and obviously with such cultural figures of the city as its local impresario, Patrick Hayes. Hurok had given Hayes a chance to organise Richter's concerts in Washington.[46] Richter obviously enjoyed some freedom between concerts, in the

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[41] Discussion between the author and Lev Grigorievich Ginzburg in Moscow, summer 2011.

[42] Correspondence between the author and Walter Moskalew; also Anthony Phillips's answer to questions by the author via Moskalew, 18 May 2013.

[43] However, in his autobiography Richter remembers that he and his entourage were invited to violinist Efrem Zimbalist's home; Monsaingeon, *Sviatoslav Richter*, 105.

[44] Dorothy McCardle, 'Rachmaninoff and Hi. S. Richter Played it Friendly', *Washington Post*, 22 December 1960; RGALI , F. 2750, op. 1, delo 25.

[45] Eisenhower's People to People Ambassador programmes. See for example the document at the President Eisenhower Library in Abilene Texas, http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/.

[46] Delos Smith, 'The Music World: Romantic Mien is Secret of Richter's Greatness', *Washington Post*, 20 November 1960. Patrick Hayes ran the Hayes Concert Bureau from

form of sightseeing and during the train trips from destination to destination, but the extent to which he was allowed to meet representatives of the American music world is not mentioned, even in his autobiography.

In the beginning, the touring artists had some economic and material advantages, but the situation changed soon after Goskontsert's establishment in 1956, and with the expansion of foreign travel opportunities for the top musicians.[47] During Richter's engagements in America, Goskontsert SSSR started to plunder the substantial foreign concert commissions and fees from the hands of these artists. According to Robinson, Goskontsert paid Soviet performers on tours abroad only the equivalent (at artificially low exchange rates) in foreign currency of the standard they received in rubles in the USSR. This means that the Soviet government stole most of the concert fees from the Soviet soloists. The rest of the fee was turned over to the local Soviet embassy. Additional minor sums in rubles were paid to the soloists for their trouble in representing their country.[48] The pianist also had to pay for his own meals and personal expenses. However, Hurok used to give the soloists extra cash payments of several hundred dollars 'under the table'.[49] How Hurok managed to sneak these cash payments past 'gorillas' is an interesting question.

1947 in the Washington area. Dana Attraction from San Francisco was involved in organising the San Francisco concert (see *Alameda California Times Star*, 11 November 1960), and the Phoenix concert was arranged by impresario Jessie Harper Linde, who had opened her box office, Linde Box Office Productions, in 1936 (see Joie Davidson, 'Richter, Genius at Piano, Wins Phoenicians' Bravos', *Arizona Republic*, 21 November 1960). Boston's local impresario Aaron Richard was behind the organisation of Richter's Symphony Hall concert on 11 December (Kevin Kelly, 'Richter in Second Solo Symphony Hall Program', *Boston Globe*, 14 December 1960). On the 21 December Soviet Embassy reception after Richter's second concert in Washington on 20 December 1960, see McCardle, 'Rachmaninoff and Richter Played it Friendly'.

[47] Archival materials do not show exactly when the situation changed for the worse and the economic conditions of the soloists deteriorated. However, the interviews of Jacques Leiser and Lev Ginzburg by the author show a different picture than, for example, Harold C. Schonberg, 'Soviet Musicians Shop for Goodies: Gilels Buys Steinway Grand – Oistrakh is Inspecting "Fiddles" at $15,000 Up', *New York Times*, 22 December 1955, 19. Milstein's memoirs, however, back up the information of the *New York Times*; see Nathan Milstein and Solomon Volkov, *From Russia to the West: The Musical Memoirs and Reminiscences of Nathan Milstein* (New York: Holt, 1990), 218. Therefore, it can be concluded that the economic conditions for soloists might have become worse after 1955. Leiser's reply to interview questions by the author on 17 April 2012.

[48] Robinson, *The Last Impresario*, 369. Also, according to Leiser (a Paris representative of the EMI record company), the Soviet government took most of the concert fees, giving only 10 per cent of them to the Soviet soloists. See also Milstein and Volkov, *From Russia to the West*, 217. I am also grateful to Richter aficionado Antti Sairanen for his comments based on interviews of Soviet musicians (Sairanen interview with the author, spring 2013).

[49] Robinson, *The Last Impresario*, 369; Sairanen interview.

Richter's earnings in 1960, according to the agreement between Hurok Artists Inc. and Carnegie Hall for his piano recitals, would certainly be minor compared to that which was agreed by Hurok and Goskontsert. According to the agreement between Hurok Artists Inc. and Carnegie Hall of 26 August 1960, Richter would be paid $525 for one concert. Since he played five concerts, his earnings would total $4,125 with a $1,500 deposit. There is no information concerning what profits the concerts produced in their totality and which sums Carnegie Hall and Hurok Artists earned from the Richter concerts. According to the 28 August 1960 agreement, which Hurok signed regarding the concert fees for Richter for his 23 and 26 December Carnegie Hall concerts, Richter would be paid a $600 deposit and $525 for each concert – altogether two concerts with the deposit would bring him $1,650. Richter was paid on 15 April, 19 April and 3 May – $775 for each concert with a $300 deposit, which totalled $2,625.[50] It must be stressed that most of the money from Richter's concert fees went into the 'pockets' of Goskontsert.[51] How much remained for Richter is not yet known.

Cultural Exchanges in the Context of Cold War Cultural Competition

The transmission of Soviet cultural influences across the Iron Curtain made possible the competition between Eastern socialism and Western capitalism for attracting the attention of foreign audiences. Soviet artists who were sent on foreign concert tours were selected using the criterion of their impact on foreign audiences. By sending such prestigious artists as Richter on foreign concert tours, the Soviet government managed to boost their country's perceived status in the international arena, and in the hearts and minds of Western audiences. By utilising popularised high culture, the Soviets managed to compensate for their inadequacy in the areas of material progress, consumerism and living standards when compared to the United States. The high prestige of Soviet artists was considered to be a far more efficient method by which to influence foreign audiences than for example the modernist tendencies of popular music and jazz – music which was considered 'barren' 'low culture', according to the party's 'official' opinion in the Soviet Union – a medium which America kept sending to the Soviet Union. Therefore music and dance were often mentioned first in the bilateral cultural exchange agreements signed from the end of the 1950s.[52]

Hurok could not stress enough the importance of Richter's concert tours to Soviet–American relations when writing to V.T. Stepanov, the Soviet Minister of Culture, on 9 December 1960 after critics had praised Richter. Hurok believed

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[50] Carnegie Hall archives, Hurok Attractions Inc., no. 1125, compl. 10/28/1960.

[51] Carnegie Hall archive, Hurok Attractions Inc., no. 1030, compl. 8/26/1960.

[52] Paul Henry Lang, *New York Herald Tribune*, 20 October 1960; RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1603, l. 17 (Hurok Artists Inc. 9-go dekabria 1950 V.T. Stepanov Ministerstvo Kultury Moskva SSSR).

that Richter's performances could accomplish considerably more than merely diplomatic missions. He believed that such exchanges would promote cultural and spiritual connections between the American and Soviet people.[53]

It also seems, that despite the reciprocal nature of the cultural exchanges, the Soviet government used their cultural exchange agreement with the United States more enthusiastically than the Americans did, according to the official report of the Soviet Ministry of Culture to the Central Committee regarding the exchange of soloists between the Soviet Union and the United States. In this report containing information about the cultural exchanges actualised between the USSR and the US during the period 1955–72, the number of Soviet classical music soloists to the US outnumbered the number of American soloists sent to the Soviet Union.[54] In 10 cases out of 17, the Soviet Union sent more soloists to America, and only in five cases did the Americans send more soloists than the Soviets. Altogether, the Americans sent 78 soloists plus their two accompanying pianists to the Soviet Union, whereas the Russians sent 110 soloists and a delegation of soloists with two leaders to the United States.[55] Therefore, despite plans for reciprocal exchanges, the plans were not always fulfilled in practice. Yet the methods of waging the cultural Cold War can be described as reactions to each other's contribution to the exchange of soloists and artistic groups. The Americans compensated for their lack of soloists sent to the Soviet Union in some years by sending larger companies or symphony orchestras instead. Thus a cultural 'arms race' developed. But, unlike the military escalation, this 'arms race' established better relations and enhanced the mutual admiration of the adversaries.

There seems to be a correlation to this observation in the fact that the American concert firms and impresarios noticed the immense financial potential of Soviet titans. Therefore market forces increasingly favoured the sending of Soviet artists to the West, but not the other way around. Obviously, the Americans did not benefit economically to the extent the Soviets did from these concert tours, because there were no Russian impresarios or market forces operating to ensure that the performances of American soloists and orchestras would create huge box-office revenues for Soviet government cash registers or for Americans. Instead, the Soviet government subsidised cultural production.[56] Richter's fame, which arose

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[53] RGALI, F. 2329, op. 8, delo 1603, l. 17 (Hurok Artists Inc. 9-go dekabria 1950 V.T. Stepanov Ministerstvo Kultury Moskva SSSR).

[54] See both RGANI, F. 5, op. 64, delo 126, ll. 20–24 (Spravka ob obmenakh hudozhestvennymi kollektivami mezhdu SSSR i SShA po linii Ministerstva kultury SSSR s 1955 po 1973 g.) in N. G. Tomilina et al., *Kultura i vlast ot Stalin do Gorbacheva: Apparat TsK KPSS i Kultura 1965–1972. Dokumenty* (Moscow: Rosspen 2009), prilozhenie 2, ll. 1089–92 and (Spravka ob obmene solistami mezhdu SSSR i SShA s 1955 po 1972 g.), ibid., prilozhenie 3, 1092–7.

[55] RGANI, F. 5, op. 64, delo 126, ll. 25–9 (Spravka ob obmene solistami mezhdu SSSR i SShA s 1955 po 1972 g.), in Tomilina et al., *Kultura i vlast*, prilozhenie 2, 1092–7.

[56] Former Soviet sources do not reveal much about the payments given to American soloists and companies travelling to the Soviet Union. This information needs to be found

from his first appearances behind the Iron Curtain, ensured that every American concert hall was filled for his performances.

During his American tour, Richter gave approximately 25 concerts. Most of Richter's American concerts, like his five New York City concerts at Carnegie Hall's main stage in October, were more intimate recitals than concerts in which he performed as a soloist with symphony orchestras. Richter started his American concert tour in Chicago, performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Leinsdorf on 15 October. On 21 October, Richter performed Dvorak and Brahms piano concertos with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy at the Philadelphia Academy of Music.[57] Grass-roots contacts had played a major role not only in getting Richter and other musicians to America, but also in performing with leading American symphony orchestras. Because the members of the Philadelphia Orchestra (which had got a chance to perform with Richter in Leningrad during their first tour to the Soviet Union in May and June of 1958) had been awed by the craftsmanship of the pianist, Ormandy had been among the Americans who had been the most eager to influence the Soviet Ministry of Culture and Goskontsert to give permission for Richter to travel to America.[58] Richter also played with the Boston Symphony, conducted by Charles Munch on 1 November – an orchestra which had made its USSR premiere in 1956.

Despite his demanding schedule, Richter also had time to record after his performances with the orchestras – with the Chicago Symphony and Erich Leinsdorf on 17 October (concert 15 October) and with the Boston Symphony and Charles Munch on 2 and 3 November (concert 1 November). Richter also recorded in a New York studio on 29 November. He also had an all-Beethoven recording session with RCA Victor in December, one of the few official recordings made during his American tour.

The Soviet government's strategic attempt was to show that Soviets were actually better musicians than Americans. Perhaps, therefore, they accepted Richter's decision to perform a Western classical repertory – Ludwig van Beethoven, Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Joseph Haydn – that was more familiar to the foreign audiences than a Soviet repertory. However, he preferred to play especially works that were commonly ignored.[59] Richter chose his own programmes, using as his primary criterion which pieces would go together and

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from American archives.

[57] Dvorak's Piano Concerto in G minor, opus 33 and Brahms's Second Piano Concerto in B flat, opus 83; Edwing H. Schloss, 'At the Academy: Russian at "Summit" in Pianist Debut Here', *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 October 1960.

[58] RGALI, F. 3162, op. 1, delo. 12 (Dokumenty o gastrole v SSSR Filadelfitskogo simfonicheskogo orkestra); John Milder, 'Sviatoslav Richter: New Cultural Sputnik in Orbit', *High Fidelity Magazine*, October 1960, 29; Paul Moore, 'Sviatoslav Richter. Sequestered Genius', *High Fidelity Magazine*, October 1958.

[59] Haydn Sonata in C; Robert Schumann's Novelettes, opus 21, Nos. 1, 2 and 8; and some neglected Beethoven sonatas.

which would not. He especially played works of composers that he felt deserved a wider audience. Additionally, he delighted in discovering neglected compositions and bringing them to new audiences.[60]

The fact that the Soviets performed many Western works raises the question of what advantages there might have been in having Soviet virtuosos play music by Western composers, as opposed to having them perform Russian works. Would it have been better to stick to the works of Russian or even Soviet composers, to further solidify the 'superiority' strategy of the Soviet system that had produced this kind of high-quality music, and leave no room for doubt?

American critics also recognised Richter's choice of showcasing the modernist works of one of the leading and most distinguished composers of the country – Sergey Prokofiev, a personal friend of Richter. Playing lots of Prokofiev (Richter was well known for his all-Prokofiev programmes) was obviously an idiosyncrasy of Richter. The Soviets backed it because Richter's Prokofiev renditions had real propaganda value in showing the level of culture the Soviet Union represented.[61]

Conclusions

Between 1955 and 1973, more than 2,000 Soviet artists, dancers and artistic groups toured the United States.[62] The extent to which Soviet experts were sent to the West, and the number of their concerts overseas, suggests the importance of their professionalism to the Soviet Union in its ideological struggle. Music, with its 'soft power', certainly had an impact on the relations between the superpowers. Furthermore, the Soviet government soon noticed that successful concert tours by these performing titans created not only political and diplomatic credibility for the Soviet Union, but also financial legitimacy in the form of international record deals and commissions by foreign impresarios. The competition for record deals between different organisations – for example, the recording rights of Richter's

[60] Correspondence between the author and Walter Moskalew, 15 May 2013.

[61] Richter's second concert at Carnegie Hall on Sunday evening 23 October was dedicated solely to Prokofiev; Jay S. Harrison, 'Sviatoslav Richter', *New York Herald Tribune*, 24 October 1960; Mike Newberry, 'The Holy Fire of Sviatoslav Richter', *The Worker*, November 1960.

[62] Tomilina et al., *Kultura i vlast*, prilozhenie 2 (Spravka ob obmenakh hudozhestvennymi kollektivami mezhdu SSSR i SShA po linii Ministerstva kultury SSSR s 1955 po 1973 g., 1089–92) and ibid., prilozhenie 3 (Spravka ob obmene solistami mezhdu SSSR i SShA s 1955 po 1972 g., 1092–7). The number of Soviet artistic groups and individual soloists sent to the United States rose to 2,277. However, the number of members includes those in such groups as the Soviet Government Folk Dance Ensemble; the Leningrad Opera and Ballet Theatre; the The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kirill Kondrashin; Moiseev's Ensemble, Ice Circus, a Soviet ballet group consisting of male and female dancers; the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra; and Iurlov's Republican Choir Kapella.

concert tours in Finland and America – shows how much was at stake where performances of Soviet artists were concerned.[63]

The importance of cultural exchange as an effective tool and an unwavering channel for diplomacy is proven by the fact that even when diplomatic relations between the superpowers seemed to be at stalemate, there was never a pause in the discussions on cultural exchanges and the signing of new bilateral cultural agreements. When all else failed, and high-level diplomacy was diminished, the back door of culture never closed. However, it is not yet clear whether the monetary value of these concert tours rose above their cultural diplomatic value. Economic motivation certainly played an important role in the continuation of cultural exchanges, especially during the periods of stalled diplomatic relations.

Yet, without the necessary financial information, it is hard to evaluate how much American concert firms profited from the concert tours of Soviet soloists in America. When it came to Americans, naturally the American State Department did not profit financially from the tours of American performers travelling to the Soviet Union because the Soviets did not have a non-governmental system of concert firms and impresarios paying lavish concert fees to Americans. Nor would the American State Department have stolen the fees from American performers. However, the income tax would have somewhat reduced the earnings of American performers. In contrast, the Soviet government commandeered handsome fees in the form of foreign currency from the performances of their Soviet subordinates.

Whereas the foreign concert tours of Soviet soloists were extensively controlled and monitored by Soviet government-level organisations, the Soviets would not have been able to manoeuvre in the field of cultural diplomacy without the non-governmental Western organisations, concert firms, impresarios and even directors of American symphony orchestras. Behind the scenes, these non-governmental actors greatly influenced the decisions to invite these Soviet musicians to the West. Without the tireless lobbying by such actors as Hurok, Ormandy (conductor of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra) and also Richter's entourage in the Soviet Union, Richter would perhaps not have had a chance to perform in the United States. Finland, as a country between the East and the West – and also the Finnish concert organisation Fazer Concert Bureau – played a strong role in making possible Richter's further outreach to the West. Richter's own people-to-people contacts during the trip were obviously limited, but the reception of his concerts has shown that Richter's cultural diplomatic value was certainly prominent.

It is challenging to show the extent to which these attractive diplomatic tools were able to open unofficial connections at grass-roots level, and whether or not they were able to smooth the road for additional diplomatic negotiations in order to improve the relations of the superpowers. In order to further study the role of Soviet performers as tools of 'soft power' in the future, the archival records on Soviet musical interaction with the West should be supplemented with oral-

[63] I am currently working on an additional article about this theme, 'Behind the Bootlegging: Intrigue at Sviatoslav Richter's Carnegie Hall Concerts'.

history sources to facilitate digging deeper into people-to-people communication and influence in these processes. This is an urgent matter, because the generation of the most interesting performers such as David Oistrakh, Sviatoslav Richter and Mstislav Rostropovich has already vanished. However, some individuals who knew them are still with us. These people are our last living links to this important and fascinating period of history.

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Chapter 7

Student Interactions, Race and the Media: The Oberlin College Choir 1964 Tour of the USSR and Romania

Tim Scholl

The story of Cold War cultural exchange has long focused on large-scale exhibitions and festivals, the tours of famous performing and visual artists, and the dissemination of films and writings by well-known film-makers and leading intellectuals. David Caute's *The Dancer Defects* includes chapters on stage and screen, music and dance, and art exhibits.[1] Another foundational text in the study of Cold War cultural exchange, Frances Stonor Saunders's *The Cultural Cold War*, addresses the institutional framework that supported these efforts, and investigates their considerable investment in spreading books, journals and magazines as well.[2] Studies focused on particular art forms, such as Naima Prevots's *Dance for Export*, have been more generous in their considerations of amateur as well as professional artists and organisations, but knowledge of the activities of the many amateur performing-arts groups that traversed the globe in the cultural Cold War's battle for hearts and minds remains comparatively limited.[3]

The 1964 tour of the Soviet Union and Romania undertaken by the Oberlin College Choir under US State Department auspices was one such amateur tour. Although considered extremely successful at the time, like many of the cultural exchange efforts of amateur groups, the attention it received was relatively short-lived and mostly forgotten in the annals of East–West Cold War cultural exchange, unlike the legendary tours of the Gershwin opera *Porgy and Bess* throughout Europe, including the Soviet Union, Latin America and the Middle East in the 1950s, the Moiseyev Dance Company's explosive debut in New York City in 1958, or the New York City Ballet's much-heralded visits to the Soviet Union in 1962 and 1972, to name but a few more prominent, professional examples.

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[1] David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[2] Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 1999).

[3] Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

Certainly, the intended audience for the amateur groups and, in many cases, the cities and venues where they performed, differed greatly from those chosen for well-known professional ensembles, in much the same way that particular groups were deemed more appropriate or potentially effective in different regions of the globe: José Limón's fluent Spanish proved useful in Latin America and Mexico; Martha Graham's sparse aesthetic (and designs by Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi) seemed particularly appropriate for tours of the Far East.

At the time of its selection for the spring 1964 US State Department-sponsored tour of the Soviet Union and Romania, the Oberlin College Choir was considered one of the leading amateur choirs in the US.[4] The 10,000 programmes printed in Moscow for the tour cite the choir's laudatory reviews in *The New York Times* (*NYT*) and the *Philadelphia Enquirer* as examples of 'how the press writes about one of the best choirs in the USA'.[5] *NYT* broke the news of the choir's upcoming tour on October 10, 1963, the day before the State Department made its announcement. The *NYT* reported that the State Department had proposed three university musical groups to the Soviet side, one instrumental and two vocal, and that the Soviets decided on a vocal group and chose the Oberlin Choir. *The NYT* also noted the new experiment that the State Department's Cultural Presentations Program would undertake with the Oberlin tour:[6]

> The trip will be made in March and April, during the school term. This was a deliberate decision by the State Department so that university students in the Soviet Union would have a better chance to hear and meet the Oberlin Choir than they would during the summer vacation period.
>
> Most past student-group exchanges have been made during the summer vacation when meetings with Soviet students are more limited.[7]

This State Department decision not only demonstrates US government interest in person-to-person exchanges in 1963; it also suggests the belief in the potential of student groups to facilitate them.

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[4] Oberlin College is a private liberal-arts college founded in 1833 near Cleveland, Ohio. The Oberlin Conservatory of Music is the oldest continuously operating conservatory in the US. Both the College and Conservatory were surprisingly lively points of US/USSR cultural exchange in the 1960s. At least two delegations of Soviet 'students' visited the campus in those years (though one delegation admitted to being coal miners, given that Soviet students could not afford to visit the US). David Oistrakh and Mstislav Rostropovich performed in Oberlin prior to the choir's Eastern European tour, and met with the students in Moscow.

[5] Tour programme. Robert F. Fountain 30/368. Series IV. Scrapbooks. Folder Russia Tour 1964, Box 3. Oberlin College Archives.

[6] Robert F. Whitney, 'Choir at Oberlin Will Tour Soviet', *New York Times*, October 10, 1963.

[7] Ibid.

In retrospect, the timing of the tour was especially propitious. The selection of a choir from a college with a long and distinguished record of supporting civil rights and that featured three black soloists, just months after the August 1963 March on Washington, where Martin Luther King Jr delivered his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech, would have implications for the ongoing dialogue of race relations that impacted US/USSR student exchanges well into my own days in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s. More importantly, the assassination of President Kennedy in November of the same year, not long after the Oberlin Choir embarked on a marathon schedule of rehearsals to prepare for the tour, would colour many of the choir members' conversations with Soviet and Romanian citizens. Nearly every choir member I have spoken with recalls that discussion as a kind of recurring theme of the tour and of their interactions with Soviet and Romanian citizens.

The American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959 provides additional context for a tour of amateur musicians to the Soviet Union five years later. Primarily an exhibition of consumer goods – with fashion shows, on-site hairstylists and farm equipment – the exhibit also featured a very popular book display, but the atmosphere remained more fairground than a venue for fine arts.[8]

The choir toured the Soviet Union and Romania for 55 days, giving 39 concerts in 14 cities.[9] Its repertory, fairly typical for an amateur choir at the time, included three programmes of music spanning five centuries, sung in seven languages, all of it memorised. Two features of the repertory especially endeared the choir to Soviet audiences. First, the choir sang in Russian, something the equally acclaimed Robert Shaw Chorale had not attempted on their visit to the Soviet Union a few years earlier.[10] The Oberlin Choir sang sacred music by renowned Russian and Soviet choral director Pavel Chesnokov – mostly unperformed in the Soviet era – as well as Russian folk songs. The 'American folk songs' that closed their concerts represented an additional novelty for Soviet audiences. These were, in fact, Negro spirituals featuring black soloists. Although Russian critics praised the choir's performances of standard choral repertory – Mozart, Brahms, madrigals, as well as more contemporary works – it was the particular alchemy of Russian and African American music that seems to have galvanised audiences. David Swain, a student-participant who kept a daily trip log of the tour, recalls a particularly successful concert in late March in Kiev:

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[8] The involvement of Charles and Ray Eames in the design of the exhibition and Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome lent the exhibit high-brow design cachet.

[9] February 29–April 25, 1964, in an appendix of *Cultural Presentations Program of the US Department of State, July 1, 1963–June 30, 1964*. Robert F. Fountain 30/368. Series IV. Scrapbooks. Folder Russia Tour 1964, Box 3. Oberlin College Archives. Cities on the tour included Leningrad, Moscow, Minsk, Ryazan, Kiev, Lvov, Chernovtsy, Kishinev, Odessa, Yalta, Simferopol, Zaporozhye, Ploesti and Bucharest. The tour concluded in New York City, with a concert at Town Hall.

[10] John Stuhr-Rommereim, 'An Interview with Vladislav Chernushenko, Director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory and Glinka Cappella', *Choral Journal*, October (1995): 14.

> The audience went wild! Our audiences get greater and greater. The place was packed and hotter than an indoor swimming pool. We really suffocated. We were told that the crowd of people outside who couldn't get in were so violent that they broke door in, and the latter had to be nailed shut! Our last concert in Kiev was delayed fifteen minutes because of a reported crowd of students making a ruckus because they couldn't get in.[11]

The Oberlin Choir came to prominence under the direction of its charismatic leader, Robert Fountain, a leading US choral conductor at the time. In my interviews with former members of the choir, all have stressed the very important role Fountain played in their development, both as musicians and young adults; and it is clear that the choir members were prepared to do almost anything for their conductor and the choir, including attending the extra Saturday rehearsals that were instituted shortly after the tour was announced in the autumn of 1963, when preparations for the tour began in earnest. David Swain noted the special attention Fountain received after a particularly successful concert in Leningrad: 'Then finally Fountain came out, and he was given another round of applause and promptly surround by a swarm of people seeking autographs. So he was busy for a while.'[12]

Eighty students from both the College and the Conservatory went on the tour, 75 singers and five musicians. Male and female chaperones from the College accompanied them, as did a US State Department official. A Soviet translator/guide accompanied them throughout the USSR portion of the tour.

The Oberlin Choir tour is very well documented, chiefly in the Robert Fountain Collection of the Oberlin College Archives.[13] The director's scrapbook of the tour includes his correspondence with the State Department before and after the tour, newspaper clippings, photos, programmes and even the notes passed to Fountain during intermissions or at the end of concerts, requesting some rather specific encores.[14] Fountain's scrapbook also contains letters and photographs sent to him by choir members after the tour was over and reminiscences of the tour gathered 10 years later by one of the choir members. An audio recording of the group was made in New York City after the tour, and the photographic record is abundant.

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[11] David Swain, 'Russia Trip with Oberlin College Choir, 1964', unpublished trip log, handwritten daily, p. 23. [To be deposited in the Oberlin College Archives.]

[12] Ibid., p. 6.

[13] Robert F. Fountain 30/368. Series IV. Scrapbooks. Folder Russia Tour 1964, Box 3. Oberlin College Archives.

[14] Ibid. Some examples: 'Please, Ukranian people's song'; 'Please sing Chesnokov's song. We want to listen it very much'; 'Would you kindly sing any Russian song? Amused spectator'. Some of these notes, which audience members typically wrote in English, offer amusing translations of the titles of the works from Russian back into English: 'Please "Nobody knows, soon they will be done, troubles of this world"' must refer to 'Nobody Knows the Troubles I've Seen'. Swain noted after the particularly successful March 4 concert in Leningrad: 'about six notes passed to Fountain asking for specific pieces', p. 7.

The most striking feature of the tour, in working with both the archival materials and from my interviews with participants, is the level of interaction it generated between the Eastern bloc and US students. I would like to focus on three aspects of these cultural exchanges in this chapter: first, the way that a variety of media were employed to highlight those person-to-person exchanges that occurred both formally and informally; second, the implications of race for this tour; and finally, the State Department's assessment of the tour's success.

The terms of the College's agreement with the State Department reveal the paradox of the US in both disseminating information about the tour widely while maintaining strict control of its release and use in US media outlets: 'No member of the tour will write for publication for the duration of the tour without prior Department agreement and clearance of the material.'[15] Yet it is clear that the State Department very much wanted regular reports of the tour to appear. One student filed accounts of the tour to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the nearest large-city daily newspaper to Oberlin, and became, effectively, the choir's official reporter. Other reports came later. One of these, written by other student-participants for the Oberlin College newspaper, began with an editorial note: 'The report appears as corrected by the State Department.'[16] Another account, written by a choir member for her local newspaper, notes: 'Other articles on the choir's experiences behind the Iron Curtain will appear as rapidly as they are cleared by the State Department.'[17] In addition to these student writers, one student documented the tour extensively in photographs. Both the student correspondent for the *Plain Dealer* and the primary student tour photographer had special briefings, including a debriefing in Washington, DC, with Fountain, by State Department officials.

Both the photographic and the written records of the tour make it clear that the Department of State wished to highlight the interactions among the members of the choir with the citizens, and especially students, of the Eastern bloc. The emphasis on student exchange was particularly important for the US side. The US/USSR Cultural Exchange Agreement, which began in 1958, included performing artists, scientists, films, publications and exhibitions; but Yale Richmond, a veteran US Foreign Service officer posted as a cultural officer in a number of countries, including the Soviet Union, has dubbed the student exchanges the 'flagship' of the US cultural exchange initiatives. In 'Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: How the West Won', he writes of President Eisenhower's interest in student exchanges, in particular:

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[15] Oberlin College Agreement with the US State Department. Record Group 30/266, Joseph R. and Anita C. Reichard Collection. Series 3, Choir Tour Files. Oberlin College Archives.

[16] The Oberlin Review, no date. The report is filed from Lvov, March 29, 1964. Record Group 30/266, Joseph R. and Anita C. Reichard Collection. Series 3, Choir Tour Files. Oberlin College Archives.

[17] Cheryl Artis, 'Russian's Response Thrills Oberlin Choir in Leningrad', *Elyria Chronicle-Telegram*, April 6, 1964, 17.

> In preparation for the negotiation of the Cultural Agreement, President Eisenhower, who was a strong supporter of exchanges – with him, we could not have had them – wanted to bring 10,000 Soviet students to the US, pay all their costs, and not require reciprocity.[18]

Eisenhower's wishes proved idealistic. The student exchanges of his day were much smaller, but the desire to target the hearts and minds of students, as well as established intellectuals, is clear. Many of the photographs of the choir tour document these encounters, both officially organised or spontaneous: meetings with local choirs after rehearsals; briefings on the Soviet space system; or informal conversations with Romanian citizens gathered around the choir's tour bus, to give a few examples. The informal meetings receive a great deal of attention in both the reports filed from Eastern Europe and in the recollections of choir members written 10 years later.

The 'Campus Observer' for a US weekly newspaper noted:

> Although the choir members are primarily concerned with the concerts, some of the most exciting moments apparently have been generated by the more informal events that create contacts with individuals rather than masses of people. Mr. Fountain, for instance, has opened all rehearsals to the Russians, who often pack the house for practice session[s] and remain afterwards to mingle with the performers.[19]

Diane Haley, the student-participant who wrote for *The Plain Dealer* and left the most complete published accounts of the tour, recalled:

> These meetings with the Soviet people were the most interesting parts of the tour, and perhaps the most important. We were told that we were the first American group allowed to participate in arranged meetings with students in the Soviet Union.[20]

She then describes the usual protocol of the organised meetings:

> The 'formula' was almost the same every time. We were ushered into the school's auditorium amidst thunderous applause. The director of the institution would then welcome us with words of praise and admiration, assuring us of their intense desire for world peace and friendship. Often a recital or variety show

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[18] Yale Richmond, 'Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: How the West Won', *American Communist History* vol. 9, no. 1 (2010): 63.

[19] John Lipsky, *The National Observer*, April 27, 1964; Oberlin College Choir Scrapbook. The Russian Tour, Spring 1964. Record Group 30/266, Joseph R. and Anita C. Reichard Collection. Series 3, Choir Tour Files. Oberlin College Archives.

[20] Diane Haley, 'Curtain Call', *Oberlin Today*, April 22, 1964, 5.

> would follow, and occasionally our own choir members would take part in panel discussions where student questions would be answered.
>
> When this formal session ended, a casual conversation period would begin and both 'sides' would seek a common language … in which to converse.[21]

What did they talk about? From a number of published accounts and recollections of the tour written later, they spoke about music, differences in educational systems and income levels in both nations. Only one of the student-correspondents mentions the assassination of John F. Kennedy that occurred only months before the tour, yet every member of the choir with whom I have spoken recalls the president's death as a main topic of conversation everywhere they travelled, and especially in the informal, spontaneous 'sidewalk seminars'.

The less spontaneous encounters followed a pattern familiar to me from my own student travels to the Soviet Union in the 1980s. One choir member wrote of 'listening to the Young Pioneers tell us they loved us and our people, and then having them show us pictures of the devastation produced by our American bombers'.[22] Others recall a litany of provocative questions having to do with poverty, race, religion and politics, although Haley reported that 'politics rarely came up', in part because choir members knew that the subject 'would lead to a deadlock'.[23]

The subject areas choir members recall discussing roughly parallel those in an information bulletin prepared by an information centre for American travellers to the Soviet Union, established in New York City in 1959 'in response to a need expressed by American visitors to the Soviet Union for essential information on the opportunities and limitations of travel in the U.S.S.R'.[24] (The centre was partially funded by the State Department.) It produced a seven-page list of 'commonly asked questions' to prepare American travellers to the Soviet Union. These ranged from questions concerning travel to the USSR, life in the US, civil rights, justice and the legal system to cultural life, US politics and the American way of life.[25] The information centre provided no answers to the questions tourists might anticipate, only a detailed list of questions, many reflecting both popular and political preoccupations in the Soviet Union at the time: 'Is Elvis Presley

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21 Ibid.

22 *The Russian Tour – Ten Years Later*. Recollections of the experiences of the Oberlin College Choir in the Soviet Union and Romania during March and April 1964. Compiled in the spring of 1974 by Russ Hurd. Robert F. Fountain 30/368. Series IV. Scrapbooks. Folder Russia Tour 1964, Box 3. Oberlin College Archives.

23 Haley, 'Curtain Call', 7.

24 George Szell Papers, Box 7, Tour Instructions, Europe, 1965. The Cleveland Orchestra Archive. I would like to thank Clayton Koppes for sharing this curious document with me.

25 Ibid.

still popular?'[26] 'What is America doing about prostitution? Why is there so much homosexuality in America? Is it true that Americans drink heavily?'[27]

Naturally, not all of these informal interactions followed the sort of protocols or preferred subject matter that US officials might have desired. Swain, who refers to the meetings as 'fraternizations', wrote of a less choreographed meeting in the lobby of the Hotel Europa:

> After dinner I rather lazily bought post cards and began writing them in the hotel lobby. Soon a young man sat down with me and we tried to talk. He knew a bit of French but more German. Soon Walt Denny came up, and he was able to understand the German, so we talked about nothing especially, although this fellow seemed very impressed with much from the USA. He is an engineering student. Also got talking with another student, with a group of us together. Again most small talk, but they are friendly. The first fellow told Walt and me that the hotel was swarming with plainclothes men. He finally got up and left, just as suddenly as he had arrived and [sat] down.[28]

Accounts of the choir's tour, from both 1964 and 1974, tend to recall the experience as a positive and transformative one for all involved, and certainly the reports approved by the Department of State contain no negative information. That said, it is worth mentioning some of the negative aspects of the tour members' experiences that begin to surface in the 1974 reminiscences, and repeatedly in my own conversations with the participants. A number of students suffered from amoebic dysentery; at least one was hospitalised, and another lost almost 20 kilos over the course of the tour. Several students were sent home early for health reasons. And all of the students were impelled by the State Department's wish for greater personal exchange with Soviet students to embark on a tour of Eastern Europe and miss half of their spring semester. There was no concrete mechanism in place for making up for lost studies – students were expected to work those details out with professors individually – and, as a result, several of the students scheduled to graduate in spring 1964 had to finish their studies later or elsewhere.

Writing about the tour 10 years later, Donna Beik Wulff, who later became a prominent professor of religion, asked probing questions about these exchanges:

> As I sift through the welter of impressions remaining from our contact with the Russian people, a dominant pattern emerges. Both in the more formal meetings arranged with student groups and in the impromptu 'sidewalk seminars' that formed around any of us when we ventured out alone, it was the Russians who were the avid questioners, eager to learn about us, about our country, about our education system and our way of life. They already knew far more about

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[26] Ibid., Section: 'Commonly Asked Questions', 4.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Swain, 'Russia Trip', 5.

> America than we knew of the Soviet Union, yet they invariably pressed us for more. Lacking their intense curiosity, we all too easily fell into the role of V.I.P'.s at a press conference, dispensing information as best we could in response to the endless stream of eager questions …
>
> I have one significant reservation about the success of the Russian Tour. I wonder how much the experiences of travelling and singing for seven weeks in the Soviet Union really touched and transformed us. Were we open to such transformation? Or were we missionaries in disguise, agents of the cultural imperialism that has for centuries been our country's dominant stance toward those who happen not to share our values, our assumptions, our way of life? Did our own attitudes, in the spring of 1964, permit us to engage in a truly open 'cultural exchange'?[29]

Race was understandably a sensitive issue in the cultural exchange process, as Truman Capote's *The Muses are Heard* – an account of the 1955 *Porgy and Bess* tour to the Soviet Union – and many other works on cultural exchange amply demonstrate. The information centre for travellers to the Soviet Union devotes special attention to this in its list of what were allegedly commonly asked questions. Several questions under the heading 'Civil Rights, Justice and Legal Guarantees' address the 'Negro question', as it was then called:

1. Why do Negroes have such an inferior status in the United States? Why are they legally denied equal opportunity?
2. Why are there so many lynchings of Negroes every year in the United States? Why do you allow them to be lynched?
3. Why do you refuse Negroes entrance to public schools? Is it true that Negroes cannot go to college?[30]

The Oberlin tour highlighted the race question in subtle, mostly unexplored ways, given that each concert ended with what were called 'American folk songs', but that were actually African American spirituals, and that the 10,000 programmes printed in Moscow for the tour mention the College's unprecedented step (from 1835) of admitting African Americans as degree candidates.

Three black singers alternated in solos in these numbers, and one became the tour's star after a performance in Leningrad. United Press International reported that the 'stopper of the program was "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" sung by Joy Blackett'.[31] Press accounts identify Blackett as a resident of Yellow

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[29] *The Russian Tour – Ten Years Later*.

[30] 'Commonly Asked Questions', 2.

[31] 'Muscovites Rhapsodic over Choir', *The Journal*, Lorain, Ohio, March 11, 1964. David Swain wrote: 'Should mention that Joy Blackett made a *big* hit with her solos in

Springs, Ohio, though in fact she was a citizen of Bermuda who had lived in the US for only two years. Thus the most celebrated soloist on the tour, who regularly represented the African American musical heritage, was not herself an American.

In a conversation with Blackett, she told me that she did not mind singing spirituals, but, at 19, was well aware of the differences – and tensions – among African Americans and Africans from elsewhere as well as the tensions her sudden celebrity created within what was meant to be an ensemble.[32] The question of her racial/national identity recalls a discussion held three years earlier when the panel formed to select dance performers to tour for the State Department considered the inclusion of Toni Lander on the American Ballet Theatre's 1960 tour of the Soviet Union. The company's director pointed out that the ballerina, 'although Danish, is connected with no one nationality'.[33] In other words, the desire to project the US as a multi-ethnic society became a complicated one in a 'nation of immigrants'.

Despite occasional tensions and difficulties with the tour, the Department of State was well satisfied with the choir's success in facilitating genuine cultural exchange. Its yearly report on cultural presentations quoted several of the participants, including this quite representative comment:

> Even those members of the choir who were most cynical about the value of cultural exchange in promoting understanding between people have drastically reappraised their views. We feel that collectively and individually we may be contributing to a new Soviet concept of America.[34]

The report on the Oberlin tour also stressed the value of interactions with students. After so-called 'taste-makers' (local intellectuals whose opinions the cultural exchange officials had long sought to influence), university students were considered a second ideal audience for US cultural presentations. After a final celebration at the end of the Russian portion of the tour, Swain wrote:

> Soon after that joyful sorrowful ending, we began to hear assessments of our success. We were told that we were the first group in Russia to be allowed to have organized fraternizing sessions with the people, especially students. Vasily [a handler from the Soviet side] said we're the best ambassador the US has. Mr. Prehn [of the US State Department, who accompanied the entire tour] said we were a tremendous success, made a great impression, etc. We've been showered with all sorts of compliments.

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spirituals; in fact we had to do "Motherless Child" a second time!', p. 6.

[32] Telephone conversation, May 11, 2012.

[33] Prevots, *Dance for Export*, 76.

[34] Cultural Presentations Program of the US Department of State July 1, 1963–June 30, 1964, 65. Robert F. Fountain 30/368. Series IV. Scrapbooks. Folder Russia Tour 1964, Box 3. Oberlin College Archives.

> What an experience it's been.[35]

Whether or not it is true that the group was the first to participate in organised meetings with Soviet students, as they were told, their tour demonstrated the importance of these formal and informal exchanges to those planning cultural presentations abroad, and suggests a change in Department of State strategy for future exchanges:

> It has also been learned that there is great value to setting aside enough time for off-stage appearance[s] of the performers. They should be given as much opportunity as possible to engage in such activities in relaxed and leisurely circumstances, rather than in the hurried and peremptory manner often imposed by tight schedules.[36]

There were many State Department-sponsored cultural exchanges before and after the Oberlin College Choir tour of 1964, many involving student performers. It is clear that the Oberlin experiment (sending singing student ambassadors to the Soviet Union and Romania during the academic year, with the express purpose of facilitating 'fraternisation' with local students, and with regular reports on the tour and those encounters dispatched to US news outlets) was judged a successful one by US government officials and a model for future cultural exchange endeavours.

It is also true that our knowledge of the tour derives mainly from the accounts of the participants and from government publications and reports. As with many studies of Cold War cultural exchange, reports of the effectiveness of these exchanges from the 'other side' are sparse. Soviet reviews of the tour (also disseminated by the US government in press releases and year-end reports) are laudatory, and the crush of spectators at concerts – especially in the major cities and in the open rehearsals Fountain held to accommodate audience members without tickets to the concerts – speak to the achievements of US aims for the tour as well as to the skill of the performers.

We may never be able to gauge the real impact these exchanges of large performing-arts groups had on their considerable and often elite audiences. But the conclusion of Yale Richmond's 'Cultural Exchange and the Cold War' offers a way to understand another aspect of the tour. A veteran Cold Warrior, Richmond stresses the impact of the exchanges on the 'other side':

> As more and more Soviet citizens travelled to the West and made the inevitable comparisons with their own country, the Soviet media had to become more honest with their readers and viewers at home. Cultural exchange encouraged

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35 Swain, 'Russia Trip', 35.
36 Ibid., 87.

> pressure for reform. It prepared the way for Gorbachev's reforms and the end of the Cold War.[37]

If we reverse Richmond's lens, we can imagine that an equally striking and demonstrable aspect of the Oberlin tour is the impact that the cultural mission had on its US participants, many of whom maintained contacts with their Soviet and Romanian counterparts years after the tour ended. 'Exchange', as we typically understand the term in this Cold War context, oversimplifies the process. Richmond stresses the impact of US cultural and political superiority on Soviet citizens, and the resulting impact on world geo-politics. But US travellers to the Eastern bloc and other parts of the globe certainly came to understand the world – and their own worlds – differently as well. The Oberlin College Choir tour demonstrates how valuable these cultural embassies proved, not only for the target audiences of these exchanges but for the emissaries as well.

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[37] Richmond, 'Cultural Exchange and the Cold War', 75.

PART III
Reception and Transfers in the Area of Theatre and Dance

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Chapter 8
Breaching the Iron Curtains: Russian 'Theatre Tourists' to Eastern Europe, 1965–1981

Susan Costanzo

'You would think you were on the Left Bank in Paris. In September 1957 they were giving *The Flies* by Sartre, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett and *The Chairs* by Ionesco. Other plays which delighted the Parisian intelligentsia were in rehearsal. Moreover in Paris they are usually performed in small halls, whereas in Warsaw these programmes fill the big theatres'.

K.S. Karol concluded this effusive description: 'The people in Warsaw have a strong cult of the theatre.'[1] His pride in Polish theatrical achievements was affirmed by scholar Daniel Gerould, who wrote that in 1956 Polish theatre became 'wildly receptive to everything new … all that was experimental, daring, and unexpected was good'. From then until 1968, Polish theatre had the most interesting and diverse repertory in all Europe, according to Gerould.[2] But this boom did not only affect Polish troupes. Theatrical groups from all over the world also performed there, adding to the wide range of theatrical experiences for Poles and the foreigners who visited them until the imposition of martial law in 1981.

This wealth of theatrical opportunities in Poland and elsewhere suggests the potential for Eastern Europe as a bridge for the transmission of theatrical texts and styles into the Soviet Union via 'theatre tourists'. Through travel, Soviet performers and spectators could experience some of the most innovative theatre in the world during the Cold War. Although art was restricted by censorship throughout Eastern Europe, the diversity there exposed Soviet citizens to far more options than were available at home. While some travellers sampled local theatres while on tourist junkets, others performed in amateur troupes at prestigious international festivals that featured world-renowned avant-garde theatres. These expanded theatrical opportunities were not limited to the amateurs who travelled to Eastern Europe between 1965 and 1981. Their trips also provided armchair cultural tourists with published accounts, including photos and descriptions of innovations from around

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[1] K.S. Karol, *Visa for Poland*, trans. Mervyn Savill (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1959), 178.

[2] Daniel Gerould (ed. and trans.), *Twentieth-Century Polish Avant-Garde Drama: Plays, Scenarios, Critical Documents* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 84.

the world. Although Soviet professional troupes had visited Poland as early as 1949, they did not participate in these international festivals, which privileged performers outside the mainstream. Thus, in spite of their second-class status within the Soviet cultural realm, amateurs served as valuable importers of these trends, and Eastern Europe enabled numerous peeks through the Iron Curtain for Soviet citizens.[3]

An examination of Soviet amateurs' experiences in Eastern Europe reaches beyond scholarship on Cold War diplomatic rivalries.[4] It also flies under the radar of explorations of superpower cultural diplomacy, some of which treat cultural exchanges as artistic ICBMs lobbed into one or another culture while the artistic activities themselves supposedly remained unaffected.[5] Instead, an examination of theatre tourists adds to recent work that emphasises smaller states, non-state actors and cooperation.[6] The growing recognition of the significance of average citizens' interactions during the Cold War has been particularly fruitful in the study of world youth festivals and other forms of cultural exchanges and exhibitions, although they do not address the transmission of aesthetic trends.[7] These events

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[3] This chapter is a first effort to frame questions and explore potential avenues for future research. Drawn primarily from published sources at this stage, evidence is fragmentary and only suggestive.

[4] At this point in the project, I have reviewed English-language scholarship. For a historiographical essay on trends in superpower diplomacy after the collapse of communism, see Melvin P. Leffler, 'The Cold War: What Do "We Now Know?"' *American Historical Review* vol. 104, no. 2 (1999): 501–24. For analyses of superpower diplomacy that use extensive Russian-language sources, see Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War: From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

[5] On cultural diplomacy, see Frederick Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Nigel Gould-Davis, 'The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy', *Diplomatic History* vol. 27, no. 2 (2003): 193–214; and the special issue of *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 4, no. 2 (2002).

[6] See, for instance, Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Brendan Humphreys (eds), *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered* (Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2010); Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Katalin Miklossy (eds), *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge, 2011).

[7] On World Festivals of Students and Youth, see Karin Taylor, 'Socialist Orchestration of Youth: The 1968 Sofia Youth Festival and Encounters on the Fringe', *Ethnologia Balkanica* vol. 7 (2003): 43–61; Kristin Roth-Ey, '"Loose Girls" on the Loose? Sex, Propaganda and the 1957 Youth Festival', in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, Melanie Ilic, Susan E. Reid and Lynn Attwood (eds) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 75–95; Pia Koivunen, 'The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a New Peaceful Image of the Soviet Union', in *Soviet State and Society under Nikita Khrushchev*, Melanie Ilic and Jeremy Smith (eds) (London: Routledge, 2009), 46–65; Pia Koivunen, 'Overcoming

facilitated 'cross-curtain' contact for individuals who did not necessarily have an agenda that corresponded to 'official' goals. Like many of these scholars, I am interested in the Cold War not as high politics or 'Cultural Olympics',[8] but as the lived experience of individuals who had to manoeuvre within its constraints as well as its possibilities.

Although a study with the Soviet Union at its centre would seem to follow a traditional approach to the study of Cold War superpowers, amateurs represented a marginal sector of the cultural world.[9] Far greater in number than their professional counterparts, amateur theatres were sponsored by a variety of institutions, such as institutes and universities, houses of culture affiliated with factories or neighbourhoods,[10] and local Komsomol organisations. The director and sometimes

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Cold War Boundaries at the World Youth Festivals', in *Reassessing Cold War Europe*, Sari Autio-Sarasmo and Katalin Miklossy (eds) (London: Routledge, 2011), 175–92; Joni Krekola and Simo Mikkonen, 'Backlash of the Free World: The US Presence at the World Youth Festival in Helsinki, 1962', *Scandinavian Journal of History* vol. 36, no. 2 (2011): 230–55. On other forms of cultural exchange, see Joël Kotek, *Students and the Cold War*, trans. Ralph Blumenau (New York: Macmillan, 1996); Marilyn S. Kushner, 'Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959: Domestic Politics and Cultural Diplomacy', *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 4, no. 1 (2002): 6–26; Susan E. Reid, 'Who Will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959', *Kritika* vol. 9, no. 4 (2008): 855–904; Melanie Ilic, 'Soviet Women, Cultural Exchange and the Women's International Democratic Federation', in *Reassessing Cold War Europe*, Autio-Sarasmo and Miklossy (eds),157–74; Tomas Tolvaisas, 'Cold War "Bridge-Building": U.S. Exchange Exhibits and Their Reception in the Soviet Union, 1959–1967', *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 12, no. 4 (2010): 3–31.

[8] Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, 3.

[9] For studies of Soviet amateur theatre in the post-Stalin era, see Alma H. Law, 'The Soviet Theatre in the 1980s: Amateur and Studio Performances', in *Contemporary Russian and Polish Theatre and Drama*, Robert Findlay, Philip Hill and Bela Kiralyfalvi (ed.) (Washington, DC: University and College Theatre Association, 1982), 21–8; Alma H. Law, *Soviet Theatre in Transition: The Politics of Theatre in the 1980s* (Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 1984); Alma H. Law, 'Some Observations of the Soviet Theatre Today', *Soviet Union* vol. 12, no. 2 (1985): 131–6; K. Iu. Rogov (ed.), *Semidesiatye kak predmet istorii russkoi kul'tury* (Moscow: O.G.I., 1998); L.P. Solntseva et al. (eds), *Samodeiatel'noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: Ocherki istorii. Konets 1950-kh–nachalo 1990-kh godov* (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1999); M.V. Iunisov, *Mifopoetika studencheskogo smekha (STEM i KVN)* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi Institut Iskusstvoznaniia, 1999); A.P. Shul'pin, *Teatral'nye opyty 'Manekena'* (Cheliabinsk: Biblioteka A. Millera, 2001); A.P. Shul'pin, *Molodezhnye teatry Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2004); Bella Ostromoukhova, 'Le Dégel et les troupes amateur: Changements politiques et activités des étudiants 1953–1970', *Cahiers du monde russe* vol. 47, no. 1–2 (2006): 303–26; Susan Costanzo, 'Amateur Theatres and Amateur Publics in the Russian Republic, 1958–1971', *Slavonic and East European Review* vol. 86, no. 2 (2008): 372–94.

[10] The equivalent of American community centres. See Anne White, *De-Stalinization and the House of Culture: Declining State Control over Leisure in the USSR, Poland and*

a designer received a meagre salary, but the cast performed *gratis*. Most troupes were not permitted to sell tickets; others were limited to state-regulated prices. In either circumstance, they remained dependent on sponsoring organisations, which prevented the development of independent semi-professional troupes that existed elsewhere. In spite of these limitations, the best amateur troupes developed a stable core of performers, some of whom acquired skills and experience as strong as many Soviet professionals.[11]

In the 1960s and 1970s, amateurs usually staged productions in one of three genres: traditional multi-act plays, poetry theatre or *estrada*. Poetry theatre created visual representations of a long poem, such as Vladimir Mayakovsky's *Good!* (*Khorosho!*), or stitched together numerous poems focusing on a particular author or theme. *Estrada* was variety/sketch theatre that emphasised satire and social commentary with eclectic forms, styles and devices; the most acclaimed *estrada* troupes usually evolved away from short, pithy sketches about student life to more complex productions that addressed universal concerns. Regardless of their approach, troupes that travelled abroad typically had already earned national recognition at a Soviet festival, but this achievement did not mean that the troupes slavishly followed party ideology and expectations for theatres. In fact, they often critiqued Soviet society and sometimes even politics.

Theatre festivals offered an intensive and extensive opportunity for Soviet troupes to learn about the latest trends. International theatre festivals dotted both Eastern and Western Europe, and Soviet performers eagerly attended them in the Eastern bloc, especially when they attracted troupes from all over the world.[12] Prominent international festivals took place in Wroclaw (known first as International Festival of Festivals of Student Theatres, then briefly as International Festival of Student and Experimental Theatres, and finally International Festival of Open Theatres), Zagreb (International Festival of Student Theatres) and Belgrade (BITEF: Belgrade International Theatre Festival).[13] The Wroclaw festival was one of the most respected in the world at the time because troupes were invited after

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Hungary, 1953–89 (London: Routledge, 1990).

[11] Many famous actors and directors were involved in amateur troupes early in their careers: directors Roman Bykov, Mark Zakharov, Petr Fomenko and Anatolii Vasil'ev; and actors Iia Savina, Alla Demidova and Aleksandr Filippenko in Moscow, and Igor Gorbachev and Sergei Iurskii in Leningrad.

[12] This desire to travel has a similar spirit to the 'youth identity' that Richard Jobs has examined for 1968 primarily in Western Europe. Richard Ivan Jobs, 'Youth Movements: Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968', *American Historical Review* vol. 114, no. 2 (2009): 376–404.

[13] Like critics and participants of the time, I refer to the festivals by the city names. On Polish festivals, see Jeffrey Goldfarb, 'Theater behind the Iron Curtain', *Society* vol. 14, no. 1 (1976): 30–34; Jerzy Tymicki, 'New Dignity: The Polish Theatre 1970–1985', *Drama Review* vol. 30, no. 3 (1986): 13–46; Juliusz Tyszka, 'The School of Being Together: Festivals as National Therapy during the Polish "Period of Transition"', *New Theatre Quarterly* vol. 13, no. 50 (1987): 171–82; Mirosław Peczak, 'The Orange Ones, The Street,

distinguishing themselves at other international festivals.[14] Although hosted by the acclaimed non-professional Wroclaw troupe Kalambur, its location also gave participants access to internationally acclaimed Jerzy Grotowski, who moved his Lab Theatre (Teatr Laboratorium) there two years before the first Wroclaw festival in 1967. These reasons may account for the Wroclaw festival's visibility in sources. Although the Zagreb festival was the oldest (1965–71?), it may have been eclipsed by its Belgrade counterpart that was founded in 1967, because Zagreb disappeared from discussions at the time, and I have found no scholarship or reviews outside my Russian sources. Evidence for the Belgrade festival is likewise scant, although it did attain some publicity in the wake of communist collapse.[15] Amateurs also attended other, less well-known venues, though they were less likely to garner much attention at home.

Most Soviet travellers to international festivals were amateur troupes affiliated with higher education institutions. They usually hailed from major cities, including Moscow, Leningrad, Cheliabinsk, Kharkov, Ivanovo, Omsk and Angarsk. Poland was the most frequent destination, though troupes occasionally ventured to Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. Evidence suggests that troupes usually travelled abroad once, but the *estrada* troupe 'Maneken' (Mannequin) from the Cheliabinsk Polytechnic Institute went abroad numerous times between 1966 and 1979: once each to Zagreb and Czechoslovakia and thrice to Poland. In addition, the theatre's director, Anatolii Morozov, once travelled alone to the Wroclaw festival.[16] Another frequent festival participant was the Ivanovo Youth People's Theatre. Sponsored by the Komsomol, this poetry troupe led by Regina Grinberg went to Poland four times by 1977. Most likely, additional theatres travelled but were not covered by the Soviet media, especially as foreign tourism became more commonplace and less newsworthy. As one of Russia's 'sputnik generation' summed up his own travels, 'The first trip was interesting, but later ones became routine.'[17]

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and The Background', *Performing Arts Journal* vol. 13, no. 2 (1991): 50–55; Kathleen Cioffi, *Alternative Theatre in Poland 1954–1989* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1996).

[14] Shul'pin, *Manekena*, 46. Juliusz Tyszka, a participant in student theatre in the 1970s, notes that the festival, along with Warsaw's Theatre of Nations in 1975, was 'the most important mode of artistic exchange for all Polish theatre'. Juliusz Tyszka, 'Student Theatre in Poland: Vehicles of Revolt, 1954–57 and 1968–71', *New Theatre Quarterly* vol. 26, no. 2 (2010): 168.

[15] Gautam Dasgupta, 'BITEF: An International Theatre Festival', *Performing Arts Journal* vol. 11/12, no. 3/1 (1989): 219–25; Erika Munk, 'Before the Fall: Yugoslav Theaters of Opposition', *Theater* vol. 31, no. 1 (2001): 5–25. I have not yet examined sources from the former Yugoslavia.

[16] Anatolii Morozov, 'Etot mnogolikii teatr … 1: Ulybnis', prokhozhii!', *Vechernii Cheliabinsk*, 1 February 1979.

[17] Aleksandr A. Konstantinov, 'Sasha the Muscovite', in *Russia's Sputnik Generation: Soviet Baby Boomers Talk about Their Lives*, ed. and trans. Donald J. Raleigh (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 44.

First trips to foreign festivals were often humbling. Rave reviews and sold-out crowds at home did not guarantee an enthusiastic reception abroad. What was daring in Moscow or Cheliabinsk was sometimes met with indifference or even scorn across the border. In terms of skill level, the best amateur troupes appeared much like their counterparts at the festivals, but Soviet censorship restricted access to foreign dramatic works and production techniques. Moscow University's (MGU) Student Theatre, for instance, performed Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* in Zagreb in 1965. Directed by film veteran Sergei Iutkevich and newcomer Mark Zakharov, MGU's staging hewed close to Brecht's portrayal of Chicago gangsters who represent the rise of Nazi dictatorship. Ui is Hitler, even though sophisticated Soviet theatregoers could recognise the parallels to Joseph Stalin.[18] The quality of the work earned a much-coveted article in *Teatr*, the leading Soviet theatre journal; and one American scholar later concluded that the Student Theatre captured Brecht's spirit better than all other Soviet troupes, including the acclaimed Taganka Theatre.[19] But the reception at the Zagreb festival was mixed.[20] Maneken's *Liubava* fared worse at Zagreb in 1967. A Cheliabinsk critic had praised this production as 'a hymn to the heroes of the first five-year plan', but one festival critic panned it as 'shallow' with 'one-sided clichés about Soviet life'.[21] The theatre's 'optimistic ethical worldview' appeared naïve in 1967, perhaps in light of the growing student movement.[22] *Estrada* troupes from Kharkov and the Moscow Aviation Institute (MAI) that performed at Wroclaw festivals in 1967 and 1969, respectively, were likewise received coolly, in spite of the uproar that the MAI created in Moscow in 1966 when it mocked the Central Committee, questioned Soviet foreign policy in Africa, and suggested that Soviet leaders disregarded the brutal consequences of some of their policies for the public.[23] Critics who sometimes travelled with the troupes often provided honest assessments of the reception in reviews published at home.

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[18] Henry Glade, 'Major Brecht Productions in the Soviet Union since 1957', in *Bertolt Brecht: Political Theory and Literary Practice*, Betty Nance Weber and Herbert Heinen (eds) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 92.

[19] Ibid.

[20] S. Chudakov, 'Karnaval'naia kar'era diktatora Ui', *Teatr* (8, 1964), 6–10; Berngard Raikh, 'Brekht stal by sporit!' *Teatral'naia zhizn'* (8, 1965), 9–10. On the Zagreb reception, see N. Krymova, 'S nashim Brekhtom – v Zagrebe', *Teatr* (1, 1966), 149–50.

[21] Quoted in Shul'pin, *Manekena*, 31.

[22] B. Nikolaev characterised the troupe's outlook in 'Na granitse dobra i zla … ', *Komsomolets*, 24 December 1974. On the international student movement, see Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Jobs, 'Youth Movements'.

[23] On the Wroclaw reception, see Shul'pin, *Manekena*, 46. The evidence for these results is second hand. Neither Shul'pin nor published articles offer substantive information about the productions. It is possible that the MAI troupe was considerably different by 1969. See Costanzo, 'Amateur Theatres'.

The remarks offered an unspoken commentary on censorship and the limited innovations in Soviet theatre when measured by world standards. The reactions of foreign audiences also presented amateurs with one of the most important lessons of international performing. These early experiences provided incentives for Soviet amateurs to change their aesthetic goals. Maneken's first trip to Poland in 1966 led the troupe to shift its focus from sketch theatre to more serious and demanding productions. Describing the reception in Zagreb a year later as 'lukewarm', Morozov subsequently characterised the trip as the troupe's 'first crisis' that confirmed for him the need for deeper changes.[24]

If some festival audiences found little originality in Soviet amateurs, Soviet troupes and critics became acquainted with the newest world theatrical trends at international festivals. Participants included a veritable who's who in cutting-edge world theatre. In 1965 the MGU performers saw plays that were banned at home – by Samuel Beckett, Tadeusz Rozewicz, Franz Kafka and Alfred Jarry.[25] In its various trips, Maneken was exposed to the avant-garde styles of American Richard Schechner's Performance Group, Jerzy Grotowski and the British theatre company Grass Roots, which introduced the Soviet citizens to their first 'happening'.[26] The MAI had the good fortune to meet with members of Bread and Puppet, the sensation of the 1969 Wroclaw festival. In 1973, the people's theatre at the Leningrad Institute of Railway Engineers (LIIZhT) was exposed to Odin-Teatret, led by Grotowski's acolyte Eugenio Barba and Shuji Terayama from Japan.[27] Festivals also included innovative non-professional troupes from the host country. The experience revealed more than artistic differences: Soviet participants further learned that the rigid divide between amateur and professional status in the Soviet Union did not restrict non-professionals everywhere.[28]

The exposure to Grotowski alone offered a unique opportunity for amateurs. American director and critic Richard Schechner characterised Grotowski as one of the four great directors of Western twentieth-century theatre.[29] One Polish

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[24] B. Nikolaev, 'Anatolii Morozov: "Vse sovershaetsia v dushe cheloveka"', *Komsomolets*, 5 July 1973.

[25] Krymova, 'S nashim Brekhtom'.

[26] Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Cheliabinskoi oblasti, f. R-1282, op. 3, d. 210, l. 89; Viktoriia Tarasova, 'Brotslavskii kaleidoskop', *Komsomolets*, 25 November 1971; Liia Vainshtein, 'Posle Brotslava – Varshava', *Cheliabinskii rabochii*, 6 November 1971.

[27] E. Shamovich, 'Na Brotslavskom festivale', *Teatr* (4, 1974), 109–16.

[28] Anatolii Silin, 'Prichiny i sledstviia', *Teatr* (12, 1975), 60–63; Anatolii Morozov, 'Monolog o dialoge', *Vechernii Cheliabinsk*, 6 March 1975; 'Etot mnogolikii teatr … 2: Traditsii i eksperimenty', *Vechernii Cheliabinsk*, 2 February 1979. For studies of Polish non-professionals, who were far better integrated into the professional realm, see Roman Szydłowski, *The Theatre in Poland*, trans. Christina Cenkalska (Warsaw: Interpress, 1972), 132–60; Jeffrey Goldfarb, *The Persistence of Freedom: The Sociological Implications of Polish Student Theater* (Boulder: Westview, 1980); Cioffi, *Alternative Theatre*.

[29] Quoted in Halina Filipowicz, 'Shifting a Cultural Paradigm: Between the Mystique and the Marketing of Polish Theatre', in *Over the Wall/After the Fall: Post-Communist*

scholar and theatre director summed up Grotowski's achievements: 'Considered the most insightful acting teacher since Stanislavsky and the most creative theater personality since Artaud, Grotowski has secured his absolutely unique place in world theater history.'[30] The 'official' Soviet position on Grotowski was ambivalent at best. Grotowski studied at a Moscow theatre institute in 1955–56. A year later in Cracow he debuted his first professional production, *The Chairs* by Eugène Ionesco, a play that, like other absurd dramas, was banned in the Soviet Union. Returning to Moscow in 1976, he lectured at the All-Russian Theatrical Society and met with the Moscow Art Theatre, a troupe whose commitment to Konstantin Stanislavsky's realist style would have benefited little from Grotowski's emphasis on ritual and his opposition to realist costumes and sets.[31] None of his theoretical ideas and no critical reviews of his work were published in the Soviet Union (but they circulated underground). He did co-author a two-page essay on the relationship of Polish theatre to other art forms.[32]

This period in world theatrical developments, especially after 1968, was particularly conducive to cross-cultural fertilisation. Amateurs had plenty to absorb in spite of language barriers. Anti-war themes and the exploration of sexuality offered engaging subject matter, but scholars generally agree that the era's innovations emphasised the visual rather than the verbal elements of performance.[33] Indeed, sexual topics were most provocative because they were performed as much as they were discussed. As a result, language did not hinder spectators' ability to see innovations. Of course, the absence of understandable dialogue was at times frustrating, although synopses were sometimes available in multiple languages.[34] But words were usually subordinated to other elements of performance. The growing role of international festivals also encouraged the prominence of visual innovations because dialogue-rich productions would not have been as compelling to multi-national audiences.[35]

Cultures through an East-West Gaze, Sibelan Forrester, Magdalena J. Zaborowska and Elena Gapova (eds0 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 165.

[30] Kazimierz Braun, *A History of Polish Theater*, *1939–1989* (Westport: Greenwood, 1996), 164.

[31] On Grotowski's experiences in the Soviet Union, see Alma H. Law, 'Grotowski Visits Moscow', *Slavic and East European Performance* vol. 13, no. 2 (1993): 35.

[32] Jerzy Grotowski and Ludwik Flaszen, 'Podlinnyi vyzov – eto zhizn', *Voprosy literatury* (12, 1975), 159–61.

[33] Oscar G. Brockett and Robert Findlay, *Century of Innovation: A History of European and American Theatre and Drama since the Late Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1991), 428; Richard Schechner, 'The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde: Why It Happened and What We Can Do About It', *Performing Arts Journal* vol. 5, no. 2 (1981): 48–63 and vol. 5, no. 3 (1981): 9–19.

[34] See, for instance, Tarasova, 'Brotslavskii kaleidoskop'.

[35] On the role of the 'physicality of theatre' at the Nancy Festival du Monde, see David Looseley, 'Jack Lang and the Politics of Festival', *French Cultural Studies* vol. 1, no. 1 (1990): 5–19.

This lack of communication skills also did not hamper Russian amateurs' experiences outside scheduled festival events. One of the most gratifying activities of the festivals was the opportunity to meet and network with troupes from around the world. In this respect, amateurs were exhilarated by the 'time out of time' element of festivals.[36] But participants not only enjoyed the temporal suspension of their everyday lives. Festivals also occurred 'out of place' in a foreign space that further enhanced the liminal quality of their activities. Most of them worked or studied full time, and theatre was an avocation. At festivals, theatre filled their waking hours, as they shared meals and sleeping quarters with other participants. Welcoming host cities encouraged visitors to mingle in the environs beyond the theatre spaces where performances, post-performance discussions and other activities ran from 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. Exchanges were most fruitful with Eastern Europeans who had at least rudimentary Russian-language skills. All in all, festival travel provided rewards and reaffirmed those facets of their identities that did not follow Soviet precepts that exalted work at the expense of free-time activity. Unfortunately, most of these interactions and conversations took place off the historical record, and evidence is scant without oral histories.

Travellers were not the sole beneficiaries of these experiences. Critics usually reported on festivals in *Teatr*, and the broader Soviet theatrical community gained as well. Regulations governing professional theatre journals mandated coverage of amateur activities, which were often snubbed by professionals. International festivals met this requirement while offering information on ground-breaking international trends that professionals eagerly devoured. Articles on early festivals focused primarily on the reception of the 'home team' performances, but descriptions also included other participants. Over time, reviewers increasingly reported on foreign theatres at the expense of Soviet troupes. For instance, after the 1965 Zagreb festival, the *Teatr* correspondent focused primarily on MGU's *Arturo Ui*. But when the MAI travelled to Wroclaw in 1969, the critic focused almost exclusively on Bread and Puppet, and after the 1971 festival, Schechner's Performance Group received similar attention.[37] Neither article even mentioned the play produced by the Soviet entries, and in some cases, it was not clear that the reviewer had seen their performances.[38] In an effort to maximise space devoted to foreign theatres, later articles sometimes entirely omitted Soviet participants.[39] Their absence did not reflect assumptions that its readership was already aware

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[36] Alessandro Falassi (ed.), *Time Out of Time: Essays on the Festival* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), 4.

[37] See Krymova, 'S nashim Brekhtom'; Anatolii Silin, 'Studenty vykhodiat na podmostki', *Teatr* (7, 1970), 147–54; Witold Dombrowski, 'Molodezhnyi teatr – golos progressa', *Teatr* (9, 1972), 116–25.

[38] Dombrowski, 'Molodezhnyi teatr'; Konstanty Puzyna, 'Na festival festivalei', *Teatr* (11, 1967), 156–7.

[39] Shamovich, 'Na Brotslavskom festivale'; Anatolii Silin, 'Desiat' let spustia', *Teatr* (8, 1976).

of the productions because national coverage of amateur work, especially groups outside Moscow, was patchy at best in spite of regulations. Other print sources offered an outlet for additional views on the festivals, and amateur participants themselves wrote about foreign theatre in the local press and national journals that targeted amateurs.[40]

Festival reviews, particularly those written by Warsaw critics rather than their Soviet counterparts, offered more than lengthy descriptions of the most important productions at the festivals. Their evaluations widened the discourse about trends in foreign theatre. By presenting a 'second opinion' without the ideological framework that characterised the commentaries of conservative Soviet critics, they provided a positive perspective that counterbalanced centuries-old Russian ambivalence to Western cultural incursions. Russian theatre had been dominated by the ideas of Konstantin Stanislavsky, who led the Moscow Art Theatre from 1898 to 1937. Although his ideas evolved over time, his emphasis on realist theatre with actors who disappear into the character and an impermeable fourth wall (an iron curtain in its own right) between performers and spectators became the only acceptable approach to theatre from the late 1930s until Stalin's death, and realism retained its primacy in the less repressive post-Stalin era. It would be unfair, however, to accuse Soviet critics of an exclusive opposition to Western aesthetic innovations: many Western theatregoers, including critics, expressed some reservations about new forms.

The contrast was especially evident in reviews of American Richard Schechner's Performance Group. A *Teatr* critic characterised the troupe's *Dionysius-69* as 'unconcealed pornography' and offered a lengthy condemnation of Western efforts to erase distinctions between the performers and the spectators.[41] Even if these remarks were intended as window dressing in order to share problematic material, which does not appear to be the case here, the foreign reports offered an alternative understanding and demonstrated that productions could elicit diverse views. Polish critic Witold Dombrowski wrote that Schechner's newest production, *Commune*, was the best production of the 1971 Wroclaw festival. Although he did not discuss the more provocative but already familiar *Dionysius*, which was also performed, Dombrowski spoke favourably of Schechner's 'environmental theatre', with its original use of performance space and acting approaches that sought to destroy the fourth wall.[42]

Not all Soviet critics reviled the era's innovations. In some cases, Soviet reviewers themselves provided alternative critiques. After a brief description of a Shuji Terayama production, Schechner's detractor concluded that productions

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[40] 'Pol'sha – liubov' moia', *Leninets*, 22 July 1978; R. Grinberg, 'Voz'memsia za ruki, druz'ia!', *Leninets*, 27 March 1976; R. Grinberg, 'Zritel' na stsene', *Klub i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatel'nost'* (11, 1977), 32–4; Anatolii Morozov, 'Etot mnogolikii teatr … ', *Vechernii Cheliabinsk*, 1–3 February 1979.

[41] I. Kovalev, 'Tsena slova i deistviia', *Teatr* (6, 1971), 143–6, quoted 144.

[42] Dombrowski, 'Molodezhnyi teatr', 120–22.

aimed at eliminating boundaries between actors and audiences were 'devoid of both social meaning and artistic significance'.[43] By contrast, reporting on Terayama's production at the 1973 Wroclaw festival, a different *Teatr* critic acknowledged the 'shock therapy' quality of the performance and the 'aggressive' goal of the troupe to wrench the audience from its complacency. Although the author admitted some ambivalence toward the production, his review was respectful and thoughtful.[44] The expanding discourse on controversial theatre holds significance beyond assessments of the innovations themselves. Diverse analyses undermined orthodox efforts to expect the public to accept without question the views regarding a given work of art by an authority figure, in this case a professional theatrical critic. In essence, these more neutral reviews encouraged readers to draw their own conclusions.

Amateurs had outlets other than the press for communicating their experiences. They shared their observations at domestic festivals that allowed for considerable more detail on concerns that may have been not acceptable for print.[45] The All-Russian Theatrical Society (VTO) sponsored regional seminars throughout the Soviet Union for amateurs to share productions and receive technical assistance from VTO consultants. The workshops were often hosted by a leading amateur company, such as Maneken or the Ivanovo Youth Theatre. These events allowed troupes to share experiences that would have included foreign productions.[46]

Some companies had to settle for these vicarious trips to festivals. Although opportunities for travel to Eastern Europe were growing for amateur troupes, permission was by no means automatic. In spite of repeated invitations, the Our Home (*Nash dom*) *estrada* troupe at Moscow University never received permission to go abroad in spite of its acclaim as the most influential amateur *estrada* collective in the 1960s.[47] With its wide-ranging satire and innovative forms, the theatre did not meet Communist Party international travel standards: 'politically prepared' and 'stable from the perspective of morality and everyday life'.[48] Our Home may not have been permitted to perform abroad, but their scripts could cross the border. Viktor Slavkin's *A Bad Apartment* (*Plokhaia kvartira*) was performed by a Warsaw student theatre, and Polish television aired a professional

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[43] Kovalev, 'Tsena', 145.

[44] Shamovich, 'Na Brotslavskom festivale', 113–14. For a Western appraisal of the performance, see Marjorie B. Young, 'The Fourth International Student Festival of Open Theater, Wroclaw, Poland', *Drama & Theatre* vol. 12, no. 2 (1975): 124–6.

[45] Viktoriia Tarasova, 'Prazdnik studencheskikh teatrov', *Komsomolets*, 25 December 1973. She offers no details of Anatolii Morozov's talk at a Tashkent festival.

[46] The VTO's archive preserves volumes of consultant reports from their trips (not all of them seminars of this type). But the reports focus primarily on the performances at the seminars and the consultants' interactions with the troupes.

[47] For more details on the troupe, see Costanzo, 'Amateur Theatres'.

[48] On party requirements for Eastern European travel, see Anne E. Gorsuch, *All This is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 17.

staging of Mark Rozovskii's *An Entire Evening as the Damned* (*Tselyi vecher kak prokliatie*).[49] Their work was also translated into Czech.[50]

In spite of this limitation, Our Home participants and other Soviet citizens had options. Travelling with a troupe to a festival was not the only way for amateurs to experience Eastern European theatre. Soviet citizens were increasingly travelling abroad as tourists after foreign travel became possible in 1955. The most popular destination was Poland. Amateurs took advantage of personal trips abroad to expand their knowledge of theatre. Rozovskii, a founding director of Our Home, travelled to Poland and shortly thereafter wrote *An Entire Evening*, an attempt to stage an absurdist play. In another example of Iron Curtain penetration, Rozovskii also modelled this play on a Soviet critic's lengthy description of a Paris production of Eugène Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano*.[51] Anatolii Morozov visited Auschwitz and was inspired to include excerpts from Peter Weiss's *The Investigation* (*Die Ermittlung*), a docudrama about the trials of Auschwitz camp staff and guards, in Maneken's next production, most likely the first performance of the play in the Russian Republic in 1967.[52] Viktor Slavkin, an Our Home playwright, travelled to Poland in 1963 after hearing about the trip of Mikhail Ushats, another troupe member. Although Slavkin was travelling with a group from Mosproekt, his employer at the time, he skipped scheduled activities in order to see all the student theatres on the route. In early 1968, he and Rozovskii also travelled to Prague where they met playwright and future dissident Vaclav Havel.[53]

Enterprising Russians could also cross the border to Eastern Europe and sample Western culture without ever leaving their cramped Soviet apartments. And they were not confined to abridged reports from lucky observers. Both Slavkin and Regina Grinberg, director of the Ivanovo Youth Theatre, were so thrilled about their encounters in Poland that they subsequently learned enough of the language to subscribe to Polish literary magazines.[54] Polish publications of foreign literature and dramas were significantly broader than those in the Soviet Union and included translations of Western absurdists.[55] I do not know how often this 'bilingualism' was used in this way, but amateurs were by no means unique in this effort.[56]

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[49] Mark Rozovskii, *Delo o 'konokradstve'* (Moscow, 2006), 33; Mark Rozovskii, *Poimali Ptichku Golosistu* (Moscow, 2009), 485.

[50] Viktor Slavkin, in Rozovskii, *Poimali*, 372.

[51] Mark Rozovskii, interview, Moscow, 27 July 1994. A transcript of the interview is in the author's possession. For the review of Ionesco, see Grigorii Boiadzhiev, *Teatral'nyi Parizh segodnia* (Moscow, 1960), 87–116.

[52] A. Bossart, 'Proverim chistotu zvuchaniia', *Klub i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatel'nost'* (12, 1978), 31.

[53] Slavkin, in Rozovskii, *Poimali*, 372.

[54] Ibid., 376; 'Pol'sha – liubov' moia'.

[55] Karol, *Visa*, 185.

[56] William Jay Risch, 'Thinking between Borders: Polish Media and Cultural Resistance in Post-1953 L'viv', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* vol. 40, no. 1 (2006): 101–26. For other discussions of the Polish language as a means to 'cross' borders, see Yale

Of course, one of the questions that must be asked is whether the varieties of exposure to international theatrical trends had an influence on subsequent work by the amateurs. As Deming Brown cautioned in his exploration of the impact of Polish and Czech literature on Soviet writers:

> Questions of literary influence are very much a matter of conjecture. Literary creation is such a subjective phenomenon that even the individual writer is hard put to explain the source of his ideas … Questions of literary influence are so subtle, complex, and intangible that it is exceeding dangerous to generalize about them …[57]

That said, it is worth paying attention to what artists do say about their artistic development and the individuals whom they believe have made an influence, because, at the very least, they have tried to incorporate some of the ideas. And that effort speaks directly to efforts of knowledge transfer.

Poland again provided the greatest impact. Not only were their own styles appealing, but most student theatres participated in cultural exchanges, including festivals, in the West, and so they could share a wealth of information about trends.[58] Viktor Slavkin declared that 'through Polish theatre "Our Home" entered into the same system as European theatre'.[59] Regina Grinberg linked her Ivanovo troupe's work to Cracow's STU's poetry productions and Lodz's Teatr-77's incorporation of the audience into the action.[60] Our Home also admired Polish student theatres and invited Kalambur from Wroclaw and Cracow's Teatr-38 to perform at MGU, and thus a broad audience in Moscow and Leningrad saw the innovative troupes.[61] But the Polish impact was not limited to student groups. One critic noted that, although Grotowski's influence on Morozov was unclear, he began to pursue more complex artistic goals after Maneken met with Grotowski in 1971.[62] Critic Aleksandr Svobodin hinted at Grotowski's influence on Morozov in a 1973 review of *Incident on the Metro* (*Sluchai v metro*), a professional production directed by Morozov and his brother Boris. The critic referred to the actors' performances

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Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 200–204.

[57] Deming Brown, 'Czechoslovak and Polish Influences on Soviet Literature', in *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on the USSR*, Roman Szporluk (ed.) (New York: Praeger, 1975), 140.

[58] Goldfarb, *Persistence of Freedom*, 73.

[59] Slavkin, in Rozovskii, *Poimali*, 372.

[60] 'Pol'sha – liubov' moia'; Grinberg, 'Voz'memsia'; Grinberg, 'Zritel' na stsene'. Rozovskii also published an overview of Polish student theatre in his book on Our Home productions. Mark Rozovskii, *Samootdacha* (Moscow, 1976), 62–4.

[61] V.M., 'Vrotslavskii "Kalambur" v "Nashem dome"', *Teatr* (5, 1969), 166–7; N. Bogatyreva and I. Rutberg in Rozovskii, *Poimali*, 501–2.

[62] Shul'pin, *Manekena*, 56.

as 'cruel theatre', a reference to the style of Antoine (Antonin) Artaud, often considered the forerunner of Grotowski.[63]

But similarities do not necessarily prove influence. Independent, 'parallel developments' offer another possible explanation.[64] This phenomenon is most striking for amateur productions that made innovative use of space and audience contact. Richard Schechner's pioneering 'environmental theatre' exploded traditional notions of 'set' design and the fourth wall separating audience from performance action.[65] If directors typically devised a new set for each production, Schechner recognised that each spectator viewed a play from a unique physical and intellectual perspective, and he created an individualised space for each production that allowed theatregoers to choose a seat from diverse vantage points in the room, including overlooking the performance floor. In the Soviet Union, troupes also experimented with space. In 1966 Our Home's Al'bert Aksel'rod and Mikhail Kochin directed *Five Novellas in Room Five* (*Piat' novell v piatoi komnate*) in the theatre's rehearsal space in a Moscow University club. Performers wore street clothes, and the 'stage' was the undecorated floor. To heighten the 'homely' atmosphere, troupe members scattered coffee grounds underneath the seats prior to performances in a rare Soviet attempt to enhance theatregoers' experience through scent.[66] Although the artifice of performance remained, the troupe was offering theatre as a site for honest and open conversations much like those flourishing in private apartments at the time.[67] The 'set' also highlighted the connection between the spectacle and daily life. At the climactic moment of Françoise Sagan's story 'One Morning for Life' (*Odnazhdi utrom* in Russian), the windows of the rehearsal room suddenly open to reveal the bustle of Moscow streets.[68] Given that Schechner's first production associated with 'environmental theatre' appeared that same year, no influence on Aksel'rod's production was possible.[69]

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[63] A. Svobodin, 'Sluchai v metro', *Teatr* (7, 1973), 68–9, quoted 69. On Artaud and Grotowski, see Ruston Bharucha, 'Eclecticism, Oriental Theater and Artaud', *Theater* vol. 9, no. 3 (1978): 50–59.

[64] Brown, 'Influences', 140.

[65] See Richard Schechner, *Environmental Theater*, exp. ed. (New York: Applause, 1994). His seminal article 'Six Axioms for Environmental Theater' was first published in 1967.

[66] Rozovskii, *Samootdacha*, 84.

[67] Juliane Furst, 'Friends in Private, Friends in Public: The Phenomenon of the *Kompaniia* among Soviet Youth in the 1950s and 1960s', in *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia*, Lewis Siegelbaum (ed.) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 229–50; Ludmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg, *The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

[68] I. Sidorina, 'Dva chasa v piatoi komnate', *Teatr* (4, 1966), 68. The scene was based on Françoise Sagan's story 'Un matin pour la vie', *Elle*, 861 (22 June 1962), 84–7.

[69] Schechner's writings have not been translated into Russian, and it does not appear that he or his troupe travelled to the Soviet Union in a professional capacity.

Numerous Russian amateurs further worked to enhance spectator involvement and innovative use of space in productions beginning in the mid-1970s. Most came of age after Our Home was closed in 1969, so *Five Novellas*' impact was minimal. And this new generation of theatres had little if any direct contact with foreign productions unless they read about them in theatre journals. Most of them forged intimate connections with spectators after the lack of access to house of culture stages prompted them to seek out alternative spaces. Like Our Home participants, Genrietta Ianovskaia and Iurii Smirnov-Nesvitskii used their rehearsal space for performances in Leningrad houses of culture. In Moscow, Viacheslav Spesivtsev's acclaimed troupe acquired part of an empty building, and Valerii Beliakovich moved his troupe out of the Gagarin Club in southwest Moscow and into an empty storefront. The autonomous spaces led to less oversight, while the cramped quarters necessitated inventive uses of space and created an unavoidable immediacy with audiences that troupes further cultivated.[70]

Regardless of the extent of parallel developments, contacts between the earlier generation of Soviet amateurs and the outside world via Eastern Europe attracted the attention of Western European festival organisers. The reputations of some troupes were piercing the Iron Curtain, and Eastern European troupes served as conduits for information about homebound Soviet amateur troupes to Western Europeans. Both Our Home and the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute's *estrada* troupe were invited to perform at the 1967 Festival du Monde at Nancy University in France.[71] In spite of the prestige associated with the invitations, it appears that no amateur troupes were permitted to travel to Western Europe until the late 1980s. In the Soviet world, travel to the West required 'a squeaky clean past, political connections, and (usually) previous travel without incident to Eastern Europe'.[72] In addition, trips to Western Europe were reserved for high-status individuals, and amateurs hardly met this standard.[73] As a result, high-level Soviet officials viewed the invitations as an opportunity to reward 'more deserving' individuals,

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[70] Susan Costanzo, 'Reclaiming the Stage: Amateur Theater-Studio Audiences in the Late Soviet Era', *Slavic Review* vol. 57, no. 2 (1998): 398–424. Spesivtsev did travel to Yugoslavia for a children's theatre festival in the mid-1970s.

[71] Founded in 1963 by future French Minister of Culture Jack Lang, the festival featured world-class theatre and originally focused on student groups but expanded beyond students groups in 1968 to include other innovative troupes. On the Nancy festival, see Looseley, 'Jack Lang', 5–19; David Looseley, 'The World Theatre Festival, Nancy, 1963–88: A Critique and a Retrospective', *New Theatre Quarterly* vol. 16, no. 22 (1990): 141–53; Roland Grünberg and Monique Demerson, *Nancy sur scènes: au carrefour des théâtres du monde* (Nancy, 1984).

[72] Gorsuch, *All This*, 111.

[73] Ibid., 19; Anne E. Gorsuch, 'Time Travelers: Soviet Tourists to Eastern Europe', in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism*, ed. Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 210; Eleonory Gilburd, 'Books and Borders: Sergei Obraztsov and Soviet Travels to London in the 1950s', in *Turizm*, Gorsuch and Koenker (eds), 227–47.

rather than the ones invited. The Komsomol Central Committee recommended Our Home and Maneken (rather than the Leningrad troupe) for travel to Nancy. Instead, internationally acclaimed and more reliable Georgii Tovstonogov (a party member and deputy to the Supreme Soviet at the time) attended with his 'students' at Leningrad State Institute for Theatre, Music and Film, although they were ranked lowest by the Komsomol and did not meet the festival guidelines as 'student theatre'.[74] Our Home participants turned their frustration into a ditty: 'We didn't go to Zagreb. We didn't go to Wroclaw … But how we didn't go to Nancy – it was simply delightful!'[75]

Our Home's repeated disappointment was frustrating, but a number of troupe members observed and met with their Eastern European counterparts while visiting as tourists. More fortunate Soviet amateur theatres relished their festival trips. These excursions, especially to Poland, provided crucial dispersion points for cultural trends into the Soviet Union. Festivals offered world-class performances, and innovative production techniques were accessible to international participants regardless of language skills. Amateurs carried their impressions back home and shared them with colleagues and other theatre lovers via the press and Theatrical Society seminars. Troupes also received critiques of their own productions that provided a rude awakening after the insular world of Soviet art. The feedback spurred them to adapt their creative goals in order to gain acceptance in international theatrical circles, and in this way too they influenced cultural developments at home. These efforts represented a breach in the geopolitical Iron Curtain.

The Cold War served to unite non-mainstream theatre. Troupes both in the Soviet Union and abroad challenged orthodox assumptions about theatrical experiences during the 1960s and 1970s. Together, their work breached a different iron curtain – the one between spectators and performers. For some Soviet troupes, these developments were a product of their exposure to Western trends. In other cases, Soviet troupes shared similar preoccupations, suggesting that the consequences of modern urban life likewise breached ideological boundaries.

These experiences occurred at a time of 'an exceptional vitality for young theatre throughout the world', as one Parisian critic has suggested with respect to the Nancy festival.[76] But this era was over by 1980. For the most part, its 'demise' resulted from creative exhaustion.[77] In addition, tensions associated with Cold War diplomacy resurfaced and suspended Eastern Europe's role as cultural mediator. Martial law in Poland ended Soviet citizen travel there, and a re-emergence of conservative politics in the United States and Britain with the elections of Ronald

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[74] Tovstonogov's students did not make a splash. In a retrospective of Nancy festivals, the group was named along with all other troupes that performed that year, but it was not mentioned in excerpts of reviews from the time or shown in any photographs. See Grünberg and Demerson, *Nancy sur scenes*, 38–47.

[75] Slavkin, in Rozovskii, *Poimali*, 372.

[76] Robert Abirached, quoted in Looseley, 'World Theatre Festival', 151.

[77] Schechner, 'Decline and Fall'.

Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, respectively, inflamed Soviet mistrust until Mikhail Gorbachev assumed leadership of the ailing Communist Party.

Further study of the workings of theatre tourism would entail the inclusion of Western festivals, such as Nancy's Festival du Monde, in order to build out the networks that operated between East and West from the late 1950s until 1981 or perhaps 1991. It might also incorporate similar networks of other arts, including popular music, because it is likely that they too took advantage of the relatively easy crossing from the Soviet Union to 'friendly' Eastern European countries.

The expanding possibilities for international cultural contacts during the Cold War merit a cautionary note. Recent scholarship that emphasises connections across cultures during the Cold War usually presents this development as positive. However, these interactions were not without their detractors. In 1986, *The Drama Review* published an article by 'Jerzy Tymicki', who claimed that Polish theatre 'had a love affair with communism' in the 1970s. He was particularly critical of Jerzy Grotowski and a handful of other internationally prominent practitioners of theatre who 'mainly explored artistic problems. They concentrated on methods, techniques, forms, and formal games.' As a result, according to Tymicki, the Polish public lost interest in these theatres.[78] He was no more satisfied with international travel and festivals. While promoting Polish culture elsewhere, these theatres 'masked communist power by showing its "human face" [and] served Soviet policies of "détente"'. Tymicki sarcastically condemned them: 'Let's forget what's really happening to the dull grey population of ordinary Poles. We are artists – the elite, and the elite have the right to a better life.'[79] Although Tymicki did not consider other potential explanations, such as creative exhaustion, for audience attitudes, his view suggests that this shift to international opportunities for theatres in the 1960s and 1970s had ambivalent domestic consequences for the arts in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Although Soviet theatre tourists benefited from these encounters, recent triumphalist scholarship on their hosts may warrant a reassessment.

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[78] This phenomenon was not unique to Poland at that time. See Bernadette Quinn, 'Problematising "Festival Tourism": Arts Festivals and Sustainable Development in Ireland', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* vol. 14, no. 3 (2006): 288–306.

[79] Tymicki, 'New Dignity'. According to Kathleen Cioffi, Tymicki is a pseudonym for Kazimierz Braun, a playwright, director and critic who emigrated to the United States in 1985. Cioffi, *Alternative Theatre*, 145. Braun's website also lists a play published under that pseudonym in 1982: http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~kaz/web-plays.html (accessed 2 November 2013). Braun's analysis of Grotowski in 1989 lacks rancour. See Braun, *History*, esp. 163–5. Some members of the Polish theatre community shared 'Tymicki's' assessment without the bitterness. See Kathleen Cioffi and Andrzej Ceynowa, 'An Interview with Director Lech Raczak', *Drama Review* vol. 30, no. 3 (1986): 81–90. For a response to Tymicki's article, see Halina Filipowicz, 'Polish Theatre: "Message over the Medium"', *Drama Review* vol. 31, no. 2 (1987): 26–31.

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Chapter 9

Ballet as a Tool for Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War: Soviet Ballets in Paris and London, 1954–1968

Stéphanie Gonçalves

Ballet has been connected to political powers since its creation in the court of fifteenth-century France. It was a noble art, reserved for men, focusing on virility and elegance, ability and presence, qualities which were essential for the *courtisan* and the *honnête homme*.[1] Through the ages, dance continued to be linked to political spheres, sometimes as an anticonformist position. For instance, in the 1930s in the USA, the New Dance Group was created to raise social awareness.[2] Their motto was 'dance is a weapon', which definitely put dance beyond the widespread stereotypes of white tutus, pink pointes and frail ballerinas. Furthermore, dance was not only just a *façade* for idealised stories; but as such it was used as a diplomatic tool, becoming part of cultural strategies in the context of the Cold War. This is represented in the popular success of the Kirov and Bolshoi in Paris and London, which took place at a time when the Soviet regime was being depreciated by Western propaganda.

The ambition to propagate an ideological model through the soft power[3] of culture in the Cold War has been underlined by several researchers.[4] Fine arts,

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[1] The *courtisan* was the ideal man of the sixteenth century, followed by the concept of the *honnête homme* in the seventeenth century. See for example, Nicolas Faret, *L'honnête homme ou l'art de plaire à la Cour*, Paris, 1630.

[2] Bernice Rosen, *The New Dance Group: Movement for a Change* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2000); Ellen Graff, *Stepping Left: Dance and Politics in New York City, 1928–1942* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Victoria Phillips Geduld, 'Performing Communism in the American Dance: Culture, Politics and the New Dance Group', *American Communist History*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2008): 39–65; Stacey Prickett, 'Dance and the Workers' Struggle', Dance Research: *The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, vol. 8, no. 1 (1990): 47–61.

[3] Joseph S. Nye Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

[4] Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the*

cinema and music were largely used by the Soviets and the Americans because conventional weapons, and particularly atomic weapons, could not have been used.[5] The atomic threat revealed the extreme creativity of both superpowers, mobilising everything they could to serve their foreign policy, preferably areas they mastered. The role of dance has been discussed in three main studies revealing the lack of research about the European ground: first, Naima Prevots's *Dance for Export* explains the role of American dance during the Cold War;[6] Anthony Shay's book about folk dance in a political perspective;[7] and recently Christina Ezrahi's work on the Soviet ballet, *Swans of the Kremlin*.[8] These researches are major progress in the study of the relationship of dance and politics. Apart from the repertoire, they also emphasise this link through the complexity of institutions and actors involved, and also through the possible impacts of such tours. The process of travelling itself is also interesting: going abroad with 100 dancers was never an everyday phenomenon, but always a striking and extraordinary event, all the more so when Soviets troupes visited Western capitals right in the middle of the Cold War. At the time, in Paris and London, curiosity for merely seeing Soviet dancers – 'real Soviets', flesh and bone – was enough to visit their shows.[9] But the mastery of the Soviets was also widely known due to their repertoire and technique spread through films and articles.[10] In London, many books had been published on Russian and Soviet ballet, and some had been reprinted many times.[11] Apart from larger works, there are also smaller studies such as Larraine Nicholas' article

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Cultural Cold War (London: Granta, 2000); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); J.-F. Sirinelli and G.-H. Soutou (eds), *Culture et Guerre froide* (Paris: PUPS, 2008). See also the reviews by G. Liska, 'The Politics of "Cultural Diplomacy": *The Soviet Cultural Offensive* by F.C. Barghoorn; *Communist Propaganda Methods: A Case Study on Czechoslovakia* by Vladimir Reisky de Dubnic', *World Politics*, vol. 14, no. 3 (1962): 532–41.

[5] Tony Shaw, 'The Politics of Cold War Culture', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 3, no. 3 (2001): 59–76.

[6] Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

[7] Anthony Shay, *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2002).

[8] Christina Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin: Ballet and Power in Soviet Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012).

[9] Thomas Gomart, *Double détente: Les relations franco-soviétiques de 1958 à 1964* (Paris: Sorbonne, 2003), 10.

[10] Some periodicals specialising in dance issues published articles on Soviet and American dance: for example, *Dancing Times*, *Dance and Dancers*, *Ballet Today*, or *Ballet* and *The Ballet*, the Russian Ballet League Periodical for the British part; or *Toute la danse* and *Danse et rythmes* for the French one. They were sometimes written by fellow-travellers.

[11] See W.A. Propert, *The Russian Ballet, 1921–1929* (London: John Lane, 1931); Vladimir Kameneff, *Russian Ballet through Russian Eyes* (London: Russian Books and Library, 1936); Gordon Anthony, *Russian Ballet: Camera Studies* (London: Bles, 1939); Alexandre Benois, *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet* (London: Putman, 1941, 1945,

on fellow-travellers in Britain, which is particularly helpful for understanding the actors and intermediaries such as friendship societies which were involved in the East–West cultural exchanges.[12] A recent book edited by Alexandra Kolb finally sums up the trend of studying the implication of politics in dance, through various contributions.[13]

This chapter will focus on Soviet ballet tours in two artistic and political capital cities, Paris and London, which were also important in the struggle of the superpowers. The study of these two European cities in the Cold War in the ballet field is still lacking[14] and the European angle brings an important perspective to the more traditional Soviet–American viewpoint. The relevant period is from 1954 to 1968, both important years between the death of Stalin and the implementation of the Brezhnev doctrine. This *terminus a quo* is also a relevant in the field of dance itself as 1954 was the year of the first official Soviet ballet tour to Western Europe since the end of World War II. From 1968, there was a certain decline of enthusiasm towards Soviet ballet in Western countries and a 'scarcity of choreographers who can create ballets for large companies'.[15] From then, the Soviets had to refresh their shows because the public wanted to see something new:[16] 1954–68 can thus be seen as the beginning of the sending of Soviet ballet companies abroad and their 'establishment' on Western stages. Through specific ballet tours, the actors here will be not only those involved in ballet, but also diplomats and other intermediary key actors. A functional approach as practised by Pascal Ory[17] that aims 'to light actors, factors and the effects of this relation'[18] is been followed in this study. This approach will permit us to reconstruct a perspective into the period in the ballet field but at the same time to explore some precise tours and their effects on Paris and London

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1947); Iris Morley, *Soviet Ballet* (London: Collins, 1945, 1946); Agrippina Vaganova, *Basic Principles of Classical Ballet* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1948).

[12] Larraine Nicholas, 'Fellow Travellers: Dance and British Cold War Politics in the Early 1950s', *Dance Research*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2001): 83–105.

[13] Alexandra Kolb (ed.), *Dance and Politics* (Oxford: Lang, 2010).

[14] Please note that Christina Ezrahi's chapter 5, 'Beyond the Iron Curtain: The Bolshoi Ballet in London in 1956', extensively describes useful Soviet archives and papers. See Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 137–68.

[15] Marcel Schneider and Marcelle Michel, *Danse à Paris: Ballets des Champs-Elysées* (Paris: Dell'arte, 1983), 63.

[16] Marie-Pierre Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement: France et URSS à l'heure de la détente (1964–1994)* (Paris: Sorbonne, 1991), 296. She is talking about a 'decline of the keen interest from the 1970s'. But we can nuance this assertion a little because the Soviet companies always had great popular success in Paris and London until the 1990s.

[17] For a comparison between a functional and a formal approach, I suggest the introduction (in French) by Pascal Ory in *Les relations culturelles internationales au XXème siècle: De la diplomatie culturelle à l'acculturation*, Anne Dulphy et al. (eds) (Brussels: Lang, 2010), 15–23.

[18] Anne Dulphy et al., *Les relations culturelles*, 20.

scenes and audiences. Sources such as British and French diplomatic papers, general and specialised press, and interviews with former dancers have been used.

French and British Actors and Networks: A Traditional Path for the Ballet Field

Ballet offers some advantages other arts do not vis-à-vis its international use. It is a mix of visual and acoustic art which mobilises many senses and sensitivities. The fact that no language is required to understand it – which means that no translation is needed (contrary to theatre) – is another feature that was not ignored by artists and civil servants in charge of the tours,[19] though some 'messages' can be shaped, through the aesthetic or through the narrativity of some ballets. For example, the Soviets very often staged *Ivan the Terrible* in Paris and London from the 1960s after having danced many traditional ballets such as *Swan Lake* or *The Sleeping Beauty*, mirroring the imperial aesthetic. *Ivan the Terrible* could allegedly be seen as a metaphor for the proletariat struggle, in which the slave takes the place of his master.[20] But the Soviets were not so naïve to think that a ballet – even with propaganda themes – could conquer non-communist audiences.[21] Rather, ballet was one part of a vast and centralised cultural strategy. The Soviet ballet tours were coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and, from 1957, by a special committee, the State Committee for Cultural Links with Foreign Countries under the Council of Ministers of the USSR.[22]

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[19] The National Archives, Kew (TNA), FO 371/122813, Visit to UK by Mr Bulganin and Mr Khrushchev from Soviet Union, File NS1052/84, February 18, 1956, where 'Mr Dodds Parker has suggested that the Soviet leaders see a performance of Shakespeare instead of ballet or opera'. It is said: 'But as Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev speak no English, they may find this tedious'. As a reply, ballet is finally preferred to theatre: 'Lord Reading [in charge of coordinating the visit at the Foreign Office] agrees with the third paragraph above. British ballet is of a direct style to Russian ballet and Lord Reading thinks that the Russians would probably appreciate it.' For France, 'an impartial investigation would show that, far from being a source of expenses, the national lyrical theatres are representing the most marvellous propaganda means and French artistic influence'. Archives Nationales-Pierrefite (AN-P), 19930357, Direction de la musique et de la danse, Opéra de Paris, 1907–1984, carton 1, Administration générale de la Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux (RTLN), Note de synthèse sur la RTLN et réponses à des questions parlementaires, 1947–1951, Rapport d'activités de 1947, 27. See also 'it is time … the Opera brings to perfection the choreographic art and become the most powerful propagator of this art where are reflected the purest qualities of civilisations', ibid., Rapport d'activités 1947–48, 7.

[20] The popularity of the ballet may certainly be linked with the films of Sergei Eisenstein.

[21] See Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 139.

[22] TNA, BW2/539, Council Committee and Members Soviet Relations Committee, 1958; see 'New State Committee for cultural links with foreign countries under the Council of

Obviously, crossing of the Iron Curtain was not that easy at the time, and from the Soviet point of view was mainly linked to scientific, educational or cultural exchanges. Studying the exchanges between the East and the West through ballet tours gives us a better understanding of how the travelling between the two 'worlds' took place and how it sometimes led to important political consequences, such as high-profile defections.[23]

When it comes to organising the tours, many different levels ranging from public to private ones were mobilised in relation to the ballet tours in France and in Great Britain. They can be defined as 'traditional' organisations as they are part of the cultural and artistic exchanges in general and for many years – like painting exhibitions, theatre, films or literature – they were linked to the same official paths. It can be seen as the increase of state control over cultural exchanges, especially at the beginning of the Cold War.[24] The political importance of these exchanges is underlined by the fact that leaders of the respective countries were often involved in the negotiations, as well as the foreign ministries of each country. Sometimes, their help in the negotiations – or, conversely, their hindrance – was decisive. In May 1954, a visit of the Soviet Ballet[25] was cancelled due to the battle of Diên-Biên-Phû in French Indochina, which serves as an edifying example. The French government and particularly the Minister of the Interior, M. Martinaud-Déplat – referring to public security – feared demonstrations by anti-communists and veterans inside and outside the Opéra de Paris.[26] They decided to cancel the shows to avoid 'very unfortunate incidents', just one day before the beginning, on 12 May.[27] This event, considered by witnesses as a quandary in public diplomacy, has been seen as an affront by the Soviets.

One level below, we can find specific official organs sometimes established particularly for cultural exchanges. Such organisations that were at the intersection of art and diplomacy can be found in both countries, France and Great Britain. In France, the Association Française d'Action Artistique (AFAA) was the main public actor organising all the cultural exchanges under the auspices of the Foreign Office.[28] The AFAA had links to many other ministries, such as the Ministry of

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Ministers of the USSR', *Sovetskaya Kul'tura*, May 21, 1957. Translation by the British Council.

[23] Just to cite some of them: Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky (1953), Rudolf Nureyev (1961) and, later, Natalia Makarova (1970) and Mikhail Baryshnikov (1974). A study should be devoted to this question.

[24] See Gomart, *Double détente*, 219. Bilateral agreements for cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union would be signed later.

[25] In France, they were introduced as 'Ballets soviétiques du Kirov et du Bolchoï'.

[26] AN-P, 19900035/36, spectacles de Gala 1954–72, Ballets soviétiques, 1954. Archives in the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra de Paris (BOP), OPERA.PRESSE.20., 1954; 'Hommage aux Ballets Russes', *Magazine France-URSS* no., 104 (May 1954), 3.

[27] 'L'Affaire des Ballets soviétiques', Paris-Presse, *L'intransigeant*, May 13, 1954, p. 1. See also BOP, OPERA.PRESSE.20, 1954.

[28] Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives in La Courneuve (MAEA-Paris), DGRCST, Cabinet du directeur général, 1948–68, Carton 24, AFAA 1946–68; AN-P, 19840759,

Education, but was directly connected to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs[29] and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also, the Commission mixte franco-soviétique was one of the governmental organs concretely negotiating terms of the incoming and outgoing companies.[30] This cultural commission also negotiated agreements on bilateral cultural exchanges between the two countries.[31] In parallel with these public agencies, there was a private organ supporting the Soviet ballet troupes coming to France: the Agence Littéraire et Artistique Parisienne (ALAP), together with a man called Fabrice Lumbroso[32] with his Spectacles Lumbroso.[33] This association was composed of fellow-travellers who were interested in spreading the Soviet vision of ballet and who were conscious of the message the Soviets wanted to transmit. Thus, they considered Soviet artistic culture to be superior to the American one. Indeed, 80 per cent of the Franco-Soviet exchanges were organised by ALAP.[34] Further down, personal links also form an important but often forgotten part related to exchanges. Fabrice Lumbroso and his secretary, Janine Ringuet, were at the heart of the organisation.[35] The Communist Party in France was also at the time an important factor in the political and social fields, and its influence cannot be forgotten in the context of artistic exchanges.[36] The Association France-URSS, which was a product of fellow-travellers but also supported by the French Communist Party (PCF), organised about 10 per cent of the shows in France.[37]

In Britain, the British Council was the institution devoted to cultural exchanges since 1934.[38] For the Soviet exchanges specifically, the Soviet Relations Committee (SRC) of the British Council was always in charge of the artistic exchanges with

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Ministère Culture, Direction développement culturel, Service des affaires internationales, carton 13, AFAA/19900035/29, Commissions et organismes auxquels participe l'Administration Générale, AFAA, Tournées, Direction artistique. See also Annie Angrémy, *La diplomatie culturelle de la France* (Paris: Conseil de la coopération culturelle du conseil de l'Europe, 1970), 70.

29 From 1959, the head was André Malraux.

30 AN-P, 19840759, Ministère de la Culture, direction du développement culturel, service des affaires internationales (1961–82), 201: URSS.

31 Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement*, 279.

32 Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement*, 296 and Gomart, *Double détente*, 84–9.

33 Fabrice Lumbroso, *Mémoires d'un homme de spectacles* (Paris: Lieu commun, 1991). In the archives, see AN-P, 19840759, Ministère Culture, Direction développement culturel, Service des affaires internationales, carton 13, AFAA/Ambassades.

34 Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement*, 297.

35 Gomart, *Double détente*, 89.

36 Stéphane Courtois and Marc Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste en France* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1995).

37 Rey, *La tentation du rapprochement*, 297.

38 Philip M. Taylor, *The Projection of Britain: British Overseas Publicity and Propaganda, 1919–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 125.

the Soviet Union.[39] The SRC had been created in 1955 especially to prevent friendship societies from having too big a share of cultural exchanges. Friendship societies were considered by the British Council as 'undesirable agents' of the Soviet regime.[40] As Tony Shaw states: 'The British Council and its offshoot, the Soviet Relations Committee, used "friendship" as a political weapon behind the Iron Curtain.'[41] 'Friendship' here referred to scientific, educational and artistic exchanges, which were previously organised by the friendship societies.[42] The paradox – and the strength of the British strategy – lies in the fact that the SRC was 'the official "governmental" organisation … in an officially "non-governmental" body, the British Council'.[43] But the SRC was abolished in 1959, partly due to Soviet suspicion towards the SRC which, from their perspective, had become a Western political tool.[44] Inside the British Council, another organ was created – the special Drama and Dance Advisory Panel that took charge of the coordination of artistic tours. All issues related to incoming and outgoing artistic tours were discussed by this body.[45]

In Britain, too, private actors functioned in parallel with public institutions. Famous English impresario Victor Hochhauser and his wife Lilian were fundamental to successful artistic exchanges.[46] Generally, impresarios such as Sol Hurok in the USA were at the core of networks because the Soviets were willing to

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[39] TNA, FO 371/116816, Anglo-Soviet cultural relations, composition of the committee on Anglo-Soviet cultural exchanges, 1955; FO 371/116817, Anglo-Soviet cultural relations, committee on Anglo-Soviet cultural exchanges, 1955; FO 371/116818, Formation of Soviet Relations Committee of the British Council and record of their meetings and activities in promoting, Anglo-Soviet cultural exchanges, 1955; FO 371/116819, Soviet relations committee meeting, 1955; FO 371/116820, Soviet exchanges, Sept. 1955; FO 924/1209–11, Anglo-Soviet cultural relations, report on activities of Soviet Relations Committee of British Council, records of meetings, 1957.

[40] TNA, FO371/116672, Activities of the British Soviet friendship society, cultural exchanges and visits by academics, 1955, confidential, October: 'try and render the Societies ineffective'. See also TNA, BW2 540 Minutes of the Soviet relations committee 1955 to 1957, 6th meeting, July 28, 1955, exchanges with the Soviet Union from July 1, 1955: Paper B confidential: Reciprocal exchanges of drama July 28, 1955.

[41] Shaw, 'The Politics of Cold War Culture', 59–76.

[42] Nicholas, 'Fellow Travellers', 85, 94.

[43] Aiko Watanabe, 'Cultural Drives at the Periphery: Britain's Experiences', *History in Focus* vol. 10 (2006): http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/cold/articles/watanabe.html (accessed 19 February, 2013).

[44] Watanabe, 'Cultural Drives at the Periphery'.

[45] TNA, BW120/1, Drama and dance advisory committee's minutes of meetings, 1939–57; BW120/2, Drama and dance advisory committee's minutes of meetings, 1958–60; BW120/3, drama and dance advisory committee's minutes of meetings 1961–65.

[46] Biographic file Hochhauser, Victoria & Albert Museum (VAMA), Theatre and Performance Archives, London.

negotiate with them, because they trusted them.[47] We have always to keep in mind that these exchanges permitted the gain of international currency which could be exchanged – instead of roubles, which could not.[48] Financial profit is thus another good reason to tour, but not the main one, as the Western public was massively present but the money was mainly earned by Western firms. In France, during the period 1953–68, almost 4 million French people saw Soviet artists, including circus, theatre etc.[49] For example, the Palais des Sports, with seating for 5,000, became a regular staging place for Soviet troupes, increasing a popular audience.[50]

Bolshoi and Kirov in London and Paris: Prestige and Propaganda

The decision to expand ballet tours abroad in spite of high costs and heavy labour can be explained by three main reasons: firstly, the Soviets wanted to renew their cultural image abroad. Soviets were seen as hard workers, rough peasants or revolutionaries, with low education. Dance, and especially cultivated imperial traditions, was used to prove that Soviets were elegant and educated, and that the Revolution had not destroyed the cultural qualities and institutions of the imperial era. This positioned the Soviets as heirs of long and celebrated traditions, giving them more power and legitimacy for ballet, even if it had experienced changes.[51] This paradox between imperial and Soviet ballet was used by the French and British governments in publicising the tours: under this more neutral étiquette of Russian ballet, it was easier to appear as non-political and, consequently, as non-communist. Welcoming the Soviet companies officially was practically mandatory – the public really wanted to see them after years of interruption[52] –

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[47] Simo Mikkonen, 'Winning Hearts and Minds? Soviet Music in the Cold War Struggle against the West', in *Twentieth Century Music and Politics*, Pauline Fairclough (ed.) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 14–15.

[48] TNA, LAB8/3167, Issue of labour permits for Soviet artistes, Letter from R.L. Speaight, Director of East–West contacts, Foreign Office, to F. Pickford, Ministry of Labour, December 14, 1964: 'At present the Russians are sending here dance groups, orchestras and individual performers who earn high fees which are of course readily transferable; while British performers in the Soviet Union are often obliged to accept quite inadequate payment, mostly in blocked roubles.' This was confirmed in an interview by Sir John Tooley, March 2011.

[49] Gomart, *Double détente*, 89.

[50] 'The Palais des Sports miraculously transformed in theatre', *Danse et rythmes*, June 1958, 7.

[51] Ezrahi speaks of a 'Russian soul' remobilised in ballet. See Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 162.

[52] Sir David Webster sent an invitation to the Bolshoi in 1946, at the reopening of Covent Garden after the World War II. See Margot Fonteyn, *Autobiography* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1975), 156. See Richard Buckle, 'Buckle at the Bolshoi', *Dance and Dancers*, vol. 7, no. 11 (1956): 6, l.4.

but at the same time, governments did not present them as Soviet, but as Russian. In the archives and the press there is extensive use of the phrase 'Russian ballet' instead of 'Soviet ballet', as if these dancers did not belong to the adversary state.

Ballet did not simply manifest a propaganda pattern, but it could *embody* it. It was thus an excellent propaganda tool, but also a tool for gaining international prestige. Prestige came through particularly famous dancers – Galina Ulanova, Maya Plisetskaya, Vladimir Vasiliev; they offered talent, vigour, athletic bodies and virtuosity. Propaganda came through the use of dancers as cultural ambassadors who conveyed Soviet messages for international media.[53] Photographs of these athletic bodies – in very technical positions such as *portés* or leaps,[54] wearing superb costumes – were largely diffused in the Western press and books, often sent by the Soviet themselves as publicity material.[55] Through their impressive repertoire and mastery, the Soviets received wide-scale media attention. Ballet was presented as a part of the Soviet education. Folkloric dances in particular were learnt at school by every Soviet pupil, and Soviet dancers were introduced as the pinnacle of excellence of the Soviet system.[56] But the propaganda also occurred in relation to the dancer's body itself. Their bodies were constantly present on the scene; they danced in a collective spirit, allegedly mirroring the Soviet ideology. Furthermore, their presence in the West seemed to sweep away the usual anti-communist discourse. The dancers appeared like superhumans who were full of energy and elegance. The press focused on certain individuals, Galina Ulanova in particular, who danced till an advanced age, probably more than 50.[57]

Concretely, during 1954 and 1968, the Bolshoi and Kirov appeared four times in Paris (two more appearances were cancelled) and seven times in London,[58]

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[53] Stéphanie Gonçalves, 'Les tournées dansées pendant la guerre froide : danser pour la paix?' Grenoble, *Cahiers de l'ILCEA*, no. 16 (2012) [online: http//ilcea.revues.org/index1402.html]. The traditional gift given by the Soviet dancers was a dove, symbol of peace.

[54] *Portés* is the French word for a technical position in which the male dancer raises the female dancer into the air, at arm's length.

[55] In the Royal Opera House Covent Garden (ROH), one can find a huge collection of photographs send by the Soviets before the 1956 tour in London. See Royal Opera House Collection, Ballet/dance companies other than Covent Garden, Box 4, Bolshoi Ballet 1956/57, artists' photos, 1956.

[56] Julie Kavanagh, *Rudolf Nureyev* (London: Penguin, 2007), 15 and 17.

[57] BOP, OPERA.PRESSE.20. Press-cuttings album in the Royal Opera House collections.

[58] For London, Kirov: Covent Garden, June 19–July 15, 1961; Covent Garden September 5–October 1, 1966. Bolshoi: Royal Albert Hall, November 16, 1954 (some dancers); Covent Garden, October 3–27, 1956; Royal Albert Hall, June 27–July 3, 1960; Covent Garden, July–August 1963; Royal Festival Hall, July 12–August 21, 1965. For Paris: Kirov and Bolshoi, Opéra de Paris, May 1954 (cancelled); Bolshoi, Vieux Vel' d'hiv, Palais des Sports, May 30–June 16, 1958; Etoiles soviétiques: Théâtre des nations, printemps 1964, Bolshoi: 1968 (cancelled); Kirov: May 16 to 30, Opéra de Paris and Palais

which is quite a lot for fewer than 15 years.[59] Their success was impressive every time, the first time in particular. The discourse surrounding these visits varied depending on the political alignment of the publication. The communist press seemed to welcome their brilliant comrades,[60] using countless superlatives and colourful as well as lyrical expressions.[61] Many photographs were published. For example, in Paris huge coverage ranging from 3 to 29 May 1954 was given for the tour of the Bolshoi, even with a special logo created for this event in *L'Humanité*.

The right-wing press gave a lot less space to visiting companies, but did give space to certain star dancers instead of the whole company. The Soviet ballet also drew negative critiques that were sometimes very severe. Some of them stuck, especially accusations of Soviet ballet being old-fashioned, boring, repetitive, even dusty. The English dancer Marie Rambert[62] wrote already in 1935, after having visited the USSR, that Soviet costumes were 'old-fashioned', 'danced in the dead idiom of an old-fashioned opera', 'dead idioms are applied scenically too', 'do not compensate for such absolute sterility of choreographic invention'.[63] It was not so easy to conquer the Western public, in particular Parisians, who were accustomed to their ballet traditions. Yet the curiosity for Soviet things was bigger than anything else, even surpassing anti-communist propaganda. Perhaps thus, Soviets promoted tradition through a very classical repertoire including classics such as *Swan Lake*, *Giselle* or *Cinderella*,[64] with some touches of Soviet contemporary works like *Romeo and Juliet* or *Spartacus*, and with a mix of folkloric dances such as a Moldavian national folk dance or *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray*.[65] Eventually, audiences in Paris and London came to love this mix.

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des Sports, June 1961 (defection of Nureyev); Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Festival international de Danse de Paris, 1965.

[59] Pragmatic reasons of democratisation and increasing airline flights cannot be ignored.

[60] I consulted *L'Humanité* and *Magazine France-URSS* for France and *The Daily Worker* for England.

[61] The examples are numerous. Just to cite one of them: 'Yesterday, the Opera was closed, but Paris hearts were open to Soviet artists', *L'Humanité*, May 15, 1954, 2.

[62] Marie Rambert institutionalised ballet in the UK, along with Ninette de Valois. She created the Marie Rambert Company, which widely toured in the twentieth century. See Marie Rambert, *Quicksilver: The Autobiography of Marie Rambert* (London: Macmillan, 1972).

[63] Hubert Griffith (ed.), *Playtime in Russia* (London: Methuen, 1935), 83–94, here 85.

[64] The classic book by Eric Hobsbawm may be useful in that case: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[65] See programme of the Bolshoi at the Royal Albert Hall, 1960, at the Royal Academy of Dance, London.

Audiences and Reception of the Western Performances

Soviet ballet successes were simply huge everywhere. Audiences were very heterogeneous even if it is difficult to find statistics on the topic. Ballet could be understood by all social classes, even if the traditional audience in London and Paris consisted of elites. Prices for seats were quite high, but there were always some ballet fans who saved money for weeks to buy tickets. Also, in Paris the Communist Party or trade unions might give free tickets to their members.[66] Audiences also included music lovers, who wanted to hear Russian music such as Tchaikovsky. Finally, a great part of the audience was representatives of the government, diplomats or high-ranking civil servants. The whole city of Paris was at the première, transforming the performance into a fashionable date. In Paris, the internal reports show that the receipts for the Bolshoi performances in 1958 reached almost 50 million francs, that is to say about 850,000 euros. To compare, a normal ballet performed the same year as *Le Chevalier à la Rose* (*Der Rosenkavalier*) was about three times less profitable.[67] The same took place in London. With the spread of 'arena ballet'[68] in huge places, such as the Palais des Sports in Paris from the beginning of the 1960s, ballet became more and more popular and economically accessible for a general audience.

The year 1954 was originally going to be the first appearance of a Soviet ballet beyond the Iron Curtain. After long negotiations, the Paris Opera was selected as the place of the first East–West ballet exchange in the 1950s, but it was eventually cancelled for political reasons.[69] The French Indochina post-colonial war, and the Diên-Biên-Phû battle in particular, shocked France and brought the Cold War to France.[70] The French Minister of the Interior – in accordance with Joseph Laniel, President of the Council and Maurice Schumann, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs – decided to cancel all the performances because the police feared demonstrations of anti-Soviets and veterans of the Indochina War, inside and outside the opera house. Public opinion was partly surprised by the cancellation. This was interpreted as an act of censorship by Communist Party members. Many letters from dissatisfied and angry people can be found in the French archives.[71] Some called the cancellation a 'scandal', something that France, 'the country of human rights', could not do because it meant the Soviets could not perform at

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66 The French historian Martine Sonnet gives an example in her book *Atelier 62* (Cognac: Le temps qu'il faut, 2008).

67 See AN-P, 199300357, Direction de la musique et de la danse, Opéra de Paris, 1907–84, carton 2: gestion financière et comptable, 1946–62, bulletins des recettes de chaque spectacle. We used the online converter of the Official French Statistical Institute to convert older francs to euros, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/calcul-pouvoir-achat.asp.

68 Alicia Markova, *Markova Remembers* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986), 128.

69 AN-P, 19900035/36, spectacles de Gala 1954–72, Ballets soviétiques, 1954.

70 Paris-Match, no. 268, May 15–22, 1954.

71 AN-P, 19900035/36, spectacles de Gala 1954–72, Ballets soviétiques, 1954.

all. Some people considered this a normal action as the French were engaged in war and could not tolerate Soviets coming to perform and entertain them in Paris. The cancellation became a political issue – *une affaire d'Etat*, called *l'Affaire des ballets soviétiques* in the French press[72] – even though it should have been a brilliant event of welcoming Soviets in Paris, in a peaceful exchange. This cancellation affected the minds of the French, the Soviets and even the British for many years. When the British considered organising an exchange with the Bolshoi Ballet in 1956, they had in mind the Paris 'fiasco' of 1954.[73]

Popular reception of Soviet acts is a difficult question. It is clear that reception varied over time, from great success in a downward spiral. It varied also because of people's background. Françoise Reiss, a Parisian dance critic in the 1950s and 1960s,[74] wrote an article in the *Revue d'esthétique*, analysing the first appearance of the Soviet dancers in Paris in 1958.[75] This article, for which interviews with Soviet dancers were used, serves as a useful testimony of the reaction of the French dance critiques in the late 1950s. Reiss underlined her huge enthusiasm about seeing Soviet dancing, but she was also 'surprised and sometimes shocked by certain aspects of its esthetical conception'.[76] Technique was their strength,[77] which Asaf Messerer summed up by saying 'a total muscular coordination for a total culture of dance'.[78] The 'purity' of tradition was an argument for the Soviets: Reiss, as many other critics, also in Britain, presented the Soviet ballet as the purest ballet ever.[79] The shows in Paris and London represented the

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[72] See 'L'Affaire des Ballets soviétiques', Paris-Presse, *L'intransigeant*, May 13, 1954, 1.

[73] TNA, FO371/122983, N. Ponomareva has been charged with shoplifting, Letter from Sir William Hayter, Moscow Embassy, to Foreign Office, September 3, 1956: 'I think we cannot safely ignore the clumsy hint of blackmail in regard to the visit of the Bolshoi ballet. I do not think even the Soviet government is likely to cut off its nose to spite its face quite to this extent, particularly after the fiasco of the Bolshoi visit to Paris. But no doubt they will try to keep us on tenterhooks until the last minute.' TNA, BW2/540, Minutes of the Soviet Relations Committee, 1955–57, 2nd meeting, May 10, 1955, Appendix A, Paper A, p. 2: 'Owing to the cancellation by the French government of the Ballets performances in Paris, the French government lost heavily (probably about £25,000) since they received no proceeds to offset the Comédie Française expenses in Moscow.'

[74] She was a specialist on the dancer Nijinsky. See Françoise Reiss, *La vie de Nijinsky* (Paris: Les éditions de l'art, 1957) and *Nijinsky ou la grâce: Sa vie, son esthétique et sa psychologie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1957).

[75] Françoise Reiss, 'L'esthétique du ballet soviétique à propos de la saison du ballet du théâtre Bolchoï de Moscou à l'Opéra de Paris (30 mai–16 juin 1958)', *Revue d'esthétique* vol. 9 (1958): 190–99.

[76] Reiss, 'L'esthétique du ballet soviétique', 190.

[77] According to many testimonies of dancers, such as Beryl Grey and Anya Linden (Lady Sainsbury), the Soviet back was at the heart of their dance.

[78] Reiss, 'L'esthétique du ballet soviétique', 195.

[79] Reiss, 'L'esthétique du ballet soviétique', 197: 'The technique of classical dance has been conserved in the USSR, purer than in every other country, because the tradition of

Russian classical style: for example in May–June 1958 at the Opéra de Paris they presented not only the more modern *Romeo and Juliet* (Prokofiev–Lavrosky) and *Mirandoline* (Vainonen–Vassilenko) but also the very classic *Swan Lake* (Petipa, Ivanov/Gorsky, Messerer–Tchaikovsky) and *Giselle* (Petipa, Lavrosky). Modern ballets with an ideological touch had been excluded from the programme, which was a choice made by the Soviets 'in order to import only eternal masterpieces constituting a universal language', according to M. Tomsky, artistic director of the Bolshoi and *maître de ballets*, cited by Reiss. But this was hardly surprising since Parisian audiences wanted to see the best Soviet numbers on their first visit. Politically leaning acts would have been ill received. Soviet attempts were to be as appealing as possible for the French audiences.

Paradoxically, however, the aesthetics mirrored Soviet culture and its political nature. Reiss explained that 'significant parts of Soviet ballet were considered non-exportable' because they had been created for a Soviet audience, in a different social context, incomprehensible to a Parisian audience.[80] Technically, the Soviet pointe work was different, 'lighter' according to Reiss. Male dancers were considered to express 'virility' through many lifts, or very high jumps, in comparison to Western ballets. But the 'curious impression of desuetude' is also, for her, 'a commitment of realism, as an ideological content'. For the Soviets, the ballet had to be realistic. It promotes a narrative style, understandable by a large public, which is at the same time the success and the Achilles heel of the Soviet aesthetic: success because large and popular audiences could understand the ballet; Achilles heel because it was seen as 'poor' for some critics or Western dancers, and people grow tired of such stories. Ezrahi explains that: 'To put it simply, Soviet ballet was distinguished from Western ballet by its "rich content" – its focus on telling a story – and the emotional absorption and conviction of its technically superb performers.'[81] This British perspective held true also for the French audience. In the following visits of the Bolshoi, in both Paris and London, the same negative criticism was encountered.

When it comes to the Kirov, the second major ballet company, it followed the Bolshoi in 1961 by visiting Paris and London. It was during this triumphant and historic tour that Rudolf Nureyev chose to seek political asylum in France.[82] The Kirov, however, suffered from the same tough criticism as the Bolshoi. The dance critic of *The Guardian* affirmed that the Kirov has 'a taste which by Western standards is plain bad or (more charitably) out of date'.[83] When the Kirov returned in 1966, the same refrain was encountered: Mary Clarke even entitled her article 'Alas, Poor Kirov', talking about 'crude and ugly *pas de deux*', 'dancers poorly

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the ancient ballet school … has been maintained and spread to 15 schools and 32 national theatres.'

80 Reiss, 'L'esthétique du ballet soviétique', 196.

81 Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 161.

82 This event is almost forgotten in the French communist press.

83 *The Guardian*, June 15, 1961.

served by the choreography'.[84] But at the same time, it was the dancers, seen as athletes and performers, who were appraised. Peter Williams in his editorial for *Dance and Dancers* talked about the Soviets 'that can enrich immeasurably our approach to the art and its presentation in the theatre', and '[t]hey gave the impression of believing implicitly in everything they did'.[85] This is a compliment, revealing the hard work and true passion of the Soviet dancers.

Impact of the Bolshoi on East–West Relations

The 'multilayered' effects – political, social and artistic – as Ezrahi asserts in the Soviet point of view,[86] can also be seen from the Western point of view. The first observation is the general trend of intensification of cultural exchanges between East and West and a greater desire from Western governments to control them, with diverse actors. From the governmental angle, ballet crystallised tensions between East and West, for instance, in the cancellation of the Soviet ballet in May 1954 in Paris. For the British side, because of the Hungarian events in November 1956, the Sadler's Wells Ballet cancelled its tour to Moscow and Leningrad because of a political rupture between the two countries. This affair also took place during the Suez Crisis, which added fuel to the fire.[87] Definitely, these exchanges were at the core of politics and tributaries of the political events: if there was a crisis, a tour could be cancelled, becoming a victim or an easy scapegoat. It could be a means for pressure or political blackmail. For example, just before the Bolshoi Ballet opened its first run in London in 1956, the case of Nina Ponomareva dominated the headlines.[88] This Soviet athlete was accused of stealing five hats from a C&A shop in Marble Arch. The USSR considered this event a 'dirty provocation' and used the prospective Bolshoi tour for blackmail.[89] The tour could finally take place after weeks of negotiations and diplomatic correspondence.

The term *exchange* can here be seen in the boxing definition: a series of blows between adversaries. On the contrary, during détente, the discourse of the ballet as an art which softened political exchanges was emphasised, especially in the usual Soviet rhetoric of friendship and peace between peoples. The balance was fragile. French and English governments, serving as hosts, needed to deploy their own cultural strategy to face the Soviets. Thus the bilateral cultural agreements were signed. They ensured reciprocity and ensured that Soviets were not the only beneficiaries. Apart from art, political realities seemed as present as ever.

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84 Mary Clarke, 'Alas, Poor Kirov', *Dancing Times*, vol. 57, no. 673 (1966): 11.

85 Peter Williams, 'After the Party', *Dance and Dancers*, vol. 7, no. 12 (1956): 5.

86 Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 167.

87 *The Times*, November 8, 1956.

88 Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 145–8.

89 TNA, FO371/122983, N. Ponomareva has been charged with shoplifting, NS1804/2, p. 1, l.5.

From the Western dancers' perspective, Soviet ballet technique was of high quality and there were many things to learn from it. Here lay true exchange, reciprocal communication. Some British dancers even went to the USSR to dance and learnt a lot after these exchanges, for example the dancer Beryl Grey from the Royal Ballet.[90] From the audiences' perspective, frontiers between blocs became porous and the spectacular presence of Soviet dancers stayed in memories for a long time. For example, those who witnessed the Bolshoi's first appearance in London in 1956 are still laudatory. The same applies to dancers who were able to dance with them.[91] Even now, when the Bolshoi visits Paris or London, memories are still vivid and the press uses them unhesitantly, mythifying dancers. Paradoxically, at a time when anti-communist propaganda was high in both countries, ballet appeared as the favourite entertainment for the Western public. Because of their impressive and spectacular shows, the Soviets were welcomed as stars, and a kind of 'star wars' was launched between the superpowers.

The question of efficiency of these ballet tours in a broader strategic plan to conquer the West needs to be raised. We all know that efficiency is difficult to measure, but in this case it seems that a *longue durée* perspective has to be taken. If ballet can have an impact on public opinion, it is not in a magical way but definitely through many years of presence. Their 'power of representation', being there *hic et nunc*, as Anthony Shay concluded in his book, was a Soviet characteristic.[92] The Soviet performative desire to make audiences communist sympathisers did not succeed, as a lot of people saw ballet as non-political.[93] Even so, through the huge and lasting success of the Soviet ballet, they did conquer the hearts of those who followed them in these years. Memories of Soviet dancers are all around in autobiographies and interviews of the great Western dancers and cannot be ignored by scholars. Soviet visits left a mark on their souls.

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[90] Beryl Grey, *Red Curtain Up* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1958).

[91] Interview with Beryl Grey – ballerina at the Royal Ballet between 1941 and 1967, and the first English ballerina who went to the USSR in 1957 (March 20, 2012, London). Interview with Anya Linden, Lady Sainsbury, a ballerina in the Royal Ballet between 1951 and 1965 (July 19, 2012, London).

[92] Shay, conclusion in *Choreographic Politics*, 224–32.

[93] See the classic text on 'performative utterances', J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962).

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Chapter 10
Conclusion

Simo Mikkonen and Pekka Suutari

Studies on East–West cultural exchanges reveal the contradictory roles of art in individual lives and governmental systems of activities. The ideological borders set obstacles to interactions between peoples on both sides of the conflict, but the case studies in this volume show the power and intensity some individuals and institutions have laid on the interactions across political boundaries. The Soviet Union continued to be the alien, an entity whose ways of operating were generally difficult to grasp in the West. However, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union opened up archives and made it possible to reassess Soviet actions, the impacts of East–West interaction have been understood from several new important levels mutually. One of the primary tasks of *Music, Art and Diplomacy* has been to address the issue of East–West cultural diplomacy from the Soviet point of view as well as from the perspective of the opposite bloc. The focus has been not only on explaining the political approach to cultural diplomacy, but also on the implications of East–West cultural diplomacy in practice and to raise up the effects of the reactions in different countries – not least in the Soviet Union.

Music, Art and Diplomacy concentrates on the two first decades following the end of the Second World War, but the chapters dealing with the period after Khrushchev in the late 1960s and 1970s suggest that, although the period of the Thaw came to an end, connections with the West remained in place. Soviet cultural diplomacy was not scaled back, although the attention probably turned more towards Western Europe than the United States. This, however, calls for more detailed studies in the future. Based on the case studies presented in *Music, Art and Diplomacy*, we can safely say that there was a period of 10 years after Stalin's death when the Soviet Union actively sought to engage with countries in the West, even the United States, in many areas of art. While not willing to open its doors completely in order to exchange works of art or let artists travel freely, the Soviet Union was confident enough to seek agreement on reciprocal cultural exchange with the West during a period ranging from the mid-1950s until at least the mid-1960s. Anyway, it was not only the Soviet Union that imposed restrictions on exchange projects; the United States was particularly wary at first, seeing few benefits in costly cultural exchange projects. However, as it turned out, the Soviet Union was ready to accept sizeable artistic troupes from the West. Such events were seen by the US officials as a way of reaching ordinary people in the Soviet Union. Indeed, as Scholl and Koppes in particular point out, those who participated in such events took advantage of these chances, even if the US

participants turned out to be difficult to control; they had their own personal and professional interests that were sometimes, but not always, compatible with those of the government.

Nor was the cultural diplomacy of the Soviet Union under the total control of the authorities. The contributions of Herrala, Costanzo and Gonçalves point to several occasions where the participants, having gone through rigorous selection processes of the security organs in order to go abroad, put their own professional and personal agendas first. It was the Soviet approach to cultural diplomacy that necessitated the use of artists on a large scale. Whole opera and ballet companies were sent abroad, and giving Soviet artists access to the West was considered a reasonable price to pay as the Soviet Union could now demonstrate its artistic prowess in the West. The Soviet Union was confident that it would not lose the competition in the artistic field to the United States. However, the reciprocity enshrined in state agreements on cultural exchange ensured that Western artists and artistic trends and processes would reach the Soviet Union and Soviet artists better than before. Costanzo's chapter points out that there was also an increasing trend within Soviet artistic circles of accessing Western art currents through socialist countries closer to Central Europe, such as Poland, where restrictions vis-à-vis the West were not as strict.

The limitations and restrictions were most stringent during the first decade after the Second World War. The chapters by Fairclough and Wiggins and Oliver Johnson point out that, despite a number of attempts, the Soviet authorities were not ready for broad-scale exchanges before the death of Stalin in 1953. Their priorities lay elsewhere, and the risks were considered to be too high. Policies emphasising isolation from the West that had been in place before the war were reintroduced. The majority of Soviet artists consequently remained without direct contact with the trends of contemporary Western art for almost a quarter of a century, mainly as a result of Soviet policies that condemned Western influences as harmful to Soviet art. Apart from a few major international exhibitions and musical competitions, there was little exchange between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world. Artists were seldom sent abroad, and any kind of direct links with the West were rare. Particularly the movement of artists between the United States and the Soviet Union from 1930 to the mid-1950s was negligible. In this respect, the change after Stalin's death turned out to be a remarkable watershed in Soviet art exchanges with the West.

Even though this change did not take place overnight, little by little it became possible to follow Western art trends through magazines, recordings, the radio and – for those not allowed to travel – even in occasional discussions with foreigners. While the mid-1950s can be seen as a period when East–West connections notably increased, this only applied to certain forms of art, and others were allowed fewer chances for contacts abroad. For example, while music and dance were definitely among the more active art forms and were at the forefront of East–West exchange activities, the fine arts, by contrast, had far fewer contacts, despite considerable high-level involvement in some of the attempts and their important role within

the Soviet Union.[1] The cases introduced in this volume reinforce the perception that music and dance were indeed areas in which successful exchange projects were more common than in other fields, despite attempts to realise large-scale exchanges in theatre, film, the fine arts and architecture.

The Soviet logic behind changing its approach to cultural diplomacy reflects the fact that foreign political decision making in the democratically governed countries became increasingly dependent on popular opinion. The Soviet leadership saw a chance to exploit this, which it considered to be a central weakness of Western democracies. By culturally influencing foreign populations, it believed that it could persuade the electorates to pressurise their governments into looking more favourably on Soviet objectives. The Soviet Union had previously sought to influence foreign communists, but now the growing middle classes became the new target. The aim was not so much to spread communism as to use cultural influencing to make the Soviet Union look less a threat and appear in a more positive light.[2] The Soviet government believed it could use the best Soviet artists and works of art in the same way it used Sputnik, to prove both the superiority and the goodwill of the Soviet Union to the world.

It should be further remembered that Soviet cultural diplomacy was designed and controlled by the Communist Party. Agreements were sanctioned by the Party, and all projects and participants had to be approved by it. What the Party could not fully control, however, was what took place when Soviet troupes travelled to the West, and not even when Western troupes travelled to the Soviet Union. Unofficial encounters, discussions and cordial meetings took place all the time without the Soviet security organs or the Communist Party being able to supervise all the goings-on, which is not to say that they did not try. However, it was not only the Communist Party that tried to limit East–West interaction. Sometimes it was images and prejudice that played that role. The chapter by Näripea, Mazierska and Kristensen points out that the role of images should not be forgotten when East–West interactions are considered. The dichotomous perception of the Soviet Union that sees the Communist Party and the citizens as completely opposed to each other simply does not stand up to scrutiny. Soviet citizens did not blindly believe the Communist Party's propaganda; but neither were they ready to totally embrace the West if only given the chance.

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[1] There are examples of unsuccessful US–Soviet projects and very few successful ones in the fine arts in the late 1950s. See Simo Mikkonen, 'Soviet–American Art Exchanges during the Thaw: From Bold Openings to Hasty Retreats', in Merike Kurisoo (ed.), *Art and Political Reality* (Tallinn: Art Museum of Estonia, 2013).

[2] Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War: From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

Interactions across the border and across the ideological frontlines increased after the wake of perestroika in the Soviet Union. This optimal state of affairs – transnational relations between the travelling people, enterprises making business deals, and artistic contacts seeking new audiences and influential ideas – is an antidote to increased governmental prejudice and discourses that aim to maintain tension and hostile preparation for war. While high-level politics underlined the possibility of danger in order to maintain military capability, the direct cultural contacts seem to speak the opposite discourse: the face-to-face meeting of people tends to create mutual understanding.[3]

The East–West cultural exchanges tried to control this state of affairs. Their primal aim was not to stop the Cold War, or even to relieve the securitisation discourse that ensured the strong military investments and security organisations. Their aim was to show the competitiveness of either bloc in their cultural state of affairs – the proof of high-quality artistic achievements. All the participants succeeded in this aim, and as a result, maybe unexpectedly, a more natural state of cultural contacts in which political limitations were reduced started to become reality, and desire to maintain this level of transnational relations increased. This finally proved to be one of the solutions to the end of the era, the end of the Cold War.

The major point of *Music, Art and Diplomacy*, therefore, has been to underline the interplay of government with the different parties and agents of cultural diplomacy. Individuals, groups and organisations at times played a fairly instrumental role not just in implementing policies of cultural diplomacy, but also in articulating and even formulating those policies. These people perceived the Cold War very differently from the traditional foreign political establishment. For them, the Cold War and competition with the adversary was not the point. Rather, the Cold War provided them opportunities that might not have arisen otherwise. Cases in this book point out that private actors in Cold War era cultural diplomacy deserve scholarly attention. East–West cultural diplomacy was an area in which several stakeholders were involved, a field of international relations where individuals outside the foreign political establishment could play important and influential roles. The cultural Cold War did not just consist in government activities and attempts to influence foreign populations; it was also about different interest groups and organisations aiming to realise their own plans and intentions.

Furthermore, it needs to be borne in mind that although the United States was a bloc leader its policies towards its allies were not as restrictive as those of the Soviet Union towards the socialist countries in Eastern Europe, and many Western

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[3] The Copenhagen School on Security Studies has developed the constructivist approach to hostile discourses by referring to the concept of *securitisation*. Its opposite, desecuritisation, may be developed by 'normal' relations in which transnational encounter across the border is a basis for the peaceful progress – not least in cultural matters. Ole Wæver, 'Politics, Security, Theory', *Security Dialogue* vol. 42, no. 4–5 (2011), 465–80. Michael Williams, 'Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics', *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 47, no. 4 (2003), 523.

European states had their own policies towards the Soviet Union. The United States made a deal with the Soviet Union on cultural exchanges only after France, Britain and many other Western European countries had done so. Furthermore, the Soviet approach towards all Western countries was similar in that after the agreements were signed the Soviet authorities sought to transact with private partners rather than with governments, which they often saw as more hostile. This point is actually quite an important one which deserves a closer look in future studies. In this volume, Gonçalves underlines the relationship between the public and private sectors especially in the West. The Soviets preferred to deal with powerful private individuals and organisations instead of foreign governments when it came to art exchanges. In Soviet–American music exchanges Sol Hurok, a famous Broadway impresario, was the man of choice for the Soviets. In Europe, similar persons can be found in many countries: for example, Victor Hochhauser in Britain. These impresarios were well-connected patrons, but also businessmen, who aimed at benefiting economically from the foreign exchanges. It seems that the Soviets quite readily adapted to the capitalist system in foreign environments when it came to cultural operations.

The cultural Cold War and the relationship between the arts and diplomacy during the Cold War era in particular remain areas that call for further attention from scholars. Despite the growing body of literature tackling the complex relationship between the arts and the Cold War, there are a number of issues that remain poorly understood and little researched. Particularly, the role of individuals, groups and organisations in cultural diplomacy during the Cold War era is fertile ground for further studies. Through interviews, oral history and the careful selection of archival materials it is possible to gain a better understanding not only of the processes of cultural diplomacy but also of the role of actors at different levels, and the effects of cultural diplomatic activities.

Looking at the years from the 1940s until the 1980s, we can see heightened international military tension and consequently strong mistrust between the states and people of each bloc. This state of affairs, called the Cold War, became for many a normal state of affairs in regard to economic, cultural and personal transnational relations across the ideological borderline in Central Europe. Even a tiny breath of wind from the other bloc was an eye-opening experience with long-lasting influence on the people on either side. New visions, opening of unexpected influences and new ways of presenting artistic traditions and ideas were influential in spite of scant existence without clear continuity of these affairs. Even so, people kept the dream of coexistence alive, struggling for the change for a better world – entirely regardless of their political views.

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